

Associated Canadian Theological Schools

THS 571/Blended Format: Theology of the Believer's Church Tradition:

Instructor: Archie J. Spencer, ThD

Fall 2010

Credit: 3 hours

Course Format: Blended in-class &
on-line:

Room: TBA

Email: archie.spencer@twu.ca

(604)888-7592 (ex.3858)

Dates: Sept. 13th – December. 6th

Time: Monday, 8:30am- 11:10am and in an
online format as scheduled below

***Course Pack:** Available at TWU book store by Sept 6th

I. Course Description

This course introduces the student to the theology of the Believer's Church Tradition. It begins with an outline of the historical-theological development of the Believers Church Tradition. It will also include along the way a study of the nature and necessity of doing theology in the contemporary context, with some attention given to the authority of God's self-disclosure in Scripture and the importance of a proper hermeneutic approach to Scripture. The subject matter then shifts to those areas of importance to the believer's church tradition such as personal salvation, the nature and mission of the church, and the practice of ministry within the church and to the world. *(The course will be offered in a blended format of in-class and on-line sessions, lectures and assignments as outlined below.)*

I. Aims

This course aims to equip the student with:

- An appreciation for and understanding of the particular theological perspective of the Believer's Church Tradition and its differences/relationship with other theological traditions within historic Christianity.
- An ability to articulate the historic doctrine of Scripture as the sole authority for the Christian in contrast to other non-evangelical views. Inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy will form the center of this discussion.
- An ability to formulate a world-view that is thoroughly informed by the Believer's Church Tradition so that thought, language and the Christian life come into conformity with the Scriptures.
- A greater appreciation for and understanding of the classic doctrines of salvation, the church and Christian ministry so that the student's local church might benefit from their understanding.

II. Texts

Buschart, D. *Exploring Protestant Traditions*, IVP, 2006

Bloesch, D. *Holy Scripture*, Downers Grove: IVP 2000

Van Gelder C. *The Essence of The Church*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001

III. Requirements: *You must obtain my Syllabus Supplement, by email request, for Details.*

A. Reading reviews: Value 30%

All three texts are required reading as assigned. The course requires a minimum of 1000 pages of text readings plus further research for the paper. Much of your learning in this course will depend upon careful disciplined reading of assigned texts. **A four-page summary/review should be submitted in the appropriate file on the mycourses web site, where there is a drop box for each review, indeed for all assignments in this course. The first four-page report on Buschart's book is due on the first day of Class, Sept. 13th, 2010.** The second report, on Bloesch, is due on **Oct. 18th, 2010.** The Third review, on Van Gelder's book, is due **Nov. 29th, 2010.** All assignments should be submitted in class or dropped off at the ACTS office. Please check my *Syllabus Supplement*, available from the faculty secretary at ACTS, or on the web site, for details on how to do a book report for my class. A grading template for the reviews will be posted on the mycourse site ahead of the due dates.

B. Research Paper: Value 45%

Students will produce a research paper of not less than 15 and not more than 20 pages in length. It is to be typed, double spaced with a 10-12 pt. font (Times New Roman). All supporting documentation and bibliography should be done in accordance with Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writer's*, 6th ed. All versions of Microsoft Word 97 and up use this as a template for theses and term papers so I recommend this software to you. Check the *Syllabus Supplement* for more details on research paper requirements. Students should consult a minimum of eight credible sources representing an extra 400 plus, pages of reading. **The paper is due by November 8th, 2010** and should be submitted in electronic format on the mycourses site in the drop box marked "Essay".

C. Final Reflection Paper: Value 25%

This assignment is designed to give the student an opportunity to interact with the lectures, readings and class discussions in relation to their own Christian experience. The student is expected to draw on these sources, not just personal experiences, in answering three questions. **YOU MUST USE THESE QUESTIONS** for this assignment.

1. How does my Christian experience, (i.e. upbringing, church experience and/or cultural experience), relate to the Believer's Church Tradition as taught in this course?
2. In what ways can the various aspects of the Believer's Church Tradition help me in relation to my present church context and Christian experience?
3. What are the issues that I find most difficult to understand and/or to reconcile with my own experience and church context?

Specific references to the doctrinal issues discussed are expected. The goal of this assignment is to help the student come to grips with the theological significance of beliefs and practices that may have previously been taken for granted or not really thought through theologically. It should be 10 to 12 pages in length and written in the same format as outlined above. This assignment is due **Dec 6th, 2006** and should be submitted as suggested above in the file marked "Reflection paper".

V. Contacting the Instructor

I will be available during office hours at ACTS – TBA.

Email address: archie.spencer@twu.ca

You may phone the office at NBS and leave a message: ph. 888-7592, *local 3858*

If all else fails leave a note under my door, or at NBS. For further information on school closure policy and contact information please see my *Syllabus Supplement*.

II. Blended Course Schedule & Outline

The course covers the following topics and we will cover the material in a blended on-line and classroom format as follows.

Module I: Historical-Theological definition of the Believers Church Tradition

Session I: The Believers Church Tradition: Towards a working definition

Session II: Believers Church Themes in the Early Church: New Testament to 4th Century
To be covered in class on Sept. 13th

Session III: Believers Church Themes in the Early Church - Continued

Session IV: Believers Church Themes in Medieval Christianity
To be covered on-line between Sept. 13th and Sept. 27th (lecture links provided on course web site)

Session V: The Reformation as Precursor to the Believers Church Tradition (Video)

Session VI: The Reformation Doctrine of Scripture
To be covered in class on Sept. 27th

Session VII: The Reformation Understanding of Justification

Session VIII: The Reformation Understanding of Church
To be covered on-line between Sept. 27th - Oct. 18th

Session IX: The Radical Reformation and Believers Church Tradition

Session X: The Great Awakening and the Rise of Believers Church Tradition
To be covered in class on Oct. 18th

Module II: Theological features of the Believers Church Tradition

Session XI: The Great Awakening in America

Session XII: The "Consolidation" of Believer's Church Theology in the 20th Century
To be covered on-line between Oct. 18th-25th

Session XIII: The Authority of Scripture in the Believer's Church Tradition

Session XIV: Revelation; A Believer's Church Approach

To be covered on-line between Oct. 25th- November 1st

Session XV: Inspiration of Scripture

Session XVI: Inerrancy of Scripture

Session XVII: Infallibility of Scripture

Session XVIII: The Hermeneutical Question in the Believer's Church Tradition

To be covered in class Nov. 1st

Session XIX: The Atonement in the Believer's Church Tradition

Session XX: Justification by Faith in the Believer's Church Tradition

To be covered on-line between Nov. 1st and Nov. 15th

Module III: Church and Ministry in the Believers Church Tradition

Session XXI: Sanctification; the Christian Life in the Believer's Church Tradition

Session XXII: The Church: The Nature of God's Chosen People

To be covered in class on Nov. 15th

Session XXIII: The Church as God's Chosen People

Session XXIV: The Church as God's Holy Spirit-Gifted People

To be covered on-line between Nov. 15th – Nov. 29th

Session XXV: The Church as God's People Sent on a Mission

Session XXVI: The Church as God's People Led

To be covered in class Nov 29th

Session XXVII: The Believer's Church in Relation to the World

Session XXVIII: The Nature of Ministry in the Believer's Church Tradition

Session XXIX: The Nature of Ministry in the Believer's Church Tradition – Continued

Session XXX: Theology as a discipline in the Believer's Church Tradition

To be covered on-line between Nov. 29th and Dec. 9th

Reading Week: October 25th-29th No class for that week.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A+	Superior	4.30
A	Excellent	4.00
A-	Very Good	3.70
B+	Proficient	3.30
B	Good	3.00
B-	Average	2.70
C+	Adequate	2.30

C	Barely Acceptable	2.00
C-	Needs Work	1.70
F	Below Standard	0.00

See my *Syllabus Supplement* for information on special situations, extensions and school closure policies.

Important Academic Notes

Web Support – Student Portal <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. (***I use this system exclusively in all my communications with students at ACTS/TWU: All assignments are to be posted to mycourses and all grading will be done from there***)

Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), MAX (850 AM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:30 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University's switchboard as well as on the website <http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>. The first announcement regarding a closure will cover the period up to 1:00 p.m. only. If classes are to be cancelled beyond 1:00 p.m., this decision will be announced by the same means before 11:00 a.m. that day. Students and faculty should assume that all night classes will continue to operate. If the emergency continues into the evening, students and faculty may check for a closure notice on the University's switchboard and website after 3:00 p.m. that day.

Paper Formatting: *Students need to adhere to Turabian format except in counselling courses, for which APA format is used.*

Students are encouraged strongly 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: <http://faculty.ucc.edu/egh-damerow/turabian.htm> or www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Note that in RefWorks the available formatting styles are those of Turabian (Notes), 6th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 5th edition.

Academic Honesty

A fundamental expectation, grounded in biblical ethics, for anyone involved in academic work at ACTS is that he/she practice academic honesty. Students must become familiar with, and adhere to, the principles and requirements associated with academic honesty. 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 (www.acts.twu.ca) at the following link: www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html.