

#314 Theology 4: The Church and Eschatology  
Western Reformed Seminary  
John A. Battle, Th.D.  
Pastoral Mentorship Program  
Academic Year 2020-2021

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

### ***Course description***

This course is designed to cover the important doctrines dealing with the church—its character, make-up, officers, duties, and sacraments—and with the last days, including what is called personal eschatology (what happens at death and beyond) and general eschatology (what will transpire at the end of this age). On many of these doctrines all orthodox Christians agree, while with others there is widespread controversy. The class will seek to distinguish not only the biblical position in each area of doctrine, but also the degree of certainty and primacy the Scriptures give to each doctrine.

### ***Course objectives***

By successfully completing this course you will have accomplished the following:

1. You will have read two classic theologies on the doctrines of the church and eschatology, along with other more specialized works.
2. You will have studied carefully the Westminster Confession of Faith's discussion of these topics.
3. You will have thoroughly studied and made a presentation explaining and refuting an important heresy or false teaching of your choice in this area of theology.
4. You will know the basic competing evangelical theologies regarding the church and Israel, the sacraments, and the events of the last days.
5. You will be able to answer detailed questions regarding the church and eschatology, providing biblical support for your understanding of these issues.

### ***Course outcomes***

Successful completion of this course will enable you to do the following:

1. Teach or preach on the theological topics covered in the class.
2. Defend the basic biblical doctrines of the church, its nature and government, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, the intermediate state, the second coming of Christ, the resurrection, the judgment, and the eternal state.

3. Develop discernment to distinguish basic doctrines from details of interpretation about which orthodox and Reformed Christians may differ.
4. Develop a tolerant and loving attitude toward other Bible believers who may differ in denominational distinctives regarding the church, the sacraments, and eschatology.
5. Successfully pass a presbytery's written and oral examinations in this area of theology for ordination to the gospel ministry.
6. Have a solid platform for a lifetime of fruitful study in theology.

### **Contact with the professor**

Please feel free to contact the professor (Dr. Battle in this case) anytime you have a question about the course material. Office phone: 253-272-0417; cell phone: 253-720-7586. Email: battle@wrs.edu. You may also set up a Zoom or Skype meeting over the internet.

### **Course notes and study questions**

The course notes are provided on the seminary website. Please print these out. You should work through the notes during the year, in consultation with the professor and your pastoral mentor. The study questions provided will be used as the basis for your midterm and final examinations. Be especially careful to understand the answers you will give for the various study questions. These questions are in the order of the notes.

### **Examinations**

There will be two exams during the year. These exams will cover the lecture material, and will be selected from the study questions provided. The midterm examination will cover Questions #1-28, and the final examination #29-59.

### **Reading assignments**

Assignment #1 (due by the time of the Midterm examination)

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 3, ch. 25; Book 4, ch. 1-19  
Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Part 3, ch. 20  
A. A. Hodge, *The Confession of Faith*, ch. 25-31  
Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*  
John Murray, *Christian Baptism*

Assignment #2 (due by the time of the Final examination)

C. Hodge, Part 4, ch. 1-4  
A. A. Hodge, ch. 32-33

James Oliver Buswell, Jr., *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, Part 4, ch. 1, 4-7  
Robert G. Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*  
Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Paul D. Feinberg, Douglas J. Moo, Richard R. Reiter, *Three Views on the Rapture*

### **Special Presentation**

During the concentrated sessions each student will make a class presentation by taking a faulty position regarding one of the doctrines concerning the church, the sacraments, or eschatology which is presented by some group or writer, accurately presenting that view and its main support, then providing a refutation of that view, and offering a clear definition and support for the corresponding correct view. Please furnish a copy of your outline to each member of the class. This presentation should take about 30 minutes.

### **Grading**

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| Attendance and participation | 10% |
| Required reading             | 30% |
| Special Presentation         | 10% |
| Midterm exam                 | 25% |
| Final exam                   | 25% |