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NT 638 Epistle to the Romans

Kenneth Schenck

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Tentative Romans IBS Syllabus
NT 638 (IBS) XL
Fall 2003

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).

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:00-1:00; 2:00-3:00 EST; Other Times by Arrangement

Some Preliminary Remarks:

1. Different IBS Professors do things differently

I have designed this course with the intent of being somewhat innovative with its pedagogy. In general, this course will involve more group work/collaborative learning and more engagement with New Testament scholarship than most IBS courses do.

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). The bulk of this course was created in conjunction with a grant from the seminary. Therefore, the bulk of the course is the property of Asbury Theological Seminary.

Personal Greetings:

Let me welcome each and every one of you into the Fall 2003 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 37 years old, married to Angela and have four children (12, 10, 4, and 3).

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 NT510(IFS) Discussion Center by the end of the first week of class.** If you prefer, make it a casual profile. You are more than your work and educational experience.

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."

Our Romans Community

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

From the outset, this community has a tremendous support staff and they have given me this clear offer, "If any of your students have a need, please contact us!" Here are their names and their "doing" role in ExL:

For **general help** with anything contact:

Kevin D. Osborn
Director of Extended Learning
Asbury Theological Seminary
(859) 858-2191
exl_director@asburyseminary.edu

For **technical support** contact:
Jared Porter
ExL Technical Supervisor
Asbury Theological Seminary
(859) 858-2373
ExL_Support@asburyseminary.edu

For **Library services** contact:
Hannah Kirsch
ExL Reference Librarian
859-858-2189
[Hannah Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Hannah.Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu)

By the way, all ExL students are encouraged to make use of local library; however, if such services are unavailable or inadequate, ExL students may also obtain library books and journal articles through the mail from Asbury Theological Seminary's B. L. Fisher Library. All requests for books and journal articles should be emailed to the ExL Reference Librarian, Hannah Kirsch (Hannah.Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu). Hannah is also available to assist ExL students with reference requests such as how to find citations for books and articles, how to use the various online databases available to ExL students, or how to begin looking for information on a specific topic.

To request material from the B.L. Fisher Library, begin by searching the library's WebPac (online catalog of the library's holdings) or one of the journal databases available on the ExL Virtual Library webpage (found in the Resource Center of your ExL classroom). Then send an email to Hannah citing the sources that you would like to request. If you need help searching the databases, do not hesitate to ask. Please allow 5-10 business days for all requests to be filled. ExL students are billed for the cost of photocopies (5 cents per page) and the cost of shipping. Express mail services (price varies according to weight) and faxing (\$1.50 for the first page and 25 cents for each additional page plus photocopy charges) are also available, but material will generally take 1-2 days from the receipt of the request to be processed.

Plan ahead and make your requests early.

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" last year 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 *NT638(IFS) 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 *NT638(IFS) 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

Class discussion will take place in the *NT638(IBS) 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.

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 limited to three or four 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 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 lose 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) David R. Bauer, *An Annotated Guide to Biblical Resources for Ministry* (Hereafter: BRM), (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003).

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

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

a. Achtemeier, P. J. *Romans* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985). Interpretation Series.

b. Dunn, J. D. G. *Romans*. 2 vols (Dallas: Word, 1988). Word Series.

c. Fitzmeyer, J. A. *Romans* (New York: Doubleday, 1993). Anchor Bible Series.

Recommended Books Relating to Romans

1. Hawthorne, G. F.; Martin, R. P.; and Reid, Daniel G., eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993).
2. Dunn, J. D. G. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).
3. Moo, D. *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996). NICNT Series.
4. Wright, N. T. *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

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 group activity, the first solo survey, etc.). I hope to give you full points on these assignments, although I cannot 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. Of these I will drop the lowest grade. 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 FINAL PROJECT.**

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 *NT638(IBS) 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 mid-night (think 11:59pm on the due date if you are an xxTJ).

GRADES WILL BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Class Participation	130 points
Exegetical Assignments	670 points
Final Project	200 points

Grading Scale:

1000-950	A	769-730	C
949-900	A-	729-700	C-
899-870	B+	699-670	D+
869-830	B	669-600	D
829-800	B-	599 below	F
799-770	C+		

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 Tuesdays from 12:00-1:00; 2:00-3:00 EST. 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 (Schedule is subject to change.)

Module Begins

Module 1 Review, Initial Group Survey, Placing Assignment

September 2

Module 2 Prescript Survey, Review of Detailed Observation

Sept. 9

- Module 3 Individual and Team Surveys of Initial Section/s
Sept. 16
Discussion: the righteousness of God
- Module 4 Review of Interpretation, Group Interpretation Project
Sept. 23
Discussions of Homosexual Practice and Natural Law
- Module 5 The Faith of Christ , Review of Word/Phrase Study
Sept. 30
Discussion of *hilasterion*
- Module 6 Concurrent Group and Individual Surveys
Oct. 14
- Module 7 Paul, Sin, and the Law
Oct. 21
Discussions of Paul and the Law, Victory over Sin
- Module 8 Interpretation Assignment
Oct. 28
Discussions of Creation, Justification, and Sanctification
- Module 9 Romans 9-11
Nov. 4
Discussions of Predestination and the Future of Israel
- Module 10 Romans 12-16
Nov. 11
Discussion of Textual Issues Relating to Romans's Ending
- Module 11 Wrapping Things Up
Nov. 18
E.g. Final Survey; Review of Evaluation/Appropriation
- Module 12 FINAL PROJECT
Begin Dec. 2
The final project will involve focusing on one of a number of issues raised in the course. The student will demonstrate their acquired skills at IBS and in the interpretation of Romans by bringing them to bear in an appropriate way on the chosen topic, moving from observation to interpretation, to evaluation, to appropriation.

Final Project is due Tues., Dec. 9.

Note: The modules are of varying length.