NT 633 Exegesis of Colossians

M. Robert Mulholland

Follow this and additional works at: http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation
http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/1789
PERSPECTIVE: Nothing requires a deeper level of spiritual maturity than the exegetical study of God's Word. Nothing enhances our spiritual maturity more consistently than the exegetical study of God's Word. This symbiotic reality is the primary dynamic of biblical exegesis. All teaching and learning, in the Christian and biblical perspective, must be directly related to a personal and growing relationship with Jesus as Lord. It is my prayerful intention to seek to be all the Lord purposes for me to be in leading this class; and it is my prayerful hope that you will seek to allow the Lord to so guide your study and participation that His full purpose for you might be fulfilled in this course.

PURPOSE: We will seek to actualize God's purposes for us in this course through the development of a sound methodology of biblical exegesis and its application to selected passages in Paul's letter to the Colossians.

PARTICULARS: It is prayerfully expected that your faithful stewardship and discipline in this course will be used by God to enable you to acquire the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Understanding of the value of sound biblical exegesis in every phase of Christian life and ministry.
- Cognizance of the best basic resources for biblical exegesis, knowledge of their use, and ability to employ them.
- Acquisition of the necessary tools for sound biblical exegesis:
  - The ability to establish:
    - the textual context of a passage
    - the literary context of a passage
    - the historical context of a passage
    - the theological context of a passage
  - The ability to "translate" the passage into contemporary life.
- Development of a sound exegetical methodology

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

   Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, Klein, Blomberg, Hubbard (KBH)
   Opening the Bible, Thomas Merton

   Collateral: Biblical Resources for Ministry, ed. Bauer
   Shaped by the Word, Mulholland
   Colossians and Philemon, Murray J. Harris (Eerdmans, 1991)

2. Preparation:
   - 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, interlaced with prayer and praise 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 that you may 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 learning, and presentation of understanding.

3. Class Procedures:
   There will be two types of class session. One will be basically lecture, during which essential aspects of exegetical methodology will be explained and illustrated. The other will be "lab" sessions in which prepared assignments will be reviewed and discussed.

4. Written Assignments:
   These will be in the form of assigned exercises as noted in the TENTATIVE SCHEDULE, and will be due on the date listed. These are to be not more than two, typed double-spaced pages in length. (Legibly handwritten assignments will be allowed when frequent use of the Greek words or phrases is required)

5. Final Exercise:
   There will be a final exercise in which you will be given an opportunity to reflect your grasp, integration, and utilization of the tools and methods of biblical exegesis. At least part of this exercise will be "take-home" in nature.

6. The quality of written assignments and the final exercise should reflect work done "as unto the Lord" for they will reflect the cumulative results of the depth and faithfulness of your stewardship of time and study.

PERFORMANCE: Your comprehension and integration of the particulars of the course will be evaluated on the basis of the written assignments and the final exercise. If, at any time, you feel that my evaluation of your work has not been accurate, please come and discuss it with me. A faithful, consistent, obedient stewardship of time and work, in which you seek to be faithful to the Lord's purposes for you in the course, will result in the successful completion of the course.

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

- Over 10% unexcused absences: 1 grade-level reduction (A to A-)
- Over 20% unexcused absences: 2 grade-level reduction (A to B+)
- Late submission of work: 1 grade-level reduction/week
- Three unexcused tardies will be equivalent to one unexcused absence.
BIBLIOGRAPHY: The following list is neither inclusive nor exhaustive. It presents a few of the basic resources for exegesis.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL
   Bibliographical Resources for Ministry, David Bauer, ed.

DICTIONARIES
   Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, (10 vols.), Kittel
   Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, (1 vol.), Kittel
   Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament, (3 vols.) Balz and Schneider

GREEK RESOURCES
   Bauer, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament
   Moulton & Geden, Concordance to the Greek Testament
   Metzger, Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek
   Greenlee, A Concise Exegetical Grammar of New Testament Greek
   Brooks and Winbery, Syntax of New Testament Greek
   Winter and Winter, Word Study New Testament and Concordance

TEXTUAL CRITICISM
   Metzger, The Text of the New Testament
   -----------  A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS TIME
   Bruce, New Testament History
   Feine, Behm, Kummel, Introduction to the New Testament
   Ferguson, Backgrounds of Early Christianity
   Guthrie, New Testament Introduction
   Schurer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, (Revision by Black, Vermes, Millar)

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 2</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Why Exegesis? Hebrews 4:12-13; Mark 12:18-27; KBH Ch.1, 5; Merton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 4</td>
<td>Discuss Merton</td>
<td><strong>Textual Context</strong> KBH 59-69; List Greek Sentences in Colossians*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 9</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>Outline Colossians from Greek Sentences*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sep 11  
**Text Establishment**

Textual Criticism  

Sep 16  
**Literary Context**

KBH 155-171, 199-214;  
Diagram Col 2:20-23*

Sep 18  
Lab  
Syntax  
Diagram Col 3:1-4*

Sep 23  
Lab  
Define the Syntax of Col 3:1-4*

Sep 25  
Vocabulary  
KBH 183-199.

Sep 30  
Lab  
Do a study of *stoice* and cognates*

Oct 2  
**Historical Context**

Jewish Background  
KBH 172-182.

Oct 7  
Lab  
Identify Jewish Elements in Col 2:6-19*

Oct 9  
Hellenistic Background

Oct 14  
Lab  
Identify Hellenistic Elements in Col 2:6-19*

Oct 16  
**Theological Context**  
KBH Ch 11.

Oct 21  
No Class  
Work ahead on assignments for October 28-Nov 11

Oct 23  
No Class

Oct 28  
Lab  
Clarify the meaning of Col 2:20-23*

Oct 30  
Lab  
Clarify the meaning of Col 3:1-3:4*

Nov 4  
No Class

Nov 6  
Lab  
Clarify the meaning of Col 3:5-11*

Nov 11  
Lab  
Clarify the meaning of Col 3:12-17*

Nov 13  
Colossians 1-2  
For the assignments through Dec. 3, study the passages to be covered in the Greek text.

Nov 18  
Colossians 2-3  
Be alert to the various aspects of exegetical methodology and note particular issues of

---

1. That is, employ the whole exegetical process to arrive at as complete an understanding of the passage as is possible. Your written assignment will be steps III and IV of “Steps of Exegesis” on page 5.
Nov 20  Colossians 3-4  interpretation that arise in these passages.

Dec 2  **Exegetical Sermons**  KBH Ch. 10;

Dec 4  Lab  Be acquainted with 2 Cor 2:14-3:18

**STEPS IN EXEGESIS:**

I. Outline the document according to its internal structure (Greek)
   A. Develop the Major Units (I. II. III. etc.)
   B. Define the sub-divisions of each major unit (A, B, C)
   C. Clarify the parts of each sub-division (1, 2, 3, etc.) if needed

II. Work with a sub-division (A, B, etc.) as the basic unit.
   A. Establish the text if necessary (Textual Criticism)
   B. Clarify the syntactical structures of the unit (Diagram)
   C. Identify focal contextual elements and research
      1. Literary Context:
         a. Syntax--identify, determine function
         b. Vocabulary--frequency, usage, meaning
         c. Form--identify, determine use
      2. Historical Context:
         a. Historical situation of the writing
         b. Jewish background (Palestine/Diaspora)
         c. Hellenistic background
   D. Determine the meaning of the text.
   E. View the text within its larger context

III. Write out a verse by verse commentary on the unit, drawing together the material from step II.

IV. Summarize the focal message of the text (Christian perspective/lifestyle)
   A. For the original readers.
   B. For your own spiritual life.
   C. For contemporary readers.