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BT 661 Pauline Theology

Ben Witherington

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BT661
PAULINE THEOLOGY
Spring 2000
Dr. Ben Witherington, III

OFFICE HOURS

Phone: 606-858-2329

TRF: 8:00 a.m.– 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
(other hours by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a detailed exegetical survey of the major topics of Pauline theology set in the context of his eschatological worldview. The implications of his theological thought for ethics will also be addressed without focusing primarily on the ethical material of the Pauline corpus.

COURSE GOALS

The major goal of this course is to give the student a sense of the scope and depth of Paul's thought world, in order to provide a context out of which they may better interpret particular Pauline texts and concepts. A second goal is to familiarize the student with the ever-increasing literature on the Pauline corpus, so study may continue after this course is concluded. A further goal is to show how all of Paul's thought is theologically grounded, and thus the necessity of relating ethics to its theological underpinning.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- 1) Ben Witherington, Jesus, Paul and the End of the World (Downer's Grove: I-V Press, 1992).
- 2) Ben Witherington, The Paul Quest (Downer's Grove: I-V Press, 1998).
- 3) C. K. Barrett, Paul (Westminster: 1994).
- 4) B. Witherington, III, Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph (Louisville: Westminster, 1994).

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

- 1) J. Ziesler, Pauline Christianity (Oxford: O. U. Press, 1990). [N.B. the student wanting a more traditional survey approach to Pauline theology may substitute Ziesler for Meeks]
- 2) E. P. Sanders, Paul and Palestinian Judaism (Phila: Fortress, 1977) PP. 431-523 [This book is not required to be purchased but will be on reserve and the student will be expected to read pp.431-523]
- 3) W. Meeks, The First Urban Christians (New Haven: Yale, 1984).

READING SCHEDULE

The student should begin by reading Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph to get a clear overview of the subject matter. This then can be followed by reading The Paul Quest and C.K. Barrett's Paul in tandem, contrasting and comparing the two works. Finally, one should read Jesus, Paul and the End of the World toward the End of the Course.

EVALUATION COMPONENTS

There will be two exams and a paper of twenty pages for this course. The paper should be on some standing topic in Pauline theology (e.g. Paul's view of the atonement, Paul's Christology, etc.). Turabian format is to be preferred with footnotes rather than endnotes. APA with its parenthetical notation does not allow for evaluative comments in the notes. The paper is due the last Friday in March. The midterm and final exams will evaluate half of the course in each case. The former will likely be administered at the end of March or the beginning of April.