Paul’s Epistles (4NT520) – 2012
(3 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 is in the final stages of a doctorate in Ancient History / New Testament Studies, where his thesis has focused on the purpose of Romans through attention to its cultural setting (Romans Debated Relationally). In this course students will not only gain a classic seminary understanding of Paul, but through interaction with Roman culture, understand him and his letters more broadly. In addition, it will be our purpose to understand how Paul thought as a Christian, so we might see how to think as Christians today.

<Office hrs: M-F, 1.30pm-5.30pm>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Little needs to be said about Paul. He and his letters are a vital part of how we are to understand the Christian faith. In this course there is both a theoretical and practical bent. You will be given an understanding of Paul himself, but will also be exposed to the cultures which shaped him. It is only as we understand both of these that we are truly in a position to see his mind and thus the way a Christian should think.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To provide a general understanding of each of Paul’s letters.
2. To highlight the specific value of each of Paul’s letters for today – particularly the counter-cultural message Paul presented in his own day and its relevance for us today.
3. To resolve the key issues & ‘problem passages’ in Paul and his writings.
4. To consider how a Christian should think.
Required Texts:


Assessment

30% Research Paper; **due on or before last class (i.e. May 8th)**

20% Mid-Term Exam; **Download after March 6th; complete by March 13th**

30% Final exam - **due two weeks after last class (i.e. 11.59pm May 22 nd)**

10% Summary of 12 Metaphors (1 each chapter) **due 11.59pm May 8th**

10% Review of the first two chapters of Ridderbos **due in class Feb 28th**

Extension Policy

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

---

1 This will be approx. 10-20 pages 1½ / double-spaced. It will be a critical paper in which I wish you to interact with secondary literature (At least 10 good sources: journal articles, monographs and a range of commentaries from at least three different traditions). The topic will be one of your own choice, negotiated with me. If you are stuck for a topic, I will assign one to you. IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST COURSE IN SEMINARY OR IF YOU ARE STILL FINDING THE ASSIGNMENT PROCESS CHALLENGING, I RECOMMEND YOU CHOOSE THE “SPECIAL TOPIC” I WILL ALSO HAVE AVAILABLE –designed to help you get orientated to seminary research.

2 This will be about 4 pages single-spaced – approx. three summaries per page. The sections you choose will be examinable – so on the final exam you may be asked to write an essay on the metaphor you chose from the chapter on “Slavery and Freedom.”

3 This assignment should be about 2 pages, single-spaced. You will want to structure it like this: A short paragraph summarizing the content of the first two chapters, then a lengthy section listing succinctly the things you liked about it, then a similar sized section on the things you didn’t like. A brief conclusion will list things like and who you might recommend this book to.
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)

**WHEN IS THE COURSE BEING RUN?**
Tuesday 6-9PM, February 07 - May 08

**General Outline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Lectures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>F7</td>
<td>The Center of Paul?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>F14</td>
<td>The Center of Paul?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>F21</td>
<td>The Center of Paul? &amp; Romans (Part I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>F28</td>
<td>Romans (Part II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M6</td>
<td>Romans (Part III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>M13</td>
<td>Galatians/Colossians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M20</td>
<td>Ephesians/Philippians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>M27</td>
<td>1Thessalonians/2Thessalonians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

**MDiv** Student Learning Outcomes

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.  

*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Strong | 1. Lengthy exegetical essay.  
2. Informal class presentations of outcomes to group discussion  
3. Book reviews |
| Moderate | 1. Close interaction with the letters of Paul.  
2. Instructor to address key elements of key Greek words.  
3. Cultural background to the letters covered in detail. |
| Minimal | 1. Reformed doctrine is highlighted in dialogue with current alternative perspectives. |
| None | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |

![Table](https://example.com/table.png)

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Strong | 1. Lengthy exegetical essay.  
2. Informal class presentations of outcomes to group discussion  
3. Book reviews |
| Moderate | 1. Close interaction with the letters of Paul.  
2. Instructor to address key elements of key Greek words.  
3. Cultural background to the letters covered in detail. |
| Minimal | 1. Reformed doctrine is highlighted in dialogue with current alternative perspectives. |
| None | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |

**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.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Strong | 1. Close interaction with the letters of Paul.  
2. Instructor to address key elements of key Greek words.  
3. Cultural background to the letters covered in detail. |
| Moderate | 1. Reformed doctrine is highlighted in dialogue with current alternative perspectives. |
| Minimal | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |
| None | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |

**Reformed Theology**

Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>1. Reformed doctrine is highlighted in dialogue with current alternative perspectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Moderate | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |
| Minimal | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |
| None | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |

**Sanctification**

Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>1. Reformed doctrine is highlighted in dialogue with current alternative perspectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Moderate | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |
| Minimal | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |
| None | 1. Singing worship song in class.  
2. Group discussion of how |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></th>
<th>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>1. A main focus of the text is how to think like a Christian (see above).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>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.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>1. Study of key passages in Romans and Ephesians highlights the way predestination should be winsomely held and articulated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1. Application at various points will highlight how a given passage may best be taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1. Worship songs of ancient origin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1. Practical illustrations of instructor’s experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>1. The theme of how to think like a Christian has significant impact on relations with the world.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>