

SYLLABUS

Introduction to Reformed Spirituality and Piety

BS/CH 902

Prof. Stephen G. Myers

1. Introduction

Course description

“For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

Psalm 84.10

Such is the cry of the new hearts that God gives to His people and it is this regenerate cry that has given rise to the spirituality and piety of God’s people, both in theological reflection and in practice. In the present course, students will be introduced to this spirituality and piety as they were expressed and developed in the Reformation and Post-reformation periods (ca. 1500-1750). Beginning with an examination of the foundational precursors of this spirituality and piety, the course will proceed to consider the development that occurred in these areas throughout the Reformation and Post-reformation periods. In this examination, attention will be given to the distinctive contributions of individual theologians, the broader dynamics of specific reform movements, and the emergence of prominent themes across reformed spirituality and piety.

Purpose of the course

The central academic purpose of the course is to introduce students to the ways in which spirituality and piety shaped the doctrine and life of the church in the Reformation and Post-reformation periods. This purpose will be achieved through an examination of the antecedents of that spirituality and piety and an exposure to critical texts and movements of the era.

The central spiritual purpose of the course is to guide the student in personal spiritual formation. Consideration of the Biblical foundations for Reformation and Post-reformation spirituality will highlight the abiding significance of these concepts both for the individual student and for those whom he will serve in the church or academy.

Overall, the course’s examination of the relationship between piety and doctrine will be paradigmatic for the student at the beginning of doctoral studies.

2. General

Instructor information: Stephen G. Myers

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Office hours: See Professor

Location and time of class: Martin Bucer Seminary

July 29 – August 2, 2019

Academic Policies: Students are expected to adhere to the Academic Policies of PRTS, found at https://prts.edu/academics/academic-catalog-2/#Academic_Policies.

3. Readings

Selected and assigned readings include:

- Primary sources: see Appendix A (2,079 pages)
- Secondary sources: see Appendix B (1,132 pages)

4. Course Assessment

The student's assessment in the course will be based on the following components:

- A. Class participation** Students are expected to engage actively in the lecture component of the course and participate in discussions as they arise. This will account for 5% of the student's final grade.
- B. Reading assignments:** All assigned readings must be completed by the submission date for the Course Paper (see below). The student will notify the instructor regarding his completion of this requirement. This will account for 20% of the student's final grade.
- C. Course paper:** A major paper consisting of original research in the area of reformed spirituality and piety in the Reformation or Post-reformation era will be submitted. This research should draw on both primary and secondary sources. The due date for the paper will be advertised during the course lectures. The paper should be submitted, in Word format, via email to stephen.myers@prts.edu and uploaded in Generra. This will account for 75% of the student's final grade.

Topic: Each student should make an appointment with the professor to discuss paper topics that are of interest to the student.

Length: For Ph.D. students, the paper should be 8,000-10,000 words, not including bibliography. For Th.M. students, the paper should be 6,000-8,000 words, not including bibliography.

Format: The paper should be formatted in accordance with the most recent edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. It should include both footnotes and a bibliography.

5. Course Objectives

- a. Be able to assess critically primary interdisciplinary sources (theology, philosophy, social and political history).
- b. Be able to read primary sources both as individual theological reflections and as representatives of trajectories of intellectual thought.
- c. Be able to read secondary sources with discernment, critical assessment, and reflection on historiography.
- d. Acquire proficiency in using digital text archives.

6. Course Calendar and Outline

The following is a tentative lecture outline. The readings listed for each day are those most applicable for that class meeting. It is not required that readings be completed prior to class, but any reading that can be done before the class meetings will aid in discussion and engagement with the lecture material.

July 29: Foundations of Reformation Piety

- Developments within mysticism
- Foundational role of Bernard of Clairvaux
- Epistemological shift to nominalism
- Emergence and distinctives of the *devotio moderna*

Appendix A

Kempis, *De imitatione Christi*.

Bernard, *Expositio...*

July 30: Early Reformation Piety: Luther, Calvin, and Knox

- Early emphases of reformed spirituality and piety
- Luther, humility, and a piety of the cross
- An emerging rejection of monastic piety
- Calvin, Union with Christ, and Word-centered piety
- The Lord's Supper and reformed piety
- John Knox and the politics of piety
- Continental developments within reformed piety
- The development of a "piety of persecution"

Appendix A

Calvin, *Institutio*.
Luther, *De Servo Arbitrio*.
Taffin, *Des Marques des enfans de Dieu...*

Appendix B

Allen, “Sanctification, Perseverance, and Assurance.”
Bouyer, *Orthodox Spirituality...*
Trueman, “Martin Luther: Preaching and Protestant spirituality.”

July 31: Puritan Piety and Emerging Issues

- Piety within English Puritanism
- A Puritan mysticism? The refinement of “affectionate theology”
- The development of home and family as the sphere of piety
- John Owen and Trinitarian piety
- Emerging issues:
 - A reformed *theosis*?
 - Christ as exemplar?
 - The societal shaping of piety
 - The role of the Law in piety: antinomianism and Neonomianism
 - The doctrine of sin
 - Assurance and faith

Appendix A

Bayly, *The Practice of Piety*.
Goodwin, *The Heart of Christ in Heaven*.
Marshall, *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*.
Owen, *Of Communion with God...*
Owen, *Of the Mortification of Sin...*
Sibbes, *Bowels Opened...*

Appendix B

Beeke and Jones, *A Puritan Theology*.
Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain*.
Dever, *Richard Sibbes...*

August 1: Samuel Rutherford; the piety of exegesis and preaching; the piety of the *Nadere Reformatie*

- Samuel Rutherford
 - The outer limits of affectionate theology?

- The polemics of piety
- The domestication of piety
- The sustained importance of preaching in reformed piety and distinctives of that preaching
- The *Nadere Reformatie* and continental piety
- Appropriation of English Puritan piety
- Wilhelmus à Brakel and the piety of doctrine

Appendix A

Brakel, *Logikē latreia*.

Rutherford, *Letters*.

Appendix B

Reuve, *Sweet Communion*.

Richard, “The Two shall become One Flesh...”

August 2: Jonathan Edwards and the Piety of Revivalism; Conclusion

- Revivalism and piety
- Jonathan Edwards and the affections of piety
- Prominent trends and distinctive themes
- Connection with current life of the Church

Appendix A

Edwards, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*.

Maclaurin, “Essay on Christian Piety.”

Scougal, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*.