

**Instructor:** Sean Doyle

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## I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is the first of a three part overview of systematic theology. Theology A explores the Bible's teaching on: Epistemology (Is there truth? What is truth? Can we know the truth?), a cursory review of Bibliology (the claims of the Bible and their substantiation, revelation, and inspiration; the canon of Scripture), Theology Proper (the existence of God; the nature, attributes, and names of God; the doctrine of the Trinity; the decrees and works of God), and Angelology (the origin, nature, fall, classification, work and destiny of angelic beings, both elect and fallen).

## II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. To provide the student with a theological framework for lifetime study of the Scriptures.
- B. To help the student articulate Biblical truth with greater accuracy and thus increase the student's awareness of deviations from or false expressions of Biblical doctrines.
- C. To assist the student in bridging the gap between orthodox theology and its practical outworking in effective gospel ministry.
- D. To engender a love of theology along with an understanding of its importance for life and ministry.

## III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

REQUIRED Millard J. Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine*. Third Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015.

REQUIRED - The Bible – The instructor will be using the ESV. Please bring your Bible to class. The Erickson text does not need to be brought to class.

## IV. COURSE PROCEDURES

Classes will primarily involve media assisted lecture and group discussion. Questions are welcomed. The study assignments and final exam shall be derived from the instructor's lectures. The final exam will be cumulative.

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. **READING & READING ASSIGNMENTS.** There will be 9 reading assignments given in this course. For each assignment, read the Grudem chapters as per the reading schedule, reporting what percentage you read by its due date on each reading assignment, and correctly answer the questions listed.
- B. **STUDY ASSIGNMENTS.** There will be 9 study assignments given in this course. They will be based on the previous weeks lecture. Students may use their notes to fill out these assignments. Students are responsible for material missed in the event of absence.
- C. **CONTEXTUALIZATION PAPER.** Students shall write a brief paper (6-7 pages handwritten, 4-5 pages typed) answering one of the questions listed below. Do not merely state your opinion. Instead, give scripture references and exegetical comments where applicable. This paper is due on the date listed in the class schedule. Late papers shall incur a substantial penalty. Papers submitted earlier than the due date may incur a small number of bonus points at the instructor's discretion.
1. A friend you have been witnessing to asks, "You keep sharing Scriptures with me on how to be saved. How do I know that the Bible is a trustworthy source to depend on in making a life-changing spiritual decision?"
  2. A cultist approaches someone in your church and confuses church members regarding the Trinity. Your friend comes to you and asks, "How do I answer this fellow who says Jesus is *just* God's son, not 'mighty God,' and there is no such person as the Holy Spirit in the Bible as a distinct entity, much less God Almighty."
  3. A co-worker asks you during lunch, "You say your God is a good God. How can a good God allow so much pain and suffering in the world?"
  4. A friend who is struggling with an addiction visits a local church. The preacher tells him that he even though the man is a born-again believer, he is nonetheless possessed by the demon of his addiction and needs to be exorcised of this demon before he can move forward in Christ. The friend wants to know if a believer can be possessed and if not, then to what extent may demonic forces attack a born again child of God?

D. **SPIRITUAL FORMATION PAPER.** Students shall write a brief paper (5-6 pages handwritten, 3-4 pages typed) answering one of the questions listed below. Do not merely state your opinion. Instead, give scripture references and exegetical comments where applicable. This paper is due on the date listed in the class schedule. Late papers shall incur a substantial penalty. Papers submitted earlier than the due date may incur a small number of bonus points at the instructor's discretion.

1. In what ways is the theological doctrine of God's sovereignty a source of encouragement for you in your ministry (for example: how ought it affect your perspective on the attendance and reactions to those you minister)? How ought the sovereignty of God be a source of comfort to those you minister to (for example how ought it affect their outlook when "unexpected" events crop up and rock their daily existence)?
2. How ought the verbal, plenary, and authoritative aspects of the inspiration of Scripture affect your views on personal devotional study of Scripture, teaching and preaching, and evangelism methods?
3. Of the attributes of God mentioned in the course lectures which three do you find most important in your life and ministry right now and why? Would you see the ones you currently listed as most important changing in time and if so how and why?

E. **FINAL EXAM.** The final exam is cumulative and shall be derived from questions previously covered in the student's study assignments. The final exam is closed book, closed notes.

F. **CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE.** Students are expected to attend class faithfully and engage in thoughtful discussion of the issues covered in class.

#### G. GRADING

Readings Assignments 10 @ 10 pts each	100 pts 10%
Study Assignments 10 @ 30 pts each	300 pts 30%
Contextualization Paper	150 pts 15%
Spiritual Formation Paper	150 pts 15%
Final Exam	300 pts 30%

#### H. GRADING SCALE:

- A – 90-100% (Excellent Work)
- B – 80-89% (Very Good Work)
- C – 70-79% (Average Work)
- D – 60-69% (Below Average Work)
- F – 59% and below (Unsatisfactory Work)



## VI. CLASS SCHEDULE

Session	Lecture	RA Due	SA Due	Paper Due
Jan 28	<b>Prolegomena:</b> What is theology? Why & how to study it? What are the major branches of theology? How does culture effect our theology?			
<b>Feb 4</b>	<b>Super Bowl Recess</b> <i>No class tonight</i>			
Feb 11	<b>Epistemology &amp; Bibliology I: General &amp; Special Revelation</b> Is there truth? Can we know it? What is truth? How did God reveal Himself to us?	1	1	
Feb 18	<b>Bibliology II: Inspiration &amp; Canonicity</b> What does it mean that the Bible is inspired by God? How did we come to have these particular 66 books?	2	2	<b>Contextualization Paper Due</b>
Feb 25	<b>Theology Proper I: God's Existence</b> Does God Exist?	3	3	
Mar 4	<b>Theology Proper II: God's Essence I</b> Who is God?	4	4	
Mar 11	<b>Theology Proper III: God's Essence II</b> What's the Trinity?	5	5	
<b>Mar 18</b>	<b>Calvary's Spring Fest</b> <i>No class tonight</i>			
Mar 25	<b>Theology Proper IV: God's Attributes &amp; Names</b> What is God like?	6	6	
<b>Apr 1</b>	<b>Easter Recess</b> <i>No class tonight</i>			
Apr 8	<b>Theology Proper V: God's Agenda &amp; God's Activity</b> – Divine Decree & You & Me & The Creator's Creation	7	7	<b>Spiritual Formation Paper Due</b>
Apr 15	<b>Angelology</b> What are angels?	8	8	
Apr 22	<b>Satanology</b> Who is Satan?	9	9	
Apr 29	<b>Demonology</b> What are demons?	10	10	
May 6	<b>Final Examination Due</b> <b>NB: May be used as a catchup date if we have a snow cancelation</b>			

THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS OR REVISIONS TO THE SYLLABUS AS HE DEEMS APPROPRIATE.

## Grading Sheet – Spiritual Formation Paper

Required Components:	Good	Average	Poor
Does the paper begin with a clear statement of the issue to be discussed?	10 9 8	7 6 5	4 3 2 1
Does the paper have a well written conclusion?	10 9 8	7 6 5	4 3 2 1
Does the student use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation?	30 27 24	21 18 15	12 9 6 3
Is the student able to draw appropriate spiritual lessons from the person under study both to emulate and to avoid?	50 45 40	35 30 25	20 15 10 5
Does the student seem to be personally wrestling with the issues which arise or is the student simply going through the motions academically?	50 45 40	35 30 25	20 15 10 5

Other Comments:

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_/150 pts possible



### Grading Sheet – Contextualization Paper

Required Components:	Good	Average	Poor
Does the paper begin with a clear statement of the issue to be discussed?	10 9 8	7 6 5	4 3 2 1
Does the paper have a well written conclusion?	10 9 8	7 6 5	4 3 2 1
Does the student use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation?	30 27 24	21 18 15	12 9 6 3
Did the paper adequately explain the historical emergence of his local church and its doctrines?	50 45 40	35 30 25	20 15 10 5
Did the paper adequately answer how his church has assisted and hampered his or her development as a biblical Christian?	50 45 40	35 30 25	20 15 10 5
<p>Other Comments:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total Score: _____/150 pts possible</p>			

