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REFORMED  THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
DISTANCE EDUCATION

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# PAULINE EPISTLES

DR. ROBERT J. CARA

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# Course Overview

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## Course Description:

ONT520 Pauline Epistles, 3 hours  
Lecturing Professor: Dr. Robert J. Cara  
Professor of Record: Dr. Benjamin Gladd

An exposition of the epistles in chronological order that emphasizes the application of Paul's theology to the pastoral needs of the churches of his day and ours. Note that ONT520 does not include Romans.

## Course Objectives:

The over-arching purpose is to enable the student to better interpret / apply Pauline Epistles (1 Corinthians - Philemon) for one's self, the church and the world.

- Learn the content of each book.
- Learn the major biblical-theological (BT) categories of Paul / book (e.g., "present evil age," humiliation/exaltation scheme) along with methodology to do further BT interpretation.
- Interact with and be aware of major systematic theology (ST) doctrines (e.g., J by F, three uses of the law) which are based on our texts.
- Learn enough about critical views to:
  1. Utilize common grace insights in critical commentaries.
  2. Provide an intelligent global critique of critical theories.

## Required Textbooks:

Kruger, Michael J., *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Revealed*, Wheaton: Crossway, 2016  
[Pp. 195-410]

Ridderbos, Herman. *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975.  
[Pp. 13-562. ]

Machen, J. Gresham. *The Origin of Paul's Religion*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947.  
[Pp. 141-69. ]

Holy Bible (1 Corinthians through Philemon [twice]).

[These books may also be available in ebook format through various retailers]

### *Online Student Handbook:*

The [Online Student Handbook](#) has been designed to assist you in successfully navigating the Distance Education experience, whether you are taking a single course or pursuing a certificate or degree program. In it you will find valuable information, step-by-step instructions, study helps, and essential forms to guide you through every aspect of your distance education opportunity from registration to graduation. Please use this resource as your first-stop reference manual.

### *Summary of Requirements:*

1. Listen to all recorded [Lectures](#)
2. Complete all [Readings](#)
3. Participate in [Forum Discussions](#) (with other students and the professor)
4. Take [Midterm and Final Exam](#)
5. Submit [Research Paper](#)
6. Submit [Reading Report](#)
7. Submit [Mentor Report/Course Application Paper](#)



# Meet the Professors

## *Lecturing Professor:*



**Dr. Robert J. Cara** is the Hugh and Sallie Reaves Professor of New Testament at RTS-Charlotte and Provost and Chief Academic Officer for the RTS institution. He has been a professor at RTS since 1993. Dr. Cara was an engineer for seven years before the Lord re-directed him toward seminary. As a former college basketball player for Penn State-Capitol, he has developed a reputation as an energetic and challenging classroom teacher, and he is a personable scholar who is very student oriented.

In addition to the traditional New Testament topics, Dr. Cara's academic interests include relating the New Testament to Reformed Theology, creeds, hermeneutics, Second Temple Judaism documents, and narrative criticism. In addition to numerous book reviews and articles, he has written a commentary on 1 & 2 Thessalonians and a forthcoming book critiquing the New Perspective on Paul. Currently, Dr. Cara is working on a commentary for the book of Hebrews in the Mentor Commentary series. Dr. Cara has several courses available on RTS iTunes U and the RTS Mobile app, which can be listened to for free.

As an ordained minister in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Dr. Cara has been very involved at both the presbytery and synod levels. He is a former vice-moderator of the denomination and for several years was the chairman of the denominational Inter-Church Relations Committee. He preaches regularly in the Charlotte area.

## *Professor of Record:*



**Dr. Benjamin Gladd** received his B.A. in Greek and Hebrew from The Master's College (2001) and M.A. in Biblical Exegesis from Wheaton College (2003). He then completed a Ph.D. from Wheaton College in New Testament in 2008. Prior to joining the RTS faculty, he served as an adjunct faculty member at Wheaton College, teaching New Testament exegesis and interpretation, Greek, and introductory courses on the Old and New Testaments.

Dr. Gladd's interests lie in biblical theology, the use of the Old Testament in the New, and biblical exegesis. RTS believes that the Bible is God's Word, he wants to instill in his students the desire to interpret Scripture seriously. He is passionate about teaching students how to engage the Bible in its original languages, by learning how to analyze syntax, perform word studies, recognize the logical flow of the passage, and determine how the Old Testament is used in the New Testament.

Dr. Gladd hails from the eastern shore of Maryland, and his wife, Nikki, from Grand Rapids, Michigan. They are proud parents of two sons, Judah and Simon. Dr. Gladd enjoys playing sports and catching any football or basketball game, using spare time to do woodworking and all sorts of DIY projects around the house.

# Grades

## *Forum Discussion (15%):*

The student is required to interact in two (2) forums:

1. Student-Professor Posts (15 total posts)
  - A. Personal Introduction Forum: The student is required to post a brief personal introduction to the professor/class. Suggested details include your vocation, where you live, your church background, why you chose RTS, and what you hope to gain through the course (1 required post).
  - B. 5 Topical Discussion Q&A Forums: The student is required to answer each topical discussion question with one (1) response. The professor will acknowledge the student's answer and will follow up with a subsequent question to which the student must also answer with one (1) response. Each topical discussion question, therefore, requires two (2) total posts/responses from the student (Total of 5 forums x 2 posts = 10 total posts).
  - C. Student-Professor Forum: The student is required to post four (4) times in this forum. Posts in this forum should focus on course-related content such as research paper topics, lectures and reading assignments, or other academic issues related to the course.
2. Student-Student Forum (5 total posts)
  - A post may be either a new topic or a response to an already existing topic.

## *Examinations (Midterm 25%, Final 25%):*

There are two examinations for this course. The midterm examination will cover the lectures and readings from Lesson One through Lesson Seventeen. The final examination will cover the lectures and readings from Lesson Eighteen through Lesson Thirty.

The midterm and final exams for this course are to be taken online in the Learning Management System (LMS). Please note that you will need to have a proctor for your exams. Your proctor can be anyone except a relative or current RTS Student. After clicking on the exam link you will be given detailed instructions about the exam. Please read these instructions carefully before entering the exam.

- 85% of each examination will be verbatim from the Lesson Questions (located at the end of each Lesson in the Study Guide).
- 15% of each examination will be miscellaneous questions from the lectures and readings.

## *Research Paper (40%):*

The student will submit a serious research paper of at least several serious commentaries and a few BT's. Must also footnote at least one journal article. See section titled "[Research Paper Instructions](#)" in this syllabus.

## *Reading Report (10%):*

Once you have completed the Required Readings, complete the Reading Report located in the Week 12 Course Activities block in the LMS.

### *Mentor Report OR Course Application Paper (5%):*

If you are enrolled in an **RTS Global** degree program, you are required to submit a mentor report at the end of the course. Every portion of the form (goals, summaries, assessments, and signatures) should be filled out completely by both the student and the mentor to receive full credit. You can download the Mentor Report form in your Canvas classroom.

If you are receiving your degree through another **RTS campus** (Orlando, Jackson, Charlotte, et. al.), or are a certificate student, or special student (e.g. from another seminary), you are asked to write a 200-word summary of how you perceive what you have learned in this course will fit into the objectives you have for your ministry, your educational goals, or other objectives you wish to achieve in life. Course Application Papers (CAP) that fall well-short of 200 words will receive a grade deduction.

### *Assignments:*

Best practice for your time management is for you to submit all assignments at the end of the week in which they fall, using the upload links provided in the LMS. All work must be submitted by midnight of the course end date, per your course start letter. You are responsible for turning in all assignments on time; no late submissions are permitted. Any student who needs an extension must get approval from the Registrar prior to that time.

### *Contact Information:*

Reformed Theological Seminary, Distance Education  
2101 Carmel Road  
Charlotte, NC 28226  
(704) 900-1257  
1-855-854-6920  
FAX: (704) 366-9295  
E-mail: [dess@rts.edu](mailto:dess@rts.edu)  
Web site: [www.rts.edu/distance](http://www.rts.edu/distance)



# Lessons

## Lesson One

Introduction to Pauline Epistles

## Lesson Two

Galatians

## Lesson Three

1 & 2 Thessalonians

## Lesson Four

1 Corinthians

## Lesson Five

2 Corinthians

## Lesson Six

Ephesians

## Lesson Seven

Colossians

## Lesson Eight

Philemon & Philippians

## Lesson Nine

1 Timothy

## Lesson Ten

Titus & 2 Timothy

# Research Paper Instructions

Your assignment is to write a paper similar to an academic journal article. (Academic journals include WTJ, JETS, NTS, etc.) See [RTS Charlotte paper-writing seminar](#) captured online. (Note, Cara is one of the speakers.)

## Minimal Format

- Your paper is to look like an article in a journal. Hence, do not include table of contents or bibliographies. (Kruger may require bibliographies.)
- Papers are to conform to general JBL or JETS standards, especially the footnote examples and abbreviations. Use *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian (8th edition) or use [JETS](#) standards .
- In the SBL and JETS standards are many rules that relate to the submitting of an article for purposes of allowing the editor room for comments; e.g., extra wide margins. Do not follow these rules. Basically use SBL or JETS standard abbreviations and footnote examples. At a minimum, here are the following format requirements:
- Text: typed, double spaced, 12 point font, 1” margins, quotes over 4 lines are to be single spaced.
- Footnotes (not endnotes): single spaced (OK if double); use font and format that is default w/ your computer program.
- Follow footnote examples for commas, italics, etc.
- Use standard abbreviation of Bible books, standard references, journals, etc.

## Common Formatting Errors

- When a book or article is used a second time, do not use Ibid., but use the “short form” as follows:
  - Young, Daniel, 25 OR Silva, “The Law and Christianity,” 342.
- When quoting an article out of a reference book, use the author’s name of the article if given. Treat it like it was an article in a multi-authored volume; e.g., L. G. Whitlock, Jr., “Dabney, Robert Lewis,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 292.
- All titles of books are to be in italics. Note the difference between a “series” and a “title.” Word Biblical Commentary (WBC) is a series and not a title; e.g., Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC 41 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 345. Note, WBC is not in italics. All series abbreviations are in SBL Handbook of Style.
- Commas and periods are inside of quotes; e.g., ... after the word “works.”<sup>1</sup>
- Quotes of Scripture and given references that end sentences are thus (note period), “Jesus wept” (John 11:35).
- Abbreviations for biblical books are in the JBL or JETS abbreviations sections. Note, no periods or italics are needed for biblical books. Also note that the abbreviations cannot be used in certain situations:



- First Corinthians 5:6 is good for cooking.
- Paul wrote First Corinthians.
- The passage 1 Cor 5:6 is good.
- The chapter 1 Cor 5 is good.
- Foreign words are in italics if in Roman letters; e.g., *sarx*, *Sitz im Leben*. However, if in the original foreign-language type, no italics, e.g., σάρξ, לֵב. Do not use quotes in either case.

### Content

- A thesis statement is a must somewhere in the introduction.
- Your paper must be trying to prove a point (thesis). This keeps you on track and enables the reader to read critically.
- A thesis statement should not simply state the obvious or be so overly broad that it is unprovable in an article. Usually, a thesis is one logical-step from the surface facts (a student must “theologize”).
- E.g., “Paul’s logic for connecting greed to idolatry is as follows: . . .
- “In 1 Peter, “salvation” always has eschatological overtones.”
- “The creation wording in Psalms 104 and 148 both use mountains to show God’s attribute of x.”
- “The central point of the David and Goliath narrative is x w/in the book of 1-2 Chronicles.”
- “Dunn’s view of justification is misguided b/c he does not deal w/ important Pastoral Epistle passages.”
- Somewhere in the paper, usually in the introduction, state the current scholarly view of your topic. On many topics, the current view might be two or three main views.
- Must “theologize” (relates to having a point).
- Yes, need factoid level, but make an implication (theologize level).
- When giving the “context” of the pericope within the text of the paper, keep the information relevant to the thesis. Otherwise, put in footnotes.

### Sources

- Especially for BS papers, include both critical and conservative sources/views.
- Include numerous serious commentaries.
- Include several BT/R-H books.
- Include at least one journal article. Commentaries will usually give you several options of journal articles. (Even if the journal article is not directly related to your thesis, that is OK.)
- Encyclopedias. E.g., NIDOTTE, ABD, ISBE. Useful for sources.
- Multi-authored books. Articles on one topic brought together in book form.
- ST books. Even though this is not the focus of the papers, at RTS we assume you aware of any relevant ST implications.

### Three types of Footnotes

1. Gives biblio for a direct quote in the text.
2. Backs-up statement in the text. Usually has multiple authors.
3. Interesting rambling about a topic that is not directly germane to the thesis.

## Showoff Footnotes

- Many times a large footnote is used to show the reader that the writer is aware of all the options relative to a particular point, including a few scholars referenced for each option. Usually at the beginning of the paper, one of these footnotes is used relative to the thesis.

## Miscellaneous

- Ameba of research.
- Start paper early; increases “fun” of scholarship and reduces anxiety.
- Audience of paper.
- The paper is written for an evangelical prof. Hence, ...
- Assume conservative view of critical issues. Do not have to prove that Paul wrote the Pastorals, although a footnote acknowledging that you are aware that some do not agree is warranted.
- Do not have to explain what an objective genitive is. Just state whether the construction is an objective genitive.
- Academic Formality for writing style.
- Use formal grammar and writing style.
- Do not use “big,” “neat,” etc. (Cara does allow a few well-placed jokes.)

## Grading

- Cara starts w/ a “D-” and hopes your paper goes up from there.
- It is obvious to the Bible profs that the a student’s papers significantly improve through seminary; however, each paper is graded on the same scale.
- Purpose of RTS-C having serious papers.
- This is a master’s degree.
- Writing a serious paper significantly enhances a student’s understanding of topic.
- Logical development toward a thesis aids one in developing logical (understandable) sermons.
- Theologizing is very important! Forcing a student to theologize at the level of the biblical text aids him in theologizing for application in a sermon.
- Minister needs formal writing skills and occasionally needs to have formal footnoting (presbytery paper).
- Student needs to know about high-level scholarship b/c he will be secondarily interacting w/ it the rest of his life, e.g., commentaries.
- Academic respectability. RTS-C is Reformed!
- Reputation to outsiders is important.
- The reality and a student’s own perception of his degree are important.
- These relate to many things including: quality of student leaving, potential students, profs who want to teach at RTS, ability of the student to grow theologically in the future, healthy sense of boasting to yourself about your degree, student future jobs based on reputation of RTS-C, etc.

**Course Objectives Related to MAR Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: NT 520 Pauline Epistles  
Professor: Dr. Robert J. Cara

<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>		<b>Rubric</b>	<b>Mini-Justification</b>
<i>In order to measure the success of the curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the outcomes.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong</li> <li>➤ Moderate</li> <li>➤ Minimal</li> <li>➤ None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pauline theology</li> <li>2. Historical-critical view of Paul</li> <li>3. Significant academic paper on a Pauline theology topic</li> </ol>
<b>Scripture</b>	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Major part of class is exegeting Pauline texts</li> <li>2. Original languages are used in class and encouraged in academic paper</li> <li>3. It's a BIBLE class!</li> </ol>
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Traditional Reformed categories are used for explaining many Pauline categories</li> <li>2. References to creeds</li> </ol>
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Psalm singing in class</li> <li>2. Personal application is made in class to many Pauline texts</li> </ol>
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Multi-faceted applications are made from Pauline texts, e.g. environment, politics</li> <li>2. Paul's passion to conform all of life to X is emphasized</li> </ol>
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Common grace use of historical-critical scholars is discussed &amp; required in paper</li> <li>2. Paul's winsomeness is shown in Philemon</li> </ol>
<b>Teach</b>	Ability to teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Many times teaching applications are made from Pauline texts</li> </ol>
<b>Church/World</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creed explanations</li> <li>2. Occasional political discussions (e.g. 2 Thess 3:10,13)</li> </ol>
<b>MAR Specific SLO</b>	An ability to integrate such knowledge and understanding into one's own calling in society	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Paul's method of dealing with spiritual problems in the church is highlighted in 1 Corinthians</li> </ol>