TH 607 — Systematic Theology 3
Instructor: Peter D. Anders
ext. 4124; panders@gcts.edu

Office / Hours: GL108 / T–F, 4:00–5:00.

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

By the end of this course you will have:

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

• Gained 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.

• Sharpened your understanding and considered 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.

• Gained 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 May 31– see Course Assignments).

Friedrich Zuendel, The Awakening: One Man’s Battle with Darkness, The Plough Publishing House, 2008. (This text will be distributed at the first class meeting at no charge to enrolled students.)


Choose ONE from the following four texts:

Christopher J. H. Wright, Salvation Belongs to Our God: Celebrating the Bible’s Central Story, IVP, 2007.


John Jefferson Davis, “Practicing Ministry in the Presence of God and in Partnership with God: The Ontology of Ministry and Pastoral Identity: a Trinitarian-Ecclesial Model,” 2011. (This article will be available on CAMS before the first class meeting and is due June 3—see Course Assignments)

A systematic theology text chosen from the list below (recommended for this course are Millard Erickson, Christian Theology, AND/OR Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology, new ed.).

Choice of **FIVE** supplemental readings posted on CAMS.


**Recommended Texts**


**Course Requirements**

**Reading Response Essays**

Four short Reading Response Essays (RRE) are required. **RRE#1** will be a **1500 word max** critical essay responding to John Webster, Holiness. This essay is **due on May 31 at 9:00 am (at the start of class)**, and will be evaluated on: 1) conciseness and clarity of thought; 2) demonstrated thoughtful, critical engagement with the reading; and 3) the quality of writing and presentation.

**RRE #2** will be a **500 word max** critical essay responding to John Jefferson Davis, “Practicing Ministry in the Presence of God and in Partnership with God.” This essay is **due on June 3 at 9:00 am (at the start of class)**, and will serve as preparation for a class discussion of the article with Dr. Davis.

**RRE #3** will be a **500 word max** reflective essay responding to Friedrich Zuendel, The Awakening: One Man’s Battle with Darkness, and is **due on August 19 by 4:00pm**.

**RRE #4** will be a **500 word max** critical essay responding to your choice of Wright, Salvation Belongs to Our God; Davis, Worship and the Reality of God; Fairbairn, Life in the Trinity; or Horton, Covenant and Salvation; and is **due on August 19 by 4:00pm**.

**NOTE:** These essays must be responses to the assigned texts, rather than summaries or explications of the texts. Students should reflect especially on a key theme, argument, issue, criticism, and/or point that is 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)
Confession of Faith

3000 word max. 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:

A. Introduction, including the tradition through which you understand your faith.

B. Holy Scripture
   a. Revelation
   b. Inspiration
   c. Inerrancy
   d. Canon

C. Doctrine of God
   a. Attributes
   b. Trinity

D. Creation
   a. Purpose of Creation
   b. Theology of Creation

E. Anthropology
   a. Creation of Humanity
   b. The Fall
   c. Original Sin

F. Jesus Christ
   a. Person of Christ in Two Natures
   b. The Mission of Christ
   c. The Atonement

G. Holy Spirit
   a. The Person of the Spirit
   b. The Fruits/Gifts of the Spirit

H. Salvation
   a. Regeneration/Conversion
   b. Justification/Sanctification
   c. Election/Predestination

I. Church and Sacraments
   a. The Nature of the Church
   b. Church Government
   c. Baptism
   d. The Lord’s Supper

J. Last Things

The Confession of Faith is due on August 19 by 4:00pm.

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 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 to be submitted by August 19.

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.
- If students are unable to submit the written work that is due at 9:00 am on the first day of class (5/31), they will be dropped from the course with a ‘W.’ This policy is set by the Registrar and outlined on the Summer Course Schedule.
- Final written work submitted by August 19 should include RRE #3 and RRE #4, a Completed Reading Form and a 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 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 19 without an extension granted by the Registrar’s office.

Grading

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

- RRE #1 20%
- RRE #2, RRE #3, and RRE #4 20%
- Confession of Faith 40%
- Completed Reading Form 20%

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 (5/31) — *The Identity of the Reconciler*

Reading Response Essay #1 on Webster DUE BY 9:00 AM

**READING:** Erickson, chs. 41–42 and/or Berkoff, 415–446 (or corresponding chapters from your chosen systematic theology text)
Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*: chs. 1–4, 10

DAY TWO (6/1) — *The Act of Reconciliation*

**READING:** Erickson, chs. 43–44 and/or Berkoff, 447–509 (or corresponding chapters from your chosen systematic theology text)
John Wesley and George Whitefield, “Controversy Concerning the Doctrines of Election and Predestination” (CAMS)
Anders, “Called by the King” (CAMS)

DAY THREE (6/2) — *The Nature of Reconciliation*

**READING:** Erickson, chs. 45–49 and/or Berkoff, 510–554 (or corresponding chapters from your chosen systematic theology text)
Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*: chs. 5–8
Martin Luther, “Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, 1522” (CAMS)
Davis, “Conversion Isn’t What It Needs To Be” (CAMS)
Horton, “Engaging N. T. Wright and John Piper” (CAMS)
Council of Trent, “Decree on Justification” (CAMS)

DAY FOUR (6/3) — *The Identity of the Reconciled*

Reading Response Essay #2 on Davis DUE BY 9:00 AM (Discussion with Dr. Davis at 11:00 AM)

**READING:** Erickson, chs. 50–55 and/or Berkoff, 555–660 (or corresponding chapters from your chosen systematic theology text)
Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*: ch. 9
Horton, “No Church, No Problem?” (CAMS)
Davis, “Practicing Ministry in the Presence of God and in Partnership with God”

DAY FIVE (6/4) — *The Hope of the Reconciled*

**READING:** Erickson, ch. 56–60 and/or Berkoff, 661–739 (or corresponding chapters from your chosen systematic theology text)
Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*: ch. 11
Yandell, “Religious Pluralism” (CAMS)
Anders, “The Real Christ Has Stood Up” (CAMS)
C. S. Lewis on Hell and Heaven (CAMS)

WORK DUE BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 19:

- RRE #3 and RRE #4
- Confession of Faith
- Completed Reading Form — including five readings from CAMS and the required course texts.

**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)*


