

# THEO6308 The Doctrine of the Church

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
DIVISION OF THEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL STUDIES  
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ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

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*"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them,  
because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."*

1 Timothy 4:16

### Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

### Core Value Focus

The seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. The core value focus for this academic year is **servant leadership**.

### Curriculum Competencies

All graduates of NOBTS are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in each of the following areas: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Disciple Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. The curriculum competencies addressed in this course are: Biblical Exposition and Christian Theological Heritage

### Course Description

This course in theology introduces the student to the doctrine of church—ecclesiology. The student will begin formation of a systematic, biblical perspective on the church both contemporary and historical. Biblical teachings of church functions and practices will be explored. The biblical descriptions of the tasks of pastors, bishops, elders, deacons, and members of the body of Christ will be examined.

### Student Learning Outcomes

The student, by the end of the course, should:

1. Be able to understand theological method and the doctrine of the church-ecclesiology biblically, historically, and systematically.
2. Be able to apply theology by integrating this doctrine into a coherent, comprehensive, and consistent Christian worldview.
3. Be able to communicate this doctrine in the particular ministry calling and context of the learner.

### Statement on Biblical Authority

In order to develop competent theological researchers for the twenty-first century church and academy, students in this course will be exposed to seminal works in Christian theology from a wide array of theological perspectives, including the influential works of many prominent non-evangelical and liberal

theologians. Students are expected to become familiar with and demonstrate advanced, biblically guided critical engagement with the works of these thinkers.

The instructor of this course operates under the assumption that the Bible is the inspired, totally true and trustworthy Word of God which is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). The Baptist Faith and Message (2000) provides the confessional framework from which the instructor leads the course.

### **Required Textbooks**

Allison, Gregg. *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012.

### **Review Texts (total of two)**

#### **Choose One (1) of the Following Texts on Church Government:**

Brand, Chad Owen and R. Stanton Norman, eds. *Perspectives on Church Government: Five Views of Church Polity*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2004.

Cowan, Steven, ed. *Who Runs the Church?: 4 Views on Church Government*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.

Cowen, Gerald. *Who Rules the Church? Examining Congregational Leadership and Church Government*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2003.

#### **Choose One (1) of the Following Texts on Ordinances:**

Armstrong, John H., ed. *Understanding Four Views on Baptism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

Armstrong, John H., ed. *Understanding Four Views on the Lord's Supper*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

Malone, Fred. *The Baptism of Disciples Alone: A Covenantal Argument for Credobaptism versus Paedobaptism*, rev. ed. Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2007.

Schreiner, Thomas R., ed. *The Lord's Supper: Remembering and Proclaiming Christ Until He Comes*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011.

Schreiner, Thomas R. and Shawn D. Wright, eds., *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007.

Wright, David F., ed. *Baptism: Three Views*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009.

### **Course Teaching Methodology**

The course will involve the following methodologies: lectures from the professor, reading, and directed research questions.

### **Course Requirements**

### 1. Attendance and Participation (10%)

Students are expected to participate in classroom discussion and to read all required materials prior to class attendance. The professor reserves the right to require of students a “pop” quiz to keep them accountable for required readings. *Students will be required to hand in a reading report at the end of the semester.*

### 2. Book Reviews.

Each student is required to review 2 books. Both reviews should include (1) a bibliographic entry, (2) brief biographical data about the author(s) (e.g., his or her position, degrees, research interests, and books), (3) an assessment of the main purpose and/or thesis of the book, (4) an overview of the author’s assumptions, method, sources, logic, and style; (5) a concise summary of the book’s contents, (6) a thorough critical analysis of the book, and (7) a conclusion with a recommendation or dismissal. The reviews should be between 4-6 pages in length (12-pt. Times New Roman) and should conform to Turabian or SBL style guides. Because book reviews are primarily about one source, use parenthetical citations for the primary text and *footnotes only for external sources*.

A few questions to consider while reading these books: What is the main purpose or thesis of this book? To whom is this book written? Did the author(s) fulfill his or her purpose? What are some of the author’s working assumptions (e.g., his or her denominational background, field of research, or view of Scripture)? Does the author provide strong biblical, philosophical, and historical support for his or her positions? Are there any points of contact between this book/writer and other texts read during the course of the semester? How might the content of this book affect ministry in the local church or ministry within your particular calling? Are there any ideas that changed your particular way of thinking on the subject matter at hand? Would you recommend this book to someone else?

- **A papers (93-100)** clearly state the book’s thesis, successfully and succinctly outline its argument in its own terms, demonstrate advanced critical engagement with the argument and content of the book, make clear and well structured arguments, and exhibit a proficient grasp of grammar, spelling, and style.
- **B papers (85-92)** clearly state the book’s thesis, show an attempt to understand the book on its own terms and critically reflect on the issues at hand, make arguments, and show sufficiency in grammar, spelling, and style.
- **C papers (77-84)** state the book’s thesis, present the content of the book, raise preliminary critical questions for further evaluation, limit evaluation to approval or disapproval of the author’s arguments, and make repeated mistakes in grammar, spelling, and style.
- **D (70-76) and F (0-69) papers** lack evidence of grasping the book’s thesis and content, limit evaluation to preformed judgments without serious consideration of the book’s

ideas, contain major grammatical, spelling, and stylistic errors, and demonstrate little or no attempt to proofread.

1. **Formal Research Paper**. Students will prepare a 10-12 page (double-spaced) research paper on an approved theme in ecclesiology. Basic guidelines regarding the research paper are as follows:
  - **Exhaustive:** Research should be exhaustive. The bibliography should contain *at least* 12 non-electronic sources.
  - **Biblical:** The researcher should demonstrate the use of biblical texts and hermeneutical skill in his or her evaluation of the issue.
  - **Organization:** The organization and structure of the paper should grow out of the research and should be the best possible means for explicating the topic.
  - **Implications:** The researcher should be able to demonstrate the “so what” of their research topic as far as it pertains to evangelical faith, practice, and evangelism.
  - **Form and style:** Careful attention should be given to all matters of subdivisions, paragraphing, quoted matter, footnotes, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, spelling, sentence structure, word usage, bibliography, etc. Papers (15-20 pages) should be double-spaced, in Turabian format, in Times New Roman 12 pt font, and should contain a bibliography and an NOBTS title page.
  - **Critical evaluation:** Critical evaluation—not just superficial treatment of the sources—and accurate exposition of the topic should characterize your paper. It goes without saying that “critical evaluation” requires the use of proper logic.

### Evaluation of Grades

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

1. Attendance and Participation	10%
2. Theological Reflection Question Sets (x4 at 15% each)	60%
3. Chapter Summaries	15%
4. Doctrinal Sermon	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

All assignments must be submitted to pass the course. Students who fail to complete an assignment will not receive a passing grade.

### Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. [Selfserve@nobts.edu](mailto:Selfserve@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the [Selfserve.nobts.edu](http://Selfserve.nobts.edu) site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. [BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System [NOBTS.Blackboard.com](http://NOBTS.Blackboard.com).
3. [ITCSupport@nobts.edu](mailto:ITCSupport@nobts.edu) - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. [www.NOBTS.edu/itc/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/) - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

[Other items may be included, such as: expectations for reading assignments, policy on late assignments, academic honesty, classroom demeanor, extra credit]

### Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

### Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

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