

Reformed Theological Seminary
02NT5300 • Pauline Epistles
Course Syllabus • Spring 2023 • RTS-Orlando

1. Course Details

- 3 credit hours
- Tuesdays 9:00 am – 12:00 pm (February 14 – May 5, 2023)
- 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
- 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

Holy Bible (translation of your choice). Read Paul’s epistles minus Romans.

Moo, Douglas J. *A Theology of Paul and His Letters: The Gift of the New Realm in Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2021. Read all **except** pgs. 192–243.

AND EITHER

Macaskill, Grant. *Living in Union with Christ: Paul’s Gospel and Christian Moral Identity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019. Read all.

OR

Barclay, John M. G. *Paul and the Power of Grace*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020. Read all.

*If you have already read either Macaskill or Barclay for a different class, choose the other one.

5. Course Requirements

- Students must complete all requirements to pass this course.
- **Reading affirmation (10%):** Students will indicate how much of the reading they have completed.
- **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 EITHER Macaskill's, *Living in Union with Christ* OR Barclay's, *Paul and the Power of Grace*. This reflection can be positive, negative, or mixed. Students must then ALSO write an additional 500 words responding to another 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 (35%):** 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. 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

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|------------------------------------|-----|
| • Reading affirmation | 10% |
| • Critical reflection and response | 20% |
| • Final exam | 35% |
| • 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 14	Intro + 1 Corinthians	
Feb 21	1 Corinthians	
Feb 28	2 Corinthians	
Mar 7	2 Corinthians	
Mar 14	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>	
Mar 21	Galatians	Critical reflection by Friday at 5pm
Mar 28	Galatians	
Apr 4	Ephesians	Response by Thursday at 5pm
Apr 11	Philippians	
Apr 18	Colossians	
Apr 25	1 Thessalonians	
May 2	2 Thessalonians	
May 9	1-2 Timothy	
May 16	Titus and Philemon	
	Exam period	Paper by May 19; exam by May 25

10. Grading Criteria

Grading Criteria for Critical Reflection and Response Student name: _____	
Criteria	Comment
Style: the student adheres to the word count and writes in clear and correct English prose.	
Accuracy: the student gives evidence of having read and understood the reading.	
Awareness: the student demonstrates an awareness of why their chosen issue matters.	
Reflection: the student provides critical, thoughtful, and in-depth personal reflection on the material.	
Integration: the student integrates concepts and ideas from the lectures and reading to inform the reflection.	
Charity: the student writes the reflection and response with Christian charity.	
Overall comment(s) and grade:	

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

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Pauline Epistles (NT5300)

Professor: Zachary Cole

Campus: Orlando

Date: Spring 2023

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u> <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>		<u>Rubric</u> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
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	The assignments require students to articulate complex ideas clearly, charitably, and with nuance.
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.)	Strong	The course content is focused entirely on the Pauline corpus.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Reformed distinctives are considered within each of Paul's letters.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	None	
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 be pushed to apply their reading to relevant issues in the contemporary world.
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.)	Minimal	Course content and reading situate Reformed views on Pauline theology alongside other views.
Pastoral Ministry	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.