Fall Term 2020
Course Syllabus
Course Number: BS825
Course Title: Anglican Approaches to the Rule of Faith
Credit Hours: 3

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Course Description

The course provides an opportunity to develop more fully an area of expertise in a theological discipline through seminar courses and research. More specifically, the course aims to prepare students for further doctoral study. The Fall 2020 unit of BS825 will be devoted to the topic of the rule of faith or regula fidei in the Anglican tradition. Over the course of the semester students will read selections from John Donne, John Keble, John Henry Newman, Hans Frei, Christopher Seitz, Ephraim Radner, and Kathryn Greene-McCreight. Of particular interest and focus will be the exegetical construction of the rule of faith from the Old Testament’s sensus literalis, as well as the early church’s understanding of the rule’s relation to catechesis, creeds, and ecclesial tradition, on the one hand, and modern construals of the rule in terms of story lines, narrative, and drama, on the other.

Depending upon class size, each student will be given one or more opportunities to lead discussion on a particular reading for the course. Students will also be asked to identify an issue of critical interest surrounding contemporary discussion of the rule of faith and prepare a major research paper on that interest.

Course Texts

Required


Recommended


Grading and Course Requirements

Classroom and Paper Requirements for STM and Non-STM Students

One student will be assigned to lead seminar each week. At least one day prior to class, the students responsible for leading discussion will circulate a four to six page summary (double-spaced) of the assigned reading to all other members of the class, as well as a set of three or more questions to help guide the discussion.

If for some reason you are unable to lead discussion on the week that you have been assigned, it will be your responsibility to switch places with another student ahead of time. The show must go on, regardless of whether you are able to be there or not.

Reading assignments typically coincide with the day they are to be discussed. Most readings are
posted online. All others are available from the library reserve shelves.

If you are a student who is enrolled in the STM degree program, you will be expected to lead the discussion for three seminars. Non-STM students will be expected to lead the discussion for two seminars.

*Book Review*

Students will prepare a careful review of either Ephraim Radner’s book *Hope Among the Fragments*, or Chris Seitz’s recent book *The Elder Testament: Canon, Theology, Trinity*. The review should be six to ten pages long, double-spaced. At least one third of the review must be devoted to a constructively critical interaction with the book’s concepts (not merely its style of presentation).

*Final Paper*

Students will also be asked to identify an issue of critical interest on the rule of faith and prepare a major research paper on that interest. STM students will prepare a final paper 25-30 pages long (double-spaced, including bibliography). Non-STM students will prepare a final paper 15-20 pages long (double-spaced, including bibliography).

Although knowledge of Hebrew and Greek is not required for this course, those students who would like to make use of their knowledge of biblical languages in their papers are encouraged to do so. More detailed information on the paper requirements will be given in class, and a bibliography for the class will be posted on Google Classroom.

*Grading*

Grading for this course will be based upon in-class participation (20 percent), written chapter summaries and accompanying questions (20 percent), the book review (20 percent), and the final paper (40 percent).

*Course Schedule*

Aug 31 Introductory Issues

What is the rule of faith? Theological, exegetical, and ecclesial aspects

Sept 07 Labor Day (No Classes)

Sept 14 Scripture and the rule of faith

Readings: 1) Collett, *Figural Reading*, 25-57
2) Collett, “Biblical Theology and Its Modern Substitutes” (online)
3) Collett, “Redemptive History, Storytelling, and Scripture” (online)
Sept 21  Scripture and Ecclesial Tradition

Readings: 1) Bauckham, *God and the Crisis of Freedom*, 91-115 (library)
2) Oberman, *Harvest of Medieval Theology*, 365-75 (library)
3) Webster, “BT and the Clarity of Scripture,” 352-84 (library)

Sept 28  Realistic narrative and the Rule of Faith (Frei)

Readings: 1) Frei, *Eclipse of Biblical Narrative*, 1-16 (online)
2) Frei, “Literal Sense: Will It Stretch or Break?” (online)
3) Tanner, “Theology and the Plain Sense” (online)
4) Greene-McCreight, *Ad Litteram*, 1-22 (online)

Oct 05  Story-Shaped Approaches to the Rule of Faith

Readings: 1) Blowers, “The Regula Fidei,” (online)
2) MacDonald, “Israel and the OT Story,” (online)

Oct 12  Reading Week (No Class)

Oct 19  Dramatized Storytelling (Theater) and the Rule of Faith

Readings: 1) Bartholomew & Goheen, “Story and Biblical Theology” (online)
2) Vanhoozer, *Drama of Doctrine* (online)
3) NT Wright, *Scripture and the Authority of God* (online)

Oct 26  Israel’s scriptures and the Rule of Faith (Seitz)

Readings: 1) Seitz, *Character of Christian Scripture*, 173-210 (library)
3) Collett, Review Essay on *The Elder Testament* (online)

Nov 02  Israel’s scriptures and the Rule of Faith (Radner)

Readings: 1) Radner, “The Cost of Communion” (online)
2) Radner, “The Absence of the Comforter” (online)

Recommended: 1) Lindbeck, “The Story-Shaped Church,” (online)
2) Popkin, The History of Skepticism, ch. 1 (online)

Nov 09  The Fathers and the Rule of Faith (Keble)

Reading: 1) John Keble, On the Mysticism of the Fathers (Tract 89)
2) Radner, *Hope Among the Fragments*, 79-90
Nov 16  Ecclesial tradition and the Rule of Faith (Newman)

Readings: 1) Newman, “The Development of Doctrine” (online)
          2) Seitz, “Roman Catholic Hermeneutics,” *Convergences* (online)

Nov 23  Preaching and the Rule of Faith (Donne)

Reading: 1) Donne, *Imagination Shaped* (library)
          2) Donne, “In the Shadow of Thy Wings,” Sermon on Ps. 63:7 (online)

Nov 30  The Eucharist and the Rule of Faith (Boersma)

Reading: 1) Boersma, *Scripture as Real Presence* (online)

Dec 07  Open Discussion (TBD)

Dec 14  Deadline for the review and final paper