Course Description

This course begins with the study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Focus then shifts to the doctrine of the Church. Topics include the nature, mission, function, organization, and ordinances of the church, the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in ministry, and the relation of Israel to the Church. The course concludes with a treatment of the Last Things in relation to individuals (including the intermediate state and the resurrection of the body), and in relation to the following corporate groups: the Church, Israel, and the nations. Three hours.

Course Objectives

As a result of this course, students should:

1. be encouraged to think theologically about the Word of God, the Church and the world in which we live each day, in order to discern how the Gospel may be brought to bear on all areas of life and thought.

2. be encouraged to gain an integrated Christian theological perspective and methodology, that introduces students to the discussion and biblical material related to the final issues of systematic theology: (a) pneumatology (the Holy Spirit); (b) ecclesiology (the Church); (c) eschatology (the last things).

3. Be challenged to develop an appreciation for the historic contributions of faithful Christians on these topics.

4. Discern the hermeneutical issues behind the most difficult theological disagreements with respect to ecclesiology and eschatology (e.g., women in ministry; the millennium; etc.), thus fostering a model for responsible use of the biblical text.

5. Be challenged to develop an approach to doctrine that emphasizes wisdom and lived theology through the development of theological humility and charity.

Required Course Texts


Course Format

CDs/DVDs/Downloads
This course requires the use of lectures available for download (in your course forum) or on a CD/DVD set available from the Distance Education office. A materials cost is automatically assessed upon enrollment. The CD material works on both Macintosh and Windows computers and may also work in other environments using a web browser. The CD/DVD serves as a guide through the course, combining lesson outlines, audio and video content and readings. Once installed or downloaded onto your computer, the ST 5103 content behaves like a website, though you do not need to be connected to the Internet in order to use it. While you are enrolled as a student in the course, you will be eligible to receive updates and new versions of the course at no additional charge as they are made available. **NOTE:** This is the only syllabus the student is expected to follow. They syllabus posted on the CD/DVD is no longer used.

Course Tutors
In addition to the course material (texts and CD/DVD), you will be assigned to a course tutor who will receive and evaluate your work and generally interact with you online and via email during your course. Course tutors are approved by the Systematic Theology department and are either professors or PhD students working at a high level in their field. Whatever the case, you may assume that your course tutor is highly competent with the material and able to interact with you. Each course tutor has a unique style and frequency of interaction, however, and you are encouraged to contact your course tutor early in your course to inquire about his/her expectations for interaction.

How can I do well in DE?
Students who are self-motivated and disciplined tend to excel in distance education courses because they do not require continual encouragement to make progress through the material. Knowing this, students who are not as self-disciplined are encouraged to find ways to motivate themselves throughout the course. Some planning tools are available on the CD/DVD to help you plan your course of study. Outside accountability partners may also prove helpful for some students. For this reason, we also encourage students to register together as a group. Contact Distance Education for further details.

Learning Assignments
What you're required to do, and why. This section describes what you must do in this course and why these assignments have been selected and designed to help you learn.

**What** — Read assigned material and report readings on exams.  
Listen or view audio/video components of the course.  
Write three (3) reflection papers.  
Take three (3) exams.  
Contribute to three (3) discussion areas online.

**Why** — Through reading and interacting with material on the course CD/DVD students have the opportunity to acquire basic competencies. Progress is simply reported in a special section during exams.

Writing three reflection papers affords the student with an opportunity to demonstrate that basic competencies have been developed through the readings and lessons. An exam at the end of each major section of the course (the Holy Spirit, the Church, and the Last Things) further demonstrates the achievement of basic competencies in each area.

Contributions to online discussions in each of the three major sections of the course give students the opportunity to develop critical theological competencies. Interaction with other students and course tutors is designed to further deepen and enrich the student's understanding of the course material and its relevance to life and practice. Students should be able to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the diversity of views encountered in each area, relevant biblical material, and an ability to articulate their own substantive theological position/conviction.

**Points** —  
Reflection Papers 45%  
* each reflection paper is worth 15% of your grade  
Exams 30%  
* each exam is worth 10% of your final grade  
Discussions 10%  
Reading 15%  
* each section of reading accounts for 5% of your final grade

Expectations for Assignments

**Readings**  
Texts have been selected for each major section of the course that appropriately introduce basic concepts, terminology, persons and movements essential to understanding the respective area. Students struggling with the required readings in a given area are encouraged to consult the "Suggested Reading" materials, which often include helpful preliminary resources. All assigned readings (unless otherwise noted) should be completed at a level of competency which will allow the reader to interact with
Reflection Papers
The three short reflection papers are designed to demonstrate your understanding and interaction with a key issue in each major section of the course. Papers should be approximately 4-5 double-spaced pages in length. Papers should be submitted to your course tutor for evaluation and comment, ideally at the conclusion of each of the three major sections. See "paper topics" in the documents folder inside your course forum. You will have at least two topics/questions to choose from for each section. Whatever topic you select for reflection, you are required to respond to one of the remaining topics for your online discussions (see below).

Exams
At the conclusion of your study of each major section in the course, an exam provides the opportunity to demonstrate the level of competency you have achieved. You will also report your reading on the exam. Each exam may include a combination of multiple choice questions, short answers, matching and essays. The exams are based on readings and lesson material, including audio/video components for that section. You may request exams through the Distance Education office via an examination proctor whom you should designate at least a month in advance of when you hope to take the first exam.

Discussions
Discussions are centered around each of the three major topics of the course. You will find each discussion area in the TriNet forum for your course. You are expected to post an extended contribution (approximately is 1-3 pages in length) in response to one of the topics listed under "paper topics" (documents folder) which you did not choose for your Reflection Paper. This post should seek to demonstrate your awareness and understanding of the diversity of views encountered in your study of that topic. Include relevant biblical material and write a sustained reflection on how your life, theology and study have changed or incorporated your learning on that topic. Your course tutor will evaluate your contribution in light of the following:

- demonstrates awareness of diversity of views
- demonstrates understanding of others' views
- demonstrates critical reflection and evaluation of views
- demonstrates progress toward arriving at personal views/convictions
- reflects on the impact of this study on personal life & ministry

Additionally, each student should post at least one thoughtful response to another student in each discussion area. Lastly, you are expected to submit a thoughtful question that relates to the area of study for which other students can interact.

Discussion Summary
- 1 extended post dealing with a different topic from the "Reflection Paper Guidelines"
- 1 response to another student
- 1 thoughtful question relating to the course
Course Schedule

While there is no pre-established course schedule, the following breakdown may help you plan your study.

Session 1  The Holy Spirit - The Person
Session 2  The Holy Spirit - The Work
Session 3  The Holy Spirit - The Gifts

Reflection Paper 1
Exam 1
Discussion 1

Session 4  The Church - Introduction
Session 5  The Church - Its Nature
Session 6  The Church - Its Inception
Session 7  The Church - The Plan of God
Session 8  The Church - Governance and Ordinances
Session 9  The Church - Gender and Ministry Roles

Reflection Paper 2
Exam 2
Discussion 2

Session 10  Last Things - Introduction
Session 11  Last Things - Individual Eschatology
Session 12  Last Things - General Eschatology
Session 13  Last Things - Rapture, Tribulation, Final State
Session 14  Last Things - Rapture, Tribulation, Final State

Reflection Paper 3
Exam 3
Discussion 3

Grading Scale

A  93 and above
A-  90-92
B+  87-89
B   83-86
B-  80-82
C+  77-79
C   73-76
C-  70-72
D+  67-69
D   63-66
D-  60-62
F   below 60
Additional Bibliography

**Holy Spirit**


Craig Keener, Three Crucial Questions on the Holy Spirit, Baker

Craig Keener, Gift & Giver: The Holy Spirit Today. ISBN 0801022665

Thomas Oden, Life in the Spirit. (Systematic Theology vol. 3)

J. I. Packer, Keep in Step with the Spirit. ISBN 080075235X


**Ecclesiology**


Donald Bridge and Phypers, David. The Water that Divides. IVP.

Robert Clouse and Bonnidel, Women in Ministry. IVP
Edmund Clowney, The Church. ISBN 0930815341


Mark Husbands and Daniel Treier, eds., The Community of the Word: Toward an Evangelical Ecclesiology. ISBN 0830827978

Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical & Global Perspectives. ISBN 0830826882


Earl Radmacher, The Nature of the Church.

John Stackhouse, Finally Feminist: A Pragmatic Christian Understanding of Gender. ISBN 0801031303


Craig Van Geder, The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit. ISBN 0801090962

Miroslav Volf, After Our Likeness. ISBN 0802844405


**Eschatology**

Donald Bloesch, The Last Things: Resurrection, Judgment, Glory. ISBN 0830827579

Darrell L. Bock, Three Views on The Millennium and Beyond. Zondervan

Robert G. Clouse, ed. The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views. IVP.

William Crockett, Four Views on Hell. ISBN 0310212685

Millard Erickson, A Basic Guide to Eschatology: Making Sense of the Millennium. ISBN 0801058368

Anthony Hoekema, The Bible and the Future. Eerdmans
George E. Ladd, Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God. Eerdmans.

Hans Schwarz, Eschatology. ISBN 0802847331