

Syllabus for Theology IV (BST 604)

Ecclesiology (The Church), Eschatology (End Times)

Front Range Bible Institute (Fall 2023)

Professor Tim Dane

I. Course Description

Theology IV is the last of four courses in systematic theology (embracing ten areas of systematic theology). This course will include a study of the last two of the ten major branches of theology: Ecclesiology and Eschatology.

The course will have classroom lectures that are primarily based upon the professor's notes and visual presentations, although the format will not be in a pure lecture form. Students are encouraged to participate by asking and answering questions and taking notes. Detailed notes will be provided, but the student is encouraged to make additions in the margins based upon classroom discussions that will expand and elaborate.

The course will include quizzes and exams from the materials studied as well as a class project. The class project will be aimed at taking the classroom learning and transferring it into a useable student tool for practical ministry purposes.

II. Course Objectives

- A. One objective of this class is to have students become familiar with the broad issues relating to orthodox Christian theology in the areas of Ecclesiology and Eschatology. To accomplish this, the professor will expose the students primarily to the orthodox views, but will also expose students to other views that have been held throughout the ages. This will especially deal with a focus on the following issues: (1) the nature of the church as a spiritual entity that is distinct from national Israel, (2) the relationships between the Old Covenant era and the present church age (continuity vs. discontinuity of the covenants), as well as the ages that will follow the present church age, (3) the promises of God for a national restoration of Israel, (4) the significance of, and differences between, different millennial views (i.e., Premillennialism, Amillennialism, Postmillennialism, Preterism), (5) the significance of, and differences between, different raptures views (i.e., Pre-tribulation, Post-tribulation, Mid-tribulation, Pre-wrath), and (6) the nature of Dispensational theology and why a Dispensational view of eschatology should be held as the most biblical of all eschatologies.
- B. A second objective of this class is that this theological learning process would achieve its true end by producing a greater love for God and a

greater desire for genuine worship. Jesus said that the Father seeks true worshippers who worship in spirit and truth. The goal of theology is more than acquisition of knowledge; it is to produce true worshippers of God.

- C. A third objective of this course is that students take the knowledge they acquire, and begin applying their growing knowledge in practical ministry. This will be accomplished by having a class project that is designed for some type of ministry application and by requiring that this class project be employed in some type of ministry setting.

III. Required Course Materials

A. Reading materials (all students):

i. All students:

1. **Required:** Professor's notes on Theology IV (and the professor will supply you with a soft copy of all materials).
2. **Required:** *Christian Theology* by Millard Erickson, Baker Books (219pp.)
3. **Required:** *The Master's Plan for the Church* by John MacArthur (266pp.).
4. **Required:** *Understanding End Times Prophecy* by Paul Benware (378pp.).
5. **Required:** "God's Plan for Israel and Current Events," by Tim Dane. (supplied)
6. **Suggested:** *Dispensationalism* by Michael Vlach (Los Angeles: Theological Studies Press, 2017) (112pp.).

- ii. Master's level students: Read all appendices at the final section of the class notes (p. 151ff.).

B. All students: Your own computer or at least access to a computer

- i. Class presentations should be on Microsoft Word, although the hard copies of your project do not necessarily have to be done on this program. Using the same program may be helpful when it comes to questions about style and formatting.
- ii. It is recommended (though not required) that you see if you could employ Power Point in your teaching.
- iii. You do not need to have a laptop in class, but you may use one for note-taking if you prefer.

- C. Logos Libronix Bible Software Program (highly **recommended** as a personal study tool, but not required for the class. Group discount may be possible through FBI).

IV. Course Requirements

- A. Attend all classes (if a student must miss a class, he/she must obtain a DVD copy and watch the lecture)
- B. All students:
 - i. Read Millard Erickson's *Christian Theology* (pp. 1035-1253)
 - ii. Read Paul Benware's *Understanding End Times Prophecy*
 - iii. Read MacArthur's *The Master's Plan for the Church*
 - iv. Read Vlach *Dispensationalism*
 - v. Read Dane "God's Plan for Israel and Current Events"
- C. All students: take notes as appropriate
- D. All students: take quizzes
- E. All students: participate in the threaded discussion questions
- F. All students: memorize Scripture passages related to ecclesiology/eschatology
- G. Complete your semester paper
 - i. Undergraduate level
 - 1. Write a 5-10 page five-part Semester Project.
 - a. Part I: Introduction.
 - b. Part II: Describe the nature of the church, the time of its origin, and the duration of the church's existence on earth. Make your explanations clear and concise. Support your statements with relevant Scripture passages.
 - c. Part III: Describe in concise terms what will take place after the rapture and during the tribulation period. Support your statements with relevant Scripture passages.
 - d. Part IV: Describe God's plan for what will take place at the close of the tribulation period and thereafter. Support your statements with relevant Scripture passages.
 - e. Part V: Summary.

2. At one place or another, your paper should try to include some concise references to the key passages we discuss in class.
 3. You should look to write very concisely in this. Do not try to be exhaustive for this would become much too extensive for the purpose of this project.
 4. Your paper should be written in proper writing style including proper footnote citations and a bibliography for your resources.
- ii. Master's level: All the same requirements above, except your paper should be 7-15 pages as a general goal.
 - iii. Help will be given on style issues:
 1. I am going to supply you with a sample paper as an appendix to this syllabus so that you have a sample on how to do this properly.
 2. The two-fold purpose of this project is (1) to see your understanding of ecclesiological and eschatological issues and (2) to help you develop your ability to write in proper style.
 3. I will help you in this process so avail yourself of my help by asking questions. Don't neglect something because you are not sure what to do. All of this is simply a process of learning style and technique.
 4. In this paper, I want you to make citations from at least five different sources (with footnotes in proper style. Ask me if you have questions how to do this. It is not hard at all. The sample paper will show you how it should look). The five sources could include your three textbooks, Erickson, MacArthur, and Benware. I also want you to use the church/institute library for at least two other references. You should also try to use Logos Libronix (if you own it) to make at least two citations since electronic citations are becoming increasingly more common. There is a feature in Libronix that can have citations set to the "Turabian" format. You should make that adjustment to your settings.

V. Threaded Discussions

- A. Each week students are to participate with the professor and with each other in an online threaded discussion involving various topics.
- B. Questions for threaded discussion are given below.

VI. Course Grading Criteria

- A. 25% Class Participation, Threaded Discussion, Scripture
- B. 25% Ecclesiology Quiz
- C. 25% Eschatology Quiz
- D. 25% Semester Paper

VII. Course Schedule

A. General schedule

Date	Topic (subject to change based on progress)	Personal Prep.	Weekly Questions:
		<p>Scripture that is assigned weekly must be turned in by the next week. You should turn it in by writing out in the email that you send back with your weekly Threaded Discussion questions to the right.</p> <p>I am not demanding that you have each these verses memorized perfectly. In other words, do your best to consult these verses, spend some time in memorizing and reviewing them, and get a good familiarity with them. When you write them out you may freely look back to the Bible to help you write</p>	<p>1. The initial answer must address the professor's question directly with an answer of roughly 50-100 words. Do this by sending a "Reply to all" email in reply to the question I send out each week from the schedule below.</p> <p>2. You can also interact with at least one other student each week with an answer that is roughly 50-100 words (not required). The purpose is to add to what the student said, or graciously seek to correct what you might see as an error, etc. Be tactful and kind in all that you do. Both answers must be made that week on a weekly basis.</p> <p>See Section "B" below at the end of this schedule for additional details.</p>

			them out.	
1	9-14-23	Introduction, Ecclesiology	Memorize Scripture and turn it in by email before next class: Matt. 16:16-20	Q1: Give an exegetically (biblical) and theologically supported answer as to why or why not one should understand the church as being in the Old Testament. Was the church in the OT? If not, did the OT prophets “predict” or foresee the church?
2	9-21-23	Ecclesiology	Begin memorizing Scripture: Acts 2:1-4	Q2: Explain what you believe might be legitimate continuities between the church and OT saints, i.e., are there any kinds of truths (spiritual or otherwise) that are true for OT saints in a way similar to or the same as to the church?
3	9-28-23	Ecclesiology	Begin memorizing Scripture: Acts 10:34-35	Q. 3: Similar to last week, explain what you believe might be legitimate discontinuities between the church and OT saints, i.e., are there any kinds of truths (spiritual or otherwise) that are true for one group but not the other?
4	10-5-23	Ecclesiology	Begin memorizing Scripture: 2 Cor. 6:14-18	Q4: Why was it so difficult for early Christians to understand that the church is so universal and diverse?
5	10-12-23	Ecclesiology	Begin memorizing Scripture: Eph. 2:11-16	Q5: Explain with scriptural support when the Church had its beginning on earth, and when it will cease to have its presence on earth in non-glorified bodies. What role will the church have in the Millennium.
6	10-19-23	Eschatology: Premillennialism, a non-negotiable	Begin memorizing Scripture: 1 Thess. 4:13-18	Q6: Give exegetical (biblically supported) and theological support for why one should believe (or not believe) in a literal, future millennium (1000 year

				kingdom) here on this present earth.
7	10-26-23	Eschatology: Premillennialism, a non-negotiable.	Begin memorizing Scripture: 2 Cor. 4:16-18	Q7: Tell which rapture position you hold to and give the reasons why you hold this view (reasons that must come from exegetical support, but may also include theological reasons).
8	11-2-23	Eschatology: Restoration through Immanuel	Begin memorizing Scripture: James 5:8; 1 Pet. 4:7	Q8: Should the Book of Revelation be seen as sequential in the Seals, Trumpets and Bowls, or is it better to see the idea of “recapitulation” in which the Trumpets and Bowls are simply giving further explanation to the Seals?
9	11-9-23	Eschatology: Seventy-Sevens to glory	Begin memorizing Rev. 1:1-3.	Q9: Describe what you see as the difference between the future judgment of the unsaved verses the saved (cf. e.g., Rev. 20:11-15; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10).
10	11-16-23	Eschatology: Pretribulationism		

B. Weekly Questions:

- i. As noted in the weekly schedule above, there is a theological question for all students listed for each week.
- ii. Each student is required to reply back to the professor and (2) hopefully interact with at least one other student.
- iii. Each answer should be anywhere between 100-200 words and should be posted in the online threaded discussion. Replies and interactions with the students may be shorter.
- iv. When you interact with other students (no set word requirements), your task is to thoughtfully and critically (although always tactfully, graciously and fairly) give a response to another student. Iron sharpens iron. I want to help each other sharpen your understanding in a number of very difficult issues.

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