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NT 632 Exegesis of Philippians

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Exegesis of Philippians – NT632

Fall 2001 – Asbury Theological Seminary (Florida Campus)

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Course Description

NT 632 is an exegetical study of Paul's letter to the Philippians which focuses upon the development of the student's understanding of the exegetical process and upon the proper application of sound exegetical principles to this Greek text.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of NT 662 (C or better), the learner will be able:

- 1) To employ an exegetical method relevant to the interpretation of Philippians and other epistolary literature—including the use of Greek-based language tools to demonstrate proficiency in lexical semantics, to identify grammatical constructions (i.e., with regard to sentence structure and use of clauses) and to engage in syntactical analyses (i.e., with regard to verbal aspect, mood, and voice; use of genitive and dative cases);
- 2) To understand Philippians within its socio-historical, literary, and canonical contexts;
- 3) To identify the central issues in the critical study of Philippians;
- 4) To articulate the importance of one's own presuppositions in the task of interpretation;
- 5) To describe the primary theological and ethical concerns of Philippians;
- 6) To demonstrate awareness of how the theological and ethical concerns of Philippians contributes to those of the canon and of constructive theology and ethics;
- 7) To differentiate between the available critical and homiletical/devotional commentaries on Philippians and other NT books;
- 8) To evaluate critically the usefulness of secondary literature in the study of NT books.

Each student should expect to spend 6-9 hours outside of class per week on assignments and reflection.

Texts

Required

Daniel B. Wallace. *Basics of New Testament Syntax: An Intermediate Greek Grammar*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Helmut Thielicke. *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Recommended Commentaries

Peter T. O'Brien. *The Epistle to the Philippians*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.

Gordon D. Fee. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Ben Witherington III. *Friendship and Finances in Philippi: The Letter of Paul to the Philippians*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1994.

On the Reserve Shelf

All of the above texts are on reserve as well as the following:

Anchor Bible Dictionary

F. F. Bruce. *New Testament History*. London: Nelson, 1969.

Fred B. Craddock. *Philippians*. Interpretation. Atlanta: John Knox, 1985.

Everett Ferguson. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

Gerald F. Hawthorne. *Philippians*. WBC. Waco: Word, 1983.

Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1993.

Ralph P. Martin and Brian J. Dodd, eds. *Where Christology Began: Essays on Philippians 2*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998.

Ralph P. Martin. *A Hymn of Christ: Philippians 2:5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1997.

Bruce M. Metzger. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2nd ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994.

F. E. Peters. *The Harvest of Hellenism: A History of the Near East from Alexander the Great to the Triumph of Christianity*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970.

N. T. Wright. *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.

N. T. Wright. *The New Testament and the People of God*. Christian Origins and the Question of God, Vol. 1. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.

Assignments

All assignments must be typed according to the following specifications: double-spaced, Times New Roman (font size 12), 1 inch margins on all borders. Weekly assignments are limited to three pages.

Evaluation

Grade Scale

A 100-93

B 86-83

C 76-73

D 66-63

A- 92-90
B+ 89-87

B- 82-80
C+ 79-77

C- 72-70
D+ 69-67

D- 62-60
F 59-0

Means of Evaluation

1) Attendance and Class Participation

15%

Attendance and class participation are essential for the fulfillment of course objectives.

Active participation (coming to class prepared, participation in discussion, asking questions) will help you maximize your learning in the class, aid me in being more responsive to student needs/concerns, and provide your classmates with an additional perspective on the material.

2) Weekly Assignments

60%

These assignments represent the core material of the course. The first eight (30%) are specific in the intent to teach the basic principals of Greek-language based study. The final four (30 %) are broad assignments in which the learners begin to apply exegetical methods to an entire pericope. *All* assignments are to be completed, but I will drop the lowest grade from each of the two groups.

3) Final Exegetical Project

25%

This final project will be due during exam week. It is limited to 10 double-spaced, typed pages (this does not include endnotes or bibliography). Students will apply the exegetical skills introduced and honed during the semester to a selected passage from Philippians. The format will be discussed in greater detail during class.

Class Schedule

The daily schedule for the course will be handed out the first day of class.