

The Doctrine of God

THEO9401

Dr. Steve Lemke
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
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Seminary Mission Statement, Core Values, and Core Competencies Addressed

New Orleans Baptist Seminary prepares servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

The main core values addressed in this seminar are Doctrinal Integrity and Characteristic Excellence.

The primary core competencies addressed in the seminar are Christian Theological Heritage and Biblical Exposition.

Course Description

An intensive study of the doctrine of God is made through an analysis of the biblical data in the light of historical and contemporary interpretations. A contemporary theology of God is developed.

Class Texts

Feinberg, John S. *No One Like Him*. Foundations of Evangelical Theology, ed. John S. Feinberg. Wheaton: Crossway, 2001.

Erickson, Millard J. *God, The Father Almighty: A Contemporary Exploration of the Divine Attributes*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Ware, Bruce, ed. *Perspectives on the Doctrine of God: Four Views*. Nashville: B&H, 2008.

Bray, Gerald. *The Doctrine of God*. Grand Rapids: InterVarsity, 1997.

Lemke, Steve, and David Allen. *Whosoever Will: A Biblical-Theological Critique of Five Point Calvinism* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010).

Class Assignments

Each member of the seminar will be expected to participate meaningfully in each session in the seminar. It is crucial that every member of the seminar read the assigned readings or papers for that date. Because of the reading schedule, seminar members should begin reading the text as soon as possible. Each member of the seminar will be assigned to lead the seminar discussion on several occasions, as delineated in the assignments below. Some changes will have to be made if the seminar enrollment changes.

Text Discussion – During the first section of the seminar, all the seminar members will be discussing the class text readings. Each week, seminar members will guide the class in a discussion of assigned portions of the text. The student facilitator assigned to lead the discussion should prepare a one-page summary of the chapter(s) and a one-page list of questions and comments addressed to the chapter, or pose a case study to apply the ideas being presented. Each student will lead the seminar discussion on assigned chapter(s) in the text. Assignments will be made quickly to facilitate students having plenty of time to prepare for these assignments. Students should express an awareness of the theological and ecclesiological background of the authors being read.

Research Papers will be written by each seminar member. They should be between 15 and 20 double-spaced pages (Times New Roman 12, 1 inch margins) with footnotes and bibliography in proper Turabian/Chicago Manual style. Research papers should focus upon a particular argument or position held by a theologian/philosopher related to the topic addressed in the seminar. Research papers are not to be merely historical surveys but rather should consist of critical analysis and response to a particular issue, argument, etc. from a particular author. Articles should thus resemble journal articles rather than articles found in theological dictionaries or historical or biblical treatments of the topic. *Research papers should be handed out or posted on Blackboard a week before they are to be presented to and discussed by the seminar.* Each seminar member is expected to have read each of the papers before the class in which it is presented. Papers should be written cleanly, without errors of style and form, in such a way that with minor alterations they can be published in a professional journal or presented at a professional meeting.

Formal Responses –Each student will be assigned to write a formal response of 3-4 pages to a research paper. Responses should demonstrate an understanding of the paper and highlight both strengths and weaknesses of the paper. Responses are to be both critical and charitable. They should help the paper writer to improve his paper upon revision. Each response will also include an *errata* section citing errors or suggested improvements in form and style.

Suggested Topics for Research Papers

- Atemporalism/God's Timelessness (Paul Helm)
- Temporalism and Mediating Views on God and Time (see *God and Time: Four Views*)
- Omnipresence
- A Model of Divine Transcendence and Immanence
- A Determinist Image of God (Paul Helm)
- A Simple Foreknowledge, Comprehensive Foreknowledge, or Middle Knowledge Views of God (see Basinger and Rice books in bibliography)
- A Comparison of the Molinism of Bruce Ware and Ken Keathley
- The Molinism of William Lane Craig or John Laing
- Models of Divine Providence in Terrance Tiessen's *Providence and Prayer*
- An Openness View of God
- Divine Simplicity
- Omnipotence
- Is God Immutable?

- Impassibility and Patripassionism (McWilliams and Fiddes)
- God and Incorporeality
- Religious Epistemology
- Religious Language
- The Goodness of God
- God and the Problem of Evil
- Perfect Being Images of God
- Liberation, Feminist, or Postmodern Theology Images of God
- The Triune God
- Picirilli's Classical Arminianism vs. Wesleyan Arminianism

Course Schedule (Revised)

Session/ Date	Presenter	Discussion of the Feinberg and Erickson Texts	Readings
1/22 am 8:00-9:00	Lemke	Introduction to the Seminar God—The Very Idea	Feinberg, chapters 1-3 Erickson, chapter 1, 12-13 Bray, chapter 1, 6
1/22 am 9:00-10:50	1 Hagans	The Existence and Being of God (arguments for God's existence, God as Perfect Being, God as Spirit)	Feinberg, chapter 5 Erickson, chapter 10 Bray, chapter 2A
1/29 am 8:00-9:20	2 Maricles	God in Contemporary Thought, Process Theology An Openness Doctrine of God	Feinberg, chapter 3 Erickson, chapters 2-4 Ware, chapters 7-8, and Lemke, "Truth for a Postmodern Era"
1/29 am 9:30-10:50	3 Hagans	The Doctrine of the Trinity	Feinberg, chapter 10 Bray, chapters 3-5
2/5 am 8:00-9:20	4 Waller	God, Time, and Eternity	Feinberg, chapter 9 Erickson, chapter 6 Allen/Lemke, chapter 3, and Lemke, "Transdimensional God"
2/5 am 9:30-10:50	5 Chesteen	The Doctrine of Creation	Feinberg, chapter 12 Erickson, chapter 12
2/12 am 8:00-9:20	6 Waller	The Moral Attributes of God (Holiness vs. Love)	Feinberg, chapter 8 Erickson, chapter 11 Allen/Lemke, chapter 1
2/12 am 9:30-10:50	7 Hagans	The Attributes of God and the Non-Moral Attributes of God – I (aseity, infinity, immensity, omnipresence, eternity, immutability, impassibility)	Feinberg, chapters 6 Erickson, chapters 7-8, 10 Bray, chapter 2B
2/19 am	8	The Attributes of God and the	Feinberg, chapter 7;

8:00-9:20	Weaver	Non-Moral Attributes of God II (omnipotence, sovereignty, omniscience, wisdom, unity, simplicity)	Erickson, chapters 8-10; Bray, chapter 2B
2/19 am 9:30-10:50	9 Chesteen	The Calvinist <i>Ordo Salutis</i> : The Decrees of God -- The Classical Calvinist (supralapsarian), Modified Calvinist (infralapsarian), and Amyrauldian Doctrines of God	Feinberg, chapter 11 Ware, Chapters 1-4
2/26 am 8:00-9:20	10 Weaver	Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom (A): Determinism, Sovereignty, and Freedom	Feinberg; chapter 13 Erickson, chapter 4 Allen/Lemke, chapters 5, 10 Lemke, "Agent Causation"
2/26 am 9:30-10:50	Lemke	Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom (B): Compatibilism and Libertarian Freedom	Feinberg; chapter 14 Erickson, chapter 4 Allen/Lemke, chapters 5, 10 Lemke, "Agent Causation" Lemke, "Agent Causation and Moral Accountability"
3/4 am 8:00-9:20	11 Maricles	Freedom and Foreknowledge	Feinberg, chapter 15 Allen/Lemke, chapter 3 Lemke, "Transdimensional God"
3/4 am 9:30-10:50	12 Chesteen	Divine Providence and Evil	Feinberg, chapter 16 Allen/Lemke, chapter 11
3/11 am 8:00-9:20	13 Waller	An Arminian Doctrine of God	Ware, chapters 5-6
3/11 am 9:30-10:50	14 Maricles	A Reformed Arminian Doctrine of God	Picirilli, <i>Grace, Faith, & Freewill</i> Pinson, <i>Arminian and Baptist</i>
3/18, 3/25 8:00-10:50	No Seminar – Spring Break & Lemke Out		
4/1 am 8:00-9:20	15 Weaver	A Baptistic Doctrine of God	Allen/Lemke, chapters 1, 4-7 Harwood, <i>Anyone Can Be Saved</i>
4/1 am 9:30-10:50	Lemke	Doing vitas & getting jobs in Academia	
4/8	Waller	Paper 1 – response Chesteen	Fear of the Lord
4/15	Maricles	Paper 2 – response Hagans	Time & Incarnation

4/22	Hagans	Paper 3 – response Maricles	Divine Simplicity
4/29	Weaver	Paper 4 – response Waller	TBA
5/6	Chesteen	Paper 5 – response -- Weaver	God and the Unserved

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