

Reformed Theological Seminary - Houston  
Spring 2026

PT5400 Classics of Personal Devotion 1 Hour  
Monday, February 23, 3:00 PM – 9:30 PM  
Tuesday, February 24, 3:00 PM – 9:30 PM

Rev. Fred Greco  
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### Course Description

Devotional writings from church fathers, medieval saints, Protestant Reformers, great Puritans, and men of the revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as from more contemporary Christians, are read and discussed to deepen the student's knowledge of and love for God.

### Course Objectives

1. To encourage the reading of classic devotional literature.
2. To explore the ways in which devotional literature can strengthen faith and encourage diligent attention to the means of grace.
3. To cultivate the student's personal holiness.

### Required Texts

1. The Bible
2. Bennett, Arthur, ed. *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2003
3. Calvin, John. *A Little Book on the Christian Life*. Translated and edited by Aaron Clay Denlinger and Burk Parsons. Orlando: Reformation Trust, 2017
4. Carson, D.A. *Praying with Paul: A Call to Spiritual Reformation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)
5. Newton, John. *Select Letters of John Newton*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2011
6. The Heidelberg Catechism
7. Warfield, B. B. *The Religious Life of Theological Students* (pamphlet). P&R, 15 pp. Available online [here](#).
8. Whitney, Donald S. *Simplify Your Spiritual Life* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: NavPress, 2003)

### Recommended Texts

(These texts are not required reading for the examination)

1. Anselm. *The Prayers and Meditations of Saint Anselm with Proslogion*. Penguin Books, 1986.
2. Bernard of Clairvaux. *The Love of God*. Edited by James M. Houston. Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1983.

3. Benedict. *The Rule of Saint Benedict in English*. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1982.
4. Bonar, Horatius. *The Everlasting Righteousness*. 1874. Edinburg: Banner of Truth, 1993.
5. Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Several translations are available.
6. Chalmers, Thomas. *Sabbath Scripture Readings: Spiritual Meditations on Every Chapter in the New Testament*. 1848. Birmingham: Solid Ground, 2006.
7. Chalmers, Thomas. *Sabbath Scripture Readings II: Spiritual Meditations on Genesis 1 through 2 Kings 11*. 1848. Birmingham: Solid Ground, 2006.
8. Henry, Matthew. *A Way to Pray*. Edited and revised by O. Palmer Robertson. 1710. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2010.
9. Phelps, Austin. *The Still Hour*. 1859. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1984.
10. Trinity Psalter Hymnal. A Joint Publication of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Psalter Hymnal Committee of the United Reformed Church in North America, 2018.
11. Vitringa, Campegius. *The Spiritual Life*. Translated and edited by Charles Telfer. 1716. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2018.

## Assignments & Requirements

(1) Completion of the Assigned Reading. The student will complete all of the Required Reading above. It will be extremely helpful to the student to have completed the reading before the class lectures. The student must indicate to the instructor in writing at the time the Final Exam is turned in how much of the reading has been completed (partial credit will be given). **30% of Final Grade**

(2) A Final Exam will be given as a take-home exam. It is *not* an open-book exam. The student will be required to sign a statement that the student has received no assistance (whether from written materials or persons) during the course of taking the exam. The final exam will be based on both the lectures and the Required Reading. The final exam is due no later than **4:00 PM on Friday, March 20, 2026**. Please arrange your schedule accordingly. **Late Exams will be penalized. 30% of Final Grade**

(3) Journal. Students will keep a journal starting Monday, February 23, through Sunday, March 8 (a total of 14 entries). Each entry will be approximately 300 words. At least two entries should be on the topic of a required reading book. Other entries should reflect the student's reflections on Scripture, a spiritual discipline being undertaken (*e.g.*, fasting, meditation, prayer), or a passage from the required reading. The Lord's Day entries (March 1 and 8) should reflect on corporate worship and the effect that it has on the student's Christian life. Due on March 9. **40% of Final Grade**

## Attendance

Class attendance is required for PT 5400. If a student anticipates an unavoidable absence, he should notify the instructor in advance. Each hour of unexcused absence subjects the student reduction of his final grade by one-half of a letter grade.

## Grading Scale

The grading scale for this course is the seminary's grading scale. You may find it listed in the *RTS Catalog*.

## **Plagiarism**

Please review the seminary's policy on plagiarism. Plagiarized work will subject the student to failure in the course and possible disciplinary action.

## **In-Class Computer Use**

Students are expected to conduct themselves as mature believers in Christ. Classroom manners should reflect this maturity. Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices, and plan to return calls during breaks. Please refrain from surfing the internet, playing games, or chatting during class time.

## **Instructor's Background**

Rev. Greco is a teaching elder (pastor) in the Presbyterian Church in America. He serves as the Senior Pastor of Christ Church in Katy, TX ([www.cckpca.org](http://www.cckpca.org)). He was the Moderator of the 50th General Assembly. In addition, he is a member of the PCA's Standing Judicial Commission, the highest court in the PCA. Prior to entering the pastorate, Rev. Greco was a ruling elder at Grace PCA in Hudson, Ohio. He was an attorney specializing in corporate law, commercial finance, and real estate. He earned his law degree (J.D.) from the University of Michigan (1996), his graduate degree (M.A. in Classical Languages and Literature) from the University of Chicago (1993), and his undergraduate degree (B.A.) from the State University of New York at Buffalo (1991). He is a graduate of Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson (2003).

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

Course: Classics of Personal Devotion (PT5400)  
 Professor: Fred Greco  
 Campus: Houston  
 Date: Spring 2026

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b>	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<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>		➤ Strong  ➤ Moderate  ➤ Minimal  ➤ None	
<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.	<b>Strong</b>	All written work must demonstrate good style, grammar, and syntax.
<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.)	<b>Moderate</b>	Students will explore how Scripture informs and shapes classical devotional literature.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	<b>Moderate</b>	Students will study devotional literature from both within and outside of the Reformed tradition.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	<b>Strong</b>	Students will study the connection between the reading of devotional literature and growth in personal holiness.
<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.	<b>Minimal</b>	Students will explore how devotional writings of previous generations might inform discussion about contemporary issues.
<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.)	<b>Strong</b>	Students will strive to appreciate the contributions of devotional writers outside the Reformed tradition.
<b>Pastoral Ministry</b>	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.	<b>Strong</b>	Students will enrich their private and public prayers as they study the prayers of devotional writers.