**COURSE SYLLABUS – PT540**

**Reformed Theological Seminary**

**5422 Clinton Boulevard**

**Jackson, MS 39209**

**601-923-1600**

**Spring 2021**

**Classics of Personal Devotion Cell: 256-509-9284**

**Professor: Charles Malcolm Wingard, D. Min. E-mail:** [**cwingard@rts.edu**](mailto:cwingard@rts.edu)

**Teaching Assistant: Jamie Peipon E-mail: jamiepeipon@gmail.com**

**Time: Monday 5-8:15 p.m. (2/1, 3/1, 3/29, 4/19)**

**Class Hours: 1**

**Revised: November 25, 2020**

**COURSE PURPOSE**

Devotional writings from the history of the church, as well as from more contemporary Christians, are read and discussed to deepen the student’s knowledge of and love for God.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To encourage the reading of classic devotional literature.

2. To explore the ways in which devotional literature can strengthen faith and encourage   
 diligent attention to the means of grace.

3. To cultivate the student’s personal holiness.

**COURSE TEXTS**

**Required Texts:**

The Bible.

Bennett, Arthur, ed. *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions.* Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2003.

Bonar, Andrew and Robert Murray M’Cheyne. *Memoirs and Remains of Robert Murray M’Cheyne.* 1844. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1995.

Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God.* Several translations are available.

Calvin, John. *A Little Book on the Christian Life.* Translated and edited by Aaron Clay Denlinger and Burk Parsons. Orlando: Reformation Trust, 2017.

Carson, D.A. *Praying with Paul: A Call to Spiritual Reformation.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.

Newton, John. *Letters of John Newton.* 1774-1881. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1990.

Ryken, Leland. *The Soul in Paraphrase: A Treasury of Classic Devotional Poems.* Wheaton: Crossway, 2018.

Vitringa, Campegius. *The Spiritual Life.* Translated and edited by Charles Telfer. 1716. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2018.

**Recommended:**

Anselm. *The Prayers and Meditations of Saint Anselm with Proslogion.* Penguin Books,

1986.

Bernard of Clairvaux. *The Love of God.* Edited by James M. Houston. Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1983.

Benedict. *The Rule of Saint Benedict in English.* Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1982.

Bonar, Horatius. *The Everlasting Righteousness.* 1874. Edinburg: Banner of Truth, 1993.

Chalmers, Thomas. Sabbath Scripture Readings: *Spiritual Meditations on Every Chapter in the New Testament.* 1848. Birmingham: Solid Ground, 2006.

Chalmers, Thomas. *Sabbath Scripture Readings II: Spiritual Meditations on Genesis 1 through 2 Kings 11.* 1848. Birmingham: Solid Ground, 2006.

Henry, Matthew. *A Way to Pray.* Edited and revised by O. Palmer Robertson. 1710. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2010.

Phelps, Austin. *The Still Hour.* 1859. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1984.

*Trinity Psalter Hymnal.* A Joint Publication of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the

Psalter Hymnal Committee of the United Reformed Church in North America,

2018.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**1.** **ATTENDANCE —** Class attendance is mandatory. If a student anticipates an unavoidable absence, he should notify the instructor in advance. Each hour of unexcused absence subjects the student to reduction of his final grade by one-half of a letter grade. Students missing one or more session (for any reason other than sickness) may either submit an additional, compensatory assignment (determined by the instructor) or choose to receive a half letter grade reduction of their final grade for each hour missed. In the event of a planned absence or absence due to sickness, quizzes and memory verses must still be submitted on Canvas by the date that they are due.

**2.** **MEMORY VERSE AND READING ASSIGNMENT QUIZ** — Textbook assignments must be read prior to class. Each week you will take a Bible memory and reading assignment quiz on Canvas before the start of class*. You will need to complete your first quiz before the first class!* On your quiz, you will be asked if you have completed all assigned readings prior to class.

**3.** **DUE DATE EXTENSION POLICY** – There will be no extensions granted for any assignments. You receive your full schedule of assignments well before they are due, and you must plan accordingly. Any late submissions will be assessed a penalty of 10 points per day late.

**4.** **EXAMINATIONS** — Final Examination, TBD

On your final, you will be asked to write out Psalm 103:1-22 in its entirety and answer a single essay question.

**5. JOURNAL**

During the semester (starting on the week beginning with January 25th), you will keep a hand-written journal in which you write down reflections from your readings and quotations of interest.

* The journal must be a bound notebook or composition book. No loose-leaf notebooks.
* You must date each entry.
* There must be at least two entries each week during the semester (starting on the week beginning with January 25th), reading week excepted.
* Use complete sentences.
* You may estimate, but journal entries should be at least 500 words.
* Students are responsible for any lost work, either by the student or professor, and are, therefore, strongly advised to keep a photocopy record of their journal.

Journals must be submitted in class on April 19.

**6. GRADES –**

Journal 40%

Reading Quizzes and Bible Memory Verses 40%

Final Examination 20%

**7. GRADING SCALE -**

97-100% A

94-96% A-

91-93% B+

88-90% B

86-87% B-

83-85% C+

80-82% C

78-79% C-

75-77% D+

72-74% D

70-71% D-

0-69% F

**8.** **READING WEEK** – March 8-12

**9. MAKEUP CLASSES.** For various reasons, classes may be cancelled and rescheduled. If makeup classes are needed, they may be scheduled on any Monday evening during the semester.

**10. ELECTRONIC DEVICES -** Computers and tablets are not permitted in the classroom. Cell phones should be turned off and put away. Voice recorders are not permitted in class.

**11.** **ETIQUETTE** – Gentlemen may not wear caps or hats in the classroom.

**12.** **DISCLAIMER** - The instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus during the semester.

**13.** **OFFICE HOURS –** Monday through Thursday, by appointment or whenever the door is open.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

February 1:

A. Read Calvin (entire book)

B. Read Lawrence (entire book)

C. Read 30 minutes in Bennett

D. Read the following in Ryken:

* Caedmon’s Hymn
* Hand in Hand We Shall Take
* Leave Me, O Love, Which Reaches but to Dust
* O Gracious Shepherd

E. **Reading Quiz and Bible Memory Verse:** Psalm 103:1-5

March 1:

A. Vitringa (read entire book)

B. Read 30 minutes in Bennett

C. Read in Ryken:

* The Quality of Mercy Is Not Strained
* Thou Hast Made Me, and Shall Thy Work Decay?
* As Due by Many Titles I Resign
* Death, Be Not Proud
* Batter My Heart

D. **Reading Quiz and Bible Memory Verse:** Psalm 103:1-11

March 29:

A. Read 30 minutes in Bennet

B. Read one (1) hour in Newton

C. Read in Bonar and McCheyne the entirety of the Memoir (pp. 3-174) and 30 minutes in his letters

D. Read in Ryken:

* Aaron
* Redemption
* The Twenty-Third Psalm
* He Bore Our Griefs
* His Savior’s Words, Going to the Cross

E. **Reading Quiz and Bible Memory Verse:** Psalm 103:1-16

April 19:   
 A. Read 30 minutes in Bennett

B. Carson (read entire book)

C. Read in Ryken:

* How Soon Hath Time
* Avenge, O Lord, Thy Slaughtered Saints
* When I Consider How My Light Is Spent
* In the Bleak Midwinter

D. **Reading Quiz and Bible Memory Verse:** Psalm 103:1-22

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| **MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**  *In order to measure the success of the MDiv 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 MDiv outcomes.*  *\*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.* | | **Rubric**   * **Strong** * **Moderate** * **Minimal** * **None** | **Mini-Justification** |
| **Articulation**  **(oral & written)** | Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. | Strong | All written work must demonstrate good style, grammar, and syntax. |
| **Scripture** | 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.) | Moderate | Students will explore how Scripture informs and shapes classical devotional literature. |
| **Reformed Theology** | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. | Moderate | Students will read devotional literature from both within and outside of the Reformed tradition. |
| **Sanctification** | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification. | Strong | Students will study the connection between the reading of devotional literature and growth in personal holiness. |
| **Worldview** | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Minimal | Students will explore how devotional writings of previous generations might inform discussion about contemporary issues. |
| **Winsomely Reformed** | 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 | Students will strive to appreciate the contributions of devotional writers outside the Reformed tradition. |
| **Pastoral Ministry** | Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both churched and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians. | Strong | Students will enrich their private and public prayers as they study the prayers of devotional writers. |