



SHEPHERDS
INSTITUTE

Reformed Baptist Distinctives: Syllabus

Heritage Church

1st and 3rd Mondays, 7–9 PM; Board Room

I. Professor

Professor: Pastor Brandon Scalf

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II. Course Description

This course provides a theological and historical overview of Reformed Baptist distinctives with an emphasis on confessional identity, covenant theology, ecclesiology, and soteriology. Students will examine how Reformed Baptists differ from other traditions (e.g., Presbyterian, Dispensational, Catholics, and General Baptist) while affirming their place within historic Reformed orthodoxy. Special attention will be given to the 1689 Second London Baptist Confession, as well as key biblical and theological texts that shape the Reformed Baptist tradition.

III. Course Objectives

Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Clearly articulate the distinctives of Reformed Baptist theology.
2. Understand the historical development of 1689 Federalism.
3. Distinguish between Baptist and non-Baptist covenantal frameworks.
4. Articulate a biblical doctrine of the church, ordinances, and confessionalism.

5. Apply Reformed Baptist theology to contemporary church life and ministry.

IV. Textbooks and Required Reading

- The Bible
- The 1689 Second London Baptist Confession of Faith (Founders edition preferred but not necessary)
- Samuel Renihan, *The Mystery of Christ, His Covenant, and His Kingdom*
- Tom Hicks, *What Is A Reformed Baptist?: An Overview of Doctrinal Distinctives*
- Samuel Waldron, *Two Things You Must Do to Be Saved*¹

V. Requirements for Credit

1. **Reading: 100%** – *Due prior to every class*
Reading assignments are expected to be completed before class. You will be asked to report your reading on your final paper. Class discussion will assume familiarity with both the assigned reading and the biblical texts that support them.
2. **Class Participation: 100%**
You are expected to contribute thoughtfully to class discussions with clarity, charity, and conviction.
3. **Theological Paper: 100%** – *Due May 5th*
Write a 6–10 page paper addressing one major Reformed Baptist distinctive. Topics may include:
 - The covenantal framework of 1689 Federalism
 - Regenerate church membership
 - Confessionalism and church authority
 - The ordinance of believer's baptism
 - Local church autonomy and eldership

Paper Structure:

6. Introduction and Thesis
 7. Biblical and Theological Development
 8. Historical Context and Contrast with Other Views
 9. Objections and Responses
 10. Pastoral Implications
4. **10–15 Minute Teaching Presentation: 100%** – *Due May 19th*
Each student will prepare a mini-lesson on a Reformed Baptist doctrine from a chosen

¹ This resource is needed only for those pursuing the certificate path

text of Scripture. The teaching should be suitable for use in a small group or Bible study setting.

VI. Reading Schedule/Calendar

What is a Reformed Baptist? (RB)

- RB, Pgs. 1-50, **Historical Roots and Confessionalism: 8/18/25**
- RB, Pgs. 51-82, **The Law of God: 9/15**
- RB, Pgs. 83-126, **Covenant Theology: 10/6**
- RB, Pgs. 127-148, **The Law and the Gospel: 10/20**
- RB, Pgs. 149-186, **Calvinism: 11/17**
- RB, Pgs. 187-222, **The Church: 12/1**
- RB, Pgs. 223-240, **Regulative Principle of Worship: 12/15/25**
- RB, Pgs. 241-266, **Christian Liberty and Conclusion: 1/19/26**

Special Sheperd's Dates

- **Preaching Workshop: 9/29/25**
- **Presentations: 12/29/25**

***Women of the Word = 9/1/25, 11/3/25, 1/5/26**

The Myster of Christ (TMC)

- TMC, Part 1: pgs. 1-33, **Hermeneutics**
- TMC, Part 1: Pgs. 34-50, **What a Covenant is**
- TMC, Part 2: Pgs. 51-80, **The Covenant of Works**
- TMC, Part 3: Pgs. 81-98, **The Abrahamic Covenant**
- TMC, Part 3: Pgs. 99-120, **The Mosaic Covenant**
- TMC, Part 3: Pgs. 121-133, **The Davidic Covenant**
- TMC, Part 3: Pgs. 134-144, **The Messiah of the Old Covenant**
- TMC, Part 4: Pgs. 145-157, **The Covenant of Redemption**
- TMC, Part 4: Pgs. 158-176, **The New Covenant of Grace**
- TMC, Part 4: Pgs. 177-192, **The Mystery of Christ**
- TMC, Part 4: Pgs. 193-210, **The Eschatological Nature of the Kingdom**

1689 Baptist Confession (1689)

- 1689, Complete by **end of module**

Two Things You Must do to be Saved (2T)

- 2T, Complete before **Preaching Workshop**