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NT 520 New Testament Introduction

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NT520 New Testament Introduction

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Fall 2001

Tuesdays, 6:15-9:00 pm

Course Introduction

This course constitutes an introduction to the writings of the New Testament in their historical, literary, and canonical contexts.

Distance Learning: This course will be offered on the Wilmore campus in the Distance Learning Room (BC157), with students also located on the campus of Asbury Theological Seminary, Orlando.

Mixed Media: This course will be offered through *mixed mode delivery*—with use of ExL technology integrated into the instruction of the course, and with networking activities constituting a regular part of the course grade. Additionally, course materials (such as PowerPoint slides, handouts, maps, charts, co-curricular reading, et al.), as well as conferencing, web links, and a chat room will be available on-line through an icon (“NT520-JG”) placed on each student’s desktop, using the Seminary’s FirstClass Client program. This means that every student will need access to the Seminary’s e-mail system; access is possible through use of computers available on the Wilmore or Orlando campus Media Center, through dialing into the system from a home computer, or via the World Wide Web (and thus through any computer, such as those available at public libraries; URL: fc.asburyseminary.edu/login).

Because of the anticipated on-line contribution of each member of the class, not all course sessions will comprise the full 6:15–9:00 pm time period.

For assistance with all technical matters related to access to course materials, send your questions by e-mail to ExL_Support@asburyseminary.edu.

Information about how to access material for the class, handouts to download, etc., and about how to submit assignments is located in the

“Course Center” on the FirstClass Client Desktop; double-click on the icon, “NT520–JG.”

Course Objectives

Having completed this course, students should be able:

- (1) to articulate how one’s beliefs about Scripture impinge on how one engages biblical texts in interpretation;
- (2) to identify a range of questions (e.g., historical, literary, canonical) that might be addressed to particular New Testament texts and explore those questions in the process of interpreting particular New Testament texts;
- (3) to identify significant, critical resources for New Testament study and deploy those sources critically in New Testament study;
- (4) to probe the interplay of theology and ethics in the various New Testament writers;
- (5) to demonstrate awareness of the significance of the original languages for understanding and interpreting the New Testament; and
- (6) to integrate these concerns and methodologies in a sound hermeneutical method.

Course Reading: Required Books

- Achtemeier, Paul J., Joel B. Green, and Marianne Meye Thompson, *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Message*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 2001.
- deSilva, David A. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 2000.
- Green, Joel B., ed. *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1995.
- Theissen, Gerd. *The Shadow of the Galilean*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1987.
- Veyne, Paul. *The Roman Empire*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Course Reading: Recommended Books

- Camery-Hoggart, Jerry. *Speaking of God: Reading and Preaching the Word of God*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1995.
- Gonzalez, Justo L. *Santa Biblia: The Bible through Hispanic Eyes*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.
- Felder, Cain Hope, ed. *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.
- Powell, Mark Allan, ed. *The New Testament Today*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster, 1998.

Course Reading: Reference

Evans, Craig A., and Stanley E. Porter, eds. *Dictionary of New Testament Background*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 2000.

Green, Joel B., and Scot McKnight, eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1992.

Martin, Ralph P., Gerald Hawthorne, and Daniel G. Reid, eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1993.

Martin, Ralph P., and Peter H. Davids, eds. *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1997.

[Note: These four dictionaries are bundled together with other reference works from InterVarsity in "The Essential IVP Reference Collection: The Complete Electronic Bible Reference Library," available from InterVarsity.]

Course Requirements

On questions of style, especially with regard to paper organization and references, see Carole Slade, Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports, Theses (11th ed.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000).

Students should submit written materials on time; late papers will receive no written comments and the grade will be penalized one-third of a letter grade per day. Late interpretive assignments will not be received.

(1) Class Preparation, Attendance, and Participation. See the schedule for each class session below. Note that assigned reading should be completed by the day listed. (30%)

Attendance throughout the course is expected; persons absent for more than three sessions of the course will not be eligible for a passing grade.

Participation in the course includes full collaboration in discussion and projects related to membership in an On-Line Conference and in a Break-out Group. Students will be assigned to an On-Line Conference (about 8 persons) and to a Break-out Group (about 12 persons) prior to the onset of class. The On-Line Conference involves three assignments that will factor into the final grade of the course:

- ***Personal Introductions*** (in conjunction with the ExL Systems Test)
- ***Group Project: deSilva***

Graduate Seminar: Theissen

Instructions for these projects will be posted beginning 4 September 2001. Group Projects will be graded on the basis of the quality of (1) each individual's contribution to group discussion and (2) the final product, which is group-generated. Graduate Seminars will be graded on the basis of the quality of each individual's contribution.

(2) Interpretive Assignments. For (at least) three of the eight assigned "discussion" days (see the course schedule below), prepare and submit to the instructor at the beginning of class an interpretive assignment for the assigned text. These papers should be single-spaced, typed, with one-inch margins and a 12-point font like Times New Roman, no more than two pages (i.e., about 900 words) in length. These are not designed to be research papers, application papers, or homilies, and no secondary materials should be consulted in their preparation. (30%)

More information regarding my expectations of "interpretive assignments" is located in the "Course Center" in the "Assignments" folder. The range of issues to be discussed in interpretive assignments will also be discussed in sessions 3-4 of the course.

Instructions to students in Orlando regarding the submission of assignments are available in the file "How to Make Contact," located in the "Getting Started" folder in the "Course Center."

(3) A Reflection Paper. An essay of approximately 3-4 pages (i.e., 1000-1400 words)—typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and a 12-point font like Times New Roman. You may undertake *either* of the projects outlined below:

- (1) Identify and discuss ways in which the issues of cross-cultural communication and understanding raised in the episode of "Star Trek: The Next Generation" entitled "Darmok," are relevant to New Testament interpretation. Copies of this film may be rented at many video stores, and are available for check-out at the Library. Essays will be evaluated on the basis of faithful representation of the episode, depth of analysis, creativity, and form/style.
- (2) Engage in a brief, critical review of Gonzalez, *Santa Biblia*. Instructions regarding critical reviews are available in the "Assignments" folder of the "Course Room."

Due at the beginning of class, 6 November 2001. (10%)

Instructions to students in Orlando for submitting assignments are available in the file "How to Make Contact," located in the "Getting Started" folder in the "Course Center."

(4) An Exegetical Paper. An essay of approximately 8-10 pages (i.e., 2300-2800 words), typed, double-spaced, with appropriate notes and bibliography, presenting an exegesis of a New Testament passage chosen from the list of "discussion" passages noted on the course

schedule. This paper should evidence both a close reading of the text and critical engagement with the range of secondary resources appropriate to the study. Due by 4:00 pm, 11 December 2001. (30%)

In addition to books mentioned in this syllabus—course reading, reference materials, and recommended reading—students should consult *New Testament Abstracts* (available in the library reference section). Commentaries for this assignment should be what I have called “critical” and “essential” commentaries. For definitions of these commentary categories and for more information regarding my expectations of research papers, see the material on Research Papers located in the “Assignments” folder of the “Course Room.”

Instructions to students in Orlando for submitting assignments are available in the file “How to Make Contact,” located in the “Getting Started” folder in the “Course Center.”

Extra Credit Opportunity

Persons desiring extra credit may complete a critical review of the required or recommended books by Veyne, Gonzales, or Felder. These reviews should be approximately 1100-1300 words (i.e., 5-6 pages) in length, typed, double-spaced, and a 12-point font like Times New Roman. Due at the beginning of class, 13 November 2001. As a critical review, this essay should summarize the author’s central theses; demonstrate the author’s approach to the subject matter; and critique the author’s analysis (e.g., with regard to the author’s method, its faithfulness to the primary materials, its engagement with the wider discussion on the topic, and so on). (From 0-4 points will be added to the final semester grade.)

More information regarding my expectations of book reviews is located in the “Assignments” Folder in the “Course Room.”

Instructions to students in Orlando for submitting assignments are available in the file “How to Make Contact,” located in the “Getting Started” folder in the “Course Center.”

Dates	Subject	Required Reading	Recommended Reading	Assignments and Activities
4 Sept	1. The New Testament World (1)	Begin reading deSilva	Achtemeier et al., ch. 1	Personal Introductions. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 9 September
11 Sept	2. The New Testament World (2)	Finish reading deSilva Begin reading Green	Achtemeier et al., ch. 2	Group Project: deSilva. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 22 September
18 Sept	3. Approaches to Understanding the New Testament: Models	Continue reading Green	Achtemeier et al., ch. 25 Camery-Hoggart	Group Project: deSilva. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 22 September
25 Sept	4. Approaches to Understanding the New Testament: Methods	Finish reading Green Begin reading Theissen		Graduate Seminar: Theissen. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 6 October
2 Oct	5. Jesus and the Gospels	Finish reading Theissen Achtemeier et al., ch 3. Read Mathew, Mark	Achtemeier et al., chs. 4-5 Adela Yarbro Collins, <i>The Beginning of the Gospel: Probing of Mark in Context</i> (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992)	Graduate Seminar: Theissen. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 6 October
9 Oct	6. Jesus and the Kingdom of God	Achtemeier et al., ch. 8	Bruce Chilton, <i>Pure Kingdom: Jesus' Vision of God</i> (Studying the Historical Jesus; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1996)	Interpretive Assignment. Mark 1:1-15 Break-out Groups
16 Oct	7. "God My Savior": Luke as Interpreter of Jesus	Begin reading Veyne Achtemeier et al., chs. 6, 9 Luke Acts	Joel B. Green, <i>The Theology of the Gospel of Luke</i> (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995); Mark Allan Powell, <i>What Are They Saying about Acts?</i> (New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1991)	Interpretive Assignment: Luke 19:1-10 Break-out Groups
23 Oct	8. Paul: Minister of Reconciliation	Continue reading Veyne Achtemeier et al., chs. 10-12, 17-18 Romans Galatians Philemon 1-2 Thessalonians	Gordon D. Fee, <i>Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God</i> (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1996)	Interpretive Assignment: Philemon Break-out Groups
30 Oct	9. Growth Pains at Corinth	Finish reading Veyne Achtemeier et al., chs. 13-	Gerd Theissen, <i>The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity</i> (Philadelphia:	Interpretive Assignment: 1 Cor 11:17-34 Break-out Groups

Dates	Subject	Required Reading	Recommended Reading	Assignments and Activities
6 Nov	10. The Legacy of Paul: The So-called Pastoral Epistles	14, 16 1-2 Corinthians Philippians Colossians Achtmeier et al., chs. 15, 19 Ephesians 1-2 Timothy Titus	Fortress, 1982) Luke Timothy Johnson, <i>Letters to Paul's Delegates</i> (The New Testament in Context; Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Trinity, 1996)	Reflection Paper Due Interpretive Assignment: 1 Tim 2:9-15
13 Nov	11. Word Made Flesh: John as Interpreter of Jesus	Achtmeier et al., chs. 7, 23 John 1-3 John	Marianne Meye Thompson, <i>The Incarnate Word: Perspectives on Jesus in the Fourth Gospel</i> (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1988)	Interpretive Assignment: John 9:1-41 Extra Credit Paper Due (Optional)
20 Nov	No Class: Reading Week			
27 Nov	12. (A) Faith at Work: James as Interpreter of Jesus; (B) Christians under Pressure: Peter as Interpreter of Jesus	Achtmeier et al., chs. 20-22 Hebrews James 1 Peter	Andrew Chester and Ralph P. Martin, <i>The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude</i> (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1994)	Interpretive Assignment: Jas 4:13-5:6
4 Dec	13. Revelation and Crisis Christianity	Achtmeier et al., ch. 24 2 Peter Jude Revelation	Richard Bauckham, <i>The Theology of the Book of Revelation</i> (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993)	Interpretive Assignment: Revelation 13
11 Dec				Exegetical Paper Due, by 4:00 pm