**PT 5375 Personal Sanctification**

**Summer 2021**

**Michael Allen**

**Note that class meets on Friday, June 11 (5:00 – 9:00) and Saturday, June 12 (8:00 – 6:00).**

**Course Description**

This course examines the doctrine of sanctification in reformed theological perspective. We will examine biblical themes, theological formulation, and contemporary understanding with an eye toward pursuing holiness within the students’ lives.

**Course Objectives**

1. To help the student gain an understanding of the biblical doctrine of sanctification.

2. To grow in appreciation of our gracious Father renewing His people in the image of His Son through the power of the Holy Spirit.

3. To grasp the importance of pursuing holiness for Christian discipleship and ministry.

4. To gain resources for cultivating growth in the Christian life.

**The Instructor**

Michael Allen, Ph.D.

Email: mallen@rts.edu

Phone: 407-278-4445

Feel free to contact me whenever needed (preferably via email). If you have questions about class protocols and expectations or about the content of your readings, please email early and inquire.

**The Textbooks**

1. Augustine, *The Confessions* (trans. Maria Boulding; New York: New City, 2001).
2. John Calvin, *A Little Book on the Christian Life* (Sanford, FL: Reformation Trust, 2017).
3. Thomas Watson, *The Lord’s Prayer* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1960).
4. James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016).

**The Requirements**

1. Read.

Read Calvin (in its entirety) prior to our class. Other readings may be read after our class.

Theology is an activity done largely through the process of good reading. Read carefully. Read charitably. Read with others. Read with the expectation that you will learn from others, even when you disagree with their main point. Read even when a text is dense and difficult, for you will learn perseverance and fortitude here. Read that which seems trite and obvious, asking how others might object or criticize. Most importantly, read because God was willing to reveal himself in written words, and because we can best witness to God’s grace with corresponding words. Read because words matter in God’s economy of grace.

You will report your reading on Canvas.

1. Attend.

Please attend and participate actively. Bring your notes, books, and Bibles. Bring writing utensils. Don’t try to take down everything that is said; rather, engage and participate actively in lectures, discussions, and exercises.

We will eat together, and we will pray together.

1. Spiritual Discipline Exercise.

Students are to pick a spiritual discipline that they have not yet privileged and to attend to it intentionally in the 4 weeks immediately following our time together. You are then to report on your commitment to this exercise and to post on its effect upon your life (and, as applicable, to that of your family, friends, and church community). Your report will be a single page post on Canvas that describes *what* you did, *why* you did it, *how* it fit into your daily or weekly rhythm, and *to what effect* it contributed to your spiritual growth this month.

Examples: praying the hours, practicing Sabbath, fasting, attending Sunday evening worship, leading family worship, practicing Christian hospitality, etc.

1. Reflective Paper.

You will write a concluding paper that offers personal reflections prompted by the reading of Augustine’s *Confessions* and Thomas Watson’s *The Lord’s Prayer*. Two questions must be addressed: (1) learning from Augustine, what false hope or love do you need to specifically name and repent of and how has his book given you categories for describing it; and (2) learning from Watson, what particular prayer or petition (from the Lord’s Prayer) do you need to make your own and how has this study of the Lord’s Prayer helped you understand it? In making this reflective account autobiographically, root it in biblical and theological analysis.

**Grading Structure**

Grades will be assessed as follows:

Reading 1/3

Spiritual Discipline Exercise 1/3

Reflective Paper 1/3

The grading scale can be found in the Academic Catalog. As laid out in the catalog, a “B” is the work normally expected of a student. An “A” is given for someone who consistently outperforms expectations, and a “C” is given for persons who only minimally and occasionally meet expectations. Read the Academic Catalog to see what grades reflect.

**Technology Policy *(Modified from Dr. Alan Jacobs of Baylor University)***

Computers, tablets, and smart-phones are not allowed in class. Think I’m over-reacting? Think you’re a master of multitasking? [You](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/25/business/25multi.html?_r=0) are [not](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/07/24/tech/main1832042.shtml). No, [I really mean it](http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/multitasking-confronting-students-with-the-facts/). Notes taken by hand are almost always more useful than typed notes, because more thoughtful selectivity goes into them; plus there are multiple cognitive benefits to [writing by hand](http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/taking-notes-by-hand-benefits-recall-researchers-find/51411). And people who use laptops in class [see their grades decline](http://www.montrealgazette.com/technology/Students+laptops+class+lowers+grades+Canadian+study/8788540/story.html) — and even contribute to lowering the grades of *other people*.

**Class Schedule**

We will meet on Friday, June 11 and Saturday, June 12.

*Friday – Class Begins at 5:00 p.m.*

*The major theme of our first day will be a theological vision of sanctification as a divine gift of the gospel that is wrought in us by the transforming presence of the Triune God and also a Christian calling that involves discipline, duty, and habits.*

Noontime Prayer

A Theological Vision of the Christian Life

Sanctification in Brief

Vespers Prayer

Dinner – Eaten Together (BYOD: bring your own dinner)

Discussion of Calvin’s *Little Book*

Evening Prayer

*Dismissal at 9:00 p.m.*

*Saturday – Class Begins at 8:00 a.m.*

*The major theme of our second day will be the various Means of Grace, with special emphasis on prayer, Word, and Sacrament, and further analysis of other means of grace such as Sabbath (see WLC 154).*

Morning Prayer

Means of Grace

The Lord’s Prayer

Lunch – Eaten Together (BYOL: bring your own lunch)

Noontime Prayer

Self-Denial and Asceticism

Sabbath

Preparation for Readings: Smith, Augustine, and Watson

Vespers Prayer

*Dismissal by 6:00 p.m.*

**Other Due Dates**

1. Reading Report: due by midnight of Saturday, July 17.
2. Spiritual Discipline Exercise: due by Saturday, July 17.
3. Reflective Paper: due by Saturday, July 24.