

ST5500 Pastoral and Social Ethics (v.072125)

Josh Malone

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Day: Tuesdays

Time: 1pm-4pm

Room: 202

TA: Michael Emmanuel – MEmmanuel9343@student.rts.edu

Catalog Description

This course examines the relationship of the gospel to obedience. It considers the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. It then addresses the role of the law as a framework for Christian life, noting the impact of redemptive-historical and cultural shifts in our appropriation of the law.

Course Requirements

Participation (15%): Each student is required to attend course, answer questions when asked, and participate in class discussions. The following rubric explains how students will be evaluated:

A to A- (100-94)	B+ to B- (93-86)	C+ to C- (85-78)	D+ to D- (77-70)	F (69 – 0)
Provided many good ideas for class consideration; inspired others; clearly communicated desires, ideas, questions, and comments. Was respectful of others.	Participated in discussions; shared questions and comments. Was respectful of others.	Listened mainly; occasionally asked a question or offered a comment. Was respectful of others.	Seemed bored with discussions; rarely spoke up, and questions or comments were off topic. Was disrespectful of others. Or, dominated class time by not permitting others to ask their questions.	Failed to attend class—missed more than three lecture periods total.

Reading Briefs (15%): For each week (after the first week) there is a reading brief due. Students are required to upload to Canvas a reading brief for the ***bolded*** listed reading only on *Lecture Schedule* (e.g. – Week 2: “Luther, Treatise on Good Works”; Week 3: “Bavinck, C1-2”). The purpose of the brief is to summarize the thesis, outline, and argument, as well as to state one’s own analysis of it (in the form of questions, confirmations, objections, etc.). Briefs may include quotations from various points in the text (so long as page numbers are referenced). Briefs should be no less than 200 words and no more than 350 words. They should be written in complete sentences and edited carefully, and uploaded to Canvas before class begins on Tuesdays.

Research Paper (25%): you must write a 12-15 page research paper written in a 12 point Times New Roman font, with 10 point Times New Roman footnotes, double-spaced, footnotes single-spaced. ***You must use at least ten sources, three of which should be journal articles.***

- a. Each student will write a critical analysis of an ethical issue. This final essay must be addressing one of the topics listed below.
 - i. Topics: The professor will create working groups focused on key topics. Possible topics include: racial/ethnic reconciliation, marriage and divorce, genetic engineering, and war/violence. They vary year to year.
 - ii. The professor will provide a few readings assigned on each topic. These are required reading (roughly 150 pages specific to the topic, to be read over the course of the final two weeks, provided in PDF format on Canvas). You will be assigned this topic, read the corresponding works, and discuss these with a group of classmates in preparation for writing your final paper (individually). The final two class sessions will allow time for groups to discuss their research and writing. Each group will be pursuing a common theme.
- b. Approvals: Topics must first be approved by the professor beforehand.

Please use *The Chicago Manual of Style* or *Turabian's Manual for Writers of Term Papers* for a style guide. Please also note the following grading rubric:

A to A- (100-94)	B+ to B- (93-86)	C+ to C- (85-78)	D+ to D- (77-70)	F (69 – 0)
Follows assignment rules re. format, length, and sources; engages primary sources; provides analysis, not simply rehearses information.	Follows assignment rules re. format, length, and sources; engages minimal primary sources and is more reliant upon secondary sources; has more repetition of information than analysis	Fails to meet assignment rules re. format, length, and sources; does not engage primary sources; relies upon secondary sources exclusively; has minimal analysis.	Fails to meet assignment rules re. format, length, and sources; relies upon secondary sources exclusively, and has no analysis.	Fails to submit paper or significantly fails to meet assignment rules.

Note, failure to reach (1) the required minimum pages (12), (2) the required number of sources (10, with 3 journal articles) will result in the loss of one to two letter grades on your paper. Due Thursday, December 11, 2025, at 11:59pm. (last day of finals)

Reflection Paper (10%): Students are expected to write a 3-page reflection paper that looks at the “Third Use of the Law” as it is defined and put to use in Reformed Theology. The aim of this short paper is for students to be able to grasp the theological importance of this significant feature of the Reformed tradition and to articulate its significance for Christian ethics. Students



should consult the following readings to help write this paper that are available on canvas:
Ferguson and Hesselink. **Due: Tuesday, November 4, 2025 11:59PM**

Final Exam (25%): Students will sit for a two-hour exam that covers questions drawn from lectures and assigned readings. **TBD**

Westminster Shorter Catechism Exam (10%): Students will memorize and be tested on WSC Q&A 39-80. **Due Friday, December 5, 2023, at 5:00pm. (last week of class)**

RTS Grading Scale

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

Textbooks & Required Reading

Holy Bible (any version)

NOTE: Students who would like to pursue an advanced course of study may negotiate different assigned readings with the instructor. This must be done the first week of class and is binding.

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Ethics: The Duties of the Christian Life*. Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2021). ISBN 978-0801098222

Jochem Douma, *The Ten Commandments*, trans. Nelson D. Kloosterman (Philadelphia: P&R, 1996). ISBN 9780875522371

Martin Luther, *Treatise on Good Works* (trans. Scott Hendrix; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012). ISBN 9780800698935.

John Murray, *Principles of Conduct* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991). ISBN 9780802811448.

David VanDrunen, *Bioethics and the Christian Life* (Crossway, 2009). ISBN 9781433501449

The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms (all modern NAPARC editions acceptable)

Supplementary PDF readings will be available on Canvas.

Course structure:

1. Introduction to Moral Theology & Christian Ethics
2. Sources of Ethics & Law: Redemptive History
3. First Table: C1-C2
4. First Table: C3-C4
5. Second Table: C5-C6
6. Second Table: C7-C8
7. READING WEEK
8. Second Table: C9-1C0
9. Good Relationships: Friendship, Race, Gender, Marriage, Divorce & Sex
10. Good Life: Money, Work, Rest
11. Good Relationships II: Economics, Immigration, Incarceration & Policing
12. Good Order: Statecraft, Justice, Punishment & War
13. Final Projects: Discuss Readings (part 1)
14. Final Projects: Discuss Readings (part 2)
15. Good Beginnings and Endings: Birth, Contraception, Abortion, Euthanasia & Suicide

Lecture Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	Aug 26	Introduction to Moral Theology & Christian Ethics	*Augustine, “On Faith and Works” [entirety – PDF provided]
2	Sep 2	Sources of Ethics & Law: Redemptive History	Luther, <i>Treatise on Good Works</i> [entirety] PDF: Natural Law
3	Sep 9	First Table: C1-C2	Douma, prologue, first and second commandment; Bavinck C1-C2 ; WLC104-110
4	Sep 16	First Table: C3-C4	Douma, third and fourth commandment; Bavinck C3-C4 ; WLC 111-121
5	Sep 23	Second Table: C5-C6	Douma, fifth and sixth commandment; Bavinck C5-C6 ; WLC 122-136
6	Sep 30	Second Table: C7-C8	Douma, seventh and eighth commandment; Bavinck C7-C8 ; WLC 137-142
7	Oct 7	Reading Week – No Class	
8	Oct 14	Second Table: C9-C10	Douma, ninth and tenth commandment; Bavinck C9-C10 ; WLC 143-148
9	Oct 21	Good Relationships: Friendship, Race, Gender, Marriage, Divorce & Sex	Murray, Ch 1-3 PDF: Friendship, Waters PDF: Bacote / PCA Statement
10	Oct 28	Good Life: Money, Work, Rest Good Relationships II: Economics, Immigration	Murray, Ch 4 PDF: Work, Veith PDF: Usury, Luther; Immigration, Gill
11	Nov 4	PMV – No Class	Complete & Submit: Reflection Paper Ferguson and Hesselink
12	Nov 11	Good Order: Statecraft, Justice, Punishment & War	War & Peace , Augustine/Aquinas/Luther Non-Violence, Hauerwas; 2K, Tuininga
13	Nov 18	GROUPS MEET : Final Projects: Discuss Readings (part 1) Reading packet (PDF provided) [No Regular Class]	
14	Nov 25	GROUPS MEET : Final Projects: Discuss Readings (part 2) Reading packet (PDF provided) [No Regular Class]	
15	Dec 2	Good Beginnings and Endings: Birth, Contraception, Abortion, Euthanasia & Suicide	VanDrunen [entirety]; Murray, Ch 5

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST5400 Christian Thought and Philosophy

Campus: Jackson, MS

Professor: Josh Malone

Date: Fall 2025

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
		• 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	Reading briefs and final paper test ability to communicate in written form. Working groups provide group forum for oral communication.
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	Lectures and readings focus upon biblical ethics as interpreted in the Christian tradition (classical and Reformed).
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	STRONG	Lectures and readings focus upon Reformed distinctives regarding the nature of sanctification and good works.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	STRONG	Every facet of class addresses the nature of, motivation for, and power for sanctification.
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.	STRONG	Readings, lectures, and final paper address the construction of moral principles and a moral imagination that is conformed to Holy Scripture as its final authority, and informed by historic Christianity.
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.)	STRONG	Readings and lectures address Christian ethical instruction from beyond the Reformed world.
Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both churched and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	STRONG	Ministers will be better informed in Christian ethics, which shapes worship, pulpit ministry, shepherding, and engaging the world.

*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.