

RTS/ORLANDO  
FALL 2010



# classics of personal devotion

COURSE NUMBER: 2HT508/01  
SYLLABUS V. 1.0

"IN YOUR LIGHT WE SEE LIGHT"

PS 37:9

## classics of personal devotion

### LEARNING LOVE OF GOD FROM LOVERS OF GOD

While introducing the concept of "mere Christianity" to his readers, C. S. Lewis acknowledged that the specific forms Christianity takes are myriad, confusing, and seemingly contradictory.

Nonetheless, he maintained, at the center of the church's life "each communion is really closest to every other in spirit, if not in doctrine."

*And this suggests that at the centre of each there is something, or a Someone, who against all divergences of belief, all differences of temperament,*

*all memories of mutual persecution, speaks with the same voice.*

In this course, we turn to some of the better voices of the larger Christian community in order to listen for that One voice, Christ's.

We seek to learn better how to love God by learning how our spiritual forebears have learned to love him.

In so doing, we try to appreciate what are the distinctive marks of a Reformed way of loving God.



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## REQUIRED RESOURCE (FOR MOST STUDENTS — SEE BELOW)

Richard J. Foster & James Bryan Smith, eds., *Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups*. A Renovare Resource for Spiritual Renewal. Revised edition. HarperOne, 2005. (ISBN-13: 978-0060777500)

## OPTIONAL RESOURCE

James Litton, ed., *The Plainsong Psalter*. Church Publishing Inc, 1988. (ISBN-13: 978-0898691627)

## REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS (FOR AMPLIFICATIONS SEE NEXT PAGE)

- Read weekly assignments in the Foster reader — we'll cover the entire reader over the course of the semester — students who go to "heroic" lengths with a project under "extra-class devotional options," below, will be able to opt out of some or all of this reading.
- Attend class and participate in class discussion.
- Contribute in-class reports on Foster reader (or dynamic equivalent) — (number of reports contingent on size of class)
- Participate in in-class chanting of plainsong psalms — copies of necessary pages in the psalter will be provided in class.

## EXTRA-CLASS DEVOTIONAL OPTIONS

(FOR REVISIONS SEE NEXT PAGE)

- Participate in the Daily Office with Father Jon Davis, Church of the Incarnation — or alternative similar exercise, to be negotiated with course professor.
- Journal the Foster reader.
- Write a paper on the life and work of one of the Foster reader figures (or another devotional figure, with permission of course professor).
- Negotiate your own "extra-class devotional option" with course professor.

## WORKLOAD

- We will work out specifics of workload in class. Everybody will be expected to come to class and participate in discussion and psalm chanting.

# ASSIGNMENT AMPLIFICATIONS:

- Come to class every week ... everybody, every week.
- Read selections from the *Reader* according to the schedule on the next page (four readings per week over a 13 week span).
- Alternatively, you may attend the Daily Office with Jon Davis, et al. (or negotiate a dynamic equivalent). For every day you do the Office, you may reduce your *Reader* obligation by one day. If you do the Office four days in a given week, you have no *Reader* obligation that week.
- If you wish to do a project that focuses on one of the writers included in the *Reader*, you may negotiate a reduction in reading requirements with your professor — depends on how ambitious your project is, and how much cash you bring ... :-)
- When the class meets for the first time, we will distribute responsibilities for brief in-class presentations. For each class meeting, four students will bring written discussion starters (to be handed in), and will be responsible to stimulate class discussion, via:
  1. A reflection ... or a challenge ... or a blessing ... or an objection ... or a question from the *Reader* (or the project you are working on).
  1. A paragraph reflecting on something from the Daily Office.
  2. A prayer you have composed from a seminary course reading or lecture (any course you are taking this semester).
- Use the following page to keep track of your attendance and of your readings. Please turn in the sheet at the end of the course.

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENTAGE
Class Attendance (you may miss one week for free).	25%
Completion of reading or Office (you get a bye on 5 readings or 5 days of the Office).	25%
In-class presentations (with written submissions).	25%
Participation when called upon.	25%

**Preparing**

(check box for class attendance)

Week 2  
Sept. 7

	✓	☺	∅
C. S. Lewis			
Dallas Willard			
Jonathan Edwards			
Francis de Sales			

Week 3  
Sept. 14

John of the Cross			
Bernard of Clairvaux			
Francois Fenelon			
St. Augustine			

**Prayer**

Week 4  
Sept. 21

Thomas Merton			
Julian of Norwich			
Henri Nouwen			
George Buttrick			

Evelyn Underhill			
Frank Laubach			

Week 5  
Sept. 28

John Baillie			
Martin Luther			

**Virtue**

No meeting!

Week 6  
Oct. 11

Gregory of Nyssa			
Richard Rolle			
John Calvin			
Blaise Pascal			

Reading  
Week  
Oct. 11

**The Spirit**

Thomas a Kempis			
William Law			
Teresa of Avila			
Thomas Kelly			

Catherine of Genoa			
George Fox			

Week 7  
Oct. 19

	✓	☺	∅
Ignatius of Loyala			
Jean-Pierre de Caussade			
Isaac Penington			
John Bunyan			

**Compassion**

Week 8  
Oct. 26

William Temple			
John Woolman			
Hannah Whitall Smith			
Jeremy Taylor			

Week 9  
Nov. 2

Elizabeth O'Connor			
John Wesley			
Catherine of Siena			
Dietrich Bonhoeffer			

**The Word**

Week 10  
Nov. 9

E. Stanley Jones			
Sadhu Sundar Singh			
Francis of Assisi			
Madame Guyon			

Week 11  
Nov. 16

John Chrysostom			
Charles Spurgeon			
Watchman Nee			
G. K. Chesterton			

**Sacrament**

Week 12  
Nov. 23

Athanasius			
Annie Dillard			
Søren Kierkegaard			
Dag Hammerskjöld			

Week 13  
Nov. 30

Kathleen Norris			
Brother Lawrence			

✓ = "I read the Reader."

☺ = "I attended Daily Office."

∅ = "I got nothin'"

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

Course: Classics of Personal Devotion  
 Professor: Reggie Kidd  
 Campus: Orlando  
 Date: Fall 2010

<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.	Strong	Participate in class discussions.
<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.)	Minimal	Prerequisite for, but not really the point of this course.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Necessary requisite for interaction with different models of spiritual growth.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	The point of the class — interact with significant voices modeling sanctification.
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Learning to love God in all of life.
<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	Exposure to models of spiritual growth from wide range of Christian voices — reflection on what Reformed people can learn from and contribute to other believers.
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Personal devotions are an essential building block
<b>Worship</b>	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	Learning one model of chanting psalms (plainchant) as potential resource for leading worship.
<b>Shepherd</b>	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.	Minimal	Indirect
<b>Church/World</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	Indirect