

Course Syllabus – Personal Sanctification (PT5375-W1)
Reformed Theological Seminary
Spring 2026

Professor: Mike McKinley
Date: February 6-7, 2026

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COURSE PURPOSE

This course is a study of the doctrine of sanctification with an eye towards the student's growth in both their own personal holiness and also their ability to help others grow in holiness.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To help the student to gain an understanding of the Biblical doctrine of sanctification.
2. To understand how Christian holiness is different from the mere discipline and morality of false religions.
3. To understand the importance of holiness in the Christian life and ministry.
4. To help the student cultivate both their own personal holiness and their ability to help others grow in holiness.

COURSE TEXTS

Required Texts:

1. Sinclair Ferguson, *Devoted to God* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2016).
2. J.C. Ryle, *Holiness* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2014). Free versions of *Holiness* are available online, and students may use them instead of purchasing the Banner of Truth edition. However, this book is a classic and well worth the modest investment.
3. Thomas Chalmers, *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection* (19th century sermon, widely available online)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (10%) – The class will meet on 2/6/25 from 5:00 PM – 9:30 PM and on 2/7/25 from 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM. Given the compact schedule, class attendance is mandatory. Students will be expected to be engaged in all class activities and discussions. In order to prepare for in-class discussions, students should read *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection* before the class meets.

2. ADVANCE SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION (10%) – Each student will be required to memorize Romans 6:1-14 in the ESV (as listed below). There will be a quiz *in class on Saturday (2/7)* in which the student will be asked to reproduce the passage accurately in its entirety (it is not necessary to memorize the verse numbers). Please take this assignment seriously and prepare in advance.

Romans 6:1–14

[1] What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? [2] By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? [3] Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? [4] We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

[5] For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. [6] We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. [7] For one who has died has been set free from sin. [8] Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. [9] We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. [10] For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. [11] So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

[12] Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. [13] Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. [14] For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

3. Advance Reading Report (20%) – Students are required to read *Devoted to God* and submit a reading report on Canvas *on or before 1/30/25*. The reading report should indicate that you have

completed the book, a brief (one paragraph) summary for each chapter, and a question or issue that you would like to discuss in class for each chapter.

4. Reading Paper (30%) – The student will read *Holiness* and write a paper (no less than 3,000 words) with an eye towards personal application. For each chapter, answer the following questions: How did the book challenge or correct your thinking about your own sanctification? What did you find particularly challenging or inspiring? How does Ryle’s work assist you in helping others to grow in holiness? *Due by March 6, 2026.*

5. Personal Growth Project (30%) – Pick an arena of life in which you wish to grow in holiness. Using the approaches discussed in class and in the readings, strive to see growth in that area in the weeks following the class meetings. Report on your progress and the effect it has had on your life. Post a report to Canvas (no less than 3,000 words) describing your efforts, the results, and what you have learned about sanctification. *Due by March 20, 2026.*

GRADING SCALE

97-100%	A
94-96%	A-
91-93%	B+
88-90%	B
86-87%	B-
83-85%	C+
80-82%	C
78-79%	C-
75-77%	D+
72-74%	D
70-71%	D-
0-69%	F

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are strongly encouraged not to have any computers, tablets, or phones out during the class sessions.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Personal Sanctification (06PT5375/01)

Professor: Mike McKinley

Campus: Washington DC

Date: Spring 2023

<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.	Moderate	All written work must demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly.
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	The doctrine of sanctification will be considered through the teachings of Scripture.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Students will study the doctrine of sanctification as it has been understood in the Reformed tradition.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Class materials and lectures will aim at helping students to grow in godliness.
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.	Moderate	Students will address contemporary issues surrounding sanctification in a manner informed by scripture.
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	The class will discuss controversies about sanctification in a way that is consistent with Reformed theology but also respectful of other traditions.
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-Christians.	Strong	Students must be able to discuss holiness in a way that is accessible to other believers.