

BRITE

BLUE RIDGE INSTITUTE FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Systematic Theology I
Fall 2021
Jefferson Park Baptist
2505 Jefferson Park Ave
August 30 - Dec 6
Mondays 6pm to 8pm
Dr. Keith Goad

Course Description

This course is a study of Theology proper (God, Trinity, creation, providence) & Anthropology (man, sin, gender, race). The course will survey these doctrines first by exegeting Scripture and then seek insights from historical developments and confessions. The goal is to help pastors, leaders, and church members know God's truth so that they can know how to obey him in their homes, churches, and with neighbors.

Course Objective

- To introduce students to the foundational biblical truths concerning the Doctrines of God and Man.
- To ensure students know and understand the primary passages when studying these doctrines as well as most important historical challenges.
- To help students identify areas in their own worldview that need more clarity and certainty so that they are more faithful in knowing God and themselves.
- To prepare students to defend the faith once for all handed down and to build up the church by strengthening their faith in God's revealed Word. (for BRITE's Theological Foundations, see <https://www.brite-va.org/about-brite/>)
- To equip students in their worship, discipleship, and faithful service.

Course Reading Prerequisite

All students who have never taken a systematic theology class should before the first class read Donald Macleod's *A Faith to Live By* (Christian Focus, 2015). The physical copies meet this requirement, but only if they are the revised edition, which was published in hardback in 2002 & in softback in 2010.

Accreditation

BRITE is not accredited as a school, but has a relationship with both Reformed Theological Seminary and Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary so that they will accept courses from BRITE for credit towards a degree.

Students wishing to audit the course should read along with Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*.

Required Textbooks

(1) John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Westminster/John Knox, 1960 translation of the 1559 Latin edition, edited by John T. McNeill & translated by Ford Lewis Battles), 1:96-423.

(2) Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Eerdmans, revised & enlarged 1996 edition), 19-261.

(3) Anthony Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Eerdmans, 1994), 1-243

Evaluation

1. Attendance (10%)

Students are expected to be present and prepared to discuss the assigned readings each week. Please contact the instructor if you know you will be absent.

2. Reading (10%)

Students will submit a record of what they read from the course requirements and suggested reading. Extra credit will be given for reading from the suggested section.

3. Berkhof Study Guide Questions (20%)

Answers to the Berkhof Study Guide Questions which follow later in the syllabus should be submitted by each student taking the course for credit.

Special care should be made to footnote where in Berkhof's *Systematic Theology* the answers may be found, as well as in any relevant parallel places in Calvin's *Institutes* & the Westminster Confession and Catechisms. Answers are due a week after the close of the appropriate section of overlapping lectures. See the professor after class for more details on this assignment.

4. Four Position Papers (10% each)

Students will answer a significant question using Scripture to interpret Scripture, historical sources, and commentaries. These papers are designed to help students gain clarity on how to pursue answers from Scripture and be equipped to answer difficult questions that will arise in the life of a church. If a student wishes to answer a question that is not listed below, the instructor must approve it.

- a. How is God knowable?
- b. Explain the biblical evidence for any attribute of God and how that attribute helps believers trust and obey him.
- c. How do you interpret the days of Genesis 1 and how does these 6 days of creation relate to the events of Genesis 2?
- d. How do you understand God's relationship with evil?
- e. Does God love everyone equally?
- f. How would you explain that the Son is fully God with the Father?
- g. How do you understand the work of the Spirit in relationship to the Son?
- h. What does it mean that man is made in the image of God?
- i. What does the Bible teach about the extent of man's depravity?
- j. What does the Bible teach regarding the roles of husbands and wives?
- k. What is your view of divorce and remarriage?
- l. How does the Bible distinguish genders?
- m. What does the Bible teach regarding homosexuality?
- n. What does the Bible teach about women in the life of the church?

5. Final Exam (20%)

The examination will test the student's mastery of all the material covered in the course lectures & reading & allow the student to apply principles learned in the course to theological test cases.

Late Penalty

All assignments are due by midnight of the day indicated. Each assignment will be penalized 5% per day it is late, unless the student has gotten prior permission from the instructor. Please do not email the day of the assignment to request permission to be late unless there has been an emergency.

Date	Lecture	Reading	Assignment
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August 30	Introduction		
September 6	Being and Names	LB, 19-51	BQ I-II
September 13	Attributes	LB, 52-81	BQ III
September 20	Trinity	LB, 82-99; 3 Creeds	BQ IV
September 27	Trinity	Goad Papers	
October 4	Fall Reading Days		
October 11	Decrees/Predestination	LB, 100-118	BQ V, VI
October 18	Decrees/Predestination	TBD	
October 25	Creation	LB, 126-164	BQ VII
November 1	Providence	LB, 165-180	BQ VIII
November 8	Nature of Man	LB, 181-196	BQ IX
November 15	Image of God	LB, 202-217	BQ X
November 22	Humanity	TBD	
November 29	State of Sin	LB, 219-236	BQ XI
December 6	Sin in human race	LB, 237-261	BQ XII