

**PAULINE EPISTLES**  
**(1 Cor —Phlm)**  
**NT5300**  
**MINI-SYLLABUS**  
**Spring 2026**

**Note:** This syllabus is the “mini-syllabus” and is not to be confused w/ the large syllabus that contains all the class-lecture notes, biblio, various articles, etc. This large syllabus will be posted on “Canvas” before the first day of class and is needed for all the class lectures. For the first day of class, the student should be prepared w/ either a hard-copy of the large syllabus or have it downloaded to his laptop.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Required Texts:**

*Trinity Psalter*—words-only edition (Crown and Covenant). Use in class. (Note, this is *not* the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*.)

M. J. Kruger, ed., *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Realized*.

H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*.

J. G. Machen, *The Origin of Paul’s Religion*. (PDF of entire book included in mega-syllabus.)

**Professor**

\* Dr. Bob Cara (technically, Dr. Robert J. Cara or Robert J. Cara, Ph.D.).

**Class Participation**

\* Attend class and participate (intelligently!) when called on. Lose points for not being in class and/or not participating.

\* Bring and sing Psalter.

**Purpose of Course (Course Objectives)**

\* The over arching purpose is to enable the student to better interpret / apply Pauline Epistles for one's self, the church and the world.

\* Secondary purposes:

\* Learn the content of each book.

\* Learn the major biblical-theological (BT) categories of Paul / book (e.g., “present evil age,” humiliation/exaltation scheme) along with methodology to do further BT interpretation.

\* Interact with and be aware of major systematic theology (ST) doctrines (e.g., J by F, three uses of the law) which are based on our texts.

\* Learn enough about critical views to:

- 1) Utilize common grace insights in critical commentaries.
- 2) Provide an intelligent global critique of critical theories.

\* Course objectives as coordinated with MDiv Student Learning Outcomes are shown at the end of this document.

## Course Requirements

### 1. Reading

- \* M. J. Kruger, ed., *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Realized*, 195-410.
- \* H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, 13-562
- \* J. G. Machen, *The Origin of Paul’s Religion*, 117-69 (chapter on Paul and Jesus)
- \* 1 Cor through Phlm (read twice)

### 2. Reading Questions (RQ) for *BTINT*, Ridderbos, and Machen

- \* Do not hand in but will be on appropriate tests. Machen will be on first test.
- \* Cara will not answer these questions directly. You may / should enquire of a fellow student *in this class*.

### 3. Lecture Review Questions (LRQ)

- \* Do not hand in but will be on appropriate tests.
- \* Cara will not answer these questions directly (except as part of class lecture). You may / should enquire of a fellow student *in this class*.

### 4. Weekly Quizzes on outlines and chapter identification

- \* Possible quiz questions given in advance and located at the beginning of each lecture.
- \* Covers Bible content.
- \* Quizzes are cumulative.
- \* May drop one quiz.

### 5. Paper

- \* This should be a serious research paper of at least several serious commentaries and a few BT’s. Must also footnote at least one journal article.
- \* 10-15 typed pages.
- \* Due on ???, severe penalty for lateness (32.2 f/s/s).

\* Paper is to concentrate on Pauline *theology*. Choose any topic / theme that is included in *more* than one Pauline epistle (you may use Romans). Note, many times a minor topic / theme makes better papers for “budding” theologians. A typical paper would (1) evaluate *in context* each location (or representative locations) where the theme is mentioned and (2) make a conclusion (i.e., “theologize”).

\* Format *is* to follow *JBL* or *SBL Handbook of Style* or *JETS* standards.

6. Bring and sing *Trinity Psalter*.

## GRADES

### 1. Tests

- \* 2 tests: midterm (includes Machen) and final.
- \* ≈ 85% of test will be verbatim questions from LRQ’s and RQ’s.
- \* Remaining 15% will be misc questions from lectures and *all* readings.
- \* Each test worth 20% of grade; hence, 40% of grade.

### 2. Weekly Quizzes

- \* 10% of grade

### 3. Paper

- \* 40% of grade

### 4. Credit for reading 1 Cor thru Phlm twice and Ridderbos

- \* On midterm, must have read 100% of 1 Cor thru Phlm once and appropriate Ridderbos sections.
- \* On final, must have read 100% of 1 Cor thru Phlm for the second time and appropriate Ridderbos sections.
- \* 10% of grade.

### 5. *Trinity Psalter*

- \* Lose points if you do not bring and sing.

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: Pauline Epistles, NT 5300

Professor: Robert J. Cara

Campus: Charlotte

Date: Spring 2026

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b>	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<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"> <li>• Strong</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Minimal</li> <li>• None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pauline theology</li> <li>2. Historical-critical view of Paul</li> <li>3. Significant academic paper on a Pauline theology topic</li> </ol>
<b>Scripture</b>	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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Major part of class is exegeting Pauline texts</li> <li>2. Original languages are used in class and encouraged in academic paper</li> <li>3. It's a BIBLE class!</li> </ol>
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Traditional Reformed categories are used for explaining many Pauline categories</li> <li>2. References to creeds</li> </ol>
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Psalm singing in class</li> <li>2. Personal application is made in class to many Pauline texts</li> </ol>
<b>Worldview</b>	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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Multi-faceted applications are made from Pauline texts, e.g. environment, politics</li> <li>2. Paul's passion to conform all of life to X is emphasized</li> </ol>
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Common grace use of historical-critical scholars is discussed &amp; required in paper</li> <li>2. Paul's winsomeness is shown in Philemon</li> </ol>

<p><b>Pastoral Ministry</b></p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Many times preaching applications are made from Pauline texts</li> <li>2. Paul's view of preaching is explicitly discussed at 1 Thess 2:13</li> <li>3. Ridderbos book has extended discussion of Pauline view of worship</li> <li>4. Paul's method of dealing with spiritual problems in the church is highlighted in 1 Corinthians</li> </ol>
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## RTS Charlotte Classroom Technology Usage

RTS Charlotte recognizes how essential it is for students to have reliable, campus-wide access to the internet. For that reason, we have made Wi-Fi available for our student body, not only in the library and student lounges, but also in the classrooms. We know that students need to use the internet to download class materials, access files on the Cloud, and locate other important information. However, we also recognize that internet access in the classroom provides opportunity for abuse and misuse. Some students have unfortunately used their internet access to engage in many activities that distract them from the classroom lectures (e.g., surfing the web, checking sports scores, playing games). Not only does such activity hamper a student's own seminary education, but it distracts other students who can easily view the screens of nearby students. In addition, donors and classroom guests (who often sit in the back) can see this inappropriate internet usage, which reflects poorly on RTS. Classroom etiquette includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet or playing computer games or other distracting activities. In addition, students must respect standards set by individual professors regarding the use of technology during their class.

In order to address this issue, we must appeal to the integrity of the students as ones who are preparing for a lifetime of ministry to Christ and his church. We expect each student to take personal responsibility for proper classroom technology usage and to encourage others around them to do the same. All RTS-Charlotte students are accountable to the policies stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Catalog and are therefore expected to use technology in the classroom only for appropriate class-related activities. Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students.

# RTS Charlotte

## Student Instructions for Exams with LockDown Browser

1. Install the LockDown Browser application on the computer you intend to use for exams, prior to sitting for the exam, using this link:  
<https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=998253613>
  - a. This link is ONLY for RTS students and covers Mac and Windows applications.
  - b. Be sure that you are able to log in to your Canvas account from the LockDown Browser before the day of the exam.
  - c. If you use internet filtering software (for example, Covenant Eyes) you may need to disable it before beginning an exam with LockDown Browser. Some types of filtering software can block your computer's connection to Canvas. Also, please be sure to add an exception for our Canvas URL: <https://rts.instructure.com>
2. The exam proctor should not be a current RTS student (current = taken a class within the past year but not yet graduated) or a member of the library staff.
3. The proctor must observe the student taking the exam and ensure that there are no devices or resources available other than the computer being used for the exam.
4. Access the exam during the date window specified for that exam.
  - a. Sign in with the proctor.
  - b. Start the LockDown Browser application using a wired or known reliable Wi-Fi connection. We do not recommend using restaurant or coffee shop Wi-Fi to take exams.
  - c. Have your student ID number and proctor details available to input into the exam.
  - d. Log in to your Canvas account.
  - e. Navigate to the exam. You will not be able to access the exam with a standard web browser. For additional details on using LockDown Browser, review this [Student Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#).
  - f. The time clock will begin once you open the exam.
  - g. The exam must be completed in one sitting. You may not exit and return to the exam later.
  - h. The exam will contain questions regarding an honor pledge, and certification that your proctor was present during the entire exam period.
  - i. Sign out with the proctor.
5. Proctors may be contacted to verify information regarding exam administration.
6. In the rare case of a technical issue (for example, if power goes out during exam) the proctor will document the date and time when the issue was reported. Once you open the exam using the LockDown Browser, you will not be able to access other programs on your computer.