



Course Handbook

Reformed Theological College

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The RTC Evening Course series offers four different Certificates:

Certificate in Bible Ministry

Certificate in Missions & Evangelism

Certificate in Theology

Certificate in Pastoral Ministry

The year long courses are designed to be low-cost programmes in basic Bible teaching, Christian beliefs and a range of ministry skills. The series has been developed specifically for busy people who want to be better equipped for God's service in their own lives and their churches.

Each year two major themes are presented: Bible Ministry, Pastoral Ministry, Theology or Missions/Evangelism; the programmes are offered on rotation.

For each course there will be four units. There will be a break of at least 2 weeks between each course.

Assessment is not onerous; generally there would be one assignment required for each 5-week unit.

If a student completes all four units of a major theme they will receive a Certificate in Bible Ministry, Pastoral Ministry, Theology or Missions & Evangelism.

If a student completes four units that are drawn from more than one major theme, (i.e. they study over more than one year) they will receive a **Certificate in Christian Studies**.

Students who have previously done all or part of the *Certificate of Bible and Ministry* can receive recognition for work completed towards the new certificates.

Course 1 - Certificate in Bible Ministry *(offered in 2010)*

1. Story of the Bible – the Big Picture
2. Reading the OT for all its worth
3. Reading the NT for all its worth
4. Teaching & Preaching the Bible

Course 2 – Certificate in Missions & Evangelism *(offered in 2010)*

1. Everyday Evangelism
2. Missions – God’s Heart
3. World Views
4. World Religions

Course 3 – Certificate in Theology *(offered in 2009)*

1. The Reformation
2. What Christians Believe (God & Man)
3. What Christians Believe (Grace & Hope)
4. Defending the Faith

Course 4 – Certificate in Pastoral Ministry *(offered in 2009)*

1. Pastoral Care
2. The Pastoral Epistles
3. Worship
4. Pastoral Leadership

Each week’s class time will be two hours (including a short break)

Story of the Bible – the Big Picture

From the Garden to the City – this is the plot of God’s story in the Bible. The course traces this story, with its core theme of the gospel of Jesus Christ, looking at key dates, significant places, the formative covenants and the main book themes throughout both Old and New Testaments. It aims to provide an overall framework for understanding the separate books, and to give insights and resources that can be used again and again to help open up God’s word in a more meaningful way.

Reading the OT for all its worth

Learning to understand the messages from God in the Old Testament genre by genre. Over five weeks the principles of interpretation, and its practice, for narrative (more than examples to follow), the Law (still God’s word for Christians), prophecy (both forth-telling and foretelling), Psalms (from complaint to praise) and wisdom literature (both instructional and “speculative”) will be examined and applied so that we might hear God more clearly and respond to him more faithfully.

Reading the NT for all its worth

As with the OT any responsible reading of the NT begins with an appreciation of the literary genres found on its pages. Each genre carries its own principles of interpretation. The Gospels contain one story with many dimensions. The main question for the parables is whether you get the point. When it comes to the epistles readers must learn to think contextually. The book of Acts poses the problem of historical precedent. Revelation is apocalyptic literature that is richly symbolic and imaginative.

Teaching & Preaching the Bible

How do you move from personal bible study to presenting a bible message or sermon to other people? This course gives practical skills for preparing bible messages. Students will be introduced to the skills of discovering the central meaning of a passage, and then structuring, illustrating, applying, concluding and presenting that message to others. This is a really a “laymen’s” guide to preaching!

Outline: Missions & Evangelism

Everyday Evangelism

This course is designed for ordinary Christians wishing to share their faith with those they meet in everyday situations. It teaches how God has prepared each one of us for witness, introduces evangelism skills, lists and explains the basic Gospel facts, and answers some tough questions about evangelism. Students should be warned that they will be motivated to put their learning into practice!

Missions – God’s Heart

In this course we will look at the biblical foundation for mission by reviewing the history of the people of God in the Old Testament. Emphasis will be placed on those elements of that history that have a bearing on the mission of the New Testament Church. The latter part of the course will look at contemporary theologies/methodologies as found in the churches.

World Views

This course will begin by defining the nature of worldviews, and exploring the different types of worldviews to be found in our society. From there it will go on to define a Christian worldview, based on the biblical teachings of the role of mankind in a world fallen from its created goodness to exist under the curse of sin, but in process of being redeemed by Christ through his new creation: the Kingdom of God.

World Religions

The aim of this course is to achieve a general knowledge of some world religions and to develop sensitivity to the world-views underlying those religions. At the same time students will be able to identify and respond to contemporary points of encounter and challenges that arise out of the meeting between Christians and non-Christians. The emphasis will be on how we evaluate these religions from a biblical perspective.

What Christians Believe (God & Man)

This course introduces the main Christian teachings on God, his Word and his works, the creation of mankind and their fall into sin, and the person and saving work of Jesus Christ. We will consider why these doctrines arose, where they are to be found in the Scriptures, and how they can help us in our Christian life.

What Christians Believe (Grace & Hope)

This course introduces the main Christian teachings on the Holy Spirit and his role in the salvation of God's people, the structure and function of the Christian community, and the Christian hope for the future. We will consider why these doctrines arose, where they are to be found in the Scriptures, and how they can help us in our Christian life.

The Reformation

This course will provide students with detailed insights into the causes and nature of Reformation in Europe. As a result, students will gain a deeper understanding of Christian life, theology, ministry and worship in the Protestant tradition. What is learnt from this history of the churches in Reformation Europe can be applied to an understanding of the church's ministry today.

Defending the Faith

In this course students will be taught to identify the influence of non-Christian teachings on society's understanding of mankind, their learning, achievements and destiny, with special attention given to the teachings of some of the sciences. The weaknesses of these approaches will be exposed, and their teachings will be contrasted to the biblical wisdom on these themes.

Outline: Pastoral Ministry

Pastoral Care

This course examines the Bible's teaching on pastoral care. It looks at what pastoral care really is, what place it should have in the church, whose responsibility it is, and what gifts and skills people need to become good pastoral carers. It then seeks to apply that teaching to pastoral care in the life of the local church, and in some of the situations that arise in people's lives.

The Pastoral Epistles

Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus lay the foundation for a biblical pastoral ministry. The course aims to give students a clear understanding of their historical background and purpose, a sound grasp of their overall themes and meaning, and a firm basis for applying their teachings to the church of today. Although the thrust of this course is practical, the contemporary relevance of these letters grows out of a responsible interpretation of their message in its original cultural context.

Worship

Week after week Christians gather for worship, but sadly, widely differing approaches to worship have been the cause of many divisions and tensions in churches. This course goes back to biblical basics. It examines some of the Bible's teaching about who it is we worship, why we worship and what biblical worship looks like. It then gives opportunity to interact with the contemporary worship scene in the light of those principles.

Pastoral Leadership

Leadership has become one of the great issues in the church today. Grounding our study in the Bible's teaching, this course looks at basic principles of leadership, and at some of the key tasks of leaders: setting an example, persisting in prayer, discipling and mentoring, clarifying vision, setting goals, building teams, delegating etc.

The 2009 course schedule is as follows:

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| Unit 1 | 5 weeks | 3 March - 31 March |
| Unit 2 | 5 weeks | 19 May – 16 June |
| Unit 3 | 5 weeks | 21 July – 18 August |
| Unit 4 | 5 weeks | 6 October – 3 November |

Cost

Each course (4 units) costs \$175.00 per person.

Units can be studied and paid for separately at \$50 per unit

For further information please contact the College

