TH 607 — SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY 3
Instructor: Peter D. Anders
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COURSE SYLLABUS
Summer 2012
GL108; ext. 4124

Course Date/Time: Tuesday, May 29 – Saturday, June 2 / Daily 9:15–12:15; 1:15–4:30

Office Hours: T–F, 4:30-5:00; and by appointment

Course Description: Continuing the study of Systematic Theology 1 and 2 with a focus on the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. Prerequisites: TH504, TH605.

Course Objectives

• Reflect on what it means to think theologically in an evangelical Christian context, and deepen your understanding of the nature and role of systematic theology in your Christian life and ministry.

• Gain a thorough understanding of the essential theological content of the doctrines of salvation, church, and last things from within a trinitarian and pneumatic framework; and with a focus on the testimony of Holy Scripture and their systematic interrelationships.

• Sharpen your understanding and consider your own positions regarding some of the key issues and viewpoints especially related to pneumatology, soteriology, and ecclesiology that define our Christian witness, and have divided historic Christianity.

• Gain a deeper appreciation of your own theological heritage and your place in the community of faith that transcends the boundaries of time and location; and a clearer vision and intellectual context for a lifetime of theological study that is expressed in continuing personal growth, and well-informed and articulate ministry.

Required Texts

John B. Webster, Holiness, Eerdmans, 2003 (due June 2 – see Course Assignments).


Christopher J. H. Wright, Salvation Belongs to Our God: Celebrating the Bible’s Central Story, IVP, 2007. (Donald Fairbairn, Life in the Trinity: An Introduction to Theology with the Help of the Church Fathers, IVP, 2009 may be substituted by students who have not yet read it.)


Supplemental readings posted on CAMS (see Course Schedule).

**Recommended Texts**


**Course Requirements**

**Reading Response Essay**

One Reading Response Essay (RRE) is required. The RRE will be evaluated on: 1) thoroughness, conciseness, and clarity of thought; 2) demonstrated significant, thoughtful, critical engagement with the reading; and 3) the quality of writing and presentation.

The RRE will be a **1200-word max** critical essay or book review responding to John Webster, *Holiness*. This essay is **due on June 2 AT THE START OF CLASS**.

**NOTE:** This essay must be a response to the course required reading, rather than merely a summary or explication of the reading. Students should seek to analyze the reading as a whole, reflecting especially on key themes, arguments, issues, criticisms, and/or points that are of particular personal interest. The following examples of general critical questions may help guide your engagement with the text and the formulation of your response:

- What stands out to me? (Reflecting on interest)
- What surprises me? (Reflecting on distance)
- What puzzles me? (Reflecting on learning opportunities)
- What connections do I make? (Reflecting on integration)
- What implications are there? (Reflecting on application)

In addition to the Reading Response Essay, students will choose either **OPTION #1** or **OPTION #2**

**OPTION #1: Essay Exam (Take-Home)**

**3,000-word max (10 pages).** This take-home essay exam will consist of integrative essay questions requiring students to draw on both the lectures and the course reading. You may use class notes and texts as you answer the questions (though each student’s exam must clearly reflect their own thoughts).

You may simply number your answers to correspond to the questions on the exam handout (available on CAMS). Answers to the exam questions will be evaluated on: 1) thoroughness, conciseness, and clarity of thought; 2) demonstrated significant, thoughtful understanding of the key terms, concepts, and issues addressed in this class, and the biblical passages relevant to them; and 3) the quality of writing, and presentation.

The Essay Exam is **due by August 17**.
**OPTION #2: Confession of Faith**

**3000-word max (10 pages).** A presentation of your own doctrinal commitments that engage the whole of the theological system covered in Systematic Theology 1, 2, and 3. The emphasis in the confession should be on clarity and brevity, and should cover at a **minimum** the following range of topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Introduction</th>
<th>F. Jesus Christ</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Person of Christ in Two Natures</td>
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<td>b. The Mission of Christ</td>
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<td>c. The Atonement</td>
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<th>B. Holy Scripture</th>
<th>G. Holy Spirit</th>
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<td>a. Revelation</td>
<td>a. The Person of the Spirit</td>
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<td>b. Inspiration</td>
<td>b. The Fruits/Gifts of the Spirit</td>
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<td>c. Inerrancy</td>
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<td>d. Canon</td>
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<th>C. Doctrine of God</th>
<th>H. Salvation</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. Attributes</td>
<td>a. Regeneration/Conversion</td>
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<td>b. Trinity</td>
<td>b. Justification/Sanctification</td>
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<td>c. Election/Predestination</td>
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<th>D. Creation</th>
<th>I. Church and Sacraments</th>
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<td>a. Purpose of Creation</td>
<td>a. The Nature of the Church</td>
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<td>b. Theology of Creation</td>
<td>b. Church Government</td>
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<td>c. Baptism</td>
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<th>E. Anthropology</th>
<th>J. Last Things</th>
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<td>a. Creation of Humanity</td>
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<td>b. The Fall</td>
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<td>c. Original Sin</td>
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The Confession of Faith is **due by August 17.**

**GUIDELINES FOR AN EFFECTIVE CONFESSION OF FAITH:**

- Articulate *your* beliefs as carefully, concisely, and clearly as possible. You should make use of course texts, additional research, your own church/denominational confessions/doctrinal statements, and the historic Christian creeds and confessions to point you to the key doctrines and biblical passages relevant to them. You should then write your beliefs in your own words. See the *Creeds of Christendom* website, www.creeds.net, for full texts of a variety of historic and contemporary Christian creeds and confessions.

- Demonstrate your awareness and understanding of the important issues concerning each doctrine. These are your beliefs, but they are also relative to a biblical and historical Christian perspective. Therefore showing an understanding of the central issues for each doctrine by the way you address them in light of both Scripture and tradition is essential.

- This is a *statement* of your beliefs, not a *defense* of your beliefs. You should cite a sufficient biblical basis for key statements, but you are not being asked to defend those statements (exegetically, philosophically, or otherwise).

- This should be seen as an opportunity to work through your beliefs on key doctrines of the Christian faith and to clearly articulate them. The exercise should also help you clarify your own confessional stance with respect to your church, denomination, mission agency, etc. You should address or emphasize topics, and format/arrange your confession in a way that will best suit your needs in this regard.
Participation

You are expected to be faithful to your calling as a student through preparation, attendance, and involvement in the course. Significant learning will take place in the context of the classroom community. Assigned reading outside of class is meant to supplement the lectures and discussions, and will provide a necessary aid for learning the material.

Due to the intensive one-week structure of this course, students are strongly advised not to enroll if there is a possibility that they may be unable to attend the full week (auditors are welcome). Students will account for their attendance and reading on the Completed Reading Form available on CAMS.

The Completed Reading Form is due by August 17.

Additional Information Concerning Written Assignments

- Written assignments should be typed in 12 point, Times New Roman-type font, double spaced, 1 inch margins, and with a cover page that clearly states your campus mailbox number. Students should make consistent use of a style manual of their choice.

- Final written work submitted by August 17 should include a Completed Reading Form and a Final Exam OR Confession of Faith. Please attach these documents together, with your name and campus mailbox number clearly stated on each. A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be included if you want the evaluated Confession of Faith or Final Exam returned to an off-campus address.

- These assignments should be submitted to my campus mailbox (#223) or under my office door (GL108). Please submit these final assignments as an email attachment only if absolutely necessary, and do not assume the instructor has received an emailed assignment until a verification is sent in response.

- It is the GCTS Registrar’s policy that no written work may be accepted by the professor after August 17 without an extension granted by the Registrar’s office.

Grading

The relative weight of the course requirements will be distributed as follows:

- Reading Response Essay 25% Due 6/2 at the start of class.
- Final Exam OR Confession of Faith 50% Due by August 17.
- Completed Reading Form 25% Due by August 17.

Plagiarism

Helpful guidelines on plagiarism can be found on the Indiana University website listed below. This document has the official recognition of the Gordon-Conwell faculty and provides very helpful tools to guide you as you prepare your papers/exams. In order to save paper, we have provided you with the website address: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html.

Personal Recorders and Computers

Recording of lectures/discussions is not permitted for this course. Students are permitted to use laptop computers during class for note-taking and course related purposes only.
Course Schedule

DAY ONE (5/29) — The Identity of the Reconciler

READING: Erickson, chs. 41–42 and/or Horton, *The Christian Faith*: ch. 17
Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*: chs. 1–4, 10

St. Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit*, chs. 16–23 (CAMS)

DAY TWO (5/30) — The Act of Reconciliation

READING: Erickson, chs. 43–44 and/or Horton, *The Christian Faith*: ch. 18

Martin Luther, “Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, 1522” (CAMS)
Peter Anders, “Called by the King” (CAMS)
John Wesley and George Whitefield, “Controversy Concerning the Doctrines of Election and Predestination” (CAMS)

DAY THREE (5/31) — The Nature of Reconciliation

READING: Erickson, chs. 45–49 and/or Horton, *The Christian Faith*: chs. 19–21
Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*: chs. 5–8
Wells, *Turning to God*: Foreword–ch. 4

Martin Luther, *Galatians 3:13* (CAMS)
Council of Trent, “Decree on Justification” (CAMS)
Michael Horton, “Engaging N. T. Wright and John Piper” (CAMS)

DAY FOUR (6/1) — The Identity of the Reconciled

READING: Erickson, chs. 50–55 and/or Horton, *The Christian Faith*: chs. 22–26
Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*: ch. 9

St. Cyprian of Carthage, “The Unity of the Catholic Church” (CAMS)
Michael Horton, “No Church, No Problem?” (CAMS)
Karl Barth, “The Gift of Freedom: Foundation of Evangelical Ethics” (CAMS)

DAY FIVE (6/2) — The Hope of the Reconciled

READING: Erickson, ch. 56–60 and/or Horton, *The Christian Faith*: chs. 27–29
Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*: ch. 11
Wells, *Turning to God*: chs. 5–8

Patrick Smith, “The Plurality of Religious Pluralism” (CAMS)
Peter Anders, “The Real Christ Has Stood Up” (CAMS)
C. S. Lewis, “Hell” and “Heaven” (CAMS)

Reading Response Essay on Webster, DUE BY 9:15 AM

WORK DUE BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 17:

- Final Exam OR Confession of Faith
- Completed Reading Form

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to revise the contents of this course syllabus as necessary.
Representative Systematic Theologies

(Texts in **BOLD** are integrated into the Course Outline; * = Introductory.)


Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley and others. Four volumes. T. & T. Clark, 1956–75. (Neo-Orthodox)


Bloesch, Donald G. *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*. Hendrickson, 2005. (Evangelical)*


Grenz, Stanley J. *A Theology for the Community of God*. Broadman/Holman, 1994. (Neo-Evangelical)*


