

Reformed Theological Seminary
 Hebrews to Revelation
 NT5350 (3 Credit Hours)
 Spring 2026
 Tuesdays 1–3:55 pm

Dr. Chris S. Stevens
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 TA: Tucker Alexander

1. Course Objectives:

To orient students to the major themes, content, and scholarship of the Gospels.

Know (Head):

- Date, Authorship, Socio-Religious setting of the individual letters/books.
- Major Content and Themes of the individual and canonical section.
- Major Scholarship and a general awareness of interpretive challenges.
- How to process and respond to hyper-critical work.

Be (Heart):

- Understanding the significance of the individual accounts for theology (BT & ST), daily life, and ecclesiastical form and function.
- Become a critical inquirer of the individual pericope and canonical section.
- Reflect upon the author as people and instruments in redemptive history.

Do (Hands):

- Learn to delve deeply into the biblical text.
- Recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of secondary literature and that there is no replacement for thoughtful personal interaction with the text.
- Begin notes for later preaching, teaching, and further studies.

2. Course Description from the RTS Catalogue (p. 77)

Attention is given to the General Epistles and the writer's literary art, theological teaching, pastoral purpose, and message for today's church and world

Assignments:

Required Material

- English Bible with cross references (CSB, ESV, NAS, etc.)
- Hand edition of the Greek New Testament (NA28, UBS4, etc., with apparatus)
- Means for taking notes, which is strongly recommended not to be electronic.

Recommended Materials

- Bible Software (Accordance, Logos, etc. There are many free resources available too.)

Required Reading:

- a) Read Hebrews to Revelation in any language.
- b) Two personal selections:
 - a) critical commentary at least 250 pgs. on one of the texts;¹
 - b) roughly 200 pgs. of personal choice of top-quality works (academic journals or monographs, examples in bibliography).
- c) Jobes, Karen H. Letters to the Church: *A Survey of Hebrews and the General Epistles*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- d) Carson, D. A. and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005. (Sections on Heb-Rev) Pgs. 128
- Alternatives:
 - *Kruger, Michael J. ed. *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Realized*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016.
- e) Stevens, Chris S. "Does Neglect Mean Rejection? Canonical Reception History of James." *JETS* 60.4 (2017): 767–80. (via Canvas)

Assignments:

1. Paper: Major Figures 5%, Due Before Easter

A 1000-word summary of 10 **significant figures** in Hebrews-Revelation scholarship and their contribution. Giving roughly 100 words per person, this can be done in list form with a paragraph for each figure. It is an opportunity for reflection and assessment, so biblical dictionaries should not simply be copied. Using AI is subject to the school policy on academic honesty.

2. Paper: Biblical Journal Notes 10%, Due April 28

¹ An expository work is not a critical commentary. Consult the bibliography given in class, but generally think more NIGTC, Pillar, Calvin, ICC, etc. and not REC by P&R.

- a. Each weekday during the semester (i.e., Monday-Friday) read somewhere in Heb-Rev. *Journal* a minimum of 100-words in an accumulative document to be turned in at end of semester. This is a free-write assignment interacting with the Biblical text in a manner of personal reflection, interaction, wrestling, anxiety, hurt, joy, likes/dislikes, and etc. Grading will be done on the process and volume. **Privacy will be explained in class.**
 - i. Pastoral Hint: There are two ways to make this a useful and sustainable practice. 1) Free read and reflect as part of your yearly Bible reading. 2) Read through a book a few times without commentaries or other resources. In time, you will accumulate a large quantity of personal reflections that can serve future sermon series or Sunday Schools.
- 3. Mid Term: 20%, Due March 17
Midterm Exam (20%) to be taken after reading week, covering lectures, assigned readings, and Bible reading up to that point.
- 4. Paper: Major 25%, Due April 28

Advice: Use your seminary assignments to prepare for lifelong service to the King. I warn that no one in your church wants to hear a 17-part lecture on why Bultmann's form criticism failed—and frankly, neither do I.

Instead, use your assignments to build skills, deepen knowledge, and lay foundations for future labors. For example, choose key figures for your short papers who can also feature in your major papers (friend or foe). Then use those same figures in future NT classes. By the end of seminary, you will have a strong grasp of ten major NT scholars. If planned well, your papers might grow into a thesis, the background for a sermon series, or the foundation of a Sunday School curriculum.

b) Major Paper 25%

A 3000-word biblical exegetical paper. Besides the features requisite in a quality paper (clear thesis, logical argumentation, appropriate conclusion, etc.), it should include some comment on the following features: textual criticism, lexical analysis, syntactical discussion, structural analysis, location within book, biblical theological significance, covenantal insights and ramifications, and etc. (remember the layers of **cotext, context, and canon**).

The paper will be 3000 words *excluding* footnotes and bibliography. It should demonstrate interaction with the text and secondary literature: journal articles, commentaries, monographs, biblical theologies, systematics, etc. While I do not want a summary of commentators' opinions, the goal is not to be groundbreaking or novel. You are not measured by finding something new or novel. The assignment aims to practice engaging with the biblical text and using tools for productive learning and articulation. I want to see you learn and grow in thinking as Christian scholars. One or two exceptional papers per semester will be selected for praise and reward.

Format: **Text Body:** left justified, Font Times New Roman (or Brill, Helvetica Neue), 12 pt., 1-inch margins, indent ½ inch, and double-spaced. **Footnotes:** left justified, 10 pt., first line ½ inch indent. Pagination is on the top right. I am dyslexic, so I am sympathetic to typos, spelling errors, and grammatical abominations. However, you are in a master's program, so labor well in proofreading and make the paper easier for me to read, or such errors will lower your grade.

The topics below are suggestions that should cover most papers. If you have something outside of these suggestions, meet me with a written, prepared thesis and three points to prove your thesis.

Rough Paper Topics:

Hebrews: Priesthood; 'Rest' in 3–4; Melchizedek; Warning Passages; Sufficiency of sacrifice; Christology; Mosaic vs./and New Covenant; etc.

James: on Law; justification; Faith & works; connection or conflict with Paul; Poor and Power structures; etc.

Peter: Social setting of community; use of OT; view of OT prophecy; false teachers, what they teach, and how to respond; etc.

1–3 John: Christology; pneumatology; participation; community; false prophets; so many topics

Jude: citation of noncanonical 1 Enoch and Assumption of Moses; function and contribution within canon; etc.

Revelation: anything really expect I will not allow bashing other *voices*. While criticism should be part of a good paper, the assignment is not to make a hit piece.

Paper Policy:

The style and form of papers should be conducted according to the school policy. Footnotes and bibliography are SBL Style (5th), use inclusive and appropriate language, and be consistent: *behaviour* or behavior. The style and tone of papers should conform to theological journals (see for instance *JBL*, *JETS*, *JTS*).

5. Final Exam: 20

The Final Exam (20%) will focus on the remaining lectures and readings but include anything from the semester.

Grading Policy:

All assignments must receive a passing grade to pass the class. There is no mathematical passing without a valid attempt at every assignment. The grading scale for this course is the seminary's grading scale on *RTS Catalog*, pg.48. Also, the professor reserves the right to grade papers, final

exams, and other assignments on a comparative scale. In exams and papers, students are not required to agree with the professor or RTS. They are measured by their merit, method, and execution.

Grading:

1) Paper: Major Figures	5%
2) Paper: Journal Notes	10%
3) Mid Term	20%
4) Paper: Major	25%
5) Final Exam	20%
6) Reading	10%
7) In-class Participation	10%

Due Dates:

1) Major Figures	Before Easter (via Canvas)
2) Journal Notes	April 28 (one text doc. via Canvas)
3) Mid-Term	March 17 (in class)
4) Paper: Major	April 28
5) Final Exam	May 5–7 (in class)
6) Reading Report	April 28

Late Assignments:

Late assignments lose one letter grade per day, excluding Sundays. A 'day' is any time after the beginning of class. So, if you are going to be one hour late, you might as well use the rest of the day to ensure everything is perfect. Must be either time-stamped at the front desk or prior to 11 pm on Canvas.

Attendance:

While attendance and participation in the classroom only count for 5% of your grade, I pray you would consider the actual value. All absences will be handled according to school policies. Two tardies (arriving after the beginning of class) constitute an hour of absence. Students missing more than two sessions (for any reason) may either submit an additional, compensatory assignment [determined by the instructor] or choose to receive a full letter grade reduction in their final grade.

Class Participation:

Class participation requires: preparation, reading of assignments, active listening, and discussion in class. Classroom disrespect will not be tolerated, including verbal interaction, and all devices must be used solely for classroom participation. Any student doing other activities will be dismissed and counted absent.

Plagiarism: In accordance with school policy, any cheating (quiz, paper, exam, etc.) will be submitted to the Academic Dean for resolution. Furthermore, the use and abuse of AI tools are explained in the Artificial Intelligence Policies for Use in Coursework. If there is evidence of widespread abuses, the Professor reserves the right to change how assignments are handled.



Course Objectives Related to M.Div. Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Hebrews-Revelation (NT5350)

Professor: Chris Stevens

Campus: Jackson

Date: Spring 2026

<u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<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.	Strong	Course basic exegetical principles for interpreting Scripture
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	See course title and description
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Reformed distinctives on Scripture and its interpretation are carefully considered
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Scripture is the primary means of grace, its study ought to be an act of love toward God
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Minimal	Focused on interpreting Word of God rightly

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	Though we hope the professors and students exemplify this spirit
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Must understand what the text means to preach it rightly
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	Course is relevant to worship but is not centered on worship, as such
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Moderate	Using Scripture rightly is central to good shepherding
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	Though alternative approaches to Scripture will be considered and application of original meaning to contemporary contexts

Additional Bibliography

Exegesis:

Beale, G. K. *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

Bultmann, Rudolf Karl. "Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible?" *Encounter* 21.2 (1960): 194–200.

Casurella, Anthony. *The Johannine Paraclete in the Church Fathers: A Study in the History of Exegesis*. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Biblischen Exegese. 25. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1983.

Conzelmann, Hans, and Andreas Lindemann. *Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the Principles and Methods of New Testament Exegesis*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988.

Longenecker, Richard N. "Can We Reproduce the Exegesis of the New Testament." *Tyndale Bulletin* 21, (1970): 3–38.

Porter, Stanley E. and Kent D. Clarke. "What is Exegesis? An Analysis of Various Definitions," Pages 3–21 in *A Handbook to the Exegesis of the New Testament*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

*Steinmetz, David C. "The Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis." *Theology Today* 37 (1980): 27–38.

Major Figures:

Baird, William. *History of the New Testament Research*, Vol. One: From Deism to Tübingen. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

———. *History of New Testament Research*, Vol. Two: From Jonathan Edwards to Rudolf Bultmann. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.

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Green, Joel B., Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1992.

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Soulen, Richard N., and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 3rd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Backgrounds:

Charlesworth, James H. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1983.

Collins, John J. *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature*. The Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1995.

*Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

*Hengel, Martin. *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period*. Translated by John Bowden. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.

_____. *Studies in Early Christology*. New York: T&T Clark, 1995.

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Jellicoe, Sidney. "Septuagint Studies in the Current Century." *JBL* 88.2 (1968): 191–199.

Müller, Mogens. "The Septuagint as the Bible of the New Testament Church." *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 7.2 (1993): 194–207.

General Works:

*Beale, G. K. *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

*_____. *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994

_____. "Did Jesus and the Apostles Preach the Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Revisiting the Debate Seventeen Years Later in the Light of Peter Enns' Book, Inspiration and Incarnation." *Themelios* 32.1 (2006): 18–43.

George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*. Revised ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

General

Jobes, Karen H. *Letters to the Church: A Survey of Hebrews and the General Epistles*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

Hebrews

Baugh, S. M. "The Cloud of Witnesses in Hebrews 11." *WTJ* 68 (2006): 113–32.

Brennan, Nick. *Divine Christology in the Epistle to the Hebrews: The Son as God*, Lnts 656. London: T&T, 2021.

Docherty, Susan. "The Text Form of the Ot Citations in Hebrews Chapter 1 and the Implications for the Study of the Septuagint." *New Testament Studies* 55 (2009): 355–65.

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Howard, George E. "Hebrews and the Old Testament Quotations." *Novum Testamentum* 10.2–3 (1968): 208–16.

Jeffries, Bridget Jack. "Hebrews, She Wrote? An Analysis Ofthe Harnack-Hoppin Thesis of Priscillan Authorship of Hebrews." *JETS* 67 (2024): 47–66.

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Moffatt, James. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Icc. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1924.

O'Brien, Peter Thomas. *The Letter to the Hebrews*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

Pitts, Andrew W. and Joshua Walker. "The Authorship of Hebrews: A Further Development in the Luke-Paul Relationship." Pages 143–84 in *Paul's Social Relations*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Land. Vol. 7 of *Past*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

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James

Bauckham, Richard. *James: Wisdom of James, Disciples of Jesus the Sage*, New Testament Readings. New York: Routledge, 1999.

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Elliott, John H. "The Epistle of James in Rhetorical and Social Scientific Perspective Holiness-Wholeness and Parterns of Replicaiton." *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 23 (1993): 71–80.

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1–2 Peter

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1–3 John

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