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WO 650 Tutorial in Worship Advanced Investigations: Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Lester Ruth

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WO 650 Tutorial in Worship
Advanced Investigations: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper
Spring 2003
Thursdays 2:30-5:15 Orlando and Wilmore through March 6
Online through the remainder of the semester
Dr. Lester Ruth

This course will involve distance-learning instruction. Students will be expected to have familiarity with the First Class Client email system.

(This course does not fulfill a core elective requirement in Proclamation.)

Professor’s information: Dr. Lester Ruth; BC (Beeson) 218; 859-858-2175; lester_ruth@asburyseminary.edu; Office hours: 3:30-4:30 p.m. Wednesdays; 9:45-10:45 Thursdays; other times and other means (V-Tel and Orlando visit) by appointment. During office hours, I can be contacted by telephone, email, or First Class chat room. Telephone calls preferred over emails.

Course Description
This course focuses on the critical theological issues—past and present—which exist in understanding baptism and the Lord’s Supper. It is a more extensive examination of these issues than the student received in the WO510-49 level course. Once it moves to an online format, the course will operate on a seminar format with a strong emphasis on the student’s close reading of the required texts and on the student’s ability to participate in a running discussion of the critical theological topics.

Course Objectives
Students completing this course will be able to:
--define the most critical recurring issues in baptismal and eucharistic theology;
--articulate from their own viewpoint a coherent theology of baptism and the Lord’s Supper;
--critique her or his own theology by understanding how other Christians would evaluate this personal articulation of theology.

Texts to be purchased (4 required books)

There will be additional required reading on the library’s electronic reserve.

Note: specific online presentations will require additional reading.

Online discussion rhythm
When the class moves to an online basis, the weekly discussions will run from 9 a.m. on one Friday morning to 8 a.m. on the following Friday morning. The emails will be archived each Friday morning.

Online check
All WO650 students must have a First Class email account and be familiar with the procedures for starting and participating in online discussion in the Discussion Center of the class folder.

By Thursday, February 27 every student should have accessed the Discussion Center and responded to the professor’s initial posting.

Assignments
There will be four kinds of assignments:
--quizzes on reading: WO650 students will take the three in-class quizzes on the readings given on February 20, February 27, and March 6.

--general online participation: WO650 students are expected to have high levels of participation in the online discussions. At a minimum, each student is expected to participate in each week’s discussion 3 times. The professor will keep track of each student accomplishing this minimum goal. In addition, the professor will keep track of the number of significant postings by each student. A significant posting has one or more of the following qualities: insightful interaction with the reading material; originality of thought; insightfulness of thought, pointed response to another student or the professor; or advancement of the discussion forward.

Students should remember that this is an online seminar on historical and contemporary theology. Ability to understand and articulate the theology found in the readers will be more highly valued than students’ recitation of their own experience.

At the end of the semester, students will be asked to label the quality of their classmates’ online interaction. Although the final evaluation for grading purposes will be the professor’s, he will consider this peer evaluation in addition to his own observations.

--special online participation: at least once in the semester (this will be determined according to the number of students registered for the class), each student will do additional reading beyond the general required reading, using as a beginning basis the bibliographic included as an appendix to this syllabus. This reading can be supplemented by readings found and selected by the student. The student should do enough reading so as to accomplish the following.

Using this additional reading as background to deepen their understanding of the topic, the student will initiate the assigned week’s online discussion. It will be the student’s responsibility to identify the crucial theological issues and define the most critical theological categories for that week’s discussion and to make sure that they are adequately discussed in the course of the week. In addition, the student should raise two or three questions that can serve to spark wider discussion by their classmates.

In effect, the student should take this as seriously as if he or she was preparing a formal presentation for an on-campus class.

The student with that week’s special responsibility should make her or his posting on Friday morning by 9 a.m.

--a final project: As a final project, each student can choose one of the following: 1) development of plans to teach on sacramental theology in a local church; 2) development of theological position papers on sacrament theology appropriate for the student’s denominational tradition and adequate enough to serve as the basis for responding to ordination/ministry boards; within these papers, the student will be asked to critique theologically their own position; or 3) a research paper of the student’s own choosing (it is recommended that the student check with the professor on approval of the topic). Generally, this final project should run around 15 pages double spaced. Due Friday, May 16 by noon in Professor’s Ruth office (Beeson 218) or as an email attachment.

Note: In grading, the professor will use the following qualitative assessments, in descending order: exceptional work, good work, acceptable work, marginal work, and unacceptable work. For more details on the qualities of each level and their relationship to letter grades, please see p. 28 of the seminary catalog.

Means of calculating the grade
Students’ grades will be calculated in the following manner:

--weekly quizzes on reading: 10% of the grade
--regular online participation: 45% of the grade
--special online participation: 25% of the grade
--final project: 20% of the grade

Late work
Tardiness on the final comprehensive project will be penalized in the following manner: every 24 hours late will result in the loss of an entire letter grade for the project. For example, a project turned in
within the first 24 hours of the due time and date will be dropped 1 letter grade (A to B) whereas a project
turned in within the second 24 hours will be dropped 2 letter grades. The penalty is assessed on the project,
ot on the semester grade.

**Course Schedule**
Course meets jointly with WO515
February 13: The promise of Christ’s Presence and the sacramentality of the Church

February 20: The ministry of Christ: then and now (Professor Ruth in Orlando)
   Quiz on this reading: Edward Schillebeeckx, pp. 13-17, 40-45 in *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God* (Sheed and Ward, 1963); Karl Rahner, “What is a Sacrament?” in *Worship* 47, 5 (May 1973): 274-284. Pointers: consider how Schillebeeckx says physical encounter is still possible with Christ; According to Rahner, why is it more important to talk about Christ’s “institution” of the church than about specific “institution” of individual sacraments?

February 27: Christ, baptizer with the Holy Spirit

March 6: Christ, host of the table, Lamb of God, heavenly bread
   Quiz on this reading: J. Ernest Rattenbury, pp. 168-170 in *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley* (OSL Publications, 1996); Rob L. Staples, pp. 211-228 in *Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The Place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality* (Beacon Hill Press, 1991); Laurence Hull Stookey, pp. 41-62 in *Eucharist: Christ’s Feast With The Church* (Abingdon, 1993); William Willimon, pp. 23-34 in *Sunday Dinner*. Pointer: consider the different manners Christ is said to be present in the Lord’s Supper; how does affirming the presence of Christ affect what we say about the bread and wine?

Online introduction to be completed by February 27.

**Please note that through March 6 the course will meet jointly with WO515, a core worship elective in worship.**

Course meets as online forum
March 7-13: Historic eucharistic doctrines
   Required reading for everyone: essay by Raymond Johnny on Ignatius on reserve; essay by Adalbert Hamman on Irenaeus on reserve; section from Gary Macy’s *The Banquet’s Wisdom* on reserve

March 14-20: Historic baptismal doctrines
   Required reading for everyone: David Wright’s essay on Augustine and the transformation of baptism on reserve; section from Laurence Stookey’s *Baptism* on reserve

March 21-27: Historic Protestant sacramental doctrines: baptism
   Required reading for everyone: chapters 1-3 in James White’s *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*

March 28-April 3 Historic Protestant sacramental doctrines: Eucharist
   Required reading for everyone: chapters 4-5 in James White’s *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*

April 4-17: Recent Roman Catholic and Orthodox perspectives
   Required reading for everyone: section from Kenan Osborne’ *Sacramental Theology* on reserve; sections from Alexander Schmemann’s *The Eucharist* and *Of Water and the Spirit* on reserve

April 18-24: Recent ecumenical perspectives
Required reading for everyone: book entitled *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*; sections from Robert Webber’s *The Sacred Actions of Worship* on reserve

April 25-May 1: Methodism on baptism
   Required reading for everyone: John Wesley’s sermons on the new birth on reserve; John Wesley’s treatise on baptism on reserve; United Methodist denominational statement entitled *Of Water and the Spirit* (access at www.gbod.org/worship/articles/water_spirit/); Ted Campbell’s essay on Wesley on baptism and conversion on reserve; denominational statements and baptismal rites on reserve

May 2-8: Infant baptism closely considered
   Required reading for everyone: Buchanan’s *A Case for Infant Baptism*; Pawson’s and Buchanan’s *Infant Baptism Under Cross-Examination*

May 9-15: Methodism on the Lord’s Supper
   Required reading for everyone: section from J. Ernest Rattenbury’s *Eucharistic Hymns* (treatise and hymns) on reserve; section from John Bowmer’s *The Sacraments of the Lord’s Supper in Early Methodism* on reserve; John Wesley’s sermons on Communion on reserve; denominational statements on reserve; current position papers from United Methodist eucharistic study committee (http://www.gbod.org/worship/default.asp?loc_id=9,388,650&act=nav_loc);
Appendix: Additional Bibliography

Note: Do not be limited by this bibliography in doing your preparation.

Note: Here’s a good, standard method for doing research:
--Find a “threshold” article, book, or dictionary article which provide a good entrée into the topic.
--Compile your bibliography from the material cited in this “threshold.”
--Call up the threshold article or book on the library’s online catalog for books or on the library’s electronic
database for articles (check with the reserve librarian for help). See what the subject headings are.
Call up other materials by that same subject heading.
--Remember that it is always best to read both primary material (writings from the theologian) as well as
secondary material (other people’s comments on what the theologian said). For example, if studying
Calvin on the Lord’s Supper, read what Calvin has to say as well as commentators on Calvin.

Note: The ATS libraries may not own all of the material needed to prepare for your online
presentation. Compile your bibliography early and order what you need from interlibrary
loan.

General bibliographic information

The best comprehensive bibliography on Christian worship is:

Check out the following websites for their bibliographies: www.calvin.edu/worship and www.iwsfla.org.

Also refer to the bibliographies in Webber, Robert E., ed. The Sacred Actions of Christian Worship, vol. 6
in The Complete Library of Christian Worship. The volume can also be good for background
essays.

Do not forget to look at the helpful entries (each followed by a bibliography) in The Oxford Dictionary of
the Christian Church and Fink, Peter, ed. The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship.

The following is also a good source for background articles.
University Press, 1980

Historic Eucharistic Doctrine


patristic sources: the Didache, Clement of rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of
Lyons, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian of Carthage, Origen, the Diascalia and
Constitutiones Apostolorum. Has bibliography.

Heron, Alasdair I. C. Table and Tradition: Toward an Ecumenical Understanding of the Eucharist.
Westminster, 1983.


Pueblo, 1982.


**Historic Baptismal Doctrine**


**Historic Protestant Doctrine: baptism**

Consult the bibliography at the end of White’s *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*.


**Historic Protestant Doctrine: Eucharist**

Consult the bibliography at the end of White’s *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*.


**Roman Catholic**


Osborne, Kenan B. *Sacramental Theology A General Introduction*. in its entirety.


**Orthodox**


----------------------. *For the Life of the World*. St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press.

----------------------. *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*. St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press.

**Recent Ecumenical doctrine**


Various denominational responses to Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry.

Volume 13, no. 2 of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. Entire issue devoted to The Eucharist in ecumenical dialogue (Catholic compared to Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed, Methodist, Baptist, and Jewish)

**Methodism on Baptism**

Borgen, Ole. *John Wesley on the Sacraments* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972),

*Doxology* 11 (1994); the whole issue is devoted to a Methodist understanding of baptism; articles by Vogel, Felton, Hickman.


Ruth, Lester. Anthology of passages from John Wesley on baptismal regeneration. Posted in course center in class icon in First Class.


**Methodism on Eucharist**

Borgen, Ole. *John Wesley on the Sacraments* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972),


Ruth, Lester, section on the Lord’s Supper from *A Little Heaven Below* (Kingswood, 2000) for early American Methodist theology.


**Infant Baptism**


Alphabetical List
Electronic Reserves WO650 Spring 03
*=also for WO515


Laurence Hull Stookey, pp. 116-126 in *Baptism Christ’s Act in the Church* (Abingdon, 1986).


*William Willimon, pp. 23-34 in *Sunday Dinner*.

Student information sheet: WO650

Name_________________________________________

I moved here from ______________________________

Current church (i.e., denominational) affiliation:_________________________

Prior church (i.e., denominational affiliation:____________________________

Year at ATS: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th Other

My greatest desire for this course is
__________________________________________________________.

I usually experience Christ in worship at the following point(s):
__________________________________________________________.