

COURSE SYLLABUS

ST408: Foundations of Systematic Theology

Course Lecturer: John M. Frame, DD

Course Description

Welcome to *Foundations of Systematic Theology*, an online graduate-level course designed to help you establish a foundation of concepts and terminology on which to build a theological framework. This foundation will prepare you to access important theological works and confidently discuss various teachings of Scripture and how they apply to life. The goal of this course is to equip you to understand God's Word more fully.

The course deals with the essentials of all major areas of systematic theology with the goal to orient you to the basic concepts and terminology necessary to understand God's Word more accurately and deeply. The lectures focus on the overarching theme of God's lordship using the three attributes of control, authority, and presence as a means of organizing the doctrines of Scripture. You will gain an understanding of how the great teachings of Scripture fit together and will be able to apply those teachings to life and ministry.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of your study, you should be able to do the following:

- Understand the nature of theology.
- Summarize what the Bible teaches on the subjects commonly discussed in theological literature.
- Trace ways in which biblical teachings are linked together by the overarching theme of lordship.
- Understand key theological terms and concepts to apply in future theological studies.
- Identify major doctrinal controversies in the history of the church and show how those controversies affected the study of theology.
- Apply good theological methods to analyze issues not explicitly discussed in the course.
- Appreciate the personal spiritual significance of understanding basic theological concepts.
- Analyze your own spiritual life in light of biblical doctrine in order to identify areas in which you need to grow.
- Place a high value on theology for spiritual growth for yourself and those you teach.

Accessibility

If you have particular accessibility needs, please contact the CUGN Registrar at the beginning of the course. This will allow us to work directly with you to make efforts to accommodate your situation and ensure as full as possible accessibility to the course.

Course Lecturer



John M. Frame, DD

Education:

- Belhaven College, DD
- Yale University, MPhil
- Westminster Theological Seminary, BD
- Princeton University, AB

Teaching Career:

- J.D. Trimble Chair of Systematic Theology and Philosophy, Reformed Theological Seminary
- Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy, Reformed Theological Seminary
- Founding faculty member (taught apologetics and theology courses), Westminster Theological Seminary, California (1980-2000)
- Professor of Apologetics and Systematic Theology, Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia (1968-1980)
- Balanced time between teaching and extensive academic research

Other Career Highlights:

- Discerning media critic and talented musician, playing both organ and piano
- Local ministry work, training pastors and lay leaders
- Ordained by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church
- Associate pastor in churches in Pennsylvania, California, and Florida
- Considered one of the foremost scholars on the thought of Cornelius Van Til and has been published extensively on Van Til's writings
- Activity in various professional societies and organizations for decades, including the Evangelical Theological Society and the Society of Christian Philosophers

Publications:

- Articles in *The Westminster Theological Journal* and *Christian Culture*
- Author of several books, including *Apologetics: A Justification of Christian Belief*, *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology*, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, *Apologetics to the Glory of God*, *Salvation Belongs to the Lord*, and *The Doctrine of the Word of God*

Online Professor

Within two weeks of your registration for the course, CUGN will assign one of its faculty members as the online professor. Once your online professor has been assigned, (s)he will be introduced and will guide you through the 8-week study. Your online professor will be available to you by email and can, at set times, be available by video chat or other real-time technology.

The following will be done by the online professor in order to stimulate student involvement and to facilitate effective learning:

- Evaluate and assign grades to all coursework.
- Answer questions that may arise.
- Issue your final grade.

For additional help as you work through this course, please read *Succeeding in Your Online Course*, which is provided at the end of this syllabus.

Course Texts

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994.

You will also need to have access to a Bible and the following historical documents: Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed, Westminster Confession of Faith, and Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms, which are included as appendices to Grudem's text and are also available online at www.creeds.net and www.reformed.org/documents/.

Textbooks can be ordered through our online store at CUGN.org, through your local bookstore, or through your preferred eReader when available.

Academic Honesty

At CUGN, we believe all we do is "as unto the Lord" and we thus hold to a high academic standard of honesty; we do not tolerate plagiarism and cheating. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty face consequences ranging from interaction with the Academic Dean to expulsion from CUGN.

Quizzes and Exams: Any student found guilty of cheating on a quiz or exam will automatically receive a score of zero for that quiz or exam. A second offense will result in automatic course failure and possible disciplinary action and/or expulsion from CUGN. Please view the [CUGN Academic Catalog](#) for a full definition and examples of cheating.

Plagiarism: If a student's work is found to be plagiarized, consequences will vary depending on the nature of the plagiarism.

If an offense is deemed unintentional, the student will have an opportunity to resubmit the work. A second offense will result in an automatic score of zero for that assignment, which may also result in failure of that course.

More serious plagiarism offenses could result in automatic course failure, disciplinary action, or expulsion from CUGN. Please view the [CUGN Academic Catalog](#) for a full definition and examples of plagiarism. If you have questions about plagiarism, or would like to request resources for learning how to avoid plagiarism, please contact our Registrar's Office at registrar@cugn.org or toll free at (888) 487-5376 ext. 3.

Course Methods

Throughout this course, a number of methods will be used to engage you in learning and processing information, and applying the learning to your life. These methods include the following:

Media/Materials

The course will include media presentations of lectures and supplementary materials to be viewed, listened to and/or read throughout the lessons of the course.

- **Audio-based teaching**
The primary course content will be delivered via audio lectures, including the full transcript of each lecture.
- **Multisensory learning**
Because the primary teaching information is provided in audio and PDF text documents, students can choose the medium (or combination of media) that most closely aligns with their individual learning styles.
- **Readings and other media**
Reading from the required textbooks will be assigned to students each week.

Interaction

Whether sitting in a traditional classroom or studying from a distance, students benefit from interaction and collaboration with other students. In order to meet this need in distance theological education, CUGN offers structures and resources to encourage effective community interaction in this course.

Discussion Forum

Students are required to respond to questions posted in the course and are encouraged to read and respond to the posts of other students.

Reflection

Through blogging, CUGN provides many opportunities for students to reflect on what they have learned, what they believe, and where they are challenged. The goal of these reflections is personal spiritual growth and transformation.

Course Requirements

This course consists of a mentor relationship, readings, audio lectures, videos, discussion forums, a creative research project, quizzes, and blogging. The information regarding these course components and expectations is as follows:

MENTOR

This course requires that you seek out a mentor in your community with whom you can communicate by e-mail and/or telephone and with whom you can meet face-to-face at least twice during the

course. The purpose of this mentoring relationship is to enable you to assimilate the teaching in this course into your life and ministry. Further definition of the mentor's role in this course can be found in the "Mentor Requirements" information available in the Week 1 Assignments section of the course.

READING

Study assignments covered in this course should be read in the context of the lesson in which they are assigned. In addition to the required textbooks, you may be asked to read supplementary materials.

The syllabus will show an assigned section of the textbook, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* by Dr. Wayne Grudem. Instead of reading the entire section shown for each week, please do the following:

- Peruse the section and choose chapters that are most interesting to you.
- Read a *minimum* of 50 pages from the assigned section or sections each week. In order to read with continuity, you are expected to finish reading each selected chapter even if this goes slightly above the 50-pages weekly requirement.
- Please record in your weekly validation form the chapters that you read each week with respective page numbers and weekly totals of reading.

At the end of the course, when you are asked to validate your reading (or percentage thereof), please use the 50-pages minimum per week as your basis.

AUDIO LECTURES

Each of the lessons in this course features an audio lecture of approximately 40 to 50 minutes in length delivered by Dr. John Frame. These instructional lectures are required and can be listened to as many times as needed. The written text of the lecture, as well as a guided outline to assist in note-taking, are made available in PDF format. There are 24 lectures in this course; therefore, three lectures will be presented and discussed each week.

DISCUSSION FORUMS

Discussion questions related to each week's lectures are integrated into the weekly course requirements. You are required to post your own original response to each question in the Discussion Forum. Each response should consist of two to three well-developed paragraphs. In addition, your online professor may comment on your posts, and you should be prepared to respond to those comments.

VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

There are two video presentations related to this course that are required viewing. You will note them in the assignment section in the weeks where they are relevant.

CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT

You will develop a creative research project on a topic of interest related to the subject matter of this course. Upon completion of the project, you will submit a paper describing the project along with any

related documentation. More guidance concerning the project will be provided by your online professor during the first week of the course, and you may also find topic ideas and further instructions in the Creative Research Project Instructions document available in the Before You Begin section of the course. The topic for your research project must be submitted to your professor for preapproval prior to beginning your research. Projects may be posted online to be read and commented on by other students. Your Creative Research Project and related writing are due at the end of Week 5. Remember, each week begins on a Monday and ends the following Sunday; therefore, the Creative Research Project is due on the Sunday of Week 5 at 11:59 p.m. EST.

QUIZZES

You will take a 10-question, multiple choice and/or true/false quiz at the end of each lecture. There is a “remediation” feature built into all quiz questions that allows you to review questions you missed. Once you have reviewed the question again, you can attempt to answer a second time. If you are correct, you will receive half of the normal credit for that question. If you do not attempt to answer the second time, you will not receive credit for that question. You will be given only one attempt to take each quiz. All quizzes are timed (20 minutes) and will be graded automatically.

REFLECTION

You will be required to keep a blog during the 8 weeks of this course, posting *at least once per lesson*. Your blog entries will consist of your response to the Personal Reflection Question found in each lesson’s Class Time. Blog entries can be viewed only by you and CUGN faculty, unless you wish to make them available to anyone else taking the class. The purpose of the blog is to help you reflect on what you are learning, what you believe, and where you may be challenged in your thinking and your life by what is studied in this course. The goal of these reflections is personal spiritual growth.

DUE DATES

Each week of the course begins on Monday at 12:01 a.m. EST and ends on Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST. Unless noted otherwise, all assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. EST on the Sunday of the week in which the assignment is due. For example, if an assignment is due during Week 2, you must complete and submit it by 11:59 p.m. EST on Sunday, the last day of Week 2. It is at your online professor’s discretion to penalize late work.

Course Grading

All coursework must be completed and turned in to your online professor within five days of the end of Week 8. Please note that it is at your online professor’s discretion to penalize late work.

Your grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Online Participation	30% of Course Grade
Creative Research Project	30% of Course Grade
Lesson Quizzes	25% of Course Grade
Reading	10% of Course Grade
Mentor Meetings	5% of Course Grade

Grades will be issued within two weeks of the end of the course.

Weekly Topics and Assignments

Week 1:

- Take the Moodle tutorial for online instruction.
- Listen to the following lectures:
 - #1: *Theology Proper: God the Lord*
 - #2: *Theology Proper: God's Acts in History and Biblical Descriptions of Him*
 - #3: *Theology Proper: The Trinity*
- View the video *Where Did the Bible Come From?*.
- Read from the following section of the course text:
 - Chapter 1: Introduction to Systematic Theology
 - Part 2: The Doctrine of God
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 1, 2, and 3.
- Identify and contact your mentor.
- Submit topic for Creative Research Project.

Week 2:

- Listen to the following lectures:
 - #4: *Bibliology: The Word of God*
 - #5: *Bibliology: The Authority of Scripture*
 - #6: *What Is Theology?*
- View the video *Has the Bible Been Corrupted?*.
- Read from the following section of the course text:
 - Part 1: The Nature of the Word of God
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 4, 5, and 6.
- Have first meeting with your mentor.

Week 3:

- Listen to the following lectures:
 - #7: *Anthropology: Man, the Image of God*
 - #8: *Hamartiology: Sin, the Fall, and Common Grace*
 - #9: *God's Covenants*
- Read from the following section of the course text:

Part 3: The Doctrine of Man

- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 7, 8, and 9.

Week 4:

- Listen to the following lectures:
#10: Christology: The Person of Christ
#11: Christology: The Work of Christ
#12: Pneumatology: The Person and Work of the Spirit
- Read from the following section of the course text:
 Part 4: The Doctrines of Christ and the Holy Spirit
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 10, 11, and 12.

Week 5:

- Listen to the following lectures:
#13: Soteriology: Election, Calling, and Regeneration
#14: Soteriology: Conversion (Faith and Repentance)
#15: Soteriology: Justification and Adoption
- Read from the following section of the course text:
 Chapters 31-38 of Part 5: The Doctrine of the Application of Redemption
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 13, 14, and 15.
- Submit Creative Research Project.

Week 6:

- Listen to the following lectures:
#16: Soteriology: Sanctification and Assurance
#17: Soteriology: Perseverance and Glorification
#18: Ecclesiology: The Nature of the Church
- Read from the following section of the course text:
 Chapters 39-43 of Part 5: The Doctrine of the Application of Redemption
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.

- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 16, 17, and 18.

Week 7:

- Listen to the following lectures:
#19: Ecclesiology: The Task of the Church
#20: Ecclesiology: The Means of Grace (Spiritual Growth) in the Church
#21: Ecclesiology: The Sacraments
- Read from the following section of the course text:
 Part 6: The Doctrine of the Church
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 19, 20, and 21.

Week 8:

- Listen to the following lectures:
#22: Eschatology: Heaven and Hell
#23: Eschatology: The Events of the Last Days
#24: Synthesis and Application: Bringing it All Together
- Read from the following section of the course text:
 Part 7: The Doctrine of the Future
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete your blog entries.
- Complete quizzes 22, 23, and 24.
- Have final meeting with your mentor.

Week 8 Follow-Up:

- Complete and post all reflective blog entries.
- Complete Discussion Participation, Reading Completion, and Mentor Meetings Validations.
- Complete and submit course evaluation form.

Course Contributors

CUGN utilizes the radio and television teams of Our Daily Bread Ministries to enhance the students' educational experience. This course uses two videos from the *Day of Discovery* television program. The expert contributors to these programs are listed as follows:

- Darrell Bock, Ph.D. (University of Aberdeen, Scotland), Research Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary
- Mart DeHaan, Litt.D. (Cornerstone University), Senior Advisor of Ministry Content for Our Daily Bread Ministries

- Jimmy DeYoung, Ph.D. (Louisiana Baptist University), Journalist and Conference Speaker
- Paul Maier, Ph.D. (University of Basel), Professor of Ancient History at Western Michigan University
- Rick Watts, Ph.D. (Cambridge), Professor of New Testament at Regent College
- Daniel B. Wallace, Ph.D. (Dallas Theological Seminary), Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary

Notes Regarding This Syllabus

This syllabus is designed to provide learners with an overview of the course. CUGN will provide specific instructions related to assignments for each lesson, specific discussion question postings, and interactive involvement with all students.

Succeeding in Your Online Course

1. Remember that this is a full semester's study completed in eight weeks. Therefore, expect that there will be a significant time commitment needed in order to complete all the requirements.
2. If you have any questions about the Moodle learning environment, the course requirements, schedule, or assignments, please contact the online professor who is ready and willing to help you have a successful online learning experience.
3. Technological problems may occur. Be sure to have a back-up plan in case of computer failure or late arrival of textbooks.
4. Before you post a comment or a response to another student's comment, be sure you have read the material and listened to the lectures related to the topic under discussion.
5. Think about how you can promote additional discussion by the comments you post.
6. When you post, respond directly to the question under consideration and express your points clearly and concisely, making only one main point per post.
7. If you find sources related to the topic being discussed, please share them with the class.
8. Practice good "netiquette": Disagree respectfully, stay on point, and don't post anything that is derogatory or inflammatory.
9. Enjoy, learn, challenge, and be challenged!