

**09PT5375**

**Personal Sanctification**

**Reformed Theological Seminary NYC**

**Spring 2026**

**Rev. Dr. Justin Adour**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines what the Bible and the Reformed tradition teach us about sanctification and personal holiness. We will explore a theology of sanctification, the foundations for a godly life, the confrontations that sanctification brings, and the practices that assist us in personal growth.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE**

. We will also meet all day on April 25th (9 am - 6 pm) with a lunch break. Since this is an intensive course, participation is mandatory on both days.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To help the student gain an understanding of the biblical doctrine of sanctification, particularly as understood in the Reformed tradition.
2. To recognize the Gospel as the source of our growth and maturity.
3. To confront and address the idols of our hearts and those we seek to serve
4. To assist in establishing healthy and sustained rhythms of growth through the means of grace and spiritual practices.

### **THE INSTRUCTOR**

- Justin Adour, DMin
- Email: justin.adour@gmail.com
- Phone: 917-819-6650

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out (email or in-person is preferable, but a call or text is fine if needed).

**REQUIRED TEXTS** (Some readings are only portions of a book. See below for details).

- Calvin, John *On the Christian Life*
- Lane and Tripp, *How People Change*
- Lewis, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*
- Keller, Timothy. *The Prodigal God*
- Rah, Soong Chan. *Prophetic Lament*
- Smith, James K.A. *You Are What You Love*

**Additional articles are also required and listed below.**

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**1. Reading.** Students are required to read all of the assigned texts. The majority of these texts are not dense but rather provide an opportunity for personal reflection. Read with an eye toward such reflection. These reflections will be part of our time together.

Since our intensive will take place toward the end of the semester, the majority of readings should

be completed before our gathering. The sections of the book *How People Change* do *not* need to be completed before the intensive.

A reading report will be required and submitted to Canvas.

**2. Attendance & Discussion.** Students are required to attend both gatherings. Further, the quality of our time together will depend on active participation and interaction with the texts. Come prepared to engage and participate in dialogue. Please ensure you bring your Bible, along with any other items you find will be helpful for you to engage.

Our time together will consist of prayer, lectures, and discussions.

**3. Rule of Life (ROL).** As part of a final project, students will be required to submit a Rule of Life that structures their rhythms of spiritual disciplines. This ROL may be an adaptation of something similar that is currently used by the student, though if certain aspects from class are missing, students will be required to submit an updated ROL that includes the additions.

**4. Reflection Paper.** Students will be required to submit a final paper incorporating the readings, lectures, and discussions, particularly concerning the *foundations*, *confrontations*, and *practices* of sanctification (a suggested structure could be using each topic as a sub-heading for reflection). The goal is to reflect on how the Lord is seeking to move you into a new season of growth and maturity.

Some primer questions for your reflection might be: What were the most helpful, insightful, and challenging aspects of the content? What areas of your life are you realizing need more attention? What Holy Spirit confrontations do you need in this season? What are the actionable steps you are planning on taking to pursue holiness and obedience in your life?

We will have time to discuss this paper more toward the end of our intensive. The paper should be 1000-1500 words total.

***Due Date for all assignments: May 15, 2025***

## **GRADING STRUCTURE**

Grades will be assessed as follows:

- Reading: 15%
- Attendance & Discussion 35%
- ROL: 10%
- Reflection paper: 40%

## **TECHNOLOGY SPECIFICATIONS**

In order to access Canvas, students and faculty need a reliable high-speed internet connection and an up-to-date browser (Chrome, Firefox recommended). Additional software and hardware needs include:

- Computer – Microsoft Windows or Mac OSX
- An active e-mail account (provided by RTS)
- Word processing (Written assignments are submitted as MS Word or PDF) (RTS provides a Microsoft user license to all active students)
- Zoom conferencing software
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Additionally, some basic skills are necessary for using Canvas and Zoom

- Browse the internet by entering a web-address
- Navigate Canvas & Zoom using a computer, tablet, or mobile device
- Upload and download a file

For any Canvas-related issues, you can call or email the DE Student Services Departments ([dess@rts.edu](mailto:dess@rts.edu)) or the DE Canvas Administrator ([canvas.admin@rts.edu](mailto:canvas.admin@rts.edu)). After hours, you have access to 24/7 support through the Canvas Help Desk (Instructure).

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY**

See the RTS policy. This course will adhere to the established standards found in the Catalog.

## INTENSIVE SCHEDULE

**Friday, April 24th: 4 pm - 9 pm**

**A Theology of Sanctification:** In the opening session, we will consider a biblical and Reformed perspective on sanctification.

Required reading *before* the intensive:

- Bavinck, "[Sanctification & Perseverance](#)"
  - Pg. 1-6 - "Intro" & "Holiness as Gift and Reward"
  - Pg. 15-19 - "Sanctification Is Also in Christ" & "Passive and Active Sanctification"
- Murray, "[Definitive and Progressive Sanctification](#)"
- Calvin, [On the Christian Life](#) (96)

**Structure of the evening:**

- Prayer & Reflection
- Lecture & Discussion: A Theology of Sanctification
- Dinner & Discussion
- Lecture & Discussion: The Christian Life
- Prayer & Reflection

**April 25th: 9 am - 5 pm**

**The Foundations of Sanctification:** In this session, we will see the extent to which sanctification is rooted in a robust theology of the Gospel. Not only are we in need of freedom from our rebellions against God, but we also need freedom from the self-righteousness and self-centeredness that keep us from Him.

Required reading for *before* intensive:

- Keller, *The Prodigal God* (192) - The Gospel is for both the prodigal son who runs away and the obedient son who remains. Recognizing when we are the prodigal or the obedient son helps us better apply the Gospel to our hearts.

Strongly suggested reading, but not required:

- Keller, *The Freedom of Self-Forgetfulness* (48)

**The Confrontations of Sanctification:** In this session, we will see how sin, which is fundamentally idolatry, distorts our view of God, one another, and ourselves. Naming and confronting our idols is necessary for Christian maturity.

Required reading *before* the intensive:

- Rah, *Prophetic Lament* (pg. 19-203) - We have lost our ability to lament, yet nearly 40% of Israel's prayerbook—the Psalms—are lament. Centering lament is a deeply formative way to confront idolatry and injustice.
- Smith, *You Are What You Love* (pg.1-56) - What we love makes us who we are. Rightly orienting our affections toward God will transform the way we often turn toward other loves, other gods.

- Lewis, [The Screwtape Letters](#) (pg. 1-44) on attached PDF or Chapters 1-22 in the printed book) - We have an enemy that seeks to distract us, who seeks to steal, kill, and destroy. Being conscious of his schemes and the ways he tempts us toward idols is part of our ongoing growth and maturity.

**The Practices of Sanctification:** In this session, we will consider that there are means of grace and practices that encourage and empower our Christian walk. Though sanctification is a work of the Spirit, the means of grace and spiritual disciplines put us in the path of the Spirit's renewing power.

Not required before the intensive, but is required before the end of the semester:

- Lane and Tripp, *How People Change* (1-94) - How can we practically apply the Gospel to our lives in such a way that we see meaningful and lasting change in ourselves and others?
- Powilson, David. ["X-Ray Questions"](#)
- [Practices for spiritual, emotional, and mental health](#)

**Structure of the day:**

- Prayer & Reflection
- Lecture & Discussion: The Foundations of Sanctification
- Break
- Lecture & Discussion: The Confrontations of Sanctification
- Lunch break - 1 hour
- Lecture & Discussion: The Practices of Sanctification
- Prayer & Reflection