

Reformed Theological Seminary
NT Studies for Counseling
NT5500 (3 Credit Hours)
Spring 2026
Fridays 9–11:55 am

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1. Course Objectives:

To orient students to the major themes, content, and purposes of the New Testament.

Know (Head):

- Basic contours of the NT canon.
- Familiarity with a canonical, covenantal, and historical perspectives.
- Able to read the different literary texts as culminating in one literary text, i.e., unity amidst diversity.

Be (Heart):

- Understanding the significance of the individual letters/books for theological maturation (BT & ST), daily life, counseling, and general worldview articulation.
- Become a critical inquirer of canonical sections and themes. (For instance, what is the radical danger of hope?)
- Reflect upon each author as an instrument in redemptive history.

Do (Hands):

- Learn to delve deeply into the biblical text to encounter the drama, drink in the doctrine, abound in doxology, and foster discipleship.
- 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 counseling, teaching, and further studies.

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

Providing counseling students with an introduction to the New Testament as a means to be equipped to have a biblically grounded and informed framework for further studies.

This course will meet the following CACREP standards:

1. **Critiquing Research** - The importance of research in advancing the counseling profession, including how to critique research to inform counseling practice (2.F.8.a)
2. Evidence-based practices - Identification of evidence-based counseling practices (2.F.8.b)
3. Data Interpretation - Gathering and interpreting data about the need for programs and services (2.F.8.c)
4. Outcome Measures - Development of outcome measures for counseling programs (2.F.8.d)
5. Evaluation of Counseling - Evaluation of counseling interventions and programs (2.F.8.e)
6. Research Methods - Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods (2.F.8.f)
7. Research Design - Designs used in research and program evaluation (2.F.8.g)
8. Review of Statistics - Statistical methods used in conducting research and program evaluation (2.F.8.h)
9. Data Analysis – Analysis and use of data in counseling (2.F.8.i)
10. Ethics in Research - Ethical and culturally relevant strategies for conducting, interpreting, and reporting the results of research and/or program evaluation (2.F.8.j)

3. Required Material

- a. Bible with cross references (CSB, ESV, NAS, etc.)
- b. Means for taking notes in class, which is strongly recommended not to be electronic.

4. Assignments

A. Required Reading: 20% Self-report on final essay

- a) New Testament, Matthew-Revelation (any preferred translation)
- b) Carson, D. A. and Douglas J. Moo. *Introducing the New Testament: A Short Guide to Its History and Message*. Edited by Andrew David Naselli. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010. (160)

For longer introductions see:

- a. Carson, Donald A. and Douglas J. Moo. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- b. Kruger, Michael J., ed. *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament: The Gospel Realized*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016.
- c) Levine, Amy-Jill. *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2020. (128)
- d) Gathercole, Simon. *Defending Substitution: An Essay on Atonement in Paul*, Acadia Studies in Bible in Theology. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015. (116)
- e) Cyprian, "On the Mortality." Perhaps the greatest sermon of all time on death. (15 pages, provided in class)

- B. Papers Short (2x)** 15% each, Due March 2 and April 6
- Two critical reviews. Each must be at least 1,000 words in length (1500 max). The first half will summarize the major line of argumentation, and the second half will critically engage the argument and evidence. Each review is 15%.
 - Write up #1 (15%). Students write a critical review and interaction with *Sermon on the Mount* by Amy-Jill Levine.
 - Write up #2 (15%). Students write a critical review and interaction with *Defending Substitution*, focusing on the defense of violence in atonement.
- C. Mid-term** 15%, Due March 16
- Knowledge of the New Testament Canon. Set of Bible Knowledge will be given at the beginning of the course with much of it drawn from Caron & Moo.
- D. Paper Long** 25%, Due May 4
- Synthesis of Course Material. (30%). Students will write a culminating piece that seeks to be interdisciplinary between biblical studies and Counseling. (see below)
- E. Biblical Reflections** 10%, Due April 27 via Canvas/Email.
- Each weekday during the semester (i.e., Monday-Friday) read somewhere in through the New Testament. *Journal* a minimum of 50–100-words in an accumulative document (physical or electronic). This is a free-write assignment interacting with the Biblical text in a manner of personal reflection, interface, wrestling, anxiety, hurt, joy, likes/dislikes, etc. Grading will be done on the process and volume. **Privacy will be explained in class.**

Rough Ideas for Paper Topics:

Hope, Assurance in Hebrews or 1–2 Peter:

- Shame, Honor, and the 'Great Cloud of Witnesses': Social Identity Theory in Hebrews 11–12
- The Power of Hope and Cognitive Reframing in 1 Peter
- Assurance through Knowledge of God's Work in History
- Emotional Consequences of the Warning Passages in Hebrews and their Role in Spiritual Formation
- 2 Peter's Presentation of Endurance
- Violence embedded within a Good Gospel from a Loving God (focus on Hebrews and other Catholic Epistles)

Paper Policy:

The style and form of papers should be conducted according to the school policy. Footnotes and bibliography for this course are according to American Psychological Association (APA). 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 APA, JPSP, *JBL*, *JETS*, *JTS*, etc.).

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) Critical Engagement #1	15%
2) Mid-Term	15%
3) Critical Engagement #2	15%
4) Biblical Reflections	10%
5) Reading	20%
6) Final Essay	25%

Due Dates:

1) Critical Engagement #1	March 2 by class time (online)
2) Mid-Term	March 16
3) Critical Engagement #2	April 6 by class time (online)
4) Biblical Reflection	April 27 (online)
5) Final Reading Report	May 4 (via Final Essay)
6) Final Essay	May 4

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: Gospels (NT5500)

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