



## Protestant Moral Theology

Hilary (Winter) 2024

**Dates:** Jan 8 – March 16, 2024  
**Module(s):** Theology  
**Instructor(s):** Brad Littlejohn • [b.littlejohn@davenantinstitute.org](mailto:b.littlejohn@davenantinstitute.org)  
Tim Jacobs • [t.jacobs@davenantinstitute.org](mailto:t.jacobs@davenantinstitute.org) • [tljacobs.com](http://tljacobs.com)  
**Meeting Time:** Mondays 7:30pm – 9:30pm ET (Zoom Link posted on [Google Classroom](#))

### Course Description

Protestant moral theology is memorably summed up by Martin Luther's dictum, "The Christian is the most free lord of all, subject to none. The Christian is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to everyone." In this course, we will unpack this profound dialectic, explaining the true shape of Christian liberty that flows from justification by faith but that is ordered to love of neighbor in the life of sanctification.

Beginning with a careful consideration of Luther's often-misunderstood doctrine of Christian freedom, we will then outline what it means to use this freedom well, guided by the conscience and the law, and taking shape in the virtues. These last, although often neglected in Protestant theological ethics, were emphasized by many key thinkers and offer an essential framework for thinking about the way that sanctification takes hold in the whole person.

Finally, we will seek to apply these building blocks to four main aspects of the Christian's life in society, as understood by magisterial Protestant thinkers: the three estates of State, Church, and Family, and the doctrine of work and vocation. The course will be based chiefly on primary-source readings and will consist of roughly equal parts lecture and discussion.

### Objectives

1. To equip students to think biblically on any topic in moral theology through surveying a sampling of key topics.
2. To introduce students to the tradition of protestant moral theology.
3. To show students how academic moral theology shapes personal Christian life and ministry today.

### Course Texts

- Roberts, Anderson, Littlejohn, et al., [Protestant Social Teaching](#) (\$26.95).
- Martin Luther, [The Freedom of a Christian](#) (\$19) or on [Perlego](#)
- Gustaf Wingren, [Luther on Vocation](#) (\$26.70)
- Various free texts will be provided and linked in the Course Calendar below.

### Course Format & Delivery

Class sessions will be half lecture and half guided discussion on readings. Students are expected to come to class having already read required texts for that week and ready for discussion. Weekly readings are generally 30–70 pages.

Classes will meet on [Zoom](#) for two hours weekly and **recorded** for absent students (not for dissemination outside of class). Additional student participation and instructor interaction will take place on our [Discord](#) channel, which students will be given access to before the course. [Google Classroom](#) will be used for assignment submissions, grades, and announcements.

### Auditing

Auditors are not required to attend class live or submit assignments, but can participate in Zoom meetings, Discord, Google Classroom, and access recordings. If the time does not work for you, you can switch to auditing or to another course. Students are entitled to a full refund if the chosen time does not work for them. Please email Lynette Hughes at [registrar@davenantinstitute.org](mailto:registrar@davenantinstitute.org) with any changes, requests, or questions.

# Requirements



## **Attendance & Participation** <sup>10%</sup>

[All Students]

Attentive and sustained participation in class is required. **One unexcused absence is permitted.** Students are expected to read required texts beforehand and come with texts, notes, and questions in hand.



## **Reading Responses** <sup>40%</sup>

[All Students]

**Due:** The next session after the readings are covered in lecture.

- **Instructions:** For six of the nine required readings, write a two-page response (500–800 words). On the first page, explain the main ideas of the reading. Focus on depth instead of breadth. You do not need to include all the points in the reading. Writing should *focus* on the **texts in bold** on the course calendar, though it may use all texts. On the second page, write a response composed of a single argument on a single topic/thesis. You do not need to do research for these papers, though you may.
- **Submission:** Submit on [Google Classroom](#) as .DOCX, .PDF, or Google Doc link.

ONE of the following, depending on degree status:



## **Oral Exam** <sup>50%</sup>

[Masters Students Only]

Each student will schedule a 30 minute oral exam over Zoom for the last week of the course covering essential points of the course. In order to score 100%, students must competently answer questions related to five out of six topics. The format will be conversational, and will try to discover what you remember rather than asking “gotcha” or “what’s in my pocket” trick questions. More details will be given in class.

- **Schedule Sign Ups:** 📅 DI - 2023W - Protestant Moral Theology - Oral Exam Signups



## **Research Paper** <sup>50%</sup>

[Non Masters Students]

**Due:** See Course Calendar (end of term).

- **Length:** 3,000–5,000 words.
- **Sources:** At least 2 primary sources & 8 secondary sources.
- **Instructions:** Write a research paper on one of the topics covered in class. Your paper must be an argumentative research paper drawing from primary and secondary sources in support of your thesis. See Grading Rubric for details on expectations.
- **Grading:** Read this in detail 📖 [Grading Rubric - Research Paper \(Davenant\)](#) Late: -5%/day.
- **Submit:** Submit on [Google Classroom](#) as a PDF, or Google Doc link.

### Grading Scale:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
93	90	87	83	80	77	73	70	67	63	60	

# Course Calendar



Week of...



Readings



Bible Readings

MONDAY  
JANUARY  
8

1. The Freedom of a Christian Before God: Justification (≈80pp) [Littlejohn]
  - 1.1. **Luther, *Freedom of a Christian* (≈ 50 pp).**
  - 1.2. Littlejohn, *Faith and Freedom* (ch 1) (≈30 pp). (PDF on Google Classroom)
- Introduce yourself on Discord

- Romans 5–8
- Galatians 5

MONDAY  
JANUARY  
15

2. The Freedom of a Christian Before Man: Adiaphora (≈ 73 pp.) [Littlejohn]
  - 2.1. **Littlejohn, “Freedom for the Neighbor,” *Peril and Promise*, ch. 2. (≈ 35). (PDF on Google Classroom).**
  - 2.2. **“[Dutch Stranger Church Statement on Christian Liberty](#)” in *Peril and Promise* (≈ 8 pp.)**
  - 2.3. Littlejohn, *Faith and Freedom* (ch 2) (≈30 pp).

- 1 Cor 8–10

MONDAY  
JANUARY  
22

3. Using Freedom Well: The Conscience (≈ 52 pp.) [Jacobs]
    - 3.1. **Bavinck, *Ethics*, ch 5. “Human Conscience” (50 pp).**
    - 3.2. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* [I.79.13](#); [I-II.19.5 & 6](#) (Only “I Respond” sections required) (≈ 2 pp.)
- (For reference, see also [ST I.79.12](#); De Veritate [16](#) & [17](#)).

- Ro 2:12–17
- Ro 14:1–15:7
- 1 Cor 8

Resource: Handout - Thomistic Psychology

Bonus material: Jacobs, [“The Erring Conscience: Aquinas on Freedom of Conscience in Pluralistic Society.”](#)

MONDAY  
JANUARY  
29

4. Using Freedom Well: Law (≈ 97) [Littlejohn]
  - 4.1. E. J. Hutchinson, “Law and the Christian,” *Protestant Social Teaching*, ch. 1 (≈ 22 pp.)
  - 4.2. **Melanchthon, *Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Art. V* (≈ 49 pp.)**
  - 4.3. **Ursinus, *Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism, Os 92-93* (≈ 26 pp.)**

- Galatians

MONDAY  
FEBRUARY  
5

5. Using Freedom Well: The Virtues (≈ 55 pp.) [Jacobs]
    - 5.1. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* [I-II.55](#), 58, 61–64 (Only “I Respond” sections required) (≈ 14 pp.)
- Below PDFs provided on Google Classroom.
- 5.2. **Vermigli, *Commentary on Nicomachean Ethics*, bk. II, ch. 6 (≈ 13 pp.)**
  - 5.3. **Edwards, *Nature of True Virtue*, chs. 1–2 (≈ 20 pp.)**
  - 5.4. Jacobs, Timothy. “Virtue.” *Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*. Edited by Harry S. Stout. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017. (4 pp.)
  - 5.5. Jacobs, “Virtue/Vice Lists,” *Lexham Bible Dictionary* (4 pp.)

- Matthew 5–7
- Gal 5:16–23

MONDAY  
FEBRUARY  
12

6. The Christian in Society, I: State (≈ 85 pp.) [Littlejohn]
  - 6.1. Littlejohn, “The Civil Magistrate,” *Protestant Social Teaching*, ch. 2 (≈ 22 pp.)
  - 6.2. **Luther, *Temporal Magistrate* (≈ 34 pp.)**
  - 6.3. **Bullinger, *Decades* II.7 (≈ 13 pp.)**

- Ro 13:1–7
- 1 Pet 2:13–25
- Mt 22:17–21

MONDAY  
FEBRUARY  
19

7. The Christian in Society, II: Church (≈ 60 pp.) [Littlejohn]
  - 7.1. **Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.1-3, 12. Focus on:**
    - 7.1.1. **IV.1.1–16 (≈ 9pp.)**
    - 7.1.2. **IV.3.1–15 (≈ 7pp.)**
    - 7.1.3. **IV.12.1–13 (≈ 6pp.)**
    - 7.1.4. IV.10.27–31 (optional) (≈ 3pp.)
  - 7.2. **Hooker, *Laws III.1–2* (≈ 16 pp.)**
  - 7.3. **Field, *On the Church*, bk. IV, chs. 30-34 (≈ 20 pp.) (PDF)**

- Mt 18:15–20
- Acts 6
- 1 Tim 3

<b>MONDAY</b> FEBRUARY <b>26</b>	8.The Christian in Society, III: Marriage and Family (≈ 60 pp.) [Jacobs] 8.1. Anderson, “Procreation and Children,” <i>Protestant Social Teaching</i> , ch. 5 (≈ 12 pp.) 8.2. Kamel & Roberts, “Sex, Marriage, and Divorce,” <i>Protestant Social Teaching</i> , ch. 6 (≈ 12 pp.) 8.3. Luther, <i>The Estate of Marriage</i> (≈ 15 pp.) 8.4. “Of the State of Matrimony,” <i>Book of Homilies II.18</i> (≈ 16 pp.)	• Matt 19:1–12 • 1 Cor 7 • Eph 5:22–33 • 1 Peter 3:1–7
<b>MONDAY</b> MARCH <b>4</b>	9.The Christian in Society, IV: Vocation and Work (≈ 109) [Jacobs] 9.1. Minich & Redeemer, “Work and Labor,” <i>Protestant Social Teaching</i> , ch. 9 (≈ 22 pp.) 9.2. Wingren, <i>Luther on Vocation</i> , chs. I.1–3, III.1–4 (87 pp.)	• Ro 12:1–8 • 1 Cor 12 • Col 3:22–25
<b>MONDAY</b> MARCH <b>11</b>	10.Contemporary Issues [both] Choose 3 chapters from PST to read and come with discussions.	
<b>SATURDAY</b> MARCH <b>16</b>	<h2>END OF TERM</h2>	
<b>FRIDAY</b> MARCH <b>22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>Oral Exam</del> Schedule: <del>PM (Hilary 2024) - Oral Exam Signups</del></li> <li>Written Exam Due Friday. See instructions on Google Classroom.</li> </ul>	
<b>FRIDAY</b> MARCH <b>29</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Research Paper:</b> Due Friday</li> <li><b>Reading Responses.</b></li> </ul>	