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## SEMINAR ON PRACTICAL THEOLOGY, HERMENEUTICS, AND RESEARCH

Syllabus – Revised Sept. 2018

### I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of key practices and passages related to Practical Theology and Hermeneutics, with discussion on research procedures. Enrollment is limited to students in the Accelerated Advanced Standing program and requires the consent of the Advanced Standing Committee. 3 hours credit.

### II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

**Rationale:** The expanded statement of purpose of Dallas Theological Seminary states, “Dallas Seminary is committed to fulfilling the mandate of Jesus to make disciples of all nations.” This course is designed to instill in students a vision for evangelism and spiritual growth along with practical skills needed to carry out these ministries. As with ministry itself, this course takes a highly integrative approach, challenging students to utilize sound hermeneutics, theological analysis and cultural sensitivity as they engage in practical theology.

**A. Cognitive Objectives.** As a result of taking this course, the student will have articulated:

1. The Story of the Bible along dispensational lines and its role in defining the gospel, evangelism and spiritual life. (Demonstrated through in-class exercises.)
2. The disabling nature of sin and the challenges it presents to evangelism and spiritual growth. (Demonstrated through in-class exercises and written assignments.)
3. The nature and necessity of grace for evangelism and the Christian life. (Demonstrated through in-class exercises and written assignments.)
4. The believer’s new identity and security in Christ. (Demonstrated in evangelistic presentations and a Spiritual Life paper.)
5. The role of the Holy Spirit in conversion and in the battle against the Flesh. . (Demonstrated through in-class exercises and written assignments.)

**B. Affective Objectives.** As a result of taking this course, the student will have:

1. Increased personal confidence in engaging non-Christians in discussions about spiritual matters. (Demonstrated by on-the-street interactions.)
2. Increased personal desire for the rule of God on this earth. (Acquired throughout the course and demonstrated through spiritual disciplines and the final Integration exercise.)

**C. Behavioral Objectives.** As a result of taking this course, the student will have:

1. Addressed how the Flesh has opposed evangelism and spiritual growth in the student’s own life. (Demonstrated in a reflection paper.)
2. Explained and practiced a wide range of disciplines that support/encourage evangelism, spiritual growth, and their integration into all of life. (Demonstrated by practice and discussion of selected disciplines.)

### III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

Schemmann, Aleksandr. *For the Life of the World : Sacraments and Orthodoxy*. 2nd rev. Crestwood, N.Y. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982. (Available on Kindle)

Smith, James K. A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009. 240 pp. (Available through Logos)

After consultation with the professor - choice of:

1. Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Dutton, 2008. 240 pages. (Available on Kindle)
2. Wright, N.T. *Simply Christian : Why Christianity Makes Sense*. San Francisco, Calif., Harper, 2006. (Available through Logos)

#### IV. LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- A. Seminar Contributions: Integral to the entire course is a consistent contribution of each student to the learning of all other students. Students should anticipate providing regular verbal and written input to all aspects of the course throughout the semester, not just as specifically assigned. This format encourages students to integrate themes from other coursework into discussions.
- B. Compilation of Course Documents: Class members will collaborate to compile course notes throughout the semester. All students are expected to add to the notes, integrate readings to the notes, and extend the discussion of these notes.
- C. Readings:
  - a. The required texts will be read and discussed per the course schedule.
  - b. Students will choose one of the optional books for a careful reading and critique according to issues related to hermeneutics and biblical theology discussed in the course. Working in groups, students will lead a persuasive presentation to their colleagues on a thesis derived from the book they have read. See supplemental instructions provided separately.
  - c. Weekly readings of journal articles and book excerpts will be provided throughout the semester for student interaction. Students are expected to read these before class as assigned and be prepared for discussion.
- D. Life Disciplines (Designed to sensitize students to a God-oriented awareness in all areas of life)
  - a. Spiritual Conversations Field Assignment: Engage in 6 conversations with presumed non-believers. With each conversation, you will explore spiritual issues leading toward evangelism. Supplemental instructions provided separately.
  - b. Personal Spiritual Disciplines - Students will engage in three weeks of spiritual disciplines of their choice, submitting a brief concluding report on their learning.
- E. One Written Gospel Presentation Paper: This paper will integrate the student's personal story with the Story of the Bible and written in such a way that it prepares the students for engaging others in spiritual conversations.
- F. Two Spiritual Life Reflection Papers: (1) Students will reflect on the holiness of God, learning how of the challenges to communicate and demonstrate God's holiness. (2) Students will write a paper in which they grapple with the challenges overcoming the flesh.
- G. Integration Exercise: A final oral presentation by each student provides opportunity to integrate course themes with their own personal spiritual journey.

#### V. COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

- 1. All written submissions must be submitted electronically unless otherwise indicated. Course materials will generally be distributed and submitted through CANVAS.
- 2. With ALL email correspondence, please clearly indicate in the SUBJECT line that the email relates to AS101 and provide the specific issue addressed in that email. Limit emails to a single subject.

Eg. SUBJECT: *AS101-Spiritual Discipline Question*

- 3. Grading

Percentage breakdown for grade computation will be revealed on Canvas.

<b>A+</b>	<b>99-100</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>91-93</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>83-85</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>75-77</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0-69</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>96-98</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>88-90</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>80-82</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>72-74</b>		
<b>A-</b>	<b>94-95</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>86-87</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>78-79</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>70-71</b>		

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AS101A (3 hrs)  
Fall 2018  
Monday Afternoons

4. DTS does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of any of its programs and activities. To avoid discrimination the student is responsible for informing the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications

#### COURSE SCHEDULE

To be made available via the Canvas platform.