TH607 Systematic Theology III  
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TH607 Systematic Theology III  
Syllabus  
Summer 2014

Course description

TH607 is the capstone of the systematic theology classes at Gordon-Conwell. As a result, I am very intentional about making it an integrative experience. The following doctrines are explicitly covered: Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts, salvation, church and sacraments, eschatology and final states. A very important objective of this class is to find the coherence between these doctrines and the rest of systematic theology, but also their significance for Christian life.

The doctrine of the person and work of the Holy Spirit grounds the rest of the discussion of soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. A specifically Trinitarian Pneumatology is determinative for one’s understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, a Trinitarian Christology leads to overcoming some of the oppositions between ‘merely’ forensic and participationist understandings of salvation (justification and sanctification). Moving into the doctrine of the church, a robustly Trinitarian theology will be shown to mediate between highly individualistic and highly institutionalized ecclesiologies.

* [Summer 2014 specific:] The class meets for lectures between May 27th and May 31st, from 9:00AM-12:00PM and 1:00PM to 2:00 PM. However, the student will be required to
  (a) watch certain video lectures between (June 1 – August 1st)
  (b) write a research paper on the doctrine of the church (see below)
  (c) write a final doctrinal statement until August 15th (see below).

Comment on the structure of the teaching week (May 28-June 1)  
- I will employ a variety of teaching techniques in order to make the best use of this intensive learning experience. Since I will not be able to cover all TH607 material in class, you will be expected to complete watching some of the lectures online through Sakai.
- An outline of the teaching week schedule will be provided in class on May 27th.
Learning outcomes

• To understand the systematic coherence of pneumatology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology.
• To understand the differences between major Christian confessions on the respective topics.
• To understand what is at stake in various soteriologies, including their practical implications for the life of the church.
• To gain a better understanding of the distinctive role played by the Holy Spirit in salvation and the life of the church.
• To gain a sense for the importance and reality of the church and its implications for the life of the congregation.
• To understand various ecclesiological assumptions made by the variety of worship styles and liturgical traditions.
• To gain an appreciation for the importance of catechetical formation for the life of the church.
• To understand the implications of each of these topics for the following areas: evangelism, worship, missions, discipleship etc.

Course outline
- To be provided on the first day of class.

Evaluation and Course Requirements

(1) Pre-residency reading (see required texts)
   a. Reading report: (10%) A report of the percentage of completed reading must be presented together with all other materials due on Aug 15.

(2) Residency activities
   a. Class participation: your participation in class discussion and activities will be graded (10%). It is highly desirable that you purchase and read all the course textbooks (approx. 1300 pages) until May 27th. You should read them in the following order: Karkkainen, Volf, Horton, Allison.

(3) Pre and Post-residency activities.
   a. Video Lectures: You are required to watch several video presentations (uploaded on Sakai) which cover topics that were skipped over in class. The discussion boards are related to these lectures. You should complete watching these lectures by August 1.
   b. Final research paper. (40%). You are to write a 3,000 word research paper on an area of ecclesiology that you wish to explore in more depth. Topics must be approved by the professor. Due Aug 15.
   c. Final statement of faith (20%). You are to write a 8-10 page paper, 1.5 spaced, presenting your theological position. This paper does not require research. Instead it is meant as an opportunity for the student
to reflect on the *coherence of her theological position as a whole*. The following topics must be addressed (underlined topics should receive special attention): Doctrine of *Scripture*, *divine attributes*, doctrine of the *Trinity*, the works of the Trinity, creation, providence, anthropology, doctrine of original sin, *Christology*, atonement, person and work of the *Holy Spirit*, the relationship between the Spirit and Christ, *justification*, regeneration, *predestination*, sanctification, the nature and marks of the church, church governance, *sacramentology*, eschatology. The paper must intentionally explore the logical links between your position on various theological loci. More explanation of expectations and other instructions to be provided in class.

i. **Due August 15**

d. **Two discussion boards.**

i. **DB1 (10%):** Write a theological commentary on Romans 9:13, focusing on the concept of divine love. Choose a position on the Arminian-Calvinist spectrum and defend your exegesis in light of the major theological and biblical objections. Thread length: 600 words. **Due June 15.**

1. **Critical responses:** Write two critical responses to other threads (400 words each), written from an opposing standpoint. Raise objections, point out other relevant biblical texts. **Due June 30**

ii. **DB2 (10%):** Describe and defend your own preferred church governance model (episcopalian, congregationalist, presbyterian). Provide biblical and theological support for your position. Thread length: 600 words. **Due July 13.**

1. **Critical responses:** Write two critical responses to other threads (400 words each), written from an opposing standpoint. Raise objections, point out other relevant biblical texts. **Due July 25**

### Required Reading

**Books**


**Articles and Excerpts**
• Michael S. Horton, *Covenant and Salvation* (excerpt)
• Olson, *Against Calvinism* (excerpt on Sakai)
• Horton, *For Calvinism* (excerpt on Sakai)
• John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (excerpt)
• Bruce McCormack, ‘Incarnation and Atonement in the Reformed Tradition’
• J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church* (excerpt).

**Additional bibliography**


