Course Description
This course is a study in *The Christian Life*. Its purpose is to assist students as they think through both their own growth in grace and how the gospel shapes the way they approach discipleship and mission.

The Bible refers to the Christian life in terms of an extended race and also a “fight” to keep the faith (1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 4:7). There is good reason Paul uses these metaphors. Keeping the faith is an arduous journey. Self-reliance, not dependence, is our default. Faith always includes a mixture of believing and doubting. Following Jesus is hard.

On the other hand, Jesus explains, “my yoke is easy, my burden is light.” The Bible tells us that there is joy in the journey with Jesus. He is at work, abiding with us, comforting us, and renovating us. Following Jesus is life-giving.

This course will force us to look honestly at both aspects of following Jesus—that the Christian life is simultaneously hard and life-giving. We will begin our by “going back” to the foundational truths of the gospel. We’ll consider how God’s grace doesn’t only invite us to “come as you are” but also promises that we will not leave as we came. With a fuller picture of the movement and transformative power of God’s grace, we’ll not only be better equipped to evaluate our own journey in faith but also to assess the way forward for the churches we shepherd. This course aims to inform our minds, to capture our hearts, and to motivate our hands and feet to participate in God’s renewal.

Required Readings


**Course Evaluation**

*Reading Summary and Response Reports (40%)*
Students will provide a 600-800 word summary and response for each of the required readings. These reports will include a brief overview of the book, indicating that the student has a clear understanding of the main points and goals of each of the books. Additionally, students should include at least 3 specific ways he/she benefited from the book and at least 3 specific ways he/she disagreed with the book or ways that the book didn't fully resolve the issues. Students will exhibit thoughtful and critical engagement with the material. Further details regarding these five reading reports will be provided on the first day of class.

*Reading (10%)*
Students will indicate in an email, at the time he/she turns in each of his/her Reading Summary and Response Reports, what percentage of the assigned reading that he/she read with reasonable care and thoughtful reflection.

*Class Conversations (10%)*
Participation in class discussions is highly valued and strongly encouraged.

*Reflection Paper (40%)*
Students will write a 2500-2800 word theological reflection paper on an assigned topic. Further details will be provided on the first day of class.

**Possible Reflection Paper Topics**
*Students are not limited to this specific list. Please gain approval from the professor for additional options.*

What are common ways that 21st century, evangelical church tends to distort “The Christian Life”? What are the implications on the church? How can these trends be corrected?

What’s the motivation to “keep the faith”? How would you counsel a young believer in the blessings and challenges of running the race of faith?

How does our process of sanctification inform how we live out our faith before our unbelieving friends and neighbors? What obstacles do our shortcomings produce? How do we convey that we’re “in process” to those outside the church?

What’s the relationship between God’s command for us to seek “to be holy as I am holy” and God’s promise to make us whole? How is sanctification aimed at the whole person, and not merely the soul? How does this connection inform our concept of sanctification and how we lead others in ministry?

How does the gospel hold in tension both our justification, wherein Christ’s righteousness is ours in full at the moment of our conversion, and our sanctification, whereby Christ’s image is being renewed in us continually? Why is it important for Christians to affirm both the fullness of Christ’s imputed righteousness and also the reality of our growth in experiential righteousness through the work of Christ’s Spirit?
Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: 04PT513/06PT513 The Christian Life  
Professor: Dr. Hunter M. Bailey  
Campus: Atlanta  
Date: July 26-29, 2016

### 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.

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<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>This is a course in Practical Theology. Students should be able to articulate “real world” applications of the material covered.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td>None</td>
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#### 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.

**Strong**

This is a course in Practical Theology. Students should be able to articulate “real world” applications of the material covered.

#### 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**

We will ground our discussions of The Christian Life in the Bible. It is our “norming norm.” The Bible doesn’t simply outline a method for our sanctification but gives us a powerful promise of our growth in grace.

#### Reformed Theology

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

**Strong**

This course will explore the historic truth of the doctrines of grace and demonstrate their relevance for both students and the people they seek to shepherd in ministry.

#### Sanctification

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

**Strong**

This topic is the focal point of this course. We will examine the Christological foundations of our sanctification as well as consider the learning process and applications for ministry to others.

#### Desire for Worldview

Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.

**Strong**

According to Jesus, our sanctification occurs in the context of our participation in His kingdom. Understanding the breadth and depth of His work of restoration and renewal “as far as the curse is found” is essential to an accurate picture of our sanctification.

#### Winsomely Reformed

Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the

**Strong**

As we reflect on the doctrines of grace, they ought to foster greater
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<td>Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.</td>
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<td>humility and unity among God’s people, not arrogance and separatism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preach</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>The lectures will frequently incorporate ways that the material might be preached and taught.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship</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>Worship is one avenue through which God refines and grows us, and the course will identify ways we “practice the gospel” together in worship. Attention will be given to our understanding of the elements of worship as means of grace, and specific consideration will be given to how sacrament of the Lord’s Supper informs our growth in grace.</td>
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<td>Shepherd</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>Strong</td>
<td>The Westminster Standards refer to our sanctification as “a work of God’s grace.” The identification of sanctification as a “work” implies an ongoing process. Understanding how we approach the shepherding our own souls and leading others as they seek to daily follow Jesus is vital to the objectives of this course.</td>
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<td>Church/World</td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The course material will frequently prompt evaluation of how the church relates to the world. Christians are not sanctified in ivory towers but are called to be in the world and for the world, though not of the world.</td>
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