

Associated Canadian Theological Schools

THS 571: Theology of the Believers Church Tradition

Ed Stuckey, D.Min. Spring 2011 3 credit hours Prerequisite; THS 540 or equiv.	estuckey@journeycentre.ca 780-463-2161 Feb. 10-12, 2011 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Venue: Edmonton, Mill Woods Assembly
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Course Description

This course lays a foundation for theological study and reflection in all ACTS graduate degree programs. As an introduction to the sources, nature and methodologies of theological reflection within the “Believers Church Tradition,” it begins with a historic overview of three cardinal doctrines within that tradition, #1 Revelation and Authority, #2 Salvation, and #3 the Nature and Mission of the Church, including the character and purposes of ministry. With a view to enhancing understanding and appreciation along with discernment, the course will include an overview of the origins and distinctives of major theological heritages within the Believers Church (including Lutheran, Anabaptist, Reformed, Anglican, Baptist, Wesleyan, Dispensational, and Pentecostal. The course will provide a practical orientation to the expectations and opportunities for theological study in the ACTS curriculum.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, a student should be able to:

- 1) describe the **nature of theology, its role and importance** in the life of the individual Christian and of the church as a whole;
- 2) discuss the general **structure and function of theology as an academic discipline**, demonstrating an understanding of the relationship between various areas of theological study and their significance in the ACTS curriculum;
- 3) explain the key features that mark the **theological perspective of the Believer’s Church Tradition**, showing an appreciation for its relationship to other theological traditions within

historic Christianity and recognizing the significance of such concepts in their own ministry setting;

4) articulate the **historic Christian doctrines concerning the Scriptures, Salvation and the Church**, together with their biblical basis, contrasting these with other non-Evangelical perspectives;

5) discuss important **theological issues which arise in relation to these doctrines**, together with significant historical perspectives on those issues and key biblical concepts which apply to them;

6) apply basic **methodological principles, techniques, and tools for effective theological reflection and ministry application** in an Evangelical, Believers Church Christian framework;

7) understand and appreciate the major traditions within that framework so as to be able to interact with them in an irenic yet discerning spirit

8) formulate concrete **plans for appropriate personal theological development** through the course of the student's degree program and beyond;

9) **integrate personal theological development with practical aspects of Christian life and ministry.**

10) be able to reflect with both theological competence and historical perspective on the significant issues pertaining to revelation, salvation, and ecclesiology

Course Textbooks

Bloesch, Donald. *Holy Scripture* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000).

Buschart, W. David. *Exploring Protestant Tradition*. (Downers Grove: IVP, 2006)

Hannah, John D. *Our Legacy; The History of Christian Doctrine*. (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2001).

Harper, Brad and Metzger, Paul Louis. *Exploring Ecclesiology: An Evangelical and Ecumenical Introduction*. (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009).

OR

Belcher, Jim. *Deep Church*. (Downers Grove, IVP, 2009)

Course Assignments

A. Reading reports – Four in total (Value 30%, Due):

Reading reports should be 4-5 pages long and answer the following questions:

1. What is the essential message of this book? (Summarize the book in no more than a half page.
2. What theological assumptions or position underline(s) the thrust of the book? How does this affect the author's conclusions?
3. What chapter or section had the greatest impact on you and why?
4. What single sentence from the book most provoked your thinking (positively or negatively) and why?
5. In what ways has this book most affected how you do (or expect to do) ministry?

B. Reflection paper (Value 20%, Due Mar 11) Neither a bibliography, nor precise formatting is required, but any quotations or specific content cited from another source should be footnoted. The paper should be 10-12 pages long, and given a title (the default title is "Personal Development Plan")

1. How does my Christian experience (including upbringing, church background and cultural experience) relate to the Theology of the Believers Church Tradition as presented in this course? Be sure to include areas of agreement as well as areas of tension, making specific reference to the class notes and readings from the assigned texts.
2. What are the theological issues (addressed in this course) in which I need to increase my understanding – whether because they are at variance with my upbringing, or because they are confusing to me, or because I recognize them to be of significance in ministry, or simply because they are of personal interest. (Be sure to describe the issues clearly as well as the reasons for their significance to you)
3. If not already addressed, explain the significances, as you see them, of these issues for ministry.
4. With reference to other courses in the ACTS curriculum, as well as specific books, write out your personal plan for ongoing theological reflection and renewal, in the light of your potential future plans. Explain your selection of both resources and strategies.

C. Mentorship interaction and report (Value 20%, Due Apr 8) For this assignment you will need the input of someone you respect who has experienced success in a life of active ministry – not necessarily vocational – but it should be a reflective person who has both "done" ministry and thought carefully about "why." Plan to meet with the person long enough (min. 2 hours) to

explore at least two theological issues which you consider significant to ministry. Your report should be about 6 pages long explaining what you discussed and what you learned.

D. Research Paper (Value 30%, Due Apr 15) The paper should address a theological issue of significance to you. Especially if you have limited experience in writing academic papers be sure to consult my document entitled “Points to Ponder for Papers.” It should be 12-14 pages long double-spaced with title page, footnotes and bibliography in Turabian format. The bibliography should include a core of “credible” and “academic” sources perhaps supplemented as necessary with more popular and accessible resources such as Internet materials.

☞ **FOR GUIDANCE IN HOW TO WRITE AN ESSAY SEE: [HYPERLINK "http://www.wikihow.com/Write-an-Essay"](http://www.wikihow.com/Write-an-Essay) <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-an-Essay>**

Grading Scale

<i>Outstanding</i>	<i>Competent</i>	<i>Minimal</i>
A+ = 97-100	B+ = 85-89	C+ = 70-74
A = 93-96	B = 80-84	C = 65-69
A- = 90-92	B- = 75-79	C- = 60-64

LETTER GRADE	QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS
<p style="text-align: center;">Outstanding</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A category</p> <p style="text-align: center;">90-100%</p>	<p>Outstanding, excellent work: gives evidence of an extensive and detailed knowledge base; exceptional performance with strong evidence of original thinking, good organization, meticulous concern for documented evidence, and obvious capacity to analyze, synthesize, evaluate, discern, justify, and elaborate; frequent evidence of both verbal eloquence and perceptive insight in written expression; a clear authorial voice demonstrated by a strong introduction, a well-defined thesis, an effective body, and a summative conclusion; effective variety in sentence type, length, and structure; demonstrated masterful grasp of subject matter and its implications; is in compliance with Turabian style.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Competent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">B category</p> <p style="text-align: center;">75-89%</p>	<p>Good, competent work: laudable performance with evidence of some original thinking; careful organization, with well-developed writing plan; satisfactory critical and analytical capacity; reasonably error-free expository written expression, with clear, focused thesis and well-supported, documented, relevant arguments; good problem-solving ability; reasonably good grasp of subject matter, but an occasional lack of depth of discernment; evidence of reasonable familiarity with course subject matter, including both concepts and key issues; exhibits a serious, responsible engagement with the course content; presence of minor errors which do not detract significantly from the clarity of communication.</p>

<p>Minimal</p> <p>C category</p> <p>60-74%</p>	<p>Minimally acceptable work: relatively weak performance with infrequent evidence of original thinking or ability to analyze or synthesize course material; nominal or weak problem-solving ability; uninspiring written expression with problems in mechanics, syntax and format; written expression frequently exhibits difficulty in articulating an outline, central thesis, or sustaining a coherent argument; sentence fragments, limited or inaccurate word choice; paragraphs inadequately developed; little evidence that work has been proofread; ideas are sometimes trite or juvenile; weak in provision of documented, illustrative, or descriptive evidence; shows inadequate grasp of some basic elements of the course; presence of many grammatical and stylistic errors which detract significantly from the clarity of communication.</p>
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Miscellaneous Notes/Policies

Assignments may be emailed directly to the instructor at "estuckey@journeycentre.ca"

Deadlines are provided for your benefit in spacing out the work over the semester. If necessary, students may request an extension of seven days for one assignment during this course. The instructor must receive the request for an extension in writing by email before the due date.

Course Outline

Course Outline; Session #:

1. The Believers Church Tradition; Introduction toward a Definition

My Personal Perspective

Issues in defining “Evangelical” and “Believers Church”

Some Essential Themes:

The centrality of the Scriptures as inspired and authoritative (sola Scriptura)

The necessity of personal Salvation by grace (sola gratia) through faith alone (sola fide)

Jesus is the only Saviour (solus Christus)

Jesus is God/Man – wholly deity and wholly human

The Church is a called out people – separate from the world, but called to be active in the world on the mission of evangelism and ministry

2. The Sources and Methodologies of Theology

The Sources of Theology

Natural Theology

The Scriptures

The Incarnation

The Role of Formal Tradition (e.g. Church Creeds, Confessions and Dogma)

The Role of Informal Tradition

The Role of Reason

The Role of Experience and Emotions

The Issue of God speaking today: Cessationism vs Non-cessationism

Some Issues in Epistemology

What is truth? Can truth be known? Modern vs postmodern assumptions

Implications for Responses to Revelation

Christian Epistemology

Approaches in Doing Theology

Varieties of Theologians (from “Tabloid” to “Philosophical”)

Apophadic vs Cataphatic

Defining Essentials and Non-essentials

The Three “Poles” of Theology – Scripture, Tradition, and Contemporary Context

3. Believers Church Themes in the Early Church; understandings of Authority, Salvation and the Church (AD ca 100-600)

The Broad Eras of Church Tradition

Three Eras of Church Fathers

Explaining the Trinity

Clarifying the Person of Christ

Understandings of Authority

Among the Apostolic Fathers

Among the Apologists

Among the Theologians

Understandings of Salvation

Among the Apostolic Fathers

Among the Apologists

Among the Theologians – especially Augustine

Understandings of the Church

Among the Apostolic Fathers

Among the Apologists

Among the Theologians – Augustine, Pelagius, Synod of Orange (AD 529)

4. Believers Church Themes in the Medieval Church; understandings of Authority, Salvation, and the Church (AD ca 600-1500)

 Understandings of Authority

Aquinas on General Revelation

 Understandings of Salvation

Anselm of Canterbury

 Understandings of the Church

Gregory I

Aquinas on the sacraments

the Council of Florence

5. Believers Church Themes during the Reformation period : understandings of Authority (ca 1500 – ca 1750)

 The Recovery of the Scriptures

The Work of Erasmus

New Access to Greek and Hebrew texts

Biblical Authority for Luther

Biblical Authority for Calvin

The Reformers on Hermeneutics

Biblical Authority among the Anabaptists – the “Radical Reformation”

The Renewed Issue of the Canon

 The Issue of General Revelation

Calvin on General Revelation

 The Roman Catholic Church and Authority

The Issue of the Place of Tradition (Historical Review)

The Issue of the Interpretive Power of the Church – The Council of Trent

The Protestant Reaction

6. Believers Church Themes during the Reformation period : understandings of Justification (ca 1500 – ca 1750)

 Luther and Lutheranism on Justification

sola fide

 Calvin and Calvinism on Justification

 Arminius and Arminianism on Justification –

 Amyraut on Justification (Amyrauldianism) – modified Calvinism

 Wesley and Wesleyanism

 The Roman Catholic response – the Council of Trent and after

7. Believers Church Themes during the Reformation period : understandings of the Church (ca 1500 – ca 1750)

Luther's Understanding of the Church

Lutheranism on the church and society

Lutheranism on the sacraments

Calvin's Understanding of the Church

Calvinism on the church and society

Calvinism on the sacraments

Anabaptist Understandings of the Church

Anabaptism on the church and society

Anabaptism and the restoration of the primitive church

Anabaptism on the church and the ordinances

Anglican Understanding of the Church

Anglicanism on the church and society

Anglicanism on the church and the sacraments

Roman Catholicism on the Church and the sacraments

8. The Enlightenment; Challenge to Believers Church Theology

Historical Overview of the post-Reformation period

The Enlightenment Challenge to Authority

The Enlightenment Challenge in the natural sciences

The Enlightenment Challenge in scientific method – empiricism

The Enlightenment Challenge in religion – Socinianism, Deism, Unitarianism

Biblical Criticism

Theological Liberalism in Europe

F.D.E. Schleiermacher

Albrecht Ritschl

David Strauss

Theological Liberalism in America – Unitarianism, Deism

Shailer Matthews

Harry Emerson Fosdick

Paul Tillich

9. The Reformulation of Believers Church Theology: The Roots of Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism

Pietism in Europe

Baptists in Europe and America

The First Great Awakening in America (1720's)

Jonathan Edwards

George Whitfield

 The Second Great Awakening (1790-1820)

Camp meeting

 The Urban Revivals

Charles Finney

D.L. Moody

Billy Graham

 Princeton Theology

Charles Hodge

A. A. Hodge

B. B. Warfield

 Dispensationalism

 Wesleyanism and the Holiness

 The Pentecostal movement

10. The Reformulation of Believers Church Theology (cont.): Twentieth Century Developments

 Neo-Orthodoxy

Karl Barth

 Fundamentalism (and the conflict with Modernism)

J. Greshem Machen

R. A. Torrey

 Evangelicalism

Carl F.H. Henry

 Neo-evangelicalism

Bernard Ramm

Millard Erickson

Stanley Grenz

11. Contemporary Issues within Believers Church Theology – Revelation and Authority

 Varieties of Revelation

 The Modes of General Revelation

 Reason and Revelation

 Experience / Emotions and Revelation – Mysticism

 Revelation as Personal or Propositional

 The Holy Spirit and Revelation

12. Contemporary Issues within Believers Church Theology – Salvation and Sanctification

Concepts of the Atonement – What was Jesus doing in dying on the cross?

Historical Review

Current Challenges to penal substitution

Non-violent atonement?

Understandings of Salvation

Issues related to Justification – Protestant-Catholic Dialogue

Views of Sanctification

13. Contemporary Issues within Believers Church Theology – the Nature of the Church

The Nature of the Church – one body or many?

Leadership in the Church – the essence of servanthood

Involving women in ministry – limits or no?

Engaging in social, moral and political issues – optional or imperative?

Engaging with culture – in the world, but not of it, or of the world but not in it?

Multicultural ministry – homogeneous group or heterogeneous goal?

Emerging Church – heretical or helpful?

“Missional” Theology – in vogue or vital?

Supplement: Important Academic Notes from ACTS

Web Support – Student Portal HYPERLINK "<https://students.twu.ca>" <https://students.twu.ca>

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. Your student email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

Paper Formatting

Students need to adhere to Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format except for in counselling courses, for which APA format is used and for CanIL courses.

Students are strongly encouraged to use RefWorks (available through the library home page www.twu.ca/library) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. They will need to be aware of the need to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples: HYPERLINK http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html or HYPERLINK "<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>" <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/> www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Note that in RefWorks the available formatting styles are those of Turabian (Notes), 7th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 5th edition. For Turabian, note that there are two formats – Notes (or Bibliography Style) and Reference List (a short format citation style). ACTS uses the Notes (Bibliography) format, not Reference List.

Counselling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information found at the following website. HYPERLINK "<http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>" <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>.

For free online programs that will enable you to create properly formatted bibliography citations, go to HYPERLINK <http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/> <http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/> ("Chicago stands for "Turabian") or HYPERLINK <http://www.sourceaid.com/citationbuilder/> <http://www.sourceaid.com/citationbuilder/>

CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the “student” side. A hard copy is given to incoming students in the fall.

Please check with your professor to see which one he/she recommends you use!!

Research Ethics

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at **HYPERLINK "http://www.twu.ca/academics/research/ethics/"** <http://www.twu.ca/academics/research/ethics/> Those needing additional clarification may contact Dr. Bruce Guenther. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire TWU community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at TWU. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. TWU has a strict policy on plagiarism (see academic calendar 2008-09, pp. 37-38). Further details on this subject are contained in the ACTS Student Handbook in section 4.12. The handbook is available online on the ACTS webpage (**HYPERLINK "http://www.acts.twu.ca" www.acts.twu.ca**) at the following link: **HYPERLINK "http://www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html" www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html**.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or used as flash (self running) tutorials of varying lengths from:

HYPERLINK <http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt> <http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt>

HYPERLINK <http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> <http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

HYPERLINK http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf (8 minute flash tutorial)

Equity of Access

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.

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Course label and name, date

