

# Syllabus

## Overview of Course

Systematic Theology III is a continuation of Systematic Theology I and II and includes a study of the doctrines of soteriology (salvation and the Christian life), ecclesiology (the church and sacraments), and eschatology (death, the afterlife, and the millennium). The purpose of the course is to explore the biblical foundations of these doctrines and to understand their implications for the contemporary problems of church and society.

## Course Requirements

**Please Note: In the case of discrepancies between the course requirements mentioned in the audio material and the requirements given in this workbook, the workbook takes precedence. It is highly recommended that you do not turn in all of your written work at one time. Doing so will not allow you to benefit from the feedback of the instructor.**

### I. Required Reading

You are required to read 1250 pages total, including the textbooks below (about 850 pages) and reading completed for the paper or other additional reading (about 400 pages). Please report the number of pages you have read in the required textbooks, and list all additional reading (other than required textbooks) on the back of the "Snapshot of Course" page, which is to be turned in to the Semlink office by the course due date. See the Appendix for recommended reading on various topics.

#### Required Textbooks

- Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Baker, 1998), chapters 41-60  
- 402 pages \*\*Read only the parts that correspond to the lecture topics
- Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as a Worshiping Community* (InterVarsity Press, 2006) - 165 pages
- John Jefferson Davis, *Christ's Victorious Kingdom* (out of print - available through the GCTS Book Centre) - 134 pages
- John Jefferson Davis, *Handbook of Basic Bible Texts* (Zondervan, 1984) - optional
- John Stott, *Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit*, 2nd ed. (InterVarsity, 1976)  
- 60 pages

**Note: Since this course was taped, the reading has become a requirement that**

will count 10% of your grade. Please make note of this change.

## II. Term Paper or Personal Statement of Faith

Papers must be 10-15 pages in length, typed, and double-spaced.

### *Option A: Term Paper.*

Topics for the research paper should be specific and well-focused, having been discussed in advanced with the instructor (see list of suggested topics on page vii). In your bibliographic research you should include scholarly books, journal articles, and biblical commentaries as appropriate.

### *Option B: Statement of Faith*

For the Statement of Faith option, you are to state clearly and concisely what you believe about each of the major theological topics covered in Systematic Theology I, II, and III. Those seeking ordination might want to give particular attention to such issues as the nature and mission of the church and the work of the Holy Spirit. You should include Scripture references, but you do not need to include secondary sources or a bibliography. The paper will be graded on the basis of literary style, Scripture references, clarity of language, and consistency. **There is a sample Statement of Faith in the “Supplemental Materials” booklet for use as a model. This booklet is available for purchase through the Gordon-Conwell BookCentre.**

## III. Final Exam

The final exam will be a comprehensive essay exam covering both lecture material and required reading. An unmarked, non-study Bible is allowed, but no notes or books.

## IV. Interaction

### *Purpose*

- To enhance distance learning by encouraging and providing a context for students to meet and interact with other students taking similar courses and with their course instructors as they work through their Semlink materials. Only Semlink students taking a course for credit are required to complete the interactive component of the course. Non-credit students who are taking Semlink classes for personal enrichment are encouraged to contact the Semlink office (see the contact information section below) if they want to participate in these discussions.
- As a member of the Association of Theological Schools, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary recognizes the value of interactivity in distance learning and complies with

the standards for accreditation set by ATS which include interactivity as a compulsory component of any distance learning program that wishes to continue granting credit for its courses.

- It is highly recommended that you spread out your completion of the interactivity requirements outlined below over the six months you have to complete the course, rather than attempting to complete them all at once or very near your due date. By spreading out your completion of the requirements, you will be able to benefit fully from your interaction with other students and receive feedback from the course teaching fellow.

### *Requirements*

The interaction requirement for Semlink courses is to be fulfilled in two ways:

- 1) **An online discussion forum:** converse with other students and with instructors.
  - Integration questions will be posted by the team of Semlink teaching fellows. These questions are designed to encourage you to analyze, synthesize, and apply what you are learning in your course in a cross-curricular environment. You will be interacting with other students who are taking this course and related courses.
  - Discussions may be based on current events, culture, literature, case studies, and scripture.
  - You are required to participate four (4) times in the discussions relating to your area of study. For example, if you were taking “The Church to the Reformation,” you would be required to participate in the Church History integration discussions four times during the six months you have to complete the course.
  - You may also submit an integration question for your course to your Semlink teaching fellow (see contact information section below). If your question is selected for use, it may fulfill one of your four required interactions in the discussion forums.
  - To ensure successful completion of this requirement, please complete your participation in the discussion forums at least one week prior to your course due date. This will allow sufficient time for you to resubmit any responses if necessary.
  - Please note that there are many ongoing discussions on the Semlink website. While you are welcome to participate in any of these discussions, only participation in the discussions listed for your course will be given course credit.
- 2) **Email-based conversation** with a Semlink teaching fellow.
  - Together with the lecturing professor and/or mentoring professor, the Semlink teaching fellows have written a conversation starter, designed to tie together some of the overarching themes raised in the course.
  - The conversation starter will be posted on the Semlink website. You will go to the Semlink website, navigate to your course homepage (see below), and submit your first

response to the question via email. The submission will be read and responded to by your Semlink teaching fellow, who will take the conversation further based on your original thoughts and comments.

- You are required to email a total of three (3) times, including your original response to the conversation starter.
- Please allow a minimum of one month to complete this conversation to allow time for the teaching fellow to respond. Allow five business days for a response to each of your submissions.

To find the website and specific interactivity details for your course:

- 1) Log on to the Semlink website ([www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/semlink](http://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/semlink)) and enter the section for “Current Students.”
- 2) Select your course from the menu, and go to the homepage for your course. This page contains links to the specific interactivity requirements for your course and other Semlink resources.
- 3) If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the Semlink office (see the contact information section below) and alternative arrangements will be made.

**Please Note:** In the case of any differences between the specific interactivity requirements given for this course on the website and the information given in this workbook, the website takes precedence.

#### *Evaluation of Submissions*

- You will not be assigned a letter grade for your participation in Semlink interactivity, but completion of your interactivity requirements is required to receive credit for your course. **If you fail to complete the interactivity requirements, you will fail your course.**
- Your submissions will be evaluated as complete or incomplete based on quality of

**If this requirement is not completed by the date on which your final assignment for the course is submitted to our office, the final assignment will be held and will not be submitted to the professor for grading until the interactivity requirement is complete. Therefore, there will be no final grade given for the course until the interactivity requirement is fulfilled. Once this requirement is completed, the professor will receive and grade the final assignment and you will be given a final grade for the course. If you have not completed all interactivity requirements within ONE MONTH after the end date of the course, you will automatically fail the course with no exceptions.**

thought and clarity of expression (see the general guidelines described below and the specific guidelines found on your course home page on the Semlink website).

- In the event of an unacceptable response, you will be informed and given the opportunity to expand or re-submit your thoughts, provided that your final submissions are made before the course due date. Submissions made after the course due date will be subject to penalty.

#### *General Guidelines for Submissions*

- Proper grammar and punctuation are required (no webspoken).
- Your response should demonstrate original thought and interaction with the issues being addressed, including a coherent flow of thought or argument. Please answer the questions fully and specifically.

### **V. Workbook**

As you listen to the lectures, you can answer the questions in the accompanying workbook. The workbook is provided as a resource for your study. The questions have been designed to help you to learn and process the information in this course. The completed workbook will also serve as an outline of the course for your future reference. You may find it helpful to stop the tape of the lecture at various times to consider the questions and answer them more fully. This is highly encouraged. You may also wish to take additional notes in the margins of the workbook or in the other spaces provided. You are not required to turn in your workbook.

## **Grading**

Required Reading	10%
Term Paper or Statement of Faith	45%
Final Exam	45%
Interaction	Completion Required

## Course Outline

Lecture	Topic(s)	Required Reading	Suggested Schedule
1	Introduction, Calling, and Regeneration	Erickson, chs. 43, 44, and 45	Week One
2	Faith, Repentance, Discipleship, Justification, and Sanctification	Erickson, chs. 46, 47	Week Two
3	Sanctification and the Works and Gifts of the Holy Spirit	Erickson, chs. 41, 42 Stott, <i>Baptism and Fullness</i>	Week Three
4	The Role of the Law in the Christian Life, Perseverance of the Saints, and the Doctrine of the Church	Erickson, chs. 48, 49, and 50	Week Four Begin research for paper
5	The Doctrine of the Church, Church Leadership, and the Ordination of Women	Erickson, ch. 51	Week Five
6	Church Government, Social Action, Evangelism, and Church Growth	Erickson, ch. 52 Chan, <i>Liturgical Theology</i>	Week Six
7	Baptism	Erickson, chs. 53, 54	Week Seven
8	The Lord's Supper and the Afterlife	Erickson, chs. 55, 56, and 57	Week Eight
9	Death and Dying, Israel's Role in God's Plan, and the Millenium	Erickson, chs. 58, 59 Davis, <i>Christ's Victorious Kingdom</i>	Week Nine Finish Paper
10	The Millenium and the Eternal State of the Wicked	Erickson, ch. 60 Davis, <i>Christ's Victorious Kingdom</i>	Week Ten Take Final Exam

\* Note: The Suggested Schedule is provided to help you to organize the way that you proceed through the material. It is based upon a ten-week semester; however, keep in mind that students on campus are given two Reading Weeks during the course of the semester: one around the fourth week of the semester and one around the eighth week. You may want to insert two such Reading Weeks into your schedule in order to give yourself time to catch up on reading or paper assignments. In any case, it is recommended that you maintain a consistent schedule in order to allow adequate time to complete all lectures, reading, and assignments.

## Possible Topics for Research Paper

1. What about those who die never having heard the gospel?
2. What about the spiritual state of the profoundly mentally retarded?
3. Is there such a thing as a biblical “age of accountability”?
4. What does it mean to be “born again”?
5. What is the Old Testament background for the concept of regeneration?
6. Are there unmistakable signs of the new birth?
7. Is there a biblical basis for the idea of baptismal regeneration?
8. What are the signs of true saving faith? Is there a “counterfeit” faith?
9. What are the biblical components of true repentance?
10. What implications does New Testament discipleship have for today’s American church?
11. What is the Old Testament and rabbinic background of the New Testament doctrine of justification?
12. Are there still substantial differences between Catholics and Protestants on the issue of justification?
13. Is it possible to lose one’s justification?
14. What three “models” of sanctification have been prominent in church history?
15. Should every believer seek the gift of tongues?
16. Are all the gifts of the Spirit valid for today?
17. What do you think of Wimber’s “signs and wonders” emphasis?
18. Should every church have a ministry of spiritual healing?
19. What role should the Mosaic law play in the church? the Christian life?
20. What is your evaluation of the “theonomy” movement?
21. Should Christians try to legislate morality in a pluralistic society?
22. What “models” of the church are important in the New Testament?
23. What type of church government do you favor and why?
24. What is the nature of ordination in the New Testament? the early church?
25. Should women be ordained as pastors and elders?
26. Should the mission of the church include social action? Political lobbying?
27. What do you think of Ralph Winter’s “hidden peoples” emphasis?
28. Do you think that the “homogeneous unit” principle of the church growth movement is a biblical concept?
29. Is it valid to use secular concepts of marketing and advertising to help the local church grow?
30. How should a local church raise money? Are rummage sales acceptable?
31. Should churches borrow money to finance building programs?

32. What types of church discipline should be exercised by the local church? Is excommunication ever valid?
33. Should infants be baptized?
34. What is the basic theological meaning of baptism?
35. Is it valid to rebaptize an individual?
36. Does the New Testament prescribe baptism by immersion?
37. What view of the Lord's Supper - Zwinglian, Lutheran, Calvinistic - do you consider to have the most support from the New Testament?
38. Should only ordained ministers serve communion or officiate at such a service?
39. How often should communion be served in the church?
40. What spiritual benefit, if any, does the believer obtain from communion that is not available from preaching?
41. What happens to believers when they die?
42. Is there any room for reincarnation in a New Testament theology?
43. Does the New Testament teach eternal conscious punishment for the wicked? Annihilation?
44. What is the proper interpretation of the "millennium" in Revelation 20:4-6?
45. What will heaven be like? Will there be work in heaven? Will there be animals in heaven?

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How do I arrange to take my exam?

1. Contact the Semlink office via email (semlink.office@gcts.edu) or phone (978-646-4144 or 1-877-736-5465, toll free). Please allow at least 48 hours to process your exam request as well as additional time for mailing to destination.
2. If you are a student at the Hamilton campus, your exam will be sent to Goddard Library.
3. If you are a student at CUME, Charlotte, or off-campus, you will need to find a proctor and provide proctor contact information when requesting your exam.
  - a. Your proctor should be a church official, an education official, or a librarian. Your proctor cannot be a GCTS student or a family member.
  - b. Your exam will be sent directly to your proctor, so you must provide a mailing address for him or her.
  - c. Your proctor will be responsible for mailing your exam to the Semlink address provided in the contact information section. **Please provide your proctor with an envelope with pre-paid postage for this purpose. The proctor must mail the exam so that it is postmarked by the course due date in order to avoid late penalty. Any work postmarked after the due date will be considered late.**

### How do I send in written work?

1. All course work is due by the course due date.
2. Course materials should be sent to the Semlink office address provided in the contact information section.
3. Any course work that is mailed to the Semlink office must be postmarked by your due date to avoid penalty.
4. Please include the address to which you would like your work sent. For Hamilton students, please use your campus box number.

### How do I request an extension?

1. For Hamilton, Charlotte, or CUME students, extensions should be requested .... through your home campus' registration office.
2. For off-campus students, extensions should be requested through the Semlink office.
3. Extension requests must be made in writing and must be submitted on or before . the due date of your course. Your extension request should include the unavoidable/avoidable circumstances that have prevented you from completing

your course and the amount of time lost due to those circumstances. You should also state what work you have completed and what is still unfinished. Please state which course work you are seeking an extension for.

4. Off-campus students who have not matriculated on to a campus should submit extension requests with a \$25 processing fee per course.
5. Generally, extension requests based on avoidable circumstances are granted with a grade penalty.
6. Extensions cannot be granted after the due date.
7. You cannot withdraw from a course after receiving an extension.

### **How do I withdraw from a course?**

1. You can withdraw from your course up to the due date.
2. For Hamilton, Charlotte, and CUME students, requests to withdraw must be in writing and are to be submitted to your home campus registration office.
3. For off-campus students, requests to withdraw must be in writing and are to be submitted to the Semlink office.
4. Should you withdraw from the course, the tuition refund policy is as follows:
  - a. 100% up to 15 days, 50% up to 30 days, no refund after 30 days.
  - b. Material cost is non-refundable.
  - c. Courses dropped prior to the 15 day deadline will not appear on your transcript. A “W” (withdrawn) will appear on transcripts for courses dropped after 15 days.

### **What is the penalty for late work?**

All course work submitted to the Semlink office after the due date will be assessed a grade penalty. On-campus students should contact their home campus’ registration office for more information on the specific grade penalty that will be applied. Off-campus students should contact the Semlink office.

### **When is my course due?**

1. Your course due date can be found on the confirmation sheet sent to you separately. We highly recommend that you make this sheet a part of your course materials.
2. Your course is due six months after your start date which is based on the date you registered for the course allowing time for preparation of the course materials by the Semlink office and shipping the materials to you.
3. Graduating seniors should note that during their final semester the due date for Semlink courses will be the due date for course work for seniors.

## Contact Information

At Semlink, there are a number of different offices working together as a team in order to care for you as a student. Please read the following descriptions and contact the appropriate office when questions arise.

**For Questions About:**

Course materials  
Administrative issues  
Exam requirements  
Registration information  
Extensions  
Due dates  
If you're unsure whom to call

**Contact:****The Semlink Office**

The Semlink office handles your registration, course materials, and exams. They also handle extensions and other administrative issues. If you are unsure whom to call, the Semlink office will be able to direct you.

Phone: 978-646-4144 or 1- 877-736-5465, toll free

Fax: 978-646-4565

Email: [semlink.office@gcts.edu](mailto:semlink.office@gcts.edu)

Address: Semlink Office

130 Essex Street

S. Hamilton, MA 01982

Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p. m. Monday-Friday

**For Questions About:**

Ordering textbooks

**Contact:****The Gordon-Conwell BookCentre**

The BookCentre stocks the required textbooks for every course.

Phone: 1-888-252-4287 (toll free) or 978-646-4017

Email: [books@gcts.edu](mailto:books@gcts.edu)

Website: [gcts.christianbook.com](http://gcts.christianbook.com)

**For Questions About:**

Interactivity requirements

**Contact:****The Semlink Teaching Fellows**

The Semlink teaching fellows have been selected for demonstrated proficiency in a particular subject area. The teaching fellows work closely with the mentoring professor to help you to interact at a deeper level with the course content and to provide you with opportunities to interact with other students and instructors in an area related to this course.

Email: [semlink.theology@gcts.edu](mailto:semlink.theology@gcts.edu)

Website: [www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/semlink](http://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/semlink)

**For Questions About:**

Course content

Paper topic approval

Suggested supplemental reading

**Contact:****The Mentoring Professor**

The mentoring professor grades your course work, sets the course syllabus, approves paper topics, and can answer questions about the course content. Please contact the mentoring professor only with the above type of questions.

Name: Dr. John Jefferson Davis

Phone: 978-646-4118

Email: [jdavis@gcts.edu](mailto:jdavis@gcts.edu)

Address: Dr. John Jefferson Davis

130 Essex Street

S. Hamilton, MA 01982