

# 'Hebrew-Revelation' (NT5350) – 3 hours Spring 2024

## Syllabus

### INSTRUCTOR

Dr Bruce Lowe received his first doctorate in Analytical Chemistry and taught, consulted and researched in a university setting over several years in both Chemistry and Chemical Engineering departments. He then completed his MDiv at RTS Orlando, becoming an ordained Presbyterian minister and working in university ministry, as a youth pastor, and finally in church revitalization. He completed a doctorate in New Testament Studies where his thesis has focused on the purpose of Romans through attention to its cultural setting. Besides a particular interest in Paul, the message of James has been a subject of recent attention for Bruce. He has published an article on James 2. He has also spent significant time in Revelation and is especially exciting about helping students understand this important though difficult letter.

Office Hours: **Monday**, 12-1pm; **Tuesday**, 5-6pm; **Thursday** 5-6pm. Please email or text for appointment time.

### WHEN IS THE COURSE BEING RUN?

**Tuesday** 6-9pm, January 30<sup>th</sup> – April 30<sup>th</sup>

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

In the wisdom of God he has given us a diversity of personalities and styles of writing in the Bible. It is a joy that we have in the NT, not only the Gospels and Paul's writings, but the writings of Peter and of James and of Jude, and the very different style of Revelation. All these things are a gift from Him to round out a picture of himself, of his Son Jesus, of the history of his plan and his challenge for how we should live as Christians today. This course focuses on what are perhaps the lesser-known parts of the NT – though no less important for us today!

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To provide a general understanding of all 9 works – Hebrews to Revelation.
2. To highlight the specific value of each of the 9 works for today – i.e. in a) Personal living; b) General Pastoring; c) for the lost; d) in Counseling; and d) for Youth work.

3. To resolve the key issues & ‘problem passages’ in each of the 9 works.
4. To highlight passages of ‘special importance’ in each of the 9 works and to investigate how they might be preached to our present generation.

#### READING

Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary* (New Testament Library; Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox, 2006) ISBN 978-0-6642-2118-8<sup>1</sup>

Ralph Martin and Peter Davids (eds.), *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments* (IVP, 1997) ISBN 978-0-8308-1779-5<sup>2</sup>

Michael Kruger, *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Realized* (Crossway, 2016) ISBN 978-1-4335-3676-2

N. T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone* (2009) ISBN 978-0664227975<sup>1</sup>

#### ASSESSMENT

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|------------|--|
| <b>40%</b> | Research Paper; <b><u>Due date: see schedule below.</u></b> <sup>3</sup>           |
| <b>20%</b> | Mid-Term Exam; In Class Exam (1 hour); <b><u>Due date: see schedule below.</u></b> |
| <b>40%</b> | Final exam – via Canvas; <b><u>Due date: see schedule below.</u></b>               |

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<sup>1</sup> You will be required to read this entire commentary, and answer a question **on the final exam** to the effect that “I have read X%” for a certain grade percentage.

<sup>2</sup> You will be expected to read all the articles in this dictionary pertaining to the different letters we will be covering in the course. So you will need to read the article for Revelation, Hebrews, James... etc., and answer a question **on the final exam** to the effect that “I have read X%” for a certain grade percentage.

<sup>3</sup> This will be 10-25 pages. It will be a critical paper in which I wish you to interact with secondary literature (At least 10 good sources: journal articles, monographs and a range of commentaries from at least three different traditions – e.g. Reformed/Evangelical; Roman Catholic; Liberal Protestant; Classical History). The topic will be one of your own choice, negotiated with me. If you are stuck for a topic, I can assign one to you – see posted list of topics. **IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST COURSE IN SEMINARY OR IF YOU ARE STILL FINDING THE ASSIGNMENT PROCESS CHALLENGING, I RECOMMEND YOU CHOOSE THE “SPECIAL TOPIC” I WILL ALSO HAVE AVAILABLE** –designed to help you get orientated to seminary research. This paper is to be uploaded into the relevant folder in **Canvas**.

# General Outline

| Week | Date       | Assessment/HW Due         | Class Lectures  |
|------|------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1    | J30        |                           | Revelation      |
| 2    | F6         |                           | Revelation      |
| 3    | F13        |                           | Revelation      |
| 4    | F20        |                           | Revelation      |
| 5    | F27        |                           | Hebrews         |
| 6    | M5         |                           | Hebrews         |
| 7    | <b>M12</b> | <b>20% Midterm Exam</b>   | Hebrews & James |
| 8    | M19        |                           | James           |
| 9    | M26        |                           | 1Peter          |
| A1-5 |            | Spring Break              |                 |
| 10   | A9         |                           | 1Peter          |
| 11   | A16        |                           | 2Peter & Jude   |
| 12   | A23        |                           | 3,2&1John       |
| 13   | <b>A30</b> | <b>40% Research Paper</b> | 1John & Summary |
|      | <b>M11</b> | <b>40% Final</b>          | (at home)       |

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

| <b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>   |   | <b><u>Rubric</u></b>  | <b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>   |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p><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></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p> |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong</li> <li>➤ Moderate</li> <li>➤ Minimal</li> <li>➤ None</li> </ul> |  |
| <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.   | Strong  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lengthy exegetical essay.</li> <li>2. Informal class presentations of outcomes to group discussion</li> </ol>  |
| <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  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close interaction with Hebrews - Revelation.</li> <li>2. Instructor to address key elements of key Greek words.</li> <li>3. Cultural background to the books/letters covered in detail.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Reformed Theology</b>  | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.  | Strong  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reformed doctrine is highlighted in dialogue with current alternative perspectives.</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Sanctification</b>   | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.  | Moderate  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Singing worship song in class.</li> <li>2. Group discussion of how text applies to life at various points.</li> </ol>  |
| <b>Desire for Worldview</b>   | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.   | Strong  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A main practical focus in this course will be to see how one can counsel others using Heb-Rev. This will involve strong attention to worldview issues.</li> </ol>                                  |
| <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.)   | Strong  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Study of key passages in Revelation and Hebrews to highlight differences of opinion even within the reformed tradition.</li> </ol>   |
| <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   | Strong  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application at various points will highlight how a given passage may best be</li> </ol>  |

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|  | worship, leading, and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Xns. |  | taught.<br>2. Some worship songs of ancient origin will be sung together.<br>3. Practical illustrations of instructor's experience.<br>4. The theme of how to use these texts in counseling has significant impact on relations with the world. |
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### **Extension & Zoom Policies**

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

*Your professor may allow you to Zoom into class or watch Zoom recordings for excused absences based on the professor's discretion and subject to the availability of equipment. Students should contact their professor well in advance of the class meeting. For a third absence the Registrar should be consulted. Your professor may require additional interactive assignments to offset the absence of classroom interaction. Sync or Remote Live courses have priority for the limited Zoom equipment.*