

Classics of Personal Devotion, HT508
Reformed Theological Seminary, Houston
Winter 2018
Rev. Robert Arendale

Course Description

As our catechism states, man's chief end is 'to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.' Simply put, the goal of the Christian life is to know God (John 17:3). And knowing Him, we are called to know Him more and more (Phil 3:10). That is, we are to live in union and communion with our Lord Jesus Christ. In this course, students are introduced to several classic works on the Christian life. Through readings, discussion, and Biblical exposition, by God's grace and the power of His Spirit, we will grow in our love for and communion with the risen Christ.

Course Details

Location: RTS-H campus at Christ Evangelical Presbyterian Church
Time: 6:30PM – 9:30PM
Date: January 14, 2019 – January 17, 2019
Instructor: Rev. Robert S. Arendale
Contact: rarendale@rts.edu

Course Goals

- A. To glorify our Triune God who creates, sustains, and redeems his people.
- B. To grow in our love for and communion with our Savior Jesus Christ through the reading and discussion of great works from the Reformed tradition.

Course Philosophy

This course will consist of both discussion and lecture. Each author will be introduced and their major theological contributions surveyed. However, much of our time will be spent in discussing the readings and reflecting on how they should grow and challenge us in the Christian life. Also, we will discuss how each work should aid us in our various ministries. Finally, we will consider several Biblical texts that serve as the basis and foundation of the works read and discussed.

Course Requirements

- A. Unless providentially hindered, all registered students are expected to attend all class lectures.

B. Students are expected to read the following in full:

1. *Confessions* by St. Augustine (books 1-10)
2. “*Two Kinds of Righteousness*” by Martin Luther
3. *The Heidelberg Disputation* by Martin Luther
4. *The Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life* by John Calvin
5. *On the Mortification of Sin* by John Owen
6. “God Glorified in Man’s Dependence” by Jonathan Edwards
7. “Heaven is a World of Love” by Jonathan Edwards
8. “Heavenly Mindedness” from *Grace and Glory* by Geerhardus Vos
9. “The Fear of God” by John Murray
10. “The Usefulness of the Cross” by Richard Gaffin

**** It does not matter to the Instructor which version of the above works you read. Many of these works can be found on-line as they are sermons and selections from larger works. If you have trouble locating any of the readings, ask the Professor and he will be happy to assist****

****The more of the reading completed prior to class the better the student will be able to engage in class discussion. So ... Start Reading!!****

C. Digests. The student is expected to write a 2-page digest for each work listed above. The Reading Digest consists of a brief summary, but is much more than a summary. It is also a reflection on various themes or aspects of the book that challenged, encouraged, or convicted you. It is to demonstrate that you have read and ‘digested’ the work (12 point, double spaced). Moreover, the digests should be able to function as aids and helps to you when leading others through a study of the work in future ministry.

D. Essay. The student will write a 10 page essay arising from one of the assigned works. The students will select a major theme and summarize, critique, expand, and apply to his or her life and ministry. More information on the essay will be given in class.

Grading

10% class attendance and participation

25% reading

25% reading digests

40% essay

