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NT 511 The Gospel of Mark

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NT(IBS)511, MARK

Fall 2004

Tuesdays, 9:00-11:40 AM

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1) COURSE DESCRIPTION:

- a) **Catalog Description** (p. 113). As a basic course in Inductive Bible Studies, its primary purpose is to enable the student to begin developing an inductive approach to Bible study, especially in the areas of observation and interpretation. Parts of the Gospel of Mark are used to demonstrate and to practice a methodical approach that can be used in other biblical books. Some of the main themes of the Gospel are highlighted in the process. Prerequisite: NT500 or NT501—either completed or taken concurrently with this course. (May be taken by students in M.A. program not requiring Greek by special arrangement with the professor.)
- b) **Professor's Addendum.** The inductive method—more a sensibility than a “method” as such—will be learned by means of practice and repetition. The inductive approach is favored on at least three grounds: (1) By centering on the *text in its canonical form* (over against the events which lie behind the text or the circumstances of its production), the inductive approach is a concrete expression of a commitment to biblical authority. (2) By virtue of its *inductive* orientation to the text (over against pre-determining deductive, dogmatic, or ideological orientations) this approach seeks to hear the diverse voices of biblical texts on their own terms. (3) By emphasizing the role of the reader as one who encounters and discovers the text in first-hand experience (rather than mediated through secondary resources and means), the approach has a pedagogical advantage: we learn more when *we* do the discovering.

2) LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- a) **From Catalog** (p. 106). Having successfully completed this course, students should be able to:
- i) Demonstrate basic skills in observing the text, including aspect that pertain to the original language, with a view toward using these observations in the interpretation of the text;
 - ii) Demonstrate basic skills in interpreting the text by citing, describing, and drawing inferences from various types of evidence, including those that pertain to the original language;
 - iii) Demonstrate ability to discuss some of the major hermeneutical issues surrounding observation and interpretation;
 - iv) Demonstrate a preliminary and basic awareness of issues pertaining to the evaluation of passages for their contemporary possibilities for application and to the process of actually applying passages to specific contemporary situations; and
 - v) Demonstrate knowledge of the content of the book in its literary, theological, and historical contexts.
- b) **Professor's Addendum**
- i) **Knowledge and Skills.**
 - (1) To understand on a conceptual level what inductive Bible study *is*, both in itself and in contrast to other approaches—this includes both its value and strengths as well as its potential shortcomings and weaknesses.
 - (2) To learn to ask penetrating and fruitful interpretive questions and to grasp how the text is the first recourse for the answers.

- (3) To be introduced to the appropriate use of secondary resources for the study of the biblical text within an inductive framework.
 - (4) To have a beginning appreciation of the distinctiveness of each of the biblical genres and the corresponding hermeneutical implications.
 - (5) To have a particular grasp of the characteristics of biblical narrative and a grasp of a narrative-critical method of interpretation.
 - (6) To become intensely familiar with the content of the Gospel of Mark.
- ii) **Values.**
- (1) To be *empowered* to engage the biblical text at a deep level and *motivated* to do so for a lifetime.
 - (2) To learn from the insights and perspectives of others, so that our engagement with the text is not merely individualistic but communal and synergistic.
 - (3) To be able to teach others to study the Bible profitably to a degree appropriate for their intellectual ability and spiritual maturity.

3) COURSE MATERIALS AND TEXTBOOKS:

a) Biblical Texts.

- i) **Provided.** Students will be supplied with a common “manuscript” of Mark in the Revised Standard Version. Students will need to supply their own markers. I recommend at least eight colors and a pencil for annotations.
- ii) **Assumed.**
 - (1) English Texts: For the purpose of comparison, access to at least two other contemporary translation of the Bible based on a critical text, preferably the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the New American Bible (NAB), the New American Standard (NAS), or New International Version (NIV). Excluded are The Living Bible, New Living Translation, *The Message*, the King James, and New King James, which whatever their other merits, do not fit the close reading objectives of this class.
 - (2) Greek Texts: At least one of the following: A Greek-English interlinear NT such as Robert K. Brown, Philip Comfort, and J.D. Douglas, eds, *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 1993) or, for more advanced or ambitious readers of Greek, The United Bible Society’s *The Greek New Testament*, 4th ed. or the Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th ed. Students may also wish to consider the *Greek-English New Testament* in which the full NA²⁷ Greek text, including apparatus, is interfaced with the RSV translation.
- iii) **Recommended.** If they have not done so already, students should seriously consider acquiring *Bible Works 6.0*. This program will be either required or extremely valuable for at least eight courses in the M.Div. curriculum to say nothing of its ongoing value for exegetical research and sermon preparation.

b) Course Texts

- Fee, Gordon and Doug Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.
- Powell, Mark Allan. *What is Narrative Criticism?* Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.
- Rhoads, David, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie. *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*. 2d ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999.
- Thompson, David. *Bible Study That Works*. Rev. ed. Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel, 1994.

c) Recommended and “Approved” Commentaries

- Donahue, John R. *The Gospel of Mark*. Sacra Pagina. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 2002.
- Evans, Craig A. *Mark 8:27 - 16:20*. WBC 33b. Nashville: Nelson, 2001.
- France, R. T. *The Gospel of Mark*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002.
- Guelich, Robert. *Mark 1 - 8:26*. WBC 33a. Dallas: Word, 1989.
- Gundry, Robert H. *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1993.
- Hooker, Morna. D. *The Gospel according to Saint Mark*. HNTC. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991.

Lane, William L. *Commentary on the Gospel of Mark*. NICNT. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974.
 Marcus, Joel. *Mark 1 – 8*. AB. New York: Doubleday, 2000.
 Witherington, Ben, III. *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, Mich.:
 Eerdmans, 2001.

Note well: No commentaries are required among the course textbooks, and all of the above will be available on Reserve in the Information Commons. *Students who are not able to access the ATS Information Commons regularly are advised to acquire two or more of these volumes for their personal library.*

d) Selected Recommended Works on the Gospel of Mark

Achtemeier, Paul J. *Mark*. Proclamation Commentaries. 2d ed. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.
 Anderson, Janice Capel and Stephen D. Moore, eds. *Mark and Method: New Approach in Biblical Studies*.
 Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.
 Camery-Hoggatt, Jeremy. *Irony in Mark's Gospel: Text and Subtext*. SNTSMS 72. Cambridge:
 Cambridge University Press, 1992.
 Fowler, Robert M. *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark*.
 Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.
 Iersel, Bas van. *Reading Mark*. Trans. W. H. Bisscheroux. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1988.
 Juel, Donald H. *The Gospel of Mark*. IBT. Nashville: Abingdon, 1999.
 Kelber, Werner H. *Mark's Story of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Fortress: 1979.
 Malbon, Elizabeth Struthers. *In the Company of Jesus: Characters in Mark's Gospel*. Louisville: WJKP,
 2000.
 Marshall, Christopher D. *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative*. SNTSMS 64. Cambridge: Cambridge
 University Press, 1989.
 Martin, Ralph P. *Mark: Evangelist and Teacher*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973.

4) COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

a) Requirements

- i) The reading of course texts—four relatively short and not difficult books—constitutes 20% of the course grade. The assigned reading is largely supplemental to the lectures and class exercises, reinforcing the conceptual framework for what we are doing in class together. To receive credit for each book, students will write a *not to exceed one-page single-spaced reflection* for each. These are strategically sequenced throughout the course (see Course Schedule) and will be discussed in class on the weeks in which the reflections are due. Reflection papers will not be accepted after the due date.
- ii) On October 12 students will return a take-home assignment/quiz in which they will be asked to recognize compositional structures and features from biblical texts (10%). Class lectures, handouts, and Thompson's *Bible Study That Works* will all be available to students as resources to complete the assignment.
- iii) The heart of the coursework will be the weekly assignments—70% of the course grade.
 - (1) With a few variations, these will be detailed segment surveys of passages from Mark's gospel (see Course Schedule). The basic structure of the assignments will be largely the same. For variations in the details see the assignment handout that will be given out the first night of class.
 - (2) The average weekly assignment will probably be 5-7 pages in length (though the length and nature of the passage and the formatting of assignment can make a significant difference). In the end, *quality* is more significant than *quantity*.
 - (3) The first three assignments will be done by all students. But beginning on October 12 until the end of the semester, students will turn in assignments every other week. Students will be assigned to "group A" or "group B." On their "off week" students should minimally survey the assigned text segment and mark their observations on the Mark MS.

b) Expectations

- i) Attendance: This is a method and process oriented class. Students who miss class time will miss out on what is being taught and modeled and will be at a disadvantage in the performance of their assignments. Students are allowed two missed classes without penalty; every subsequent absence will result in a half grade reduction in the final course grade. There are no excused or unexcused absences. Students who attend every class session will be given extra credit of 2% to their total course grade (in many cases this will result in the improvement of the overall grade, e.g., “B” to “B+”). *Students* are responsible for making plans in advance in order to acquire the course content and materials for any class time that is missed.
- ii) It is expected that to do an adequate job in the course, 7-9 hours will be spent on course work each week outside of class time, including course reading and the course assignments.
- iii) Assignments are due at the beginning of class for the assigned week; but they will be turned in at the end of the class session. Late assignments—that is assignments not handed in immediately at the end of class—will not be eligible for a grade higher than “F” (i.e., 70/100 pts.), although a lower grade is possible. Also these assignments will receive only a score without feedback from the professor. Students should not expect exceptions to this policy, and the policy applies equally to students who are absent for class. If a student must be absent for class, they should send their assignment as an email attachment. The deadline remains the same as if class had been attended, 9:00 AM Tuesday.
- iv) All work, with the possible exception of charts, should be word-processed, that is, rather than handwritten, in a standard 10-12 pt. font. Handwritten assignments will not be accepted, and handwriting on the assignment is assumed to be additions made in the course of class discussion for which students are not given credit.

5) GRADING

a) Categories

- i) The reading accounts for 20% of the total grade, 5% per book reflection.
- ii) IBS compositional structures quiz accounts for 10% of the course total.
- iii) For each student there will be a total of eight IBS assignments totaling 70% of the course grade. Each assignment will be worth 10% of the course grade. The lowest grade will be dropped from the course total. This allows students to skip an assignment if they wish, but it would probably be wiser to do all of them.

b) Scale (descriptions from *ATS Catalog*, 28)

94-100	= A “Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives”
92-94	= A-
90-92	= B+
86-90	= B “Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives”
84-86	= B-
82-84	= C+
77-82	= C “Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives”
75-77	= C-
73-75	= D+
70-73	= D “Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives”
<70	= F “Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives”

6) COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	SURVEY SEGMENT/ FOCUS PERICOPE		OTHER
9/16/04	Introduction to Course Introduction to Inductive Bible Study		
9/23/04	Assignment 1: Overview of Mark (all students)		Thompson, <i>Bible Study that Works</i>
9/30/04	Assignment 2: 1:1-45 (all students)		
10/5/04	Assignment 3: 2:1-3:6 (all students)		Compositional Structures Take Home Quiz (10%)
10/12/04	Assignment 4a: 3:7-4:34 (group A)		Take Home Quiz Due
10/19/04	Assignment 4b: 4:35-6:6a (group B)		
10/26/04	Assignment 5a: 6:6b-6:56 (group A)		Fee & Stuart, <i>How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth</i>
11/2/04	Assignment 5b: 7:1-8:21 (group B)		
	Survey Segment (everyone)	Focus Pericope (assigned according to group)	
11/9/04	Assignment 6a-b 8:22-10:52	8:27-38 (group A)	
11/16/04		10:17-31 (group B)	Powell, <i>What is Narrative Criticism?</i>
11/23/04	Reading Week, No Class		
11/30/04	Assignment 7a-b 11:1-13:37	12:1-11 (group A)	
12/7/04		13:1-37 (group B)	Rhoads et al., <i>Mark as Story</i>
12/14/04	Assignment 8a-b 14:1-16:8[20]	15:33-41 (group A)	
		16:1-8[20] (group B)	