



Grace Communion Seminary
TH503: The Holy Spirit, the Church, and Eschatology

Short Syllabus

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Please contact me through the course website by clicking on “message my professor” in the right-hand column.

Mission Statement:

Grace Communion Seminary is committed to equip the saints for pastoral ministry through quality graduate-level distance education programs in biblical, theological, ministerial and pastoral studies informed by Incarnational Trinitarian faith.

Course Description

This course covers the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the Christian understanding of the church, and Christian teaching about biblical eschatology.

In order to well in this course, students are expected to put in at least 12 hours each week.

Required Texts

Johnson, Alan, and Robert Webber. *What Christians Believe*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989, 1993. ISBN: 0310367212. Approximate price: \$28* 480 pages.

Oden, Thomas C. *Life in the Spirit*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992. ISBN: 0-06-066349-9. Approximate price: \$30* 548 pages.

Torrance, James B. *Worship, Community & The Triune God of Grace*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996. ISBN: 0-8308-1895-2. Approximate price: \$12* 130 pages.

Torrance, Thomas. *The Mediation of Christ*. Colorado Springs: Helmers & Howard, 1992. ISBN: 0-939443-50-3. Approximate price: \$11* 144 pages.

Please obtain these books before the class begins. *Costs estimated in April 2016. To find the lowest online price use: <http://www.bookfinder.com/>

Recommended Texts

Barth, Karl. *Christ and Adam*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 1956, 2004. ISBN: 1-59244-639-6. Approximate price: \$12. 82 pages.

Bock, Daniel and Gundry, Stanley (editors). *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999. ISBN: 0310201438. Approximate price: \$15. 336 pages.

Okholm, Dennis and Phillips, Timothy (general editors). *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996. ISBN: 0310212766. Approximate price: \$13. 288 pages

GCS Mission Statement

“Equipping the Saints for Pastoral Ministry.” We are committed to equip the saints for pastoral ministry through quality graduate-level distance education programs in biblical, theological, ministerial and pastoral studies informed by Incarnational Trinitarian faith.

GCS Student Learning Outcomes (SLO): Grace Communion Seminary has five core learning outcomes for its students. This course serves largely to support GCS SLO 2: Reason from a sound theological basis as new covenant Christians centered in Trinitarian Incarnational faith.

Course Student Learning Outcome for this TH503

Course Student Learning Outcome 1: Develop and be able to express a faithful position on the person and work of the Holy Spirit in human spiritual transformation, the role of the Church in the life of the believer and biblical eschatology in its redemptive setting.

Course Objective 1: To reflect on course readings and lectures in writing two academic papers from a Trinitarian context on the following topics: 1. The person and work of the Holy Spirit in human spiritual transformation. 2. The role of the church in the life of the Christian believer.

Course Objective 2: To reflect on course readings and lectures in preparing for and taking a final exam focused on the redemptive essence of biblical eschatology.

Course Objective 3: To enter into weekly discussion with other students in the course to share ideas, concepts and reflections on the course readings and lectures.

Course Objective 4: To become familiar with Christian doctrine and teachings on the Holy Spirit, the church, and with Christian views on eschatology.

Required Assignments

1. **Read (or listen to, as appropriate) the lectures.** Lectures will be posted in writing, video, or audio each Monday for the first ten weeks of the course. See the *Academic Catalog* for study suggestions.

2. **Read the textbooks.** They total about 650 pages, from 60 up to 75 pages each week, or about 65 pages per week of reading. *Stay ahead of the reading as posted in the syllabus*, as reading the texts is essential to the course.

3. **View videos and read articles as assigned each week.** These total 19 hours of viewing/reading over ten weeks.

4. **Participate in the online discussions.** In classroom courses, part of the learning process takes place through discussion and interaction with other students. In an online class, this is done through comments posted on two discussion forums: 1) the *Instructor Forum* and 2) the *Class Members' Forum*. Each week, you must post at least one reply of your own to each of the one or two instructor questions posted *and also* post one response of your own and also reply to at least one other person's comment in the Class Member's Forum. *This participation is required* and counts for 25 percent of the final grade.

5. **Research Paper 1:** Write a five-page paper in double-spaced 12-point type about the person and work of the Holy Spirit in human spiritual transformation.

- a. Read *The Mediation of Christ* by T.F. Torrance, pages 99-126, and *Life in the Spirit* by Thomas Oden, pages 1-75, as background to the paper.
- b. Cite at least four sources, including those in “a.” above, from the course bibliography.
- c. This paper is due at the end of week 5 and counts for 25 percent of the final grade.
- d. For a guide to formatting your papers, see “How to Format a GCS Paper,” posted at <http://www.gcs.edu/course/view.php?id=23>.

6. Research Paper 2: Write a five-page paper in double-spaced 12-point type on the role of the church in the life of the believer.

- a. Relate the impact of a sound Trinitarian theology on understanding the purpose of the church.
- b. Read *The Mediation of Christ*, pages 73-98, *What Christians Believe*, pages 325-412, and *Worship, Community & The Triune God of Grace*, pages 1-41 and 70-94, as background to your paper.
- c. Cite at least four sources, including those in “b.” above, from the course bibliography.
- d. This paper is due at the end of week 9 and counts for 25 percent of the final grade.
- e. For a guide to formatting your papers, see “How to Format a GCS Paper,” posted at <http://www.gcs.edu/course/view.php?id=23>.

7. Final Exam: The final exam counts for 25% of the final grade. The two-hour exam will be weighted toward the topic of Eschatology. *It will be taken during the 12th week of the course, after all other assignments are due and should have been turned in.*

Estimated hours and grade weighting

Assignment	Hours*	Percentage of grade
Lectures	10	
Reading discussions and making responses	10	25
Reading the textbooks	48	
Videos/articles as assigned	19	
Writing Paper 1: The Holy Spirit	25	25
Writing Paper 2: The Church	25	25
Preparation for and taking of Final Exam	6	25
Total – about 12	143	100

hours each week.

Course Schedule

Week	Read/View/Listen as appropriate	Assignment Due
1. The Holy Spirit: Person and Work	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 1 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation
2. The Holy Spirit: Person and Work, cont.	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 2 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation
3. The Holy Spirit: Atonement and Transformation	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 3 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation
4. The Church: Foundations and Development	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 4 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation
5. The Church: Sacraments	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 5 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation Research Paper 1 due
6. The Church: Response	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 6 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation
7. The Church: Ministry and Witness	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 7 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation
8. Eschatology: Revelation	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 8 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation
9. Eschatology: Prophecy	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 9 Videos/articles as assigned	Forum participation Research Paper 2 due
10. Eschatology: Olivet Prophecy	Reading: Approx 65 pp. Lecture 10	Forum participation
11-12. Final Exam	Study and Take Final Exam	