

# Transforming Power of God's Love: A Biblical-Theological Case (ON6335) –Summer 2026 (2 hours)

## Syllabus

### INSTRUCTOR

Dr Bruce Lowe received his first doctorate in Analytical Chemistry and taught, consulted and researched in a university setting over several years in both Chemistry and Chemical Engineering. He then completed his MDiv at RTS Orlando, becoming an ordained Presbyterian minister and working in university ministry, as a youth pastor, and in church revitalization. He completed his doctorate in Ancient History / New Testament Studies where his thesis has focused on the purpose of Romans through attention to its cultural setting.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This elective takes its lead from Eph. 3:19—“to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” Based on this and other significant texts (Old and New Testament), it will be argued that the love of God can never be secondary for Christians but only primary, a matter of greatest importance. But what exactly does it mean to comprehend God’s love? And what are threats to such comprehension? Further, in what ways does this comprehension play out personally and pastorally—in evangelism, discipleship, counseling, prayer and worship? Through careful attention to significant texts (Old and New Testament) this course will paint a Biblical-Theological picture, with the firm hope and prayer that each enrolled student will experience an answer to Paul’s prayer for themselves.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To gain a deep understanding, from both OT and NT the character of God’s love.
2. To highlight the specific value of this for our everyday lives.
3. To experience an answer to Paul’s prayer in Eph. 3:19..

Texts:

Required:

- 1) Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity*  
(IVP Academic (2012)) ISBN 978-1-4335-3676-2<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A good critical book review should include 4 sections: 1) A summary of what the book covers (no more than half a page, often less); 2) Things you agree with and why; 3) Things you disagreed with and why; 4) A brief overall comment on the value of this book. Remember that the goal of a book review is to prove to

2) Oswald Chambers, *The Love of God: An Intimate Look at the Father-Heart of God* (Discovery House Publishers, 1988) ISBN 978-0929239040<sup>1</sup>

3) **Compilation of Essays** (Available closer to class date on Canvas)<sup>1</sup>

Not Required except for Achieving an 'A' in the Class (see below):

4) Nijay K. Gupta, *The Affections of Christ Jesus: Love at the Heart of Paul's Theology* (Eerdmans, 2025) ISBN 978-0802877161<sup>1</sup>

5) Christopher W. Morgan, *The Love of God* (Crossway, 2016) ISBN: 978-0-8028-4469-9<sup>1</sup>

#### ASSESSMENT

**40%** Book review of 'Reeves, Chambers & Compilation of Essays' **Due date: see schedule below.**<sup>2</sup>

**53%** Final Exam (take home); **Due date: see schedule below.**

**7%** **Short Essay (2000 words):** "How are we to understand Gupta's book in light of the essays found in & Morgan's book?" **Due date: see schedule below.**

#### ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT FOR SYNC STUDENTS

As per RTS policy, it is required that *if* you are a Sync student (zooming into class for the more than ½ the class sessions) you are required to have minimum of 5 interactions with other students as well as 7 interactions with me (the professor). These must have some assessment value connected to them. This requirement will be met during 13 of our 26 10 minute breaks. I.e. every second break will see me step to the computer and interact with zoom students during the break. For 7 of these times, I will be answering any questions from the previous two hours of teaching. In the other 5 I will briefly do the same but mainly will pose questions for the students to interact on. Participation in these activities will amount to 3% which will be taken from the 53% of the final. I.e. the final for zoom students will be worth 50% instead of 53%.

#### WHEN IS THE COURSE BEING RUN?

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me that you have read the book properly. So, you will want to do things that help show this. This may include quoting actual things that you agree with and things that you did not. Detailed interaction at points as well as broad sweeping ideas will help convince me that you have read the book well.

<sup>2</sup> This will be about **10 pages single-spaced**; so my suggestion would be that you spend 2 pages on Reeves and 2 pages on Chambers, leaving 5 pages to write on the different Compilation of Essays; after which you could have a page reflection on how you might tie them all together.

7/22/2026 - 7/24/2026 Wednesday | 7/22/2026 - 7/22/2026 | 12:00 PM - 9:00 PM; Thursday, Friday | 7/23/2026 - 7/24/2026 | 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM; Saturday | 7/24/2026 - 7/24/2026 | 8:00 AM - 10:00 PM (Zoom)

## General Outline

LESSON	DESCRIPTION
Wed 1-2a	Introduction (Eph. 3 & Rom. 7)
Wed 2b-3	The Spirit and God's Fatherhood (Rom. 8 and Gal. 3-4)
Wed 4	Relational Good News! (Rom. 1 & 5)
Wed 5	Taking Stock
Wed 6	How to help it soaking in!
Wed 7-8	Delighting in the Trinity
Thurs 1-3	Overview of Assessment; Introduction to Jeff and Eudokias webpage; "The Lord, the Lord, Gracious and Compassionate, Slow to Anger" (Ex. 32-34)
Thurs 4	"The Lord, the Lord, Gracious and Compassionate, Slow to Anger" (Num. 14; Neh. 9: 17, 31; Ps. 86:5; Ps. 103; Ps. 145; Joel 2; Jon. 4)
Thurs 5-6	The impassability of God
Thurs 6-7	<i>Election, Providence, Sovereignty</i>
Fri 1-2	The Problem of Suffering
Fri 3-4	<i>Counseling</i> with God's love in focus
Fri 5	<i>Testimonies</i> with God's love in focus
Fri 6	<i>Evangelizing</i> with God's love in focus
Fri 7	<i>Preaching</i> with God's love in focus
Sat 1	Ephesians 3
Sat 1	<i>Praying</i> with God's love in focus
Sat 2	<i>Discipling</i> with God's love in focus
Sat 3	<i>Singing</i> with God's love in focus (Jeff)
<b>Aug 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>40%</b> Book Review due
<b>Aug 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>7%</b> Gupta & Morgan paper
<b>Sept 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>53%</b> Take Home Exam +

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

<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.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Final exam containing much writing.</li> <li>2. Informal class presentations of outcomes to group discussion</li> <li>3. Book reviews</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. Close interaction with Old and New Testament.</li> <li>2. Instructor to address key elements of key Greek words.</li> </ol>
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reformed doctrine is highlighted in dialogue with current alternative perspectives.</li> </ol>
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Singing worship song in class.</li> <li>2. Group discussion of how text applies to life at various points.</li> <li>3. Principles of God's love applied at every turn.</li> </ol>
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The love of God is not just an idea, but an overarching perspective on life.</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. Study of Ephesians 1 and Romans 8-11 will highlight the way predestination should be winsomely held and articulated.</li> </ol>
<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-Xns.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application at various points will highlight how to apply the love of God in all areas.</li> <li>2. Practical illustrations of instructor's experience.</li> </ol>

### **Extension & Zoom Policies**

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

*Your professor may allow you to Zoom into class or watch Zoom recordings for excused absences based on the professor's discretion and subject to the availability of equipment. Students should contact their professor well in advance of the class meeting. For a third absence the Registrar should be consulted. Your professor may require additional interactive assignments to offset the absence of classroom interaction. Sync or Remote Live courses have priority for the limited Zoom equipment.*