

PROVIDENCE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Reformation & Post-Reformation Christian Thought (TS5111)
January Intersession 2011

Meeting times: Monday, Jan 3-Friday, Jan 7

Professor: Rev'd. Dr. Tim Perry

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Office Hours (During Winter Term): Monday (by appointment) Wednesday and

Thursday, 8:30-11:15 (open door, except when in Senate)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The second of two interconnected courses, *Reformation & Post-Reformation Christian Thought* is intended to provide a study of the development of Christian thought during the Reformation and Post-Reformation periods to approximately 1950. Particular attention will be given to the doctrinal concerns and themes of this time period, as well as the key figures articulations of those concerns and themes, with a view to how their articulations impacted the church's witness in the world. More specifically, analysis of selected writings of the most important theologians of the time period, namely Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Simons, Schleiermacher, von Harnack, Barth and Bonhoeffer, will be undertaken, so as to discern the extent to which past debates and formative centuries of the Christian tradition should inform the practice of Christian ministry in the 21st century.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student will:

- Deepen historical appreciation and understanding of several areas of Christian doctrine;
- Recognize afresh the relation between theology and church life and reform, both in the Reformation and Post-Reformation periods and in our own time;
- Acquire competence in reading theological texts, as well as in forming and articulating considered historical and theological judgments in both discussion and in writing;
- Be able to better articulate the interdependence of theology and pastoral practice;
- Develop awareness of how past debates shape present theological responsibility within the Christian community.

III. REQUIRED TEXTS:

- González, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought*, Revised ed. Vol. III, *From the Protestant Reformation to the Twentieth Century*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987.
- McKim, Donald K. *Calvin's Institutes: Abridged Institutes*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.
- Placher, William C. *Readings in the History of Christian Theology*. Vol. II, *From the Reformation to the Present*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983.
- Williams, Rowan. *Why Study the Past? The Quest for the Historical Church*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd: 2005.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Attendance

“Regular class attendance is required. Absences of 20% for any reason will be reflected in the grading up to and including a failing mark. Excessive absences may prevent a student from enrolling in future courses.” (*Student Handbook*, p. 17) Please note that in an Intersession course, 20% is one day.

B. Assignments

1. Critical Questions

Students will for each class pose three questions (just 3 please) concerning the *primary* reading to date. The three questions must do at least two of the following things:

- Ask for clarification of a specific question/issue;
- Compare or contrast this reading with other readings (this class or other classes);
- Seek to probe more deeply into an argument or point the author is making;
- Make a thoughtful assessment of what the author has said;
- Point out further questions, implications, problems, issues that are raised by these readings for you;
- Try to tie the reading into concrete experiences and concerns.

The three questions will be sent to me by email by or before Monday, Jan 3 at 8:30 am. No late questions will be accepted or given credit. Your questions will be returned to you with either a Pass (P) or a Fail (F) grade; comments will not be made. **DO NOT SUBMIT ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS!**

2. Critical Book Study—8 pages, 12-point, Times New Roman, double-spaced with 1 inch margins all around, footnotes (Turabian style), title page and bibliography, stapled in the upper-left hand corner

The student shall write an eight page critical book study of McKim’s Abridged Edition of John Calvin’s *Institutes*. The purpose of a critical book study is to engage not only the

theological positions and views of a given text in its entirety, but also to provide a seasoned theological reflection on its contents and why its contents matter for the practice of Christian ministry.

The assigned task, then, is to provide a careful and thorough examination of the basic issues(s) at stake in the text, and to reflect upon the significance of the author's views for ministerial practice. With this in mind, a critical book study of Calvin's *Institutes* should proceed in the following way. (1) *Read* the text in its entirety. (2) *Summarize* the dominant issue(s) and argument(s) in the author's mind as concerns each of the four books, demonstrating your awareness of the *central thesis or theses* of each book. (3) *Make a case* for which book among the four is most important to Calvin's overall presentation of Christian doctrine? (4) *Reflect* on what the implications of Calvin's presentation of Christian doctrine for your practice of Christian ministry?

The book study is to be handed in at the beginning of class on Jan 7, 2011.

3. Bibliographic Assignment

Making full use of the catalogue and research resources of the library, students will be asked to prepare scholarly bibliographies related to one figure from the list given below. The bibliography shall be no more than 2 pages in length, should conform with the GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK below, and should include among its references *all* of the following types of materials:

- One or more editions of primary texts by a figure
- Two or more entries and/or articles drawn from *standard reference works* in the field
- Several books and/or monographs in English
- Several scholarly articles published in the last fifty years
- At least two foreign language sources of any sort
- At least one electronic resource

Figures: Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Karl Barth. The assignment is to be submitted electronically by or before Feb 11, 2011.

4. Theological Essays—12-point, Times New Roman, double-spaced with 1 inch margins all around, footnotes (Turabian style), title page and bibliography, stapled in the upper-left hand corner.

First Theological Essay (8 pages):

The first theological essay concerns a comparison of Martin Luther's *Concerning Christian Liberty* (1520) (http://www.ccel.org/ccel/luther/first_prin.v.ii.html) with the Preface to his commentary on *St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (1535) (*LW* v. 28 pp. 4-12, on reserve in the Library). The analysis must answer *all* of the following questions:

- What is the material ‘heart’ of each of Luther’s treatises, and how may each be summarized or restated? What are the key categories and relations at play in each passage?
- What place does each of these passages occupy in the course of the overall argument of the text? What argumentative ‘work’ does each passage do?
- Compare the essays with one another. What concerns do they share? differences? Do they complement one another?
- In what way(s) does Luther’s presentation of the Gospel as far as both pieces are concerned impact your own practice of Christian ministry?

The first essay will be submitted electronically by or before Jan 28, 2011.

Second Theological Essay (5 pages):

Your task in this essay is to answer the following question: Why is the study of the past important for the practice of Christian ministry today? Your answer should be formulated in conversation with Rowan William’s important book *Why Study the Past? The Quest for the Historical Church* as well as course readings and lecture materials. The second essay is due at the beginning of class on Feb 25, 2011.

V. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

1. Matters of Style & Documentation

Your critical book review, bibliographic assignment, and two analytical essays must be written in a style consistent with the model set out by Kate L. Turabian in her work *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Though there are many formatting/style guides, Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers* is the *only* formatting system allowed for use in this class. Should you require tips and illustrations as to what Turabian formatting looks like, please consult Michael Gilmour’s “What do I have to do to get an ‘A’ on my Paper?: Paper Writing Tips and an Illustration of Turabian Formatting.” It is available in this reserve section of the library and online at:

<http://prov.ca/library/turabppr.pdf>

Written work ought to be free of spelling mistakes, punctuated correctly, and adhere to basic rules of grammar. It is expected that written work will be submitted in a clear, straight-forward style of academic prose. For accuracy in all things grammatical, please consult John Seely, *Everyday Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and for clarity in expressing one’s ideas in one’s writing, please consult William Strunk, Jr., *The Elements of Style*, 4th edition (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1999) or other similar guides.

It is assumed that each student will proofread his/her work carefully, and will seek help from the appropriate sources if the professor indicates that such help is necessary.

Incidentally, Providence College & Seminary has free tutoring help available in the library. Should I recommend that you rewrite an assignment, please avail yourself of their services.

2. Plagiarism and Honesty

Plagiarism is a common problem in higher education. Note that Providence College & Seminary's *Student Handbook* defines plagiarism as "taking and using the thoughts, ideas, and writings, and other creative works of another person, persons, and passing them off as one's own. A scholar who does so is intellectually dishonest. Scholars should give credit to give credit explicitly and clearly to ideas, thoughts, and writings of another." See pg. 16f of *The Student Handbook*. Penalties for plagiarism may include repeating the assignment, failing the assignment, or failing the course.

3. Late Assignments

Assignments are to be completed on time. Permissions for late extensions must be received from the instructor at least two days prior to the due date of a paper. Permission *may* be granted on the basis of an illness or emergency. If a student does not submit his/her assignment on time, that is at the beginning of class on the day that the assignment is due, and has not obtained an extension, he/she will receive a penalty of a 1/3 of a letter grade per working day. All assignments must be handed in by the last day of class if the student is to receive credit.

VI. GRADING

The following is an explanation of the letter grading system:

- A Excellent (90-100%)
- B Good (80-89%)
- C Fair (70-79%)
- D Passing (60-69%)
- F Failure (0-59%)

Marking is always difficult. Marks represent an evaluation of actual work—not good intentions, inherent ability, intelligence, personal or moral or spiritual qualities. I am *always* willing to discuss a grade on a paper or project. Please note that your paper will only receive a number grade, not a letter grade.

VII. EVALUATION

- Critical Questions – 10%
- Bibliographic Assignment – 10%
- First Theological Essay – 30%
- Second Theological Essay – 20%

Critical Book Study – 30%

VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT, AND REQUIRED READINGS

1. Jan 3rd AM

COURSE INTRODUCTION; THE END OF AN ERA

2. Jan 3rd PM

THEOLOGY OF LUTHER AND ZWINGLI

Reading: González, pp. 13-86; Placher, pp. 11-26

3. Jan 4 AM

INTRODUCTION TO THE REFORMED THEOLOGY OF CALVIN

Reading: González, pp. 133-177; Placher, pp. 58-68

4. Jan 4 PM

ANABAPTISM; THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND

Reading: González, pp. 86-102 & 178-95; Placher, pp. 26-34; 69-81

5. Jan 5 AM

THE CATHOLIC REFORMATION

Reading: González, pp. 196-247; Placher, pp. 38-57

6. Jan 5 PM

LUTHERAN & REFORMED ORTHODOXY

Reading: González, pp. 248-99; Placher, pp. 34-37; 68-69

7. Jan 6 AM

NEW AWAKENINGS IN PIETY: PURITANISM & METHODISM

Reading: González, pp. 300-17; Placher, pp. 91-98; 111-13

8. Jan 6 PM

THEOLOGY IN THE AGE OF REASON & IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Reading: González, pp. 318-46; Placher, pp. 82-91; 98-106

9. Jan 7 AM

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Reading: González, pp. 347-86; Placher, pp. 130-40; 149-55

10. Jan 7 PM

TWO TWENTIETH CENTURY GIANTS: KARL BARTH & DIETRICH BONHOEFFER; THE END OF CHRISTENDOM

Reading: González, pp. 428-71; Placher, pp. 156-176

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following texts are helpful introductions to the history of Christian Theology, especially in the Reformation and Post-Reformation periods.

- Bayer, Oswald. *Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation*. Trans. Thomas H. Trapp. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Bromiley, Geoffrey W. *Historical Theology: an Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.
- Davis, Thomas J. *This is My Body: The Presence of Christ in Reformation Thought*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Janz, Denis R., ed. *A Reformation Reader: Primary Texts with Introductions*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999.
- Livingston, James C. *Modern Christian Thought: The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century*. 2 vols. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006.
- Noll, Mark A. and Carolyn Nystrom. *Is the Reformation Over? An Evangelical Assessment of Contemporary Roman Catholicism*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005.
- Olson, Roger E. *The Story of Christian Theology*. Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*. 5 Vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971-89.
- Placher, William C. *A History of Christian Theology*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983.
- Selderhuis, Herman J. *John Calvin: A Pilgrim's Life*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009
- Zachman, Randall C., ed. *John Calvin and Roman Catholicism: Critique and Engagement, Then and Now*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- _____. *John Calvin as Teacher, Pastor, and Theologian*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.