



STH406 The Doctrine of the Church

Syllabus Highlights

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her:
—Ephesians 5:25

Spring 2023
Dr. John W. Tweeddale

Course Description

A study of the nature and purpose of the church, including a study of the church's worship and sacraments.

Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the nature, work, and purpose of the church as it relates to reformed theology.
2. Interpret relevant biblical texts for developing a doctrine of the church.
3. Relate the doctrine of the church to other topics in systematic theology, especially as it relates to the person and work of Christ.
4. Articulate the major views on church government and the sacraments.
5. Assess how the doctrine of the church informs worship and ministry practices today.

Textbooks

1. Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, complete edition, foreword by Richard A. Muller (Eerdmans, 2018).
2. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols., ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Westminster, 1960).
3. Sinclair Ferguson, *Devoted to God's Church* (Banner of Truth, 2020).
4. Keith Mathison, *The Lord's Supper* (Reformation Trust, 2019).
5. Guy Richard, *Baptism* (Reformation Trust, 2019).
6. Thomas Witherow, *I Will Build My Church*, ed. Jonathan Gibson (Westminster Seminary Press, 2021).
7. The Three Forms of Unity, the Westminster Standards, including the Westminster Directory of Public Worship, and the Second London Baptist Confession.

Course Requirements

1. Attend and participate in class and complete all reading.
2. Write a 1,000-1,200-word essay on: What is the church?
3. Write a 1,000-1,200-word essay on one of the three major approaches to church government.
4. Write a 1,000-1,200-word essay on baptism.
5. Write a 1,000-1,200-word essay on the Lord's Supper.
6. Complete midterm and final exams.

*This abbreviated syllabus is subject to revision. A full syllabus will be provided on the first day of class.