

Boyce College

TH 211 B: Christian Theology I

Spring Semester, 2009
Friday – 11:30-2:15 p.m.: CVR 201
Instructor: Stephen J. Wellum, Ph.D.
Credit: 3 hours

Course Syllabus

I. Course Description

- This course introduces the student to Christian theology. It begins with a study of the nature and necessity of doing theology in the contemporary world with primary attention given to the authority of God's self-disclosure in Scripture. The subject matter then shifts to consideration of the nature of the Triune God who has disclosed Himself to us, especially focusing on God's action in creation and providence. 3 hours.

II. Course Objectives

As a result of this course the student should be able better to:

- Articulate and defend the essential theological doctrines of the historic Christian faith as covered in this course.
- Appreciate the importance of historical theology in the development of the doctrines of revelation, Scripture, God, creation, providence, and angels.
- Compare and contrast the Christian worldview with other views especially in relation to the doctrines of revelation, Scripture, God, creation, providence, and angels.
- Grasp with greater depth the interrelationships between various doctrines with the twin goal of beginning to formulate a Christian worldview, as well as bringing our life, language, and thought more in conformity to God's Word.
- Integrate theological doctrines with contemporary issues thus learning how to do theology by applying the Word to the contemporary world.
- Minister in the local church with greater biblical-theological clarity as one who is deeply concerned to proclaim the whole counsel of God in all of its beauty, breadth, and depth.

III. Course Texts

Required:

- Grenz, Stanley, et al. *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Packer, J. I. *Knowing God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1973.

IV. Course Requirements and Grade

(1) Class Attendance and Reading Assignments (30%)

Boyce College Attendance Policy (see Boyce College catalog):

Class attendance is required for Boyce College students. Attendance will be checked at each class session. A student who misses more than 25% of class meetings will forfeit credit for the class and receive a failing grade. Students are also expected to be in class on time. If a student is late to class three times it will count the same as an absence. If a student has a legitimate reason for missing class for an extended period of time (such as an illness or accident) it is the student's responsibility to notify the professor so that missed tests and assignments may be made up.

Reading Assignments:

The reading of the class texts is also a very important component of this course. It is expected that you will read the texts very closely and thoughtfully and according to the schedule provided below under 'Course Schedule.' In order to fulfill the above expectations, I will be giving you *five short multiple choice tests* which will test your reading comprehension of the class texts. The dates for the tests are also found in the 'Course Schedule' below.

(2) Project and Presentation (20%)

One of the objectives of this course is to begin to understand and to articulate a Christian understanding of the world and to compare and contrast the Christian worldview with non-Christian worldviews. It is important to realize that it is not only the Christian who has views of revelation, God, origins, providence, and angels, but also non-Christians as well. No doubt, the non-Christian's view of these matters are often unbiblical, and thus lead to disastrous consequences, nevertheless they still have views on these matters. That is why it is crucial for Christians not only to be able to recognize these other views, but also to be able to critique these views from a biblical viewpoint. In order to accomplish this goal, I am requiring the following:

- Depending upon the size of the class you may work in groups of 2-3 people.
- Select a specific topic to work on – e.g. revelation, God, creation, providence, etc.
- Compare and contrast the Christian view with a non-Christian view on this same topic. For example, if you choose the topic of creation, I want you to compare and contrast the Christian view of creation and origins with a non-Christian view.
- Where do you find these non-Christian views? You can find them in a number of places: print medium (newspaper, magazine, advertisement), film medium (DVD, video), and the music medium (CD). Note: It is important to remember that non-Christian views on such topics come in many forms, some of which are quite obvious and explicit while others are only implicit in what you see and hear. Be creative in your investigation and continually ask what view of revelation, God, creation, and so forth are being presented in what you read, see, and listen to.

- Present your findings to the class on the day assigned to your group. The presentation should be around *15 minutes* and it should include the following:
 - A copy of the article, advertisement, words of the film, or lyrics of the music which you have selected to evaluate.
 - An analysis of the view presented and how it is different than a Christian view.
 - A one-page written group report summarizing what you have done.
- How will your grade be determined? It will be judged on the following 3 criteria:
 - How well you select a non-Christian view appropriate to your subject.
 - Your analysis of the view from a biblical perspective.
 - The quality of your presentation.

(3) **Exams (50%)**

There will be two exams in this course, a midterm (25%) and a final exam (25%). The midterm will cover the first half of the course and the final exam will be cumulative of the whole course. The questions from both the midterm and final exam will be taken from the classroom lectures. The date of the midterm will be *Friday, March 6, 2009*. The final exam will be held on *Friday, May 1, 2009 – 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.*

Grading Scale:

A	94-100 (4.0)	B	84-86 (3.0)	C	74-76 (2.0)	D	64-66 (1.0)
A-	90-93 (3.7)	B-	80-83 (2.7)	C-	70-73 (1.7)	D-	60-63 (0.7)
B+	87-89(3.3)	C+	77-79 (2.3)	D+	67-69 (1.3)	F	below 60 (0.0)

V. Course Outline

1. Introductory Matters
2. The Nature and Method of Theology
3. The Foundation of Theology: The God Who Speaks
 - a) The Necessity of God’s Self-Disclosure
 - b) The Locus of God’s Self-Disclosure
 - i) General Revelation
 - ii) Special Revelation
 - c) Scripture
 - i) What is Biblical Authority? 3 Views.
 - ii) The Bible’s View of Itself
 - iii) The Inspiration of Scripture
 - iv) The Canon of Scripture
 - v) The Inerrancy of Scripture
 - d) Reading Scripture: Hermeneutics
4. The God Who Is There
 - a) The Problem of God: What God?

- b) The Existence of God
 - c) God, the Covenant Lord
 - d) The Person of God: The Trinity
 - e) The Perfections of God
5. The God Who Creates
 6. The God Who Sustains and Rules

VI. Course Schedule

Date	Class Focus	Assignment Due
January 23	Hand out Syllabus Introduction to Theology	
January 30	Nature/Method of Theology	WG: 21-43; JP: 18-42
February 6	The God Who Speaks	WG: 47-72; JP: 43-72 Reading Test #1
February 13	The God Who Speaks	WG: 73-115; JP: 75-89
February 20	The God Who Speaks	WG: 116-138; JP: 90-116 Reading Test #2
February 27	The God Who is There	WG: 141-155; JP: 117-137
March 6	Midterm Exam	Study for Midterm Exam
March 13	The God Who is There	WG: 156-261; JP: 138-175 Reading Test #3
March 20	The God Who Creates	WG: 262-314
March 27	The God Who Creates	JP: 179-229; Reading Test #4
April 3	Spring Reading Days (=No Class)	
April 10	Good Friday (=No Class)	
April 17	The God Who Creates	WG: 315-354; JP: 230-242
April 24	The God Who Sustains/Rules	WG: 355-436; JP: 243-279 Reading Test #5
May 1	Final Exam (11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.)	

Reading Codes:

- WG = Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*.
- JP = J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*.

VII. Miscellaneous Matters**Classroom Policies:**

- Male students are not to wear hats or facial jewelry in class.
- Jewelry for facial piercing may be worn only in the ears of women.
- No food or drinks are allowed in class, except water.
- Guidelines for papers submitted in this course are found in the *Southern Seminary Manual of Style, 3rd ed.* available in the LifeWay Christian Bookstore located in the Honeycutt Center.

In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g. tape recorders, special adaptive equipment, special note-taking or testing-taking needs) is strongly encouraged to contact the professor at the beginning of the course.

How to reach me:

- Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. When possible please schedule an appointment for office discussions either with me directly after class or with the Faculty Secretaries Office at the Seminary.
- Office: Norton #238, 502.897.4725 or Ext. 4725
- Email: swellum@sbts.edu