



WSBM 140 CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY & LIVING

David Song (instructor of record)
with other guests
Fall 2022
2 credit hours

dsong@willingdon.org
Tuesdays 7 – 9 PM
Foundational Course (Alternating)
Room: **TBD**

WSBM exists to equip Willingdon Church – head, heart and hands – to be more biblically literate and to serve more effectively in church and related ministry.

I. Special Notes

For Credit Students, the first **weekly reflections** on Art. 2, “Revelation of God,” and on Art. 3, “Creation and Humanity” are ***due BEFORE the first class*** on Oct 18!!! Please see and follow the instruction for this assignment below (under “**VI. Course Requirements.**”).

Alternating Course: This course is being offered in an alternating course format. Classes on **Oct 18 & 25, Nov 8 & 29, and Dec 6** will be **in-person**. On *other* evenings, classes will be *online* via Zoom.

There will be no live streaming option. However, class recordings will be provided for a limited time to your class only. Unless students have provided reasons prior to the course, they should turn on their cameras for the Zoom class sessions. If you do not wish to share your real name, you may use a pseudonym, *provided* that your instructor or teacher’s assistant (TA) can identify you *ahead of time*.

I. Course Description

This foundational course offers an overview of the core theological convictions (i.e., *lived* theology) of our church family under the lordship of Jesus.

II. Course Objectives

Upon the successful completion of the course, Credit Students should have...

- examined all the articles of the **MB Confession of Faith** and the key **biblical texts** that define these articles
- reflected on the **tangible impact** of these convictions on the corporate and individual life of the Church
- developed a healthy **approach** to doing theology
- **practiced gaining an accurate and robust understanding** of those who hold *different* theological convictions
- committed **the Apostles' Creed** and **the Lord's Prayer** to memory.

III. REQUIRED Texts

- The Bible
- *Confession of Faith of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches: Commentary and Pastoral Application*. Kindred Press, 2019.
(Students must purchase the Confession through church at the course registration. They are expected to bring the Confession and the Bible to every class)
- Ortlund, Gavin. *Finding the Right Hills to Die on: The Case for Theological Triage*. Crossway, 2020.

IV. Highly Recommended (But NOT Required)

References

- Boyd, Gregory A. and Paul R. Eddy. *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology*. 2nd ed., Baker Academic, 2002.
- Grenz, Stanley J., et al. ***Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms***. IVP, 1999.

Books

- McKnight, Scot. ***King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited***. Zondervan, 2011.
- Wright, N. T. *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels*. HarperOne, 2012.
- Bates, Matthew W. *Gospel Allegiance: What Faith in Jesus Misses for Salvation in Christ*. Brazos Press, 2019.
- - - -. ***The Gospel Precisely: Surprisingly Good News about Jesus Christ the King***. Renew, 2021.
- Bartholomew, Craig G. and Michael W. Goheen. *The True Story of the Whole World: Finding Your Place in the Biblical Drama*. Faith Alive, 2009.
- Middleton, J. Richard. *A New Heaven and a New Earth: Reclaiming Biblical Eschatology*. Baker Academic, 2014.

V. Course Outline

DATE	Weekly Reflections Due	Topic	Other Assignments Due
Oct 18 <i>(in-person)</i>	ARTICLES 2, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to the Confession - The Apostles' Creed* - The Nicene Creed - "Revelation of God" - Made to Rule in God's New Temple-Cosmos - "Creation and Humanity" 	
Oct 25 <i>(in-person)</i>	ARTICLES 1, 4, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Body of King Jesus I - "Sin and Evil" - "Salvation" - The Lord's Prayer* - "God" - The Athanasian Creed 	
Nov 1 <i>(online)</i>	ARTICLES 6, 7, 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Body of King Jesus II - "Nature" + "Mission" of the Church (Ray Harms-Wiebe) - "Discipleship" 	
Nov 8 <i>(in-person)</i>	ARTICLES 8, 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Body of King Jesus III (Brian Cooper) - "Christian Baptism" - "Lord's Supper" 	Theological Posture Paper

Nov 15 (online)	ARTICLES 15, 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - King Jesus over Money & Work - “Stewardship” (Enoch Weng) - “Work, Rest and the Lord’s Day” (Deb Judas) 	Memorization* due this week
Nov 22 (online)	ARTICLES 11, 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - King Jesus over Family, Sex, & Religious Pluralism - “Christianity and Other Faiths” (John Best) - “Marriage, Singleness, and Family” (Elisangela Molinari) 	
Nov 29 (in- person)	ARTICLES 12, 14, 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - King Jesus over Politics, Human Life, & Violence (Ken Esau) - “Society and State” - “The Sanctity of Human Life” + “Love and Nonresistance” 	
Dec 6 (in- person)	ARTICLE 18	<p style="text-align: center;">New</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Made ✓ to Rule in God’s Renewed Temple-Cosmos - “Christ’s Final Triumph” - Summation 	Baptism Debate Paper

* ***The Apostles’ Creed*** and ***the Lord’s Prayer*** are to be recited from memory **by the week of Nov 15 OR earlier.**
See “Course Requirements” below for instructions.

VI. Course Requirements (for Credit Students)

1. WEEKLY REFLECTIONS (45%)

In this course, students will prepare for each class **(i)** by reading in advance the relevant **Article(s)** and their **Pastoral Application sections** of the *Confession of Faith* (Commentary sections are optional), and **(ii)** by submitting **BEFORE class an online weekly reflection for EACH article** (minimum 100 words) on the course Moodle site. The reflection must respond to this question, **“How does the present article affect the practice/life of a local church corporately and individually?”**

Note: The first weekly reflections (on Art. 2, “Revelation of God,” and on Art. 3, “Creation and Humanity”) are **due before the first class!**

2. PAPERS

a. **Developing a Healthy APPROACH to Doing Theology:** **Theological Posture Paper (25%)**

Every person is a *theologian* in the sense that nobody lives without some *thoughts* about God. Not only that, each “theologian” has a certain *attitude* or *posture* toward theology (and other theologians). For this paper, students will first read the **Introduction** and the first two chapters — **“1. The Danger of Doctrinal Sectarianism”** and **“2. The Danger of Doctrinal Minimalism”** — of Gavin Ortlund’s *Finding the Right Hills to Die on*. Students will then **(i)** define and explain what are “doctrinal sectarianism” and “doctrinal minimalism,” **(ii)** discuss the *strengths* and *problems* of EACH of these attitudes, and **(iii)** develop and explain students’ own approach to doing theology. *Please note:* By “students’ own approach,” I do NOT mean a *completely original, brand new* approach. Instead, students are *expected* to draw from the assigned readings and to demonstrate how they would now approach doing theology in light of the dangers discussed in the book.

The paper should be 2–3 pages (double spaced; 12 Times New Roman; 1” margin all around—default setting on Microsoft Word).

Due Date: November 8, 2021

b. Gaining an UNDERSTANDING of Other View:

Baptism Debate Paper (20%)

For this paper, students will read a chapter from Greg Boyd and Paul Eddy's *Across the Spectrum* (provided on the course Moodle site), which presents two opposing views on baptism (within evangelical theology). Referring to their earlier paper on **theological posture**, students will first determine to *which rank* they think this debate belongs. For ***EACH*** of these two views, students will then **(i)** write a summary of its arguments (beginning with the *thesis/main point*), which the proponents of this view themselves would read and consider to be an accurate and robust representation of their view, **(ii)** include the *biblical texts* cited in support of the view, **(iii)** mention the *arguments against* the view, and **(iv)** offer your *reflection* on the view. This paper should be at minimum 650 words (single spaced; 12 Times New Roman). Please refer to the format sample on the course Moodle site.

Due Date: December 6, 2021

3. MEMORIZATION (10%)

The Apostles' Creed and **the Lord's Prayer** (available on the course Moodle site) are to be recited from memory at a meeting (in-person or over Zoom) with the instructor of record **by the week of November 15 OR earlier**. Students are responsible for scheduling a time with the instructor of record *in advance*. Those who are able to complete this assignment *before* the due week are encouraged to contact the instructor of record *earlier*.

Course Requirements Summary:

Assignments	Due Date	Value
Weekly Reflections	<i>weekly</i>	45%
Theological Posture Paper	Nov 8	25%
Memorization	by the week of Nov 15	10%
Baptism Debate Paper	Dec 6	20%

VII. **Additional Resources**

- McKim, Donald K. *The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. 2nd ed. Westminster John Knox, 2014.
- Ogden, Greg. *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*. rev. and expanded ed., IVP, 2019.
- Wright, Christopher J. H. *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*. Zondervan, 2010.

On the Lord's Prayer and Creeds

- Wright, N. T. *The Lord and His Prayer*. Eerdmans, 2014.
- McGowan, Andrew B. *Ancient Christian Worship: Early Church Practices in Social, Historical, and Theological Perspective*. Baker Academic, 2014.

On Conversion

- Smith, Gordon T. *Beginning Well: Christian Conversion & Authentic Transformation*. IVP, 2001.
- - - -. *Transforming Conversion: Rethinking the Language and Contours of Christian Initiation*. Baker Academic, 2010.

On Creation

- Bourns-Prediger, Steven. *For The Beauty Of The Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care*. 2nd ed., Baker Academic, 2010.
- Bahnsen, Fred and Norman Wirzba. *Making Peace With The Land: God's Call to Reconcile with Creation*. IVP, 2012.
- Richter, Sandra L. *Stewards of Eden: What Scripture Says about the Environment and Why It Matters*. IVP, 2020.

On Sin and Atonement

- Anderson, Gary A. *Sin: A History*. Yale University Press, 2009.
- McKnight, Scot. *A Community Called Atonement*. Abingdon, 2007.

On Baptism

- *Baptism: Three Views*, edited by David F. Wright, IVP Academic, 2009.
- *Understanding Four Views on Baptism*, edited by John H. Armstrong, Zondervan, 2007.

On the Lord's Supper

- *The Lord's Supper: Five Views*, edited by Gordon T. Smith, IVP Academic, 2008.
- *Understanding Four Views on the Lord's Supper*, edited by John H. Armstrong, Zondervan, 2007.
- Wright, N. T. *The Meal Jesus Gave Us: Understanding Holy Communion*. Westminster John Knox Press. 1999.

On Nonresistance & on the Church and the State

- *The Power of the Lamb*, edited by John E. Toews and Gordon Nickel, Kindred Press, 1986.
- Ellul, Jacques. *The Subversion of Christianity*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Wipf & Stock, 1986.

On Marriage and Singleness

- Parrott, Les and Leslie Parrott. *Relationships: How to Make Bad Relationships Better and Good Relationships Great*. Zondervan, 1998.
- Keller, Timothy and Kathy Keller. *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God*. Penguin, 2011.
- Webb, William J. *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*. IVP Academic, 2009.
- Hill, Wesley. *Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality*. Zondervan, 2016.
- Bennett, David. *A War of Loves: The Unexpected Story of a Gay Activist Discovering Jesus*. Zondervan, 2018.

On Work, Rest, Sabbath, and Money

- Buchanan, Mark. *The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul by Restoring Sabbath*. Thomas Nelson, 2006.
- Stevens, R. Paul. *Work Matters: Lessons from Scripture*. Eerdmans, 2012.
- Stevens, R. Paul. *Money Matters: Faith, Life, and Wealth*. Eerdmans, 2021.

On New Creation (in addition to "**V. Highly Recommended – Books**")

- Wright, N. T. *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*. HarperOne, 2008.

VIII. Academic Policies

1. Course Attendance

Students are expected to attend all the scheduled classes. If, for some reason, students need to miss classes, they will need to contact the instructor ahead of time. Students will be required to catch up on missed classes by listening to the recording. Students are responsible to obtain any missing materials or notes from other students in the class. Arrangements must be made with the instructor prior to missing an exam.

2. Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to remember that they are in an academic classroom. It is inappropriate to engage in conversations with classmates during class. Cell phones must be turned off. iPods/Tablets/Smart phones are permitted if Bible software and word-processing programs are being used. Otherwise, please do not surf the net or check emails during class. Only students who have registered for a course are to be in attendance. The only exception is an "approved audit." If the class is conducted via Zoom, students should turn the video on unless there is a good reason not to.

3. Assignment Format (Citation & Style)

The default format for documentation of sources used and format of presentation for all the papers is *MLA Style*. The format guide is available at Willingdon.org/wsbn.

4. Late Assignments

Without the extension that has been granted already by the instructor, late assignments are subject to reduced grades. The work that is submitted late (from the *time* it was due) will receive a 5% reduction in grades. There will be an additional 5% reduction for every 24 hour period that follows (including the weekend).

Assignments submitted one week after their due dates will *not* be accepted (unless, again, extensions have been approved already by the instructor).

5. Extension Policy

The deadline for an assignment is considered to be part of the course requirements. Due to the additional workload for the instructor in grading late papers, and due to the school's intention to be fair to students who, often with considerable effort, submit their work on time, extensions for

course work will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. A written request with reasons for extension should be directed to the instructor. If granted, the extension deadlines will be clearly established and will be final.

Extensions for course work are granted in cases where the student demonstrates there was an unforeseeable and unavoidable emergency. Emergencies considered as grounds for an extension typically include:

- Personal sickness or injury which prevents one from working
- Sickness, injury or death in the family which requires the student's attention
- Emotional or psychological crisis for which the student has sought professional help
- Unexpected increase in job responsibilities

6. Academic Integrity

All students at WSBM are expected to hold to *uncompromised* academic integrity.

Plagiarism, whether intended or accidental, is an academic offense. In academic work, students are certainly expected to refer to and evaluate other people's works. Plagiarism unfortunately occurs when students' assignments fail to give credit to those from whom the students got certain *ideas*. In other words, students submitted the idea of another without reference to him/her (effectively claiming the credit that is due someone else and getting a grade for someone else's effort).

Therefore, whether students (1) *directly quotes* a source (i.e., "word for word" in its entirety or in its part), or (2) *paraphrase in their own words* the idea of another, they must keep track and provide a *clear reference* to the original source that they are indebted to (e.g., via footnotes).

Again, whether it was intended or not, plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Students are therefore expected to develop and exercise *proper citation*, a skill that is truly critical in academic work (please refer to the format guide at Willingdon.org/wsbm).

Using unauthorized aids of any sort in exams or assignments, completing work in unauthorized collaboration with others, or the unauthorized use of class recordings are all breaches of academic integrity.

The penalty for a lack of academic integrity may include a failing grade either in the assignment, examination or course, depending on the severity of the offense.

7. Academic Standards

Students must achieve at least a 60% grade to successfully complete a course. In order to graduate with the Certificate, any course taken and not completed must be repeated. Registration policies and procedures apply.

Students may appeal to the instructor if a course is not successfully completed, and at the discretion of the instructor, students may be granted the opportunity to re-submit a particular assignment.

8. Report Cards

Report cards are issued (usually by email) in a reasonable amount of time following the completion of each course. Due to faculty schedules, there may be delays in the time frame for issuing grade reports.

Students are responsible to appeal any error in grades and to bring to the WSBM Administrative Assistant's attention within one month following the issued report card. Grade changes are allowable for computational recording errors and must be corrected no later than one month after the date the report card was issued.