

**Reformed Theological Seminary**  
**02NT5300 • Pauline Epistles**  
Course Syllabus • Spring 2022 • RTS-Orlando

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## **1. Course Details**

- 3 credit hours
- Thursdays 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm (February 3 – May 5, 2022)
- Description: “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.” (*RTS Catalog 2021–2023*, p. 71).

## **2. Instructor Information**

- Zachary J. Cole, Ph.D., Associate Professor of New Testament, RTS-O
- E-mail: [zcole@rts.edu](mailto:zcole@rts.edu)
- Office: Orlando Campus #3-214
- Office phone: 407-278-8167
- Office hours: e-mail to arrange an appointment

## **3. Course Objectives**

- To understand the content, message, and redemptive-historical significance of twelve of the Pauline epistles (all but Romans).
- To comprehend the basic structure of Pauline theology.
- To interpret Paul’s letters responsibly and contextually, conscious of their exegetical, theological, and practical implications.

## **4. Bibliography (Required Textbooks)**

- Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. J. R. De Witt (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), read all.
- Grant Macaskill, *Living in Union with Christ: Paul’s Gospel and Christian Moral Identity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019), read all.
- Michael J. Kruger, ed., *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Realized* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), read chapters on 1 Corinthians through Philemon [available as an eBook].

## **5. Course Requirements**

- Students must complete all requirements to pass this course. For due dates, see schedule below.
- **Reading quizzes (15%):** Students will complete four reading quizzes in Canvas that cover the main ideas in the Ridderbos textbook. Each quiz will cover three chapters of Ridderbos and will take the form of multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions.

- **Critical reflection and response (20%):** Students will write 1,000 words (roughly two pages) of critical reflection on one idea or concept of their choice from Grant Macaskill's, *Living in Union with Christ*. This reflection can be positive, negative, or mixed. Students must then ALSO write an additional 500 words responding to another (anonymous) student's reflection. In the response of 500 words, the student must engage charitably with the reflection and offer a thoughtful response to it.
- **Exam (30%):** At the end of the semester, students will complete a final exam lasting two hours. The exam will cover the lecture material (not the readings).
- **Thematic research paper (35%):** Students will write a 3,000-word paper (+ or – 10%) on the contribution of *one* epistle (1 Cor–Philm) to *one* key topic in Pauline theology. Students must engage with scholarly resources including commentaries, monographs, and journal articles. See grading criteria below. DUE DATE: May 13 @ 11:00 am. Some possible options (though you should consult with the instructor):
  - i. Old Testament typology in 1 Corinthians
  - ii. The New Covenant in 2 Corinthians
  - iii. Redemptive history in Galatians
  - iv. Christian unity Ephesians
  - v. Theology proper in Philippians
  - vi. Eschatology of Colossians
  - vii. Sanctification in 1 Thessalonians
  - viii. Suffering in 2 Thessalonians
  - ix. Eldership in 1 Timothy
  - x. Shame in 2 Timothy
  - xi. Good works in Titus
  - xii. Reconciliation in Philemon

## 6. Course Requirement Summary

- |                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| • Reading quizzes                  | 15% |
| • Critical reflection and response | 20% |
| • Final exam                       | 30% |
| • Thematic paper                   | 35% |

## 7. Grading System

A	(97-100)	4.00
A-	(94-96)	3.66
B+	(91-93)	3.33
B	(88-90)	3.00
B-	(86-87)	2.66
C+	(83-85)	2.33
C	(80-82)	2.00
C-	(78-79)	1.66

D+	(75-77)	1.33
D	(72-74)	1.00
D-	(70-71)	0.66
F	(below 70)	0.00
I	(incomplete)	-
W	(withdraw)	-
S	(satisfactory)	-
P	(passing)	-

## 8. Other Information

- Attendance is mandatory. Students must notify the instructor in writing regarding any expected absence.
- Technology: in class, students are permitted use laptops and/or tablets, provided they do not prove disruptive, distracting, or detrimental to learning. The instructor reserves the right to ban them.

## 9. Class Schedule

Week	Topic	Assignment
Feb 7	Intro + 1 Corinthians	
Feb 14	1 Corinthians	
Feb 21	2 Corinthians	Ridderbos quiz 1 by Saturday at 5pm
Feb 28	2 Corinthians	
Mar 7	Galatians	
Mar 14	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>	Ridderbos quiz 2 by Saturday at 5pm
Mar 21	Galatians	Critical reflection by Saturday at 5pm
Mar 28	Ephesians	
Apr 4	Philippians	Response by Saturday at 5pm
Apr 11	Colossians	Ridderbos quiz 3 by Saturday at 5pm
Apr 18	1 Thessalonians	
Apr 25	2 Thessalonians	
May 2	1-2 Timothy	Ridderbos quiz 4 by Saturday at 5pm
May 9	Titus and Philemon	
	Exam period	Paper by May 13; exam by May 19

## 10. Grading Criteria

Grading Criteria for Critical Reflection and Response Student name: _____	
Criteria	Comment
<b>Style:</b> the student adheres to the word count and writes in clear and correct English prose.	
<b>Accuracy:</b> the student gives evidence of having read and understood the reading.	

<b>Awareness:</b> the student demonstrates an awareness of why their chosen issue matters.	
<b>Reflection:</b> the student provides critical, thoughtful, and in-depth personal reflection on the material.	
<b>Integration:</b> the student integrates concepts and ideas from the lectures and reading to inform the reflection.	
<b>Charity:</b> the student writes the reflection and response with Christian charity.	
<b>Overall comment(s) and grade:</b>	

Grading Criteria for Thematic Paper Student name: _____	
Criteria	Comment
<b>Style:</b> the student adheres to the word count, writes in clear and correct English prose, and uses proper citation style.	
<b>Awareness:</b> the student identifies a relevant theological issue and demonstrates an awareness of why it matters.	
<b>Argument:</b> the student argues a clearly stated thesis with supporting evidence.	
<b>Synthesis:</b> the student synthesizes relevant information about their topic from their chosen epistle.	
<b>Research:</b> the student demonstrates an awareness of scholarly contributions to the topic and represents them fairly and accurately.	
<b>Charity:</b> the student writes with academic honesty, intellectual rigor, and Christian charity.	
<b>Overall comment(s) and grade:</b>	

## Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Pauline Epistles (NT5300)

Professor: Zachary Cole

Campus: Orlando

Date: Spring 2022

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b> <i>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.</i> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<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. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	The assignments require students to articulate complex ideas clearly, charitably, and with nuance.
<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	The course content is focused entirely on the Pauline corpus.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Reformed distinctives are considered within each of Paul's letters.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	None	
<b>Worldview</b>	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 be pushed to apply their reading to relevant issues in the contemporary world.
<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.)	Minimal	Course content and reading situate Reformed views on Pauline theology alongside other views.
<b>Pastoral Ministry</b>	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	Moderate	Students will be pushed to consider how Paul's letters can be and should be applied in pastoral ministry.