

OT 5300
Poets
RTS Atlanta (Nashville Extension)
Summer 2024
Dates: June 11-14

Instructor Information

Dr. William M. Wood
BA; MDiv; PhD
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Email: wwood@rts.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment, email to set up a time.

I. Course Description

This Course is designed to: 1) introduce you to issues of special introduction in regard to the Psalms and wisdom literature; 2) provide a biblical-theological orientation to interpret the “writings” portion of the canon; 3) to introduce you to concepts on how to properly exegete, preach and teach Hebrew poetic features.

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” (2 Tim 2.15)

“All experience teaches us that ignorance, next to sin, is the most fruitful source of error, and that a few well-furnished and faithful ministers are far more efficient for good than a multitude of uneducated though zealous men.” –Charles Hodge

II. Course Objectives

1. To increase your knowledge of the “writings” portion of the canon (poetic books)
2. To increase your knowledge of critical issues for the writings
3. To increase your ability to properly exegete and preach poetry
4. To orient your study of the Psalms and wisdom literature with a redemptive historical hermeneutic that sees Christ as both the center and goal of the OT
5. To give glory to God by studying his word

III. Course Guidelines

1. Attendance. There are some complicated issues to discuss in class, therefore class attendance is mandatory. Any absence must be approved by the instructor beforehand via email.
2. Late-paper policy. Sometimes it will be necessary due to life situations to receive an extension on papers (see extension policy below); however, an extension is not awarded for procrastination. Papers submitted late without a viable reason (approved by the instructor) will be reduced by *one letter grade per day that they are late*. Thus, if a paper would have received an “A” grade but was submitted a day late, the grade will be reduced to an “A-”, an “A-” will become a “B+” and so on.
3. Lecture outlines will be provided for you. However, *the presence of outlines does not preclude the necessity of you taking notes*. The outlines are meant to help you keep track of where we are in the lecture, not to provide lecture notes for you.
4. Computers or handwritten notes? Studies have consistently found that hand-written note taking leads to better acquisition of the course material when compared to notes taken on computers. As such, it is recommended that you take notes *on paper*. However, this is not a requirement.
5. Computer policy. Laptops may be used in class *only for note taking*. The temptation of checking email and facebook should be resisted. It is *very distracting* to other students for you to be looking at things during class; therefore, a part of “loving your neighbor” is abstaining from these distracting acts.
6. Bring your Bible to class! You will need it!

IV. Course Assignments

Reading Assignment (10%)

All of the reading must be completed for this course. At the end of the semester you will be required to submit the final reading checklist found at the end of the syllabus. Your grade for this assignment will be determined by the percentage of the reading you completed. Hence, if you completed 100%, you will receive a 100; if you completed 90% you would get a 90, etc.

Final Exam (50%)

There will be a comprehensive final exam covering all lecture and reading material on the assigned exam date. The exam will be essays only.

Paper (40%)

You will be required to submit a Biblical-Theological paper on one of the passages detailed below. See the appendix for details.

V. Required Reading

Richard P. Belcher, *The Messiah and the Psalms: Preaching Christ from all the Psalms*. Scotland: Mentor, 2006.

Mark J. Futato. *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.

Derek Kidner, *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1985.

Tremper Longman III, *How to Read Proverbs*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2002.

Miles Van Pelt, editor. *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016. **Selections on canonical books covered in class.**

Iain Campbell, "The Song of David's Son: Interpreting the Song of Solomon in the Light of the Davidic Covenant," *WTJ* 62.1 (2000): 17-32.

James M. Hamilton Jr., "The Messianic Music of the Song of Songs: A Non-Allegorical Interpretation," *WTJ* 68 (2006): 331-45.

Biblical Books covered in class.

VI. Grade Scale

97-100	A	83-85	C+	70-71	D-
94-96	A-	80-82	C	Below 70	F
91-93	B+	78-79	C-		
88-90	B	75-77	D+		
86-87	B-	72-74	D		

*The rounding up of grades is based solely on the discretion of the professor. Thus, a 96.5 does not necessarily round up to an "A."

VII. Course Schedule

Class	Suggested Reading Schedule	Topics Covered
Lecture 1	Belcher and Futato BTOT, <i>Psalms</i> , 341-56	Psalms
Lecture 2		Psalms
Lecture 3		Psalms
Lecture 4	Kidner, pp. 56-89 BTOT, <i>Job</i> , 357-72	Job
Lecture 5		Job
Lecture 6	Longman Kidner, pp. 11-55 BTOT, <i>Proverbs</i> , 373-98	Proverbs
Lecture 7		Proverbs
Lecture 8	Kidner, pp. 90-124. BTOT, <i>Ecclesiastes</i> , 439-56	Ecclesiastes
Lecture 9	BTOT, <i>Lamentations</i> , 439-56 BTOT, <i>Song of Songs</i> , 419-38	Song of Songs & Lamentations
The Final Exam will be on CANVAS by 7/26/24		
The Final Paper should be submitted on CANVAS by 7/26/24		

*This schedule is subject to change at the sole discretion of the professor. The dates for topics are general guidelines for the progress of the course. The exam and Paper submissions will open after the final day of class and close by midnight on 7/26/24.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: OT 5300
 Professor: Dr. Wood
 Campus: Atlanta
 Date: SU 2024

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<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"> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None 	
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	Bible course.
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	This is a Bible course, after all!
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Reformed theology is a theology based on the Word.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	God works through His word.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	
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.)	Moderate	
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-Xns.	Strong	Bible course.

Extension Policy

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)

Zoom Policy

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.

Appendix: Paper Requirements

Overarching Requirements:

1. Writing Style: I expect a professional, readable paper with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. Too many errors will lead to a reduction of your paper grade.

2. Paper Length: The *minimum* length for your papers is 5,000 words inclusive of footnotes. The *maximum* length for your paper is 7,500 words inclusive of footnotes. This will be a roughly 15-page paper including engagement with scholars.

3. Title page: include a title page with your name, course number, date, and **number of words in your paper**.

4. References: You must use a *minimum* of **10** references in your paper. The bible *does not* count as a reference! No shoddy references! **Warning:** Wikipedia is *not* an academic reference tool; do ***not*** use it for your paper. References should be cited by means of the standard SBL footnote format found in the *SBL Handbook of Style*. References should come from sources such as Academic articles, commentaries, monographs, dictionary articles, and the like.

5. You must include a bibliography at the end of your paper following the SBL style. The bibliography should *not* be counted as part of your word count.

6. Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. If you are asking yourself if you should cite something, be safe and cite it! If you are caught plagiarizing, you will receive an automatic “F” for the course and will be subject to the Seminary’s disciplinary code of conduct.

7. Your paper should be **double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman (or similar) font**. **Footnotes are to be single space 10 point Times New Roman**. Note sure why, but students never follow this. Please do! It makes your professor happy, and happy professors grade happily!

7. If you know Hebrew, you *must use* Hebrew. All Hebrew must be in *Unicode*.

Specific Instructions

I. Text Options

1. Psalm 137
2. Proverbs 5
3. Ecclesiastes 12
4. Job 19
5. Other passages *if approved by the professor.*

II. Assignment Requirements

The task for this assignment is to closely examine a passage of scripture noting its redemptive historical import as it looks forward to Christ. As a Biblical-Theological paper *on the selected passage*, the goal is to see the specific way in which this passage in its particular historical milieu looks forward to the eschatological climax of redemption in Christ as well as relates to the preceding redemptive historical epochs.

Broad Outline for Paper

I. Introduction (expect this to take about a page)

-You should include a clear, cogent thesis statement here. The thesis statement will be what you think the main Biblical-Theological import of the passage is. While you do not need a statement like “my thesis statement is...,” I will be looking for you to present a clear thesis **and support it in the body of your paper.**

II. Structure of Passage (this section will likely be 2-3 pages; perhaps more if a longer passage)

-You should analyze the structure of the passage next, articulating the main thought-flow of the narrative and what you think the main point it is. The main point of the passage will be the main Biblical-Theological point as well!

-How does this passage fit the context of the book it is in?

-If you know Hebrew, *you must use it*. If you do not, then you will have to rely on commentaries and a close reading of the English text for this section.

III. Biblical-Theological Examination (this will be the main focus of your paper!)

-Focus on the particular redemptive historical context of your passage in relation to what the passage is trying to communicate. Why might this passage be introducing this content in this particular historical context?

-This step can be very difficult in wisdom literature. Focus on answering the question: how is this passage developing on OT material that comes before and how does it point us to Christ? Essentially your goal is to write a biblical-theological commentary on the passage focused on Christ.

IV. Conclusion (probably around a page)

Tie the paper together in concluding remarks focused on how the evidence that you have cited for your main thesis and how that thesis has been verified.

Note: The above broad outline will likely have numerous sub-sections and you may wish to add other sections as well. That is fine! But, I will be looking for all the material just outlined.

Appendix: Reading Checklist

Richard P. Belcher, *The Messiah and the Psalms: Preaching Christ from all the Psalms*. Scotland: Mentor, 2006. **Pages: 194.**

Mark J. Futato. *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007. **Pages: 208.**

Derek Kidner, *The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1985. **Pages: 113.**

Tremper Longman III, *How to Read Proverbs*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2002. **Pages: 150.**

Miles Van Pelt, editor. *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016. **Selections on canonical books covered in class. Pages: 108.**

Iain Campbell, "The Song of David's Son: Interpreting the Song of Solomon in the Light of the Davidic Covenant," *WTJ* 62.1 (2000): 17-32.

James M. Hamilton Jr., "The Messianic Music of the Song of Songs: A Non-Allegorical Interpretation," *WTJ* 68 (2006): 331-45.

Biblical books covered in class.

Total Reading: 802 pages + Biblical Books