1-1-2005

NT 638 Epistle to the Romans

Kenneth Schenck

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Note: Please maximize your window to view the syllabus in the intended formatting (the middle box in the upper right hand corner of this screen).

Instructor: Kenneth Schenck
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Office Phone (765) 677-2258
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 8:00-9:00 EST (until the time change, then 9-10); Other Times by Arrangement

Some Preliminary Remarks:
1. Different IBS Professors do things differently
   In general, this course will involve more group work/collaborative learning and more engagement with New Testament scholarship than most IBS courses.

2. This course assumes basic awareness of IBS method
   While we will review the method at every point (and then extend our knowledge, hopefully), it is worth mentioning that this course does assume you have had the basic Matthew or Mark introductory course. I will be glad to fill in any gaps you feel you have, but I am assuming you have already done a survey, a detailed observation, a word study, etc... at least once before.

3. A request for grace/feedback
   I fully believe we will operate in an atmosphere of grace as we communicate and work in the online medium, extending all the same courtesies online that we would in a real time classroom.

   One form that your grace might take to me is to make comments on the assignments, readings, and discussions. Are they working? Are you learning from them? Are you having problems? Have I estimated the time it should take you to prepare for each model fairly and accurately? What should I change about this course when I offer it again? Please let me know.

4. And a final formality
   The development of this extended learning syllabus and the modules that follow is intended for distribution to members of the course and others by my permission and by the permission of the seminary. It is not intended for general distribution on the internet. Permission to copy, in whole or in part, must be requested from the professor (Kenneth Schenck) and the seminary
(Asbury Theological Seminary). Much of this course was created in conjunction with a grant from the seminary. That portion is the property of Asbury Theological Seminary.

**Personal Greetings:**
Let me welcome each and every one of you into the Spring 2005 Romans IBS community. It is my prayer that your time in the course will be personally rewarding and enriching for your ministry.

First of all, my name is Ken Schenck. I'm a professor of New Testament at Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Indiana. I'm 38 years old, married to Angela and have four children (13, 11, 5, and 4).

I did my undergraduate work at Southern Wesleyan University (1987), my M.Div. at our own Asbury Theological Seminary (1990), an MA in Classics at the University of Kentucky (1993), and I received my PhD in New Testament at the University of Durham, England (1996). The Epistle to the Hebrews was my focus. I am also an ordained minister in the Wesleyan Church.

Now it's your turn:

Be sure and update your Resume on the FirstClass email system. Expand on your Resume (limit it to 100 words) and place it in the **NT(IBS)638 Discussion Center by the end of the first week of class**. If you prefer, make it a casual profile.

Feedback is important. I look forward to interacting with you online in a whole host of different ways. Please help me (and others) to "see your facial expressions."

**To the Church at NT(IBS)638**

ExL classes are community experiences: students interacting with seminary staff, faculty, and other students. May this class never seem like an independent study course but as a learning community. Let me remind you of some of the elements of our Asbury ExL community:

(1) **ExL Support Community**

For **general questions and administrative assistance regarding the ExL program**, contact Dale Hale:

ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu  
Phone: (859) 858-2393
For technical support, library research support, library loans, and ExL media contact Information Commons:

Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu
Phone: (859) 858-2233
Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

Accessing Information Commons Materials:
1. General Questions:
   - The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here: http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/hours.shtml.

2. Materials Requests:
   - To search the library catalog for available materials, click here: http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml

   - ExL Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/reference books from Asbury Seminary’s Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.

   - ExL students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions:
   - ExL students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help choosing a paper topic, determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases:
   - To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0’s to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id).

To order textbooks or for textbook information contact:
Asbury's Bookstore
1-866-855-8252 (toll-free)
exlbooks@asburyseminary.edu
Please don't hesitate to contact these people in an emergency. Moreover, I may refer you to them if a question is most applicable to their expertise.

(2) Community of Saints and Interpreters Past and Present:

None of us can take full credit for what insights and helpful understandings we have. Though I am the professor for NT638, I am a product of countless influences. I am not even fully aware of most of them.

For example, I learned IBS from several of the professors here at ATS, particularly Dr. David Bauer and Dr. David Thompson. Dr. David Smith also gave me a "jump start" two years ago into teaching Matthew IBS online--help of immense value.

I have read the text of Romans and then listened patiently to scholars like James Dunn, Tom Wright, and Richard Hays. I have then gone back to the text again. They have offered tremendous insights.

Yet I am not a tape recording. My approach to IBS and my interpretation of Romans bear the mark of my own interpretive pilgrimage.

I expect nothing less from you. I expect you to get better and better at IBS with each passing assignment, increasingly making the method your own. I expect you to make Romans your own as well, both in terms of the original meaning and as you seek whatever specific wisdom God might offer to you personally in your encounter with the text.

As God nurtures you as an individual, remember that you are part of the "communion of saints," the community of Christians and interpreters past, present, and future. Augustine, Luther, Wesley--God transformed each of these great saints through the book of Romans. Let's pray for a similar encounter.

(3) The Community of this Course

Virtual Office Hours

I will check the classroom at least every other day. This is when I will officially check in on the course, read posts, and answer email. Post your general questions and responses to the NT(IBS)638 Discussion Center. Remember, this is our classroom, so questions you ask should be overheard (or in our case over-read) by others in the class.

On the other hand, communication that you want to send me privately should be sent to the NT(IBS)638 Office. Only I can access those messages. Please note that in case of emergency you should include "Urgent NT638" in the subject line of the email so I will know to get to it immediately.
Virtual Classroom
A great deal of our class discussion will take place in the *NT*(IBS)638 Discussion Center. All participants in the class will be able to read and respond to items posted in the Discussion Center. In an on-campus course everyone hears your remarks and has a chance to benefit and respond. That's the way it should be in this electronic community.

By the way, it's all right to disagree or critique a person's work, gently but forthrightly. I also welcome disagreement with my own conclusions. We will try to learn from each other. This will happen best if we probe one another's thinking. But may we all be Christ-like in our hearts and tones.

Remember to respond with more than cliches like: "Great thought!" "I like that!" or "I have questions about that." Instead, let's state clearly what we like and why, indicating what we think is "great" and on what basis. "Fluffy" postings that don't move beyond these easy responses will not count toward class participation.

Communications for this class, especially in the Discussion Center, should be marked by quality not quantity. In general, try to keep your postings and responses to no more than 50-75 words or 2-3 well thought-out paragraphs. By the way, the online format works best with a number of short paragraphs rather than long drawn out ones.

Help us out by hitting the enter or return button often--it will make your thoughts more readable (and communication is the key to persuasion!). From time to time, usually at the end of a module, I will move old discussions into the Archive Center so that the Discussion Center doesn't get too cluttered. Remember, you can always refer back any old discussion in the Archive center.

The Course Center is where the modules for the course will be posted. Inside the module folders you will find detailed instructions for each module, the assignments, examples, and so forth. I will make sure that material at least one week ahead of where we are is posted at any one time (as well as past modules).

Team Center. Our teams, usually made up of four or five members, will be set up for you to exchange materials with one another and to interact with one another's work. In our team folders, only team members will be able to read and respond to your work. "Collaborative learning" is the name of the game online. Part of your learning experience will involve critiquing and encouraging others.

Finally, Questions?. Even though you have had at least one IBS course before, I suspect you may still have questions about the method. Our class
has a special place for methodological questions, "forest-size" questions rather than the "tree-sized" questions you might post in the Discussion Center. Please post all your mega-questions in the folder titled Questions?

**Prayer and Praise Room**
Although we are separated geographically, we can still pray for one another. The folder called Prayer and Praise Room is the place to place prayers and praises. Nothing builds a sense of community like knowing each other's needs and calling upon the God of the Universe to answer them.

The Resource Center contains links to the Library, Chapel, Registration, ExL Updates, and so forth. It also contains a PowerPoint Viewer.

Lastly, there is a Chat Center. You can use this to chat live in real-time with your classmates or with me, or both, depending on who is on-line at the same time. These discussions are not saved so you do not have to worry about any permanent record. Think of the Chat Center as the hallway outside our classroom. I will try to set up a non-required chat the first week of class to try to help us all get better acquainted with one another.

**Course Description**
This course is designed to use methodical, inductive Bible study in order to study the New Testament book of Romans. Topics will range from the overall structure and themes of the book as a whole to specific issues within and arising from the book.

**Course Objectives**
These five objectives are for every IBS class taught within the Biblical Studies department:

- Demonstrate basic skills in observing the text of Romans, including aspects that pertain to the original language, with a view toward using these observations in the interpretation of the text.

- Demonstrate basic skills in interpreting the text of Romans by citing, describing, and drawing inferences from various types of evidence, including those that pertain to the original language.

- Demonstrate ability to discuss some of the major hermeneutical issues surrounding the observation and interpretation of Romans.

- Demonstrate a preliminary and basic awareness of issues pertaining to the evaluation of passages in Romans for their contemporary possibilities for
application and to the process of actually applying passages to specific contemporary situations.

Demonstrate knowledge of the content of Romans in its literary, theological, and historical contexts.

**Textbooks**

**Required Textbooks**

(1) **The Bible**

The primary text is the Bible. As a part of your work, feel free to draw on what we might call "formal equivalence" translations. Such versions stick closely to the original wording and sentence structure of the Greek and Hebrew text. Examples include the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the New Jerusalem Bible (NJB), and the New American Bible (NAB). While the King James Version and New King James Version are formal equivalence translations, they sometimes reflect a "less original" Greek text. For this reason you should not use them as your primary biblical text.

Similarly, you should not use a paraphrase (e.g. Living Bible), a translation by a single individual (e.g. The Message), or a "dynamic equivalence" translation for your primary biblical text (e.g. New International Version, New Living Translation, etc.). These versions try to bridge the gap between "our time" and "that time" by reformulating the wording of the original Greek and by drawing on rough parallels in contemporary language. While these kinds of versions are excellent in a pastoral context, the price you pay is the illusion that you are actually looking at what the Bible originally said. You loose the opportunity to hear the possibilities of the text itself.

It would be best if your copy of the Bible was not overly interpretive (i.e., with extended notes, paragraph headings, etc.). Christians often use such "user-friendly" helps as a crutch. I ask that you wait on consulting these notes until AFTER your own inductive work. You may very well find that you need to correct the notes in your Bible!

(2) We will read the following articles at various points in the course. You can find them in the course center:


This is a useful way to familiarize yourself with numerous secondary sources on the book of Romans.

(4) One or more of the following commentaries on Romans:

**Recommended Books Relating to Romans**

**Grading**
For the most part, I will give completion grades for the first time we do any specific kind of assignment (e.g. the first survey, the first interpretation, etc.). There are six (6) such assignments in this course. I hope to give you full points on these assignments, although I cannot to do so in good conscience if you do not give an honest effort or do not contribute to your group’s product.

Thus the further we are in the semester, the more your work matters in terms of your final grade. There are eighteen (18) graded assignments in this course. Of these I will drop the lowest graded assignment (all completion assignments must be done). In other words, if pressure begins to build at home, work, or you
simply need a break; you can drop one (1) of the major assignments. You cannot drop your final Romans survey or the two final projects.

For obvious reasons, late work presents a significant problem in this format. I cannot give full credit to work submitted after you have had access to the postings of other students, let alone after I have posted my own work. I reserve the right to exact a major grade penalty on late work, even to the extent of giving no credit for an assignment. In some circumstances it might be possible to create an alternate assignment to substitute.

Please take seriously your interaction with teammates as well as class discussion. Class discussion accounts for 130/1000 of your final grade (or 13%). Some of the best learning comes through student interaction.

I will attempt to provide careful and explicit instructions for readings and assignments. If anything is unclear, please post a message in the *NT(IBS)*638 Discussion Center, so all can hear my response. Additionally, dates will be given for completion. All work will be expected at twelve midnight (i.e. 12 am, EST). Since most of us think of midnight as the end of the day, the due dates relate to the day that ends at midnight. I realize that I'm doing it wrong, but I think most of us think this way about midLnight (think 11:59pm on the due date if you are an xxTJ).

**GRADES WILL BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>130 points (≈10 points/week)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion Assignments</td>
<td>150 points (≈25 points/assignment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graded Assignments</td>
<td>510 points (≈30 points/assignment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Projects</td>
<td>210 points (105 points/project)</td>
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**Grading Scale:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>769-730</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>729-700</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>699-670</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>669-600</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>599 below</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>799-770</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>749-720</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>719-690</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>699-670</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>669-600</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>599 below</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below</td>
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**Incompletes:**

Since so many of us are over-worked and under constant time crunches, let me alert you to the school's policy on incompletes. The catalog reads: "A grade of 'I' denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an *unavoidable emergency*, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment. If the work of a course is incomplete at the end of a term
without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted a 'F'."

**Office Hours:**
You will note above that I am making myself available at 765-677-2258 on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:00-9:00am, EST (and from 9-10 after the time change). If you wish to have a more traditional conversation, you can reach me at that time via telephone. I can become available at other times by arrangement.

### Modules and Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Begins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1</strong></td>
<td>Introduction to Course and Review</td>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 2</strong></td>
<td>The Thanksgiving (1:8-15) and Proposition (1:16-17)</td>
<td>Feb. 15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read and discuss Käsemann article.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Module 3</strong></td>
<td>Romans 1:18-3:20</td>
<td>Feb. 22</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read and discuss Stendahl article.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Module 4</strong></td>
<td>Romans 3:21-4:25</td>
<td>March 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read and discuss articles by Hays and Dunn.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Module 5</strong></td>
<td>Romans 5</td>
<td>March 8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adam and Christ</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Module 6</strong></td>
<td>Romans 6</td>
<td>March 15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paul and Sin</td>
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**Spring Reading Week: March 21-25**

| Module 7 | Romans 7 | March 29 |
| | Paul and the Law | |
| **Module 8** | Romans 8 | April 5 |
| | Creation, Flesh, and Sin | |
| **Module 9** | Romans 9-11 | April 12 |
| | Predestination and the Future of Israel | |
| **Module 10** | Synthesizing Romans 1-11 | April 19 |
| | Survey of 1-11; Phrase study: "Faith of Jesus Christ," Interpretive study on 1:16-17. | |
Module 11 Romans 12-16 April 26
Textual Issues Relating to Romans' Ending

Module 12 Integrative Assignments May 3
Final Survey; Evaluation/Appropriation Assignments

The semester ends Thurs., May 19.
Note: The modules are of varying length.