1-1-2003

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.
   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 (30% of course grade) will be required (**DUE October 16**). 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 will follow this format:
      i. Define the topic/area (about half a page)
      ii. Identify the position of the source(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)

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

One concise exegetical paper (30% of course grade) will be required (DUE November 20). 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. These will be cited appropriately when quoted (Either footnotes or author and date in parentheses with bibliography).

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, 1 inch margins all around)

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.

5. Final Exam (40% of Course Grade). Will cover entire course.

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*

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H. Koester, *History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*
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**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE—PART I**
New Testament History

Palestinian Judaism
AGT 2
Lohse, Bruce, Reicke,
Schurer
Jeremias, Ferguson

Diaspora Judaism
Smallwood, Grant

Roman-Hellenistic World
Rostovtzeff, Mattingly,
Ferguson, Peters
Bruce, Koester

New Testament Writings

Synoptic Problem
AGT 3, BD 15
Matthew
AGT 4
Stoldt, Farmer
Mark
AGT 5
Robinson 2, Jeremias
Luke
AGT 6
Harvey

Johannine Writings

Gospel of John
AGT 7, BD 16
Letters of John
AGT 23
Revelation
AGT 24, BD 20

History
Acts
AGT 9, BD 17
Hengel, Sherwin-White

Pauline Writings

Galatians
AGT 14
Thessalonians
AGT 18
Corinthians
AGT 13
Phil, Col. Eph. Phm.
AGT 15-17
Pastorals
AGT 19

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Romans
AGT 12

Petrine Writings
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<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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<td>Why NT Criticism?</td>
<td>BD 1-2</td>
<td>Collins, Doty, Grant</td>
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<td>Barth and Bultmann</td>
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11-6  **Theories of NT Criticism**

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11-11 Post-Modern Theories of Interpretation

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**Methods in New Testament Criticism**

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<td>Sociological Criticism</td>
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**EXEGESIS PAPER DUE**