
PT 522 – REFORMED SPIRITUALITY
WESTMINSTER SEMINARY CALIFORNIA
Fall 2025

A. Craig Troxel
actroxel@wscal.edu

Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.
Chapel

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to acquaint you with the distinctive aspects of Reformed spirituality as it compares with the piety that dominates much of contemporary evangelicalism and post-modern spirituality. Ultimately the goal of the course is to encourage you toward greater communion with God in faith and life.

The class seeks to fulfill the following of WSC's "Student Learning Outcomes" for the M.Div.:
"Exhibits and/or reports growing integrity, teachability, humility, perseverance, self-discipline."

Course Requirements

A. Readings & Quizzes - **50%** of final grade

1. Readings, which are on Populi, are assigned each week (see Course Outline below)
2. Quizzes are on the readings and will be posted following the last class of each section (Sep 23, Oct 21, Nov 11, Dec 2), and are due within 24 hours. All quizzes are open book.

B. Written Assignment (choose one of the following) - **50%** of final grade

1. Option #1: Journal - due **Dec 2**

- a. Keep a journal of spiritual reflections, meditations and prayers, **five** days a week, Sep 16-Nov 25.
- b. Many Puritan and reformed luminaries observed this practice of spiritual reflection. You are free to do this however you wish (see Populi—"Resources" folder on "Files" page, for two readings that explain how journaling can be done). I will not read it; you will only show it to me.

2. Option #2: Outline a Classic - due **Dec 2**

a. Prepare an outline for one of the following classics in Reformed spirituality:

William Bridge, <i>Lifting Up for the Downcast</i>	Thomas Goodwin, <i>The Heart of Christ</i>
Th. Brooks, <i>Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices</i>	William Guthrie, <i>The Christian's Great Interest</i>
John Bunyan, <i>The Pilgrim's Progress</i>	John Owen, <i>Communion with God</i>
Jer Burroughs, <i>The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment</i>	-----, <i>Mortification of Sin</i>
Jonathan Edwards, <i>Charity and its Fruits</i>	Richard Sibbes, <i>The Bruised Reed</i>
John Flavel, <i>Keeping the Heart</i> (Works 5.417-509)	Thomas Watson, <i>All Things For Good</i>

- b. Your outline should be sufficiently detailed that it can function as a study guide (e.g., useful for leading a group discussion on the book). Thus, it cannot be a mere skeleton of terse headings. Each line should contain an idea (ideally a phrase or sentence) that helps you trace the flow of the author's thought. Somewhere between 7-12 pages will probably do it.

Course Outline & Readings

PILGRIMS IN THE WILDERNESS

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>
1 Sep 9	Pilgrimage	Hughes Old, "What is Reformed Spirituality?" Jn Calvin, <i>Institutes</i> (1541) Ch. 17 "The Christian Life" (785-791)
2 Sep 16	Sanctification (Cause)	Sinclair Ferguson, "The Reformed View" Sinclair Ferguson, <i>Devoted to God</i> Ch. 3 "Prepositions of Grace" (55-69)
3 Sep 23 <i>Quiz</i>	Sanctification (Means)	Richard Gaffin, "The Usefulness of the Cross" (228-46) Campegius Vitringa, "Self-Denial" (43-53); "Cross-Bearing" (55-57) Thomas Chalmers, "The Expulsive Power of a New Affection" Jn Calvin, <i>Institutes</i> (1541) - Ch. 17 "The Christian Life" (792-810)

OASIS IN THE WILDERNESS

4 Sep 30	People	John Muether, "Evangelicalism & Triumph of New School" (339-347) Dietrich Bonhoeffer, <i>Life Together</i> , "Community" (17-39) John Calvin, <i>Institutes</i> 4.1
Oct 7	<i>no class</i>	
5 Oct 14	The Lord's Day	William Still, "Thirty-Eight Years at Gilcomston" Richard Gaffin, "A Sabbath Rest Still Awaits the People of God" John Murray, "Sabbath Institution"
6 Oct 21 <i>Quiz</i>	Worship	T. David Gordon, "Some Answers about the Regulative Principle" D.G. Hart, "Post-Modern Evangelical Worship" Gordon Lathrop, "New Pentecost of Joseph's Britches?" Westminster Directory for Family Worship

MANNA IN THE WILDERNESS

7 Oct 28	Word	Tom Wells, "The Two Roads" (144-154) Stanley Hauerwas, "Preaching as Though We Had Enemies" <i>Second Helvetic Confession</i> , Chs 17,18; WSC #85,88-97 (Means of Grace)
8 Nov 4	Sacraments	John Calvin, <i>Institutes</i> 4.3,15,17 B. A. Gerrish, "John Calvin & Reformed Doctrine of the Lord's Supper" Abraham Kuyper, "Antithesis between Symbolism and Revelation" B.B. Warfield, "Sacerdotalism"
9 Nov 11 <i>Quiz</i>	Prayer	WSC #98-107 (Prayer & Lord's Prayer) Ole Hallesby, "What Prayer Is" Campegius Vitringa, <i>Spiritual Life</i> "Prayer & Word of God" (113-122)

CALLINGS IN THE WILDERNESS

10 Nov 18	Meditation & Heavenly-Mindedness	Wilhelmus á Brakel, "Watchfulness" (11-17), "Spiritual Meditation" (25-30) John Calvin, <i>Institutes</i> (1541) - Ch. 17 "The Christian Life" (810-822) John Owen, <i>Spiritual Mindedness</i> - Chs. 1,2 (1-14)
11 Nov 25	Vocation	Gilbert Meilander, "The Everyday C.S. Lewis" John Calvin, <i>Institutes</i> , 3.19 Calvin Van Reken, "Pilgrims or Settlers?" (234-256)
12 Dec 2 <i>Quiz</i>	Providence (Suffering)	Richard Gaffin, "Theonomy and Eschatology" (197-224)

Course Evaluation

A. Grades - All assignments are required

1. Weekly Readings & Quizzes 50% of final grade
2. Written Assignment 50% of final grade
3. Attendance is required. Unexcused absences will result in a penalty to your *final* grade.

B. Late work

Late work will not be accepted for this course and will receive an “F” for a grade. The only exception is when the unforeseen happens. In such cases, let me know as soon as possible *why* you must turn your work in late and we will find an agreeable time for you turn it in. Contacting me afterwards does not count.

Course Bibliography

- Wilhelmus á Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, 4 volumes (Soli Deo Gloria, 1992)
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (HarperOne, 2009), 17-39
- John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1541, reprint Banner of Truth, 2016)
- John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeil, Library of Christian Classics. (1559, reprint Westminster, 1960)
- D.A. Carson, “When Is Spirituality Spiritual?” *JETS* 37/3 (September 1994) 381-394
- Thomas Chalmers, *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection* (Crossway, 2020). Different edition on Populi.
- Sinclair B. Ferguson, *Devoted to God* (Banner of Truth, 2016) Ch. 3 - “Prepositions of Grace,” 55-69
- Sinclair B. Ferguson, “The Reformed View” (in *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*) 47-74
- Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., “A Sabbath Rest Still Awaits the People of God,” in *Pressing Toward the Marked*. Charles G. Dennison and Richard B. Gamble, (Philadelphia, 1986), ch. 3.
- Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., “Usefulness of the Cross,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 41 (Spring, 1979) 228-46.
- Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., “Theonomy and Eschatology” in *Theonomy: A Reformed Critique*, ed. William S. Barker and W. Robert Godfrey, (Grand Rapids, 1990), 197-
- B. A. Gerrish, “John Calvin and the Reformed Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper,” *McCormick Quarterly* 22 (Jan. 1969) 85-98.
- T. David Gordon, “Some Answers about the Regulative Principle,” *WTJ* 55 (Fall 1993) 321-329.
- Ole Hallesby, *Prayer* (Augsburg Fortress, 1994), Book One, 11-31
- Hart, D. G., “Post-Modern Evangelical Worship,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 30 (1995) 451-59.
- Stanley Hauerwas, “Preaching as Though We Had Enemies,” *First Things* 53 (May 1995) 45-49
- Abraham Kuyper, *The Antithesis between Symbolism and Revelation* (Edinburgh, 1898).
- Gordon Lathrop, “New Pentecost or Joseph’s Britches? Reflections on the History and Meaning of the Worship Ordo in the Megachurches,” *Worship* 72 (1998): 521-538.
- C.S. Lewis, *The World’s Last Night and Other Essays* (HarperOne, 2017) – Ch. 1 - “The Efficacy of Prayer”

- J. Gresham Machen, "The Responsibility of the Church in our New Age" in: *What is Christianity?* ed. Ned B. Stonehouse (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 272-287; or, *Selected Shorter Writings: J. Gresham Machen* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2004), 364-376.
- Gilbert Meilander, "The Everyday C. S. Lewis," *First Things* 85 (Aug/Sept 1998) 27-33.
- John R. Muether, "Contemporary Evangelicalism and the Triumph of the New School," *Westminster Theological Journal* 339-347.
- John R. Muether, "The Sabbath and OPC Identity," in *Perspectives: A Pre-Assembly Conference Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the OPC* (Committee for the Historian, 1997), 55-77.
- Richard Muller, "How Many Points?" *Calvin Theological Journal* 28 (1993): 425-433.
- John Murray, "The Sabbath Institution," in *The Collected Writings of John Murray*, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1977), Ch. 28.
- Hughes Oliphant Old, "What is Reformed Spirituality?" *Perspectives* (Jan. 1994) 8-10.
- John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin* - abridged by Richard Rushing (Banner of Truth, 2022)
- , *Spiritual Mindedness* - abridged by R.J.K. Law (Banner of Truth, 2009)
- William Still, "Thirty-Eight Years at Gilcomston," *Banner of Truth* 244 (Jan 1984) 8-16.
- Gene Edward Veith, Jr., *Postmodern Times*, Ch. 11, "Spirituality Without Truth" (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994), 191-207.
- Calvin P. Van Reken, "Christians in This World: Pilgrims or Settlers?" *CTJ* 43:2 (Nov. 2008), 234-256.
- David Wells, *Above All Earthly Powers*, Ch. 4, "Christ in a Spiritual World," pp.125-154.
- Campegius Vitringa, *The Spiritual Life*, transl., Charles Telfer (Reformation Heritage Books, 2018).
- Benjamin B. Warfield, "Sacerdotalism," *The Plan of Salvation* (Simpson, 1989).
- Thomas Watson, *Heaven Taken By Storm* (,) Appendix: "How We May Read the Scriptures with Most Spiritual Profit" 113-129
- Westminster Assembly, *Directory for Family Worship*, and *Directory for the Publick Worship of God*, in Publications Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, *Confession of Faith* (Inverness, 1970).
- Tom Wells, *Faith: The Gift of God* (Banner of Truth, 1988)