



CLASSICS OF PERSONAL DEVOTION

Instructor: Dr. Jordan Stone
Email: Jstone@rts.edu
Phone: (972) 529-1502
Friday, January 16: 6:00–9:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 21: 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE

The student will read and discuss devotional writings from church history to deepen their knowledge of and love for the Triune God. Chosen texts introduce the student to the various expressions and emphases of Christian spirituality.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To grasp the place and role of devotional reading in relation to our recognized means of grace: the Word, the Church, Prayer, and the Sacraments.
- To become familiar with a select range of classic devotional writers throughout church history.
- To develop a deeper understanding of Christian spirituality's various traditions and emphases.
- To grow discernment in reading spiritual books.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. **Patristic Spirituality:** [Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Saint Macrina*. Translated and Introduced by Kevin Corrigan. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001.](#) (34 pp) [Available online here.](#)
2. **Medieval Spirituality:** Bernard of Clairvaux. *On Loving God*. Countless print editions are available. [I recommend using this free PDF.](#) (33 pp)
3. **Reformation/Puritan Spirituality:** [Owen, John. *Communion with God*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1991.](#) (209 pp)
4. **Seminary Spirituality:** [Warfield, B. B. *The Religious Life of Theological Students*. Philipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1983.](#) (15 pp) [Available online here.](#)
5. **Modern Spirituality:** [Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*. New York: Harper Collins, 1954.](#) (128 pp)



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1 Reflection Paper (20% of final grade): Write an 800-word reflection on the experience of devotionally reading one of the following Reformed confessional documents: Westminster Confession of Faith, Westminster Larger Catechism, Westminster Shorter Catechism, Heidelberg Catechism, Thirty-Nine Articles, or 1689 London Baptist Confession. The reflection should 1) discuss the value of Christian creeds and confession for spiritual growth, and 2) reflect on how the chosen confession or catechism can aid growth in godliness.

⇒ Due Date: January 31, 2026

1 Book Interaction (30% of final grade): Write a 1,200-word review of one of the following Christian biographies. The interaction should 1) explain why you selected the given work, and 2) reflect on the vital lessons for Christian spirituality offered in the biography.

- [Bonar, Andrew. *Robert Murray M'Cheyne*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1960.](#) (192 pp)
- [Murray, Ian. *Amy Carmichael: Beauty for Ashes*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2015.](#) (192 pp)
- [Taylor, Howard. *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2009.](#) (272 pp)

⇒ Due Date: January 31, 2026

Class Discussion (30% of final grade): Students are expected to arrive prepared to discuss the relevant readings.

⇒ Due Date: January 21, 2026

Reading (20% of final grade): Students will submit a reading report on the second day of the course.

⇒ Due Date: January 21, 2026

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are required to attend all sessions. If a student is “provisionally hindered” from attending class, please notify the instructor.



WRITING GUIDELINES

Review papers must be double-spaced, use 12 pt. Times New Roman font, and include pagination. Points will be deducted for spelling and grammar errors.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY (Taken from Dr. Michael Allen)

Computers, tablets, and smart-phones are not allowed in class. Think we're over-reacting? Think you're a master of multitasking? You are not. No, you really are not. Notes taken by hand are almost always more useful than typed notes, because more thoughtful selectivity goes into them; plus there are multiple cognitive benefits to writing by hand. And people who use laptops in class see their grades decline—and even contribute to lowering the grades of *other people*.

— COURSE SCHEDULE —

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29

- Lecture: Patristic Spirituality
- Reading Discussion: *The Life of Saint Macrina*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30

- Lectures: Medieval, Reformation, and Modern Spiritualities.
- Reading Discussions: *Confessions*, *A Little Book on the Christian Life*, and *The Religious Life of Theological Students*