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NT 520 New Testament Introduction

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PERSPECTIVE: All we are and everything we do is a spiritual matter because we live in the context of God's presence, purpose, and power. In all we are, think, say, and do in this course, individually and collectively, we should seek to be conscious of God's constant and pervading presence. We should also consciously and consistently seek God's purpose for us in this course. We need to be open, receptive, and responsive to the power of the Holy Spirit at every level of this course as the mediator of God's presence and the actualizer of God's purposes. We must bathe this course in prayer, releasing ourselves and one another to the presence, purpose, and power of God. Only in this way can this course be all God purposes it to be in our present life and future ministry.

PURPOSE: There are two areas in which we will seek the actualization of God's purpose for us in this course:

- Part I -- An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament
- Part II -- An Introduction to the Critical Study of the New Testament

PARTICULARS: It is prayerfully expected that this course will be used by God to enable you to:

Part I

1. Appropriate a basic knowledge of the introductory issues of the New Testament writings (History of New Testament times; authorship, place, date, relationships to other New Testament writings; genres of literature; etc.), and how the cultural contextualization of the New Testament relates to the global, multi-ethnic, cross-cultural nature of the church and its ministry.
2. Understand the process by which the New Testament documents became the canon of the Christian movement.

Part II

3. Acquire a knowledge of the history of New Testament Criticism from the Enlightenment to the present and its significance for pastoral leadership:
 - a. The origin and development of various methods of criticism.
 - b. The foundational presuppositions of these methods.
 - c. Evaluation of these presuppositions.
4. Develop a working understanding of the various methodologies of New Testament criticism and their interplay within theological education, especially within a biblical and Wesleyan conception of the Gospel:
 - a. Historical Methodologies: Historical Criticism, History of Religions.
 - b. Textual Methodologies: Textual Criticism, Linguistic Criticism.
 - c. Literary Methodologies: Literary Criticism, Source Criticism.
 - d. Structural Methodologies: Form- and Redaction-Criticism,
 - e. Post-modern Methodologies.

PROCEDURES: The following will provide some of the scholarly disciplines of loving obedience and stewardship through which I trust the Lord will enable you to actualize His purposes for you in this course:

1. Textbooks:

Introducing the New Testament, Achtemeier, Green, Thompson (AGT)
Interpreting the New Testament, Black and Dockery, eds. (BD)

2. Preparation:

- a. It is hoped that you will enter into a covenant of prayer for the class and the course.
- b. It is urged that each period of individual study be started with prayer and dedicated to God in prayer at its close.
- c. It is expected that you will be a faithful steward of time in two areas:
 - i. Consistent participation in class sessions.
 - ii. Commit at least two hours to the Lord for prayer and study in preparation for each class hour.
- d. It is expected that you will come to class fully prepared through disciplined prayer and study to be all God wants you to be in the class session.
- e. It is presumed that you will exhibit graduate level competence in comprehension of reading, integration of learning, and presentation of understanding.

3. Class Sessions:

A lecture format will be used as the basic methodology, with class discussion of various points of interest, question, or concern as time allows. It is hoped that you will enter into the class experience with the prayerful expectation that God has things He purposes to do in each mind and heart, and that you will be open and receptive to the work of God in your life.

4. Papers:

One concise **research** paper will be required. The paper should be developed within the following parameters:

- a. Select a clearly defined topic or area for study from one of the two parts of the course.
- b. Research the topic/area, reading at least 150 pages.
- c. The paper should:
 - i. Define the topic/area (about half a page)
 - ii. Identify the position of the course(s) read (about one page)
 - iii. Critique the position of the source(s), what are the strengths, weaknesses (about a page and a half)
 - iv. Present and defend your position (about a page)
 - v. Show the relevance of the issue for your spiritual life (about half a page)

- vi. Indicate the impact of the issue on your ministry (about half a page)

One concise exegetical paper will be required. The paper should be developed within the following parameters:

- a. The paper should reveal a close reading of the passage in its original contexts, and employ the relevant critical methodologies in unpacking the meaning of the passage for the original readers.
- b. The paper should evidence engagement with appropriate secondary resources.
- c. The paper should provide an application of the meaning of the passage for Christian life in the world today.
- d. The paper should be no more than 8 pages (typed, double spaced, 12 point font)

5. The quality of these papers should reflect work done "as unto the Lord" for they will represent the cumulative results of the depth and faithfulness of your stewardship of time and study.

ATTENDANCE In order to maintain integrity with those who are faithful to the learning covenant, the following actions will govern attendance and submission of work:

- Up to 10% unexcused absences 1 grade-level reduction (A/A-)
- 10 to 20% unexcused absences 2 grade-level reduction (A/B+), etc.
- Late submission of work 1 grade-level reduction/week

BIBLIOGRAPHY: The following list is neither exhaustive nor inclusive. It provides basic resources for additional study. Give attention to the bibliographies given in Guthrie (985-1032). Also helpful are the articles in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.

Part I

- F. F. Bruce, *New Testament History*
 ----- *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*
 J. Ellul, *Apocalypse*
 Craig Evans and Stanley Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background*
 W. R. Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem*
 Feine-Behm-Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*
 Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*
 R. M. Grant, *The Formation of the New Testament*
 ----- *The Jews in the Roman World*
 A. E. Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History*
 M. Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*
 J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*
 H. Koester, *History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*
 E. Lohse, *The New Testament Environment*
 H. Mattingly, *Roman Imperial Civilization*

B. M. Metzger, *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, and, Content*
 F. E. Peters, *The Harvest of Hellenism*
 B. Reicke, *The New Testament Era*
 J. A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*
 J. M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*
 M. Rostovtzeff, *Rome*
 E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*
 E. Schurer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*
 A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*
 E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule*
 H. H. Stoldt, *History and Criticism of the Marcan Hypothesis*
 Paul Veyne, *The Roman Empire*
 H. Von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*

Part II

J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*
 W. A. Beardslee, *Literary Criticism of the New Testament*
 W. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*
 R. Bultmann, *Kerygma and Myth*
 R. F. Collins, *Introduction to the New Testament*
 David A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*
 W. G. Doty, *Contemporary New Testament Interpretation*
 Cain Hope Felder, ed. *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation*
 R. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and the Word of God*
 Justo L. Gonzales, *Santa Biblia: The Bible through Hispanic Eyes*
 R. M. Grant, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*
 Joel B. Green, *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*
 A. M. Johnson, *Structuralism and Biblical Hermeneutics*
 Koester-Robinson, *Trajectories through Early Christianity*
 E. Krentz, *The Historical-Critical Method*
 W. G. Kümmel, *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of its Problems*
 E. V. McKnight, *What Is Form Criticism?*
 B. M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*
 S. C. Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861-1961*
 D. Patte, *What Is Structural Exegesis?*
 D. and A. Patte, *Structural Exegesis: From Theory to Practice*
 N. Perrin, *What Is Redaction Criticism?*
 R. M. Polzin, *Biblical Structuralism*
 A. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons: Philosophical Description and New Testament Hermeneutics*
 ----- *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE PART I

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>	<u>RESOURCES</u>
2-12	<u>New Testament History</u>		Lohse, Bruce, Reicke,
	Palestinian Judaism	AGT 2	Schurer Jeremias, Ferguson
	Diaspora Judaism		Smallwood, Grant
2-14	Roman-Hellenistic World		Rostovtzeff, Mattingly, Ferguson, Peters Bruce, Koester
2-19	<u>New Testament Writings</u>	AGT 1	
	<u>Synoptic Problem</u>	AGT 3, BD 15	
	Matthew	AGT 4	Stoldt, Farmer
	Mark	AGT 5	Robinson 2, Jeremias
	Luke	AGT 6	Harvey
2-21	<u>Johannine Writings</u>		
	Gospel of John	AGT 7, BD 16	
2-26	Letters of John	AGT 23	
	Revelation	AGT 24, BD 20	
2-28	<u>History</u>		
	Acts	AGT 9, BD 17	Hengel, Sherwin-White
3-5 and 7	No Class		
3-12	<u>Pauline Writings</u>	AGT 10-11, BD 18	Bruce, Sanders
	Galatians	AGT 14	
	Thessalonians	AGT 18	
	Corinthians	AGT 13	

3-14	Phil, Col. Eph. Phm.	AGT 15-17	
	Pastorals	AGT 19	
	Romans	AGT 12	
3-19	<u>Petrine Writings</u>		
	I Peter	AGT 22.1-2, BD 19	
	II Peter	AGT 22.3	
3-21	<u>Jewish-Christian Writings</u>		
	Hebrews	AGT 20	
	James, Jude	AGT 22.4	
3-26	<u>New Testament Canon</u>	AGT 25	Grant, VonCampenhausen

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE PART II

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>	<u>RESOURCES</u>
3-28	<u>Introduction</u>		
	Why NT Criticism?	BD 1-2	Collins, Doty, Grant
	<u>History of NT Criticism</u>		
	Philosophical Preparations	BD 9	
4-9	Beginnings of Biblical Criticism		Kümmel, Neill
	Quest for the Historical Jesus	AGT 8	Grant
	Issues of 20th Century Criticism		Thiselton 2
4-11	Barth and Bultmann		Thiselton 1
	Bultmann and Heidegger		Thiselton 1
	Bultmann and the New Quest		Thiselton 1

Theories of NT Criticism

4-16	Demythologizing		Bultmann
	The New Hermeneutic		Thiselton 1, Funk
4-18	Post-Modern Theories of Interpretation		Thiselton 2 Thiselton 2
3-26	Presuppositions in N. T. Criticism		

Methods in New Testament Criticism

4-23	Historical Criticism		Krentz
	History of Religions		Bousset, Koester/Robinson 2
4-25	Textual Criticism	BD 3	Metzger
4-30	Linguistic Criticism	BD 11	Barr
5-2	Literary Criticism	BD 7	Beardslee
5-7	Source Criticism	BD 4	
	Form Criticism	BD 5	McKnight
5-9	Redaction Criticism	BD 6	Perrin
5-14	Sociological Criticism	BD 8	
5-16	Wrap up		