Welcome to Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies at Reformed Theological Seminary! This document contains all you need to make your way in this course! This class meets from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm each Tuesday night, starting August 25, 2015, and concluding on November 17, 2015.

Our Backgrounds

Dr. Bob Burns

Bob Burns holds degrees from the University of Maryland (B.A.), Covenant Theological Seminary (M.Div), Westminster Theological Seminary (D.Min), and the University of Georgia (Ph.D.). He is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church of America with over forty years of pastoral experience.

Bob has served in many varied ministry positions ranging from youth and singles ministry to worship and arts and senior pastor. He is now on staff at Seven Hills Fellowship in Rome, Georgia. In addition to his service in the church, Bob was the founder of Fresh Start Seminars, a divorce recovery program that conducted seminars throughout the United States, Great Britain and Australia.

Bob is the author of numerous articles in periodicals such as in the Review of Religious Research, ByFaith Magazine, and Covenant Magazine. His books include *Recovery From Divorce* (the 1990 National Association of Single Adult Leaders book of the year), *The Adult Child of Divorce* (with Michael Brissett), *The Fresh Start Divorce Recovery Workbook* (with Thomas Whiteman), and *Resilient Ministry* (with Tasha Chapman and Donald Guthrie).

Bob and his wife Janet have been married for 37 years. After their children were grown, Janet earned her masters degree in professional counseling. She has been in practice for 16 years. Bob and Janet have two sons and seven grandchildren.

Dr. Bruce McRae

- 100% Scottish (all the stereotypes are true in my case)
- Married to Katie, with children Calli, Colin, and Bonnie
- An ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America since 1986
- Educational Background
  - BA from Washington University in St. Louis
  - M Div from Westminster Theological Seminary
  - D Min from Fuller Theological Seminary, Los Angeles, California
  - MBA from Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA
- Ministry History
  - 1986-1988 -- Assistant Pastor, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, Doraville, GA
  - 1988-1994 -- Senior Pastor, Cornerstone Community Church (PCA), Los Angeles, CA
  - 1994-200 – Senior Pastor, Brookwood Presbyterian Church, Snellville, GA
  - 2000-2002 – Associate Director and Professor of Practical Theology, Atlanta Seminary for Ministry and Theology, Atlanta, GA
2002-2003 – Executive Pastor, North Park Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, PA
2003-2005 – Executive Pastor, PCA Church of the Redeemer, Atlanta, GA;
2005-2007 – Marketing Communications and Customer Service Manager, UPS Mail Innovations, Alpharetta, GA
2008-2013 – Director of Church Relations, Great Commission Publications (the publishing company jointly owned by the Presbyterian Church in America and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church).
2013-Current – Development Officer for RBI, the Benefits Agency of the Presbyterian Church in America. Visiting Instructor in Practical Theology, Reformed Theological Seminary, Atlanta, GA. Adjunct Professor in the Doctor of Ministry Program, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO.

Course Purpose

The catalogue course description for ST502, Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies, states that the purpose of this course is “An introduction to biblical, theological, and practical ministry studies within the Reformed tradition.” That is rather broad, isn’t it? Not surprising, since ministry is a rather broad profession. So, in this course, that is exactly what we are going to do: this course is an attempt to give you a broad introduction to the field of biblical theology and ministry. Ministry is, of course, a field which involves both theory and practice, both theology and practical ministry. God never gave his Word simply to fill our heads, but to change our entire lives. So, if you are going into a more academic profession, it is necessary for you to understand the relationship of theology and practical ministry. And, if you are going into a field of practical ministry, it is necessary to understand the theological basis for gospel ministry.

We define gospel ministry in very broad terms for this course – it could be pastoral ministry, missions work, campus ministry, church staff ministry, para-church ministry, or lay ministry in a church or para-church. If you are called to gospel ministry, you are called to a theologically driven leadership position, in which you connect the word of God to the lives of people. Therefore, in this course, we will continuously focus on the relationship of theology to practical ministry. In ministry, on a daily basis you have to constantly jump back and forth between biblical theology and practice, and so in this class, we will constantly be making the same kind of jump.

Goals for the course

1. To give you a broad, birds eye view of the whole range of theology. Other courses at RTS will focus in more detail on these aspects of theology. Our purpose in this course will be to introduce you to the terminology of theology, the different theological schools of thought, and the practical relevance of why it is important to understand these different schools of thought. In other words, you need to understand that people’s theology affects the way they live!

2. To show you the importance of having a theological vision in your life, and to help you begin to develop your own theological vision. Note: in this class, you will not be penalized if you disagree with the theological vision of the instructor! What is important is that you be able to defend your own theological vision from Scripture!

3. To develop an understanding of the theological task from an evangelical perspective within the Reformed tradition by:
• Introducing the historical development of theology.
• Understanding issues and struggles the church has faced in the past, and seeing how it handled them.
• Introducing the primary categories of evangelical theology.
• Identify where evangelical theology is located in the theological spectrum.
• Examine the various strands of evangelical perspective, with an emphasis on the Reformed tradition.
• Learn what it means to “think theologically”, developing a Biblical world & life view.

4. To set a model of how to “do theology.” We will take practical, real life ministry situations, and discuss how to theologically interpret and act in those situations. In other words, we will grapple with real life issues theologically. Also, we want to set a model of how to do theology in a way that is Christ-centered, gracious, humble, and winsome.

5. To show you the critical importance of godly living as the basis and foundation for your ministry, and how spirituality and academic studies are mutually dependent. In particular, we will focus on how the grace of the gospel is life transforming.

6. To discuss the whole issue of calling to ministry. In particular, we will do a personal assessment of your gifts and passions, and you will produce a Personal Mission Statement of how you believe God might best use you.

7. To give the rudiments of a theology of ministry – how theology drives ministry, and how the grace of the gospel is essential in bring and renewing vitality in ministry.

8. To discuss various aspects of spiritual leadership in various ministry situations.

**Guidelines for Assignments**

1. Class attendance is important! If you are going to miss a class, please let Dr. McRae know ahead of time, and please let him know the reason.

2. Assignments are due the day listed on the assignment sheet at the end of this course syllabus. Please submit your assignment by 6:00 pm on the day of the class that the assignment is due.

3. Please email your assignments to Dr. McRae by the date and time they are due to bhmcrae@bellsouth.net.

4. If you are going to miss a class, you are still required to submit any assignment that is due on that class date by 6:00 pm on the due date.

5. If you have any specific questions about assignments, or about the class, or any comments, please feel free to email me, as that is the best and fastest way to reach me.

**Required Textbooks**

Timothy Keller, *The Prodigal God*
Walter Marshall (Bruce H McRae translation), The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification: Growing in Holiness by Living in Union with Christ (a new version, put into modern English by Bruce H. McRae). Make sure you get the version published by Wipf & Stock. There is an older, original language version on the market as well. Do not get this one!

Tom Rath, Strength-Finders 2.0. This is a small book that we will use for the Personal Mission Statement. Buy the book, and take the Strengths-Finders 2.0 test, and insert the results into the appropriate place on the Personal Mission Statement.

Michael Williams, Far as the Curse is Found

Bob Burns, Tasha Chapman, and Donald Guthrie, Resilient Ministry

**Required Articles on the Course Website**

James Sawyer, “Liberalism”

Tim Keller, “Process Managing Church Growth”

David Steele, “The Five Points Defined” and “The Five Points Defended” (all in one document)

Donald McKim, “The Call in the Reformed Tradition”

Dan Doriani, “Work in a Blessed Calling”

Thomas Ice, “What is Dispensationalism”

Michael Horton, “From Scripture to System,” “The Covenant People,” and “New Covenant Obedience” (all in one document)

Bryan Chapell, “A Pastoral Overview of Infant Baptism”

Wayne Grudem, “The Millennium”

Anthony Hoekema, “Major Millennial Views,” “A Critique of Dispensational Premillennialism,” and “The Millennium of Revelation 20” (all in one document)

**Spiritual Life Reflection Paper**

Guidelines: write a reflection paper on your spiritual life, no more than 5 pages, double-spaced, and 12 point font. Basically I want you to reflect on what we have discussed in class during the session on Sanctification by Grace Through Faith, and apply it personally to yourself. This is fairly open ended, but I want you to talk about what God is currently doing in your life – or not doing! Answer such questions as: How did you come to faith? What has been your view of how Christian growth takes place? Has it been more works-oriented, or grace-oriented? How have you been living by the flesh? What are some of the wrong strategies you employed, or are employing, to deal with your sins? What sins are you currently struggling with? How do you need to make grace, faith, and repentance more a part of your life? What new understanding of sanctification have you come to as a result of your reading and class discussion? You get the idea: talk about the level to which you are living your current Christian life by grace – or not!
**Personal Mission Statement**

The purpose of this assignment is to get you to begin to think about God’s call and mission for your life. The assumption is that God is calling you to do what he has already equipped you to do. Therefore, it is important that you have a proper view of how God has made you, and what that might mean for your vocation in life. You are going to find this assignment great fun. On the course website you will find the guidelines for this personal mission statement, including a model and an example of how to do this assignment. It consists of doing several spiritual gift and personality profiles, using instruments that I will give out, or to which I will send you on the internet. I only want you to hand in the fruit of your analysis, a two to three page personal mission statement.

**Theological Vision of a Church**

Submit a 5-page, double-spaced, 12 point font paper on the Theological Vision of a Church. Visit a church other than the one you regularly attend. Pick a church that is very different theologically than your current church. Attend Sunday school class or a small group, and a worship service at that church. Carefully observe what you see and hear. Pick up literature from the church. Observe its architecture. And then, having gone there, write on this basic question: What theological vision did you see at that church? Remember, every church has a theology, whether explicitly stated or not, which drives everything it does. What did you observe? What did the church present about God, about Christ and the gospel, or anything else you observed about its priorities? And, if you can, do this assignment as a group with 2 or 3 other classmates. Make the visit together, and then discuss what you observed. Then submit one paper, which you have written as a group. Every member of the group will get the same grade. But if you cannot do this assignment with a group, do it as an individual.

**Final Project on Theological Vision**

This is an assignment that is due one week after the last class period. This assignment will be given to you fairly early in the course. And the purpose of the assignment is to help you to put together, in big picture, what you have been learning about theological vision. Clear instructions will be on the course website about how to do this assignment. But the purpose of the assignment is to help you think through and formulate your own theological vision, based upon what we have discussed regarding theological vision during the entire course. Again, do not procrastinate on this assignment. This is an assignment that you need to be thinking about through the entire course. The guidelines for the assignment are posted on the course website.

**Course Grading System for Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Life Reflection Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Mission Statement</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church Theological Vision Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project on Theological Vision</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Reading Assignments</td>
<td>Topics</td>
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<td>2 Sep 1</td>
<td>Tim Keller, <em>The Prodigal God</em> and Marshall, <em>Gospel Mystery</em>, 6-10</td>
<td>Sanctification by Grace through Faith</td>
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<td>3 Sep 8</td>
<td>Marshall, <em>Gospel Mystery</em>, 11-14</td>
<td>Sanctification by Grace through Faith</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Sep 15</td>
<td>Marshall, <em>Gospel Mystery</em>, 11-14</td>
<td>Sanctification by Grace through Faith</td>
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<td>5 Sep 22</td>
<td>Tim Keller, “Process Managing Church Growth”</td>
<td>The Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Oct 6</td>
<td>David Steele, “The Five Points Defined” and “The Five Points Defended”</td>
<td>The Doctrines of Grace: Calvinism and Arminianism</td>
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<td>8 Oct 13</td>
<td>Williams, <em>Far as the Curse is Found</em></td>
<td>The Narrative of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation</td>
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<td>11 Nov 3</td>
<td>Ice, “What is Dispensationalism” and Horton, “From Scripture to System,” “The Covenant People,” and “New Covenant Obedience” and Chapell, “A Pastoral Overview of Infant Baptism”</td>
<td>Covenant Theology</td>
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<td>12 Nov 10</td>
<td>Burns, <em>Resilient Ministry</em></td>
<td>Resilient Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 Nov 17</td>
<td>Hoekema, “Major Millennial Views” and Grudem, “The Millennium”</td>
<td>The Last Things (Eschatology)</td>
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<td>Nov 24</td>
<td>No Class – RTS Fall Break</td>
<td>No Class – RTS Fall Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 8</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td>Final Project on Theological Vision</td>
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**RTS Grading Scale**

A 97-100  
A- 94-96  
B+ 91-93  
B 88-90  
B- 86-87  
C+ 83-85  
C 80-82  
C- 78-79  
D+ 75-77  
D 72-74  
D- 70-71  
Below 70 is an F

**RTS Extension Policy**

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

Course: Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies  
Professor: Dr. Bruce H. McRae  
Campus: Atlanta  
Date: Spring, 2012

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>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.)</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<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>
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<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>Minimal</td>
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<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>None</td>
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<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>Minimal</td>
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<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>Minimal</td>
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</table>