HT508
Classics of Personal Devotion. 1 hour

Summer Semester
Monday and Tuesday
15–16 June 2015, 9:00am to 4:30pm
15 June, due date for written work

Instructor: Dr. Chad Van Dixhoorn
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Class: Tysons Campus
Summer Office Hours: By appointment
Overview
Devotional writings from different periods of the history of the church are read and discussed to deepen the student’s knowledge of and love for God. A dialogue to be enacted and discussed will be supplied by the instructor in class.

Goals
This course exposes students to some of the most famous books in the Christian tradition authored by people on a quest for holiness. By discussing a cluster of popular texts and authors on the subject of godliness, this reading course helps students to read with discernment and to set our own devotion to God on a firm foundation.

- To grow in faithfulness as disciples of Jesus Christ.
- To consider and critique different approaches to spiritual discipline and spiritual growth.
- To establish or confirm life-long habits of holiness in thought, word, and deed.

Requirements
A. Digests
Students are to write reading digests on the assigned texts, and to come to class prepared to discuss each of the texts under consideration. SUBMIT ALL OF THEM IN ONE PRINTED AND STAPLED PACKET. **Due 15 June, 9am.**


B. Presentation
Students are to present a 5-7 minute verbal book review(s). This should be a summary and response. It must include a statement of the most beneficial (if any) and most problematic (if any) aspect of the book. The reading choice is YOURS.... But! (1) it must total at least 200 pages (if less, you must supplement with some additional reading). (2) must be a book that you have not already read and which – to your knowledge – is not required in another RTS course. (3) It must include at least one of the following:

Assessment
Reading digests, 70%. Class presentation, 15%. Class discussion, 15%. We will be reading and discussing additional texts in class. **NOTE:** Digests express and assess ideas in your own words. Do more than supply extended quotations. Please submit **good prose**, in double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt.

Class Advice
1. Please come to class properly caffeinated and leave sufficient time to battle adverse traffic so that you can arrive on time.
2. Please come to each class prepared, with readings and reading reports completed. From the first class, I will call on students to discuss the lecture or assigned material. It is a courtesy to teacher and fellow students alike if your class contributions are informed by prior study, when appropriate. Begin to read ahead and it will serve you well.
3. Take notes of these discussions. These exchanges are a vehicle for learning and you will be expected to retain the material that we discuss.
4. Please ask questions in class. A certain amount of class time is set aside each day for discussion and I would be disappointed if we did not pack it with useful comments and queries.
5. Give some thought to your questions. There is no question too simple to ask (although there are many that are too difficult to answer). But please do not stop the class to regale it with stories, ride hobby-horses, play teacher to your fellow students, or ask to have a word spelled.
6. Please turn off your cell phones. Checking your mobile phone in a class discussion or lecture is as thoughtless as checking it while holding a conversation with another person.
7. Please refrain from online chatting, texting, and the use of email in class.
Recommended books
Alleine, Joseph. *Sure Guide to Heaven* (or *Alarm to the Unconverted*).
Ames, William. *The Marrow of Theology*.
Boston, Thomas. *The Beauties of Boston*.
Brainerd, David. *The Diary of David Brainerd*.
Brooks, Thomas. *Christ is the Life of Believers*.
Burroughs, Jeremiah. *Gospel Remission*.
Clairveaux, St. Bernard. *On Loving God*.
Edwards, Jonathan. *Charity and Its Fruits*.
Flavel, John. *Christ Altogether Lovely*.
Goodwin, Thomas. *The Vanity of Thoughts*.
Hooker, Thomas. *Danger of Desertion, or A Farewell Sermon of Mr. Thomas Hooker*.
Law, William. *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*.
M’Cheyne, Robert Murray. *A Basket of Fragments*.
Murray, Andrew. *Humility*.
Owen, John. *Communion with God*.
Owen, John. *Indwelling Sin in Believers*.
Owen, John. *Triumph Over Temptation*.
Packer, J.I. *Knowing God*.
Ryle, J.C. *Holiness*.
Ryle, J.C. *Practical Religion*.
Sibbes, Richard. *Bruised Reed*.
Watson, Thomas. *A Test of Assurance*.
Watson, Thomas. *The Doctrine of Repentance*.
Watson, Thomas. *All Things for Good*.

(Please ask if you want to read a text not on this list).