TH 501 - THEOLOGY SURVEY I
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Fall 2012  Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Jacksonville
Dates: October 1-5 (evenings) and Oct 6 (morning/afternoon)

I.  COURSE DESCRIPTION
   This course is designed to give you a concise introduction to the nature, history
and methodology of systematic theology. It should also provide a helpful stimulus in
understanding the relationship between the practice of one's faith and the belief context
into which that practice fits. The course will focus on a study of the nature of a
theological vision, the inspiration and authority of Scripture, the interpretation of those
Scriptures, the nature of the God whom we worship and the character of humanity.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS
   Students are required to complete the assigned reading from the required texts
listed below. In addition the student shall take a final exam and also compose a
Statement of Faith on the topics discussed in the class (instructions below). A sample
copy of an exam is included for your perusal. The exam and the Statement of Faith will
be due on November 9 (approximately one month after the final class.)

III. REQUIRED TEXTS
   1. Lints, Richard, The Fabric of Theology (Eerdmans/Wipf & Stock)
   2. Timothy Ward, Words of Life: Scripture as the Living and Active Word of
      God (IVP, 2009)
   3. Ryken, Philip and Edward Lefebvre, Our Triune God: Living in the Love of
      the Three in One (Crossway, 2011)
   4. Tennent, Timothy, Theology In The Context of World Christianity: How
      The Global Church Is Influencing The Way We Think About And
      Discuss Theology (Zondervan, 2007)
   5. Blocher, Henri, In the Beginning (IVP)
   6. A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY TEXT OF YOUR CHOICE

IV. EVALUATION
   The examination shall constitute 50 percent of the final grade and the Statement
of Faith shall constitute 50 percent of the final grade. The required reading shall nudge a
person over the edge (one way or the other) if their grade is borderline. Completion of the
required reading "nudges" one's grade upward if it is borderline. Failure to complete the
required reading "nudges" one's grade downward if it is borderline. The required reading
is either "completed" or "not completed". No credit is given in the final grade evaluation
for "almost completed".

V. WARNING ON 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’ve provided you with the website address: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html. Please consider this carefully.

VI. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
To protect the professor’s intellectual property rights with regard to classroom content, students are asked to refrain from audio and video recording of classes, as well as audio, video, and written publication (including internet posting and broadcasting) or live transmission of classroom proceedings.

VII. INTERNET USAGE
Students are asked to refrain from accessing the internet at any point during class sessions, unless otherwise instructed by the professor. “Surfing the web,” checking email, and other internet-based activities are distracting to other students and to the professor, and prevent the student from fully participating in the class session.

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COURSE OUTLINE
INTRODUCTION
  a. Introduction to Course
  b. Course Mechanics and Requirements
  c. The theology curriculum
A THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND VISION
  a. Nature of Theological Reflection
  b. Christian Faith and Christian Theology
  c. The Trajectory of Theology
REDEMPTIVE REVELATION
  a. Nature of Revelation
  b. Religious Language
  c. Redemptive-History
INSPIRATION AND INERRANCY
  a. The Nature of Inspiration
  b. Inspiration and Inerrancy
  c. The Authority of Scripture
  d. The Use of Scripture
BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION
  a. The Canon
  b. Classical Hermeneutical Theories
  c. Culture and Interpretation
THE TRINITY
  a. Monotheism
  b. The Divinity of the Son and the Spirit
  c. The Nature of the Trinity
THE NATURE OF GOD
a. The Attributes of God
b. Knowing God and Knowing about God
c. Review and Summary

CREATION
a. God and Creation
b. Creation Narratives - Genesis 1-3
c. The Theology of Creation

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF HUMANITY
a. Adam and Eve
b. Imago Dei
c. Personhood

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SIN
a. The Fall
b. Freedom and Falleness
c. Implications of Sin
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EXAM (SAMPLE)

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Instructions - This is a SAMPLE take home exam. You will have three hours from the time you open up the exam until you complete it. Answer three (3) out the following six (6) essay questions. Please attempt to be clear and concise. Bibles are permitted in the exam. Therefore, you should cite the Biblical material where appropriate and also the material from the required reading. You will have three hours to complete the exam which means that you should spend approximately one hour on each question. If English is not your first language, you may take one additional hour to complete the exam. The exam questions are then to be typed as is, and turned in. Each of the essays will count as 1/3 of the mid-term exam mark.

1. Theology and Faith - What are some guidelines you would suggest to a person in your congregation if they were to embark on the study of theology. How ought one to begin the study of theology? Is the objective study of theology possible? Why or why not?
2. Scripture - In what sense is Scripture inspired? How does this doctrine relate to what role Scripture ought to play in the daily life of a human person? Does inspiration entail inerrancy? Why or why not?
3. The Trinity - Explain the relationship between monotheism and worship. How are we to understand the Old Testament’s insistence upon there being only one God together with the New Testament’s conviction that both Jesus and the Holy Spirit are God? Why and how might this impact relationships within the church or the family? (choose either the church or the family)
4. **Attributes of God** - Of the following attributes of God, the holiness of God, the love of God, the wisdom of God and the glory of God, pick two and explain the Biblical context out of which they arise and the theological significance of the particular attributes. Finally offer what you take to be the reasons why an adequate understanding of one of these attributes would make a difference in a counseling situation with one of the members in your church.

5. **The Image of God** - A close associate at work says to you "we are nothing but machines. Our lives are nothing more than being a small cog in the big machine of the universe. Life is nothing more than figuring out where you fit in this machine." Offer some response.

6. **Original Sin** – As best as you are able, offer a framework to understand the first six verses of Genesis 3. What is the place of this passage in the first three chapters of Genesis? How do the events described in this passage effect the relationship of Adam and Eve to God?

***Have you completed the required reading for this course?***

yes_____ no_______
II. RANGE OF TOPICS TO BE COVERED:
   A. Theological Introduction - background and tradition through which you understand your faith
   B. Doctrine of Scripture
      a. Revelation
      b. Inspiration
      c. Canon
      d. Inerrancy
   C. Doctrine of God
      a. Attributes of God
      b. Trinity
   D. Creation
      a. Purpose of Creation
      b. Theology of Creation
   E. Anthropology
      a. Creation of Man/Woman
      b. The Fall
      c. Original Sin
III. Special Note: This confession should be seen as an exercise to help clarify your own confessional stance vis-a-vis your denomination, your mission agency etc. Please use whatever specific format would be most helpful in your relations with that church body you may be dealing with in the present or at some time in the future. There may be a topic (or topics) which need to be covered in greater depth than others or a topic which requires attention in your specific context but which is not specifically mentioned in the above list. Please include these. Arrange your Confession of Faith so that it will best suit your needs in the context of the church body in which you are a part or in which you will most likely become a part.
Bibliography – Systematic Theologies
Richard Lints

Baker, C. F.  A Dispensational Theology (D)
Barth, K.  Church Dogmatics (R)
Berkhof, H.  Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of the Faith (ER)
Berkower, G.C.  Systematic Theology  (many vols.) Eerdmans
*Bloesch, D.  Essentials of Evangelical Theology, 2 vols (Harper and
*Boice, J.,  Foundations of the Christian Faith (ER)
Boettner, L.  Reformed Faith (Presby & Reformed).
*Braaten, C. and R. Jensen, eds., Christian Dogmatics, 2 vols. (L)
Brunner, E.,  Dogmatics (LR)
Buswell, James Oliver,  Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion (R)
*Calvin, J.,  Institutes of the Christian Religion (ER)
Caster, Charles ed.,  A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology. (W)
Chafer, L.S.  Systematic Theology, 8 vols (D)
Dabney, R. L.,  Systematic Theology (ER)
deMoulin. P.,  The Anatomy of Arminianism (W)
*Erickson, M.J.  Christian Theology (Baker, 1986).EB
Evans, James H.  We Have Been Believers: An African American Systematic Theology.
Fackre, T.  The Christian Story: A Pastoral Systematics, 7 vols.EE
*Garrett, J. L. Jr.  Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical and Evangelical Vol 1.  EE
*Grenz, Stan,  Theology for the Community of God (EB)
Grider, Kenneth, A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology (W)
*Grudem, Wayne,  Systematic Theology (Zondervan)
Hall, Christopher A.  Learning Theology with the Church Fathers  (IVP, 2002).
Hall, D.  Thinking the Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context, Vol 1. (L)
Henry, Carl F.H.,  God, Revelation and Authority (EB)
*Hodge, A.A.  Evangelical Theology (Banner of Truth, 1976). (ER)
Hodge, C.  Outlines of Theology (Banner of Turth, 1983). (ER)
*Hodge, C.  Systematic Theology, 1 vol, abridged (Eerdmans, 1988). (ER)
Hodge, C.  Systematic Theology, 3 vols (Eerdmans, 1986). (ER)
*Horton, Stanley and William Menzies,  Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective.
Jinkins, Michael.  Invitation to Theology  (IVP, 2001). (R)
Kuyper, A Principles of Sacred Theology (ER)
L. Berkof, Systematic Theology (RE)
Langford, T. A Wesleyan Theology: A Sourcebook (W)
*Leith, John H., Basic Christian Doctrine (R)
Lewis, G. and B. Demarest, Integrative Theology, 2 vols.
Lewis, G. and B. Demarest, Integrative Theology, 2 vols (EB)
*McGrath, Alister, Christian Theology: An Introduction
Migliore, Daniel, Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology (R)
Milne, Bruce. Know the Truth: A Handbook of Christian Belief (IVP, 1999). (EB)
Murray, J. Collected Writings, 4 vols (Banner of Truth, 1976). (ER)
*Oden, T. Systematic Theology (The Living God, The Word of Life), 3 vols, (EW)
Olson, Roger E. The Mosaic of Christian Belief (IVP, 2002). (EW)
Rahner, K. Foundations of Christian Faith. (RC)
Reymond, Robert, Systematic Theology (Presbyterian and Reformed, Ryrie, C. C. Basic Theology (Victor Books, 1986). (D)
Shedd, R. T. Dogmatic Theology, 2 vols (Zondervan, 1953). (ER)
*Spykman, Gordon Reformational Theology (ER)
Strong, A.H. Systematic Theology (EB)
Theissen, H.C. Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology (D)
Thielicke, H. The Evangelical Faith, 3 vols (Eerdmans, 1982). (E)
Wiley, H.O., Christian Theology (EW)
*Williams, J. Rodman, Renewal Theology (CH)
*Zahl, Paul, A Short Systematic Theology (EA)

Key -

BE – Broadly evangelical
CH - Charismatic
ER - Evangelical Reformed
EW - Evangelical Wesleyan
EA – Evangelical Anglican
LP - Liberal Protestant
LA - Liberal Anglican
D - Dispensational
F - Feminist
EB - Evangelical Baptist
RC - Roman Catholic
EE - Ecumenical Evangelical
L - Lutheran
W - Wesleyan
LR - Liberal Reformed