

Reformed Theological Seminary – Washington, D. C.
PT5100 Communication I

GENERAL INFORMATION

Dates:

- August 5 (online), 6:00-9:00 pm
- September 3 (in person), 1:30-6:00 pm
- September 4 (in person), 8:00 am-6:00 pm
- September 11 (online), 6:00-9:00 pm
- September 12 (online), 8:00-11:00 am and 12:00-3:00 pm

Credit Hours: 2

Instructor: James Forsyth

Contact Info: jamesforsyth@cspc.net

Office Hours: By appointment via email

COURSE OVERVIEW

Catalog Description: This course introduces the theological framework and basic skills required for interpreting and communicating the Bible within the context of the church's ministry (both formal and informal).

Objective: To equip students for a lifetime of faithful and fruitful communication in the context of the local church.

Format: Class time will combine lectures, small group discussions, and student presentations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance and Participation (Pass/Fail).** Show up with a full heart, ready to make the most of our time together. Any scheduling challenges related to attending online classes should be discussed with the instructor.
2. **Reading (25%).** Read the books below and submit the reading report found on page 3 of this syllabus.
 - Chalmers, Thomas. *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*.
 - Chapell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*.
 - Keller, Timothy. *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*.
 - Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. *Preaching & Preachers*.
 - Olyott, Stuart. *Ministering Like the Master: Three messages for today's preachers*.
 - Piper, John. *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*.
 - Stanley, Andy. *Communicating for a Change*.

3. **Presentation (25%).** Students will present a message on an assigned text incorporating learnings from the week. A full manuscript, not to exceed 3,000 words, must be submitted.
4. **Reflection Paper (25%).** After receiving feedback from the class, write a short reflection paper, not to exceed 500 words, on how you will improve your presentation. Then make those improvements and re-submit your manuscript.
5. **Additional Sermon (25%).** Using the outline discussed in class, prepare a sermon on a New Testament text of your choosing. A full manuscript, not to exceed 2,000 words, must be submitted.

Assignment Due Date: All written assignments are due by 11:59 pm on October 6, 2026, unless otherwise arranged with the instructor.

RTS Grading Scale: The seminary uses the following grading system:

A (97-100)	4.00	quality points
A- (94-96)	3.66	
B+ (91-93)	3.33	
B (88-90)	3.00	
B- (86-87)	2.66	
C+ (83-85)	2.33	
C (80-82)	2.00	
C- (78-79)	1.66	
D+ (75-77)	1.33	
D (72-74)	1.00	
D- (70-71)	0.66	
F (below 70)	0.00	
I (incomplete)	0.00	
W, WP (withdraw, 0.00 withdraw passing)		
S (satisfactory)	0.00	

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy. RTS has developed a comprehensive AI policy, which is available to the student on page 49 of the [Academic Catalog](#). Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and abide by this policy.

Reading Report for PT5100 Communication I

Student's Name: _____

Percentage of required reading completed: _____

The book I found most helpful and why:

The book I found least helpful and why:

The book we didn't read but that I'd recommend to the whole class and why:

Identify one idea from the reading that has already changed how you'll approach your sermon for this class, and explain how.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: PT5100 Communication I
 Professor: James Forsyth
 Campus: Washington, DC
 Date: Summer 2026

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<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> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<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.	Strong	This class is designed to improve communication. Students must develop and express convictions in discussion, written work, and oral presentations.
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	This class equips students to study, apply, and communicate the Bible in the context of the local church.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	This class presupposes a reformed worldview and equips students to communicate rich doctrine in an intelligible way.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Students will wrestle with the reality that application flows from the inside-out.
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.	Strong	Students will reflect on how to communicate God's Word in this cultural moment.
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.)	Strong	This class equips students to communicate truth in a disarming and engaging way.
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	This class equips students for work in the local church.