

Asbury Theological Seminary ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange

Syllabi

eCommons

1-1-2006

NT 725 Exegetical Studies in Galatians

Ben Witherington

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

Recommended Citation

Witherington, Ben, "NT 725 Exegetical Studies in Galatians" (2006). *Syllabi*. Book 2023.
<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/2023>

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.

NT 725
EXEGETICAL STUDIES IN GALATIANS
Fall 2006

Dr. Ben Witherington, III

8:00-9:15 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday

OFFICE HOURS-- 1-2 P.M. Tuesday and Thursday

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

A study of selected passages in Galatians, this course will deal with the various textual, historical, rhetorical, exegetical, theological, and ethical concerns raised by this letter. Literary and genre issues will also be addressed to try to determine the structure of the work and its literary type or kind. The focus in the course will be on familiarizing the student not only with the content of this book, but also with the exegetical and hermeneutical issues that it raised and raises.

PREREQUISITES

NT 520, NT501/502 or equivalent

ENROLLMENT LIMITATIONS

30 students

COURSE OBJECTIVES FOR NT725

Having successfully completed this course, participants should:

1. be able to recognize the importance of a close reading of the text of Galatians;
2. be able to begin to master the skills necessary to exegete the Greek text of Galatians;
3. grasp the importance of the rhetorical structure of the works and its importance for understanding Pauline thought;
4. Understand the role of the works in the New Testament canon;
5. be able to propose fruitful ways in which Galatians may be read within the horizons of the contemporary church and world; understand the importance of Romans for the Wesleyan concepts of election and sanctified living;
6. to employ a range of exegetical approaches relevant to the interpretation of this and other NT letters;
7. to be able to identify central issues in the critical study of Galatians;
8. to be able to articulate the central theological assumptions and presuppositions one brings to the interpretation of Galatians;
9. to be able to critically assess commentaries and secondary literature, learning to distinguish between scholarly and devotional treatments of this letter;

10. to be able to understand Galatians in its social, historical, literary, and canonical contexts

COMMON OBJECTIVES FOR CORE ELECTIVE COURSE

Having successfully completed the core elective requirements in New Testament Exegesis, students should be able to:

1. Employ a range of exegetical approaches relevant to the interpretation of the New Testament book(s) in question, and to apply those approaches to other New Testament books of similar genre;
2. Situate the New Testament book(s) in question within its socio-historical, literary, and canonical contexts;
3. Identify central issues in the critical study of the New Testament book(s) in question;
4. Articulate the importance of one's own pre-suppositions in the task of interpretation;
5. Articulate the primary theological and ethical concerns of the New Testament book(s) in question;
6. Demonstrate awareness of how the theological and ethical concerns of the New Testament book(s) in question contribute to those of the canon and of constructive theology and ethics;
7. Differentiate between critical and homiletical/devotional commentaries and studies of this and other New Testament books;
8. Evaluate critically the usefulness of secondary literature in the study of New Testament books;
9. Use Greek-based language tools to demonstrate proficiency in lexical semantics;
10. Use Greek-based language tools to identify grammatical constructions (i.e., with regard to sentence structure and use of clauses); and
11. Use Greek-based language tools to engage in syntactical analyses (i.e., with regard to verbal aspect, mood, and voice; use of the dative and genitive cases).

Additionally, persons successfully completing the core elective requirement in New Testament exegesis by taking a course or courses in the range NT710-749 should be able to:

12. Fulfill the learning objectives listed above as nos. 9-11 with only limited recourse to Greek-based language tools;
13. Diagram passages in the Greek New Testament;
14. Translate with minimal lexical assistance any passage from the New Testament book(s) in question; and
15. Perform rudimentary exercises in text criticism.

Exegesis of Galatians relates to theological studies in other disciplines in that it is the foundational epistle which raises questions of the relationship of Law and Grace, justification and sanctification, divine intervention and human works. The substance of this course relates to the practice of Christian ministry in that especially in Gal 5-6 we are dealing with how Christians should live out in their daily lives the fruit of the Spirit, avoiding immorality and following ‘the Law of Christ’. Galatians provides a case study in conflict management as well. Galatians deals with a multi-ethnic problem – namely how Gentiles should relate to observant Jewish Christians. In particular this epistle raises the issue of whether Christians need to become Jews, keeping the entire Mosaic Law, in order to be true followers of Jesus. Paul, in emphatically denying that his Gentile converts need to do this, paves the way for a multi-ethnic and more culturally inclusive church. This course relates to a Wesleyan approach to ministry in that it provides balanced stress on both theology and ethics, justification and sanctification, Law and grace, just as Wesley himself did.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND READINGS

The student should have completed the textbooks by mid-term. Longenecker and Witherington should be worked through as one reads through Galatians in preparation for the class. The reading will count 50% of the grade for this class, and will be evaluated when one incorporates what has been learned into the twenty-page exegesis paper (twenty pages of text), which is the major requirement of the class, besides attendance, participation, and reading. This paper may have endnotes rather than footnotes and may follow Turabian, APA, Slade or Chicago manual of style. Fee’s guide to how to do an exegesis paper may be followed, and one will wish to consult the sample exegesis papers on reserve in the library. **This twenty-page exegesis paper will be due by Friday, October 27th.** There will also be a take home final. The final is worth 25% of the grade as is the exegesis paper

1. B. Witherington, III, Paul’s Narrative Thought World, (Westminster, 1994).
2. R. N. Longenecker, Galatians, (Word, 1990).
3. B. Witherington, III, Grace in Galatia: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary, Grand Rapids, (Eerdmans, 1998).
4. John Barclay, Obeying The Truth, (Westminster Press, 1995((pb).
5. B. Witherington, III, The Paul Quest, (InterVarsity, 1996) pb

The student may also wish to purchase J.D.G. Dunn’s commentary on Galatians or possibly, for those wanting more detail, H.D. Betz’s.

CLASS SCHEDULE

We will be working through the book of Galatians in the Greek and dealing with major topics as we go.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(full bibliography for the work in this course can be found in the required textbook, Grace in Galatia.)