

SHEPHERDS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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HISTORICAL THEOLOGY I, HT 501
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Office Hours: T, W, Th: 10:00-3:00
Other times by appointment

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

An introduction to the history of the Christian church from the Apostolic Age through the Protestant Reformation.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

- A. To provide the student with basic knowledge (names, lives, terms, concepts, principles) of the issues and flow of church history in an overview fashion.
*The student should be able to identify, through short answer questions on the three major exams, these facts.
- B. To identify key doctrinal developments in each identifiable historical time period.
*The student should be able to appraise these developments, through essay questions on the three major exams, and through research for essay papers:
1. The causes of these doctrinal developments, including heretical views;
 2. The different views as to how certain doctrines should be believed;
 3. The key people involved in the doctrinal developments.
 4. The theological results, good and bad.
- C. To encourage the student to focus on God's providential direction of history.
*The student should be able, through thought questions on the major exams, to demonstrate God's work in history:
1. As God judges sinful men and organizations.
 2. As God graces man with unmerited blessings.
 3. As God demonstrates His power and glory.
 4. As God directs the affairs of mankind toward His ultimate purposes.
- D. To enhance the student's ability to analyze the doctrinal strengths and weaknesses of the contemporary church.
*The student should be able to identify reoccurring thought patterns and doctrinal tendencies.
*The student should be able to identify the doctrinal matters that church history shows to be important, and the doctrinal matters that church history shows to be less important.

III. TEXTBOOKS

Buy and read these books according to the schedule following:

- A. Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology* (IVP).
- B. Augustine, *Confessions* (Thomas Nelson, if possible)
- C. Thomas a Kempis, *Imitation of Christ* (Thomas Nelson, if possible)
- D. John Calvin, *Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life* (Baker)
- E. Leonard Verduin, *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren* (The Baptist Standard Bearer)

IV. PAPERS

- A. Write four, 3-4 page (double-spaced) papers on the four additional texts by Augustine, Thomas a Kempis, Leonard Verduin, and John Calvin, .
- B. I'd recommend that you consider reading the primary source books , a few pages a day, as a part of your own daily personal worship—especially Calvin's little work. These three books primary source books are considered classics of Christian spirituality.
- C. Augustine's *Confessions* (due September). **Please bring your book to class this day.**
 - 1. Read at least 150 pages of the book.
 - 2. Write a 3-4 page paper giving your impressions (perhaps some of the following:). Why did Augustine write the *Confessions*? What adjectives would you use to describe his writing? Do you think Augustine makes the reader envy his past life of sins? What are some of the themes? Is this a systematic work? What do you discern about his spirituality? Are there weak and weird points? How do you reconcile this work with the fact that Augustine is a Roman Catholic? What doctrines are taught in this work? Why is this work a classic? What practical lessons for your own life did you learn? Etc.
- D. Thomas a Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ* (due October). **Please bring your book to class this day.**
 - 1. Read the entire book.
 - 2. Write a 3-4 page paper giving your impressions of this work, including some of the suggestions mentioned above on the *Confessions*. Also, be sure to evaluate the last section on Holy Communion. Overall, do you think Thomas, a Roman Catholic, is a genuine Christian? Give some of the good, pithy statements that Thomas makes

about spirituality. In general, how would you describe Thomas' view of spirituality and the Christian life? What practical lessons for your own life did you learn? Etc.

E. Leonard Verduin, *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren* (due November).

1. Read the entire book.
2. Write a 3-4 page book analysis: 1/3 content; 1/3 strengths and weaknesses of the book; 1/3 personal lessons learned.

F. John Calvin, *The Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life* (due December). **Please bring this book to class this day.**

1. Read the entire book.
2. Write a 3-4 page paper giving your impressions of this work, possibly following some of the suggestions mentioned above on the *Confessions* and *The Imitation of Christ*. Be sure to note some of Calvin's pithy statements about the Christian life. Do you think Calvin is too morose? If so, why? What are the major themes in this work? What is Calvin's view of the Christian life? Weak points? Strong points? What practical lessons for your own life did you learn? Etc.

VI. EXAMINATIONS

- A. There will be 3 major examinations throughout the course, covering the syllabus as coordinated with the class lectures and discussions.
- B. Tests will be partly short answer, partly essay. See study suggestions.

VII. FINAL GRADE

- A. 25% of grade from each exam
- B. 25% of grade from Reading and Writing
 1. 5%--Olson
 2. 5%--Augustine Paper
 3. 5%--Thomas a Kempis Paper
 4. 5%--Calvin Paper
 5. 5%--Verduin reading
- C. Any major assignment not completed, maximum grade for the course would be a C.
- D. Late Work—Drops 4 points per week day.
- E. Attendance: All students are expected to be prompt and faithful in class attendance. In no case may the number of absences for any course exceed the equivalent of four weeks of class time. This means that after four absences, student cannot receive any credit for the course.

VIII. ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

August	24	Introduction
August	31	Read Olson, <i>The Story of Christian Theology</i> , 13-112 Also reading Augustine
September	7	Olson, 112-196 Also reading Augustine
	14	Paper #1 on Augustine. Please bring <i>The Confessions</i> to class today.
	21	Olson, 197-289, and a 3x5 card affirming that you have read Olson, <i>The Story of Christian Theology</i> , pp. 13-289 Also reading Thomas a Kempis
	28	Olson, 290-367 Also reading Thomas a Kempis
October	5	Reading Week
	12	EXAM #1.
	19	Paper #2 on Thomas a Kempis. Please bring <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> to class today.
	26	Olson, 369-449 and a 3x5 card affirming that you have read Olson, 289-449. Also reading Verduin
November	2	Reading Verduin
	9	EXAM #2
	16	Paper #3 on Verduin, <i>The Reformers and Their Stepchildren</i> If possible, start reading about 10 pages a day of John Calvin, <i>The Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life</i> , preferably in your daily personal worship.
	23	Thanksgiving Recess
	30	Paper #4 on John Calvin, <i>The Golden Booklet</i> . Please bring your book to class today.
December	7	FINAL EXAM

