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NT 520 New Testament Introduction

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NT520 New Testament Introduction

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Final Version

Fall 2000

Tuesdays, 6:15-9:00 pm

Course Introduction

This course constitutes an introduction to the writings of the New Testament in their historical, literary, and canonical contexts.

Distance Learning: This course will be offered on the Wilmore campus in the Distance Learning Room (BC157), with additional students located on the campus of Asbury Theological Seminary, Orlando.

Mixed Media: This course will be offered through *mixed mode delivery* – with use of ExL technology integrated into the instruction of the course, and with networking activities constituting a regular part of the course grade. Additionally, course materials (such as PowerPoint slides, handouts, maps, charts, co-curricular reading, et al.), as well as conferencing, web links, and a chat room will be available on-line through an icon (“NT520-JG”) placed on each student’s desktop, using the Seminary’s FirstClass Client program. This means that every student will need access to the Seminary’s e-mail system; access is possible through use of computers available on the Wilmore or Orlando campus Media Center, through dialing into the system from a home computer, or via the World Wide Web (and thus through any computer, such as those available at public libraries).

Because of the anticipated on-line contribution of each member of the class, not all course sessions will comprise the full 6:15–9:00 pm time period.

For assistance with all technical matters related to access to course materials, send your questions by e-mail to ExL_Support@asburyseminary.edu.

Information about how to access material for the class, handouts to download, etc., and about how to submit assignments is located in the “Course Center” on the FirstClass Client Desktop; double-click on the icon, “NT520–JG.”

Course Objectives

Having completed this course, students should be able:

- (1) to articulate how one's beliefs about Scripture impinge on how one engages biblical texts in interpretation;
- (2) to identify a range of questions (e.g., historical, literary, canonical) that might be addressed to particular New Testament texts and explore those questions in the process of interpreting particular New Testament texts;
- (3) to identify significant, critical resources for New Testament study and deploy those sources critically in New Testament study;
- (4) to probe the interplay of theology and ethics in the various New Testament writers;
- (5) to demonstrate awareness of the significance of the original languages for understanding and interpreting the New Testament; and
- (6) to integrate these concerns and methodologies in a sound hermeneutical method.

Course Reading: Required Books

Green, Joel B., ed. *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1995.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Writings of the New Testament: An Introduction*. 2d ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999.

Malina, Bruce J. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. 2d ed. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993.

Theissen, Gerd. *The Shadow of the Galilean*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1987.

Veyne, Paul. *The Roman Empire*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Course Reading: Recommended Books

Achtemeier, Paul J. *Inspiration and Authority: Nature and Function of Christian Scripture*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1999.

Camery-Hoggart, Jerry. *Speaking of God: Reading and Preaching the Word of God*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1995.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *Santa Biblia: The Bible through Hispanic Eyes*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.

Felder, Cain Hope, ed. *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.

Powell, Mark Allan, ed. *The New Testament Today*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster, 1998.

Course Reading: Reference

Green, Joel B., and Scot McKnight, eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1992.

Martin, Ralph P., Gerald Hawthorne, and Daniel G. Reid, eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1993.

Martin, Ralph P., and Peter H. Davids, eds. *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1997.

Course Requirements

On questions of style, especially with regard to paper organization and references, see Carole Slade, Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports, Theses (10th ed.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).

Students should submit written materials on time; late papers will receive no written comments and the grade will be penalized one-third of a letter grade per day. Late interpretive assignments will not be received.

(1) Class Preparation, Attendance, and Participation. See the schedule for each class session below. Note that assigned reading should be completed by the day listed. (25%)

Attendance throughout the course is expected; persons absent for more than three sessions of the course will not be eligible for a passing grade.

Participation in the course includes full collaboration in discussion and projects related to membership in an On-Line Conference and in a Break-out Group. Students will be assigned to an On-Line Conference (about 8 persons) and to a Break-out Group (about 12 persons) prior to the onset of class. The On-Line Conference involves three assignments that will factor into the final grade of the course:

- ***Personal Introductions***
- ***Group Project: Malina***
- ***Graduate Seminar: Theissen***

Instructions for these projects will be posted beginning 5 September 2000. Group Projects will be graded on the basis of the quality of (1) each individual's contribution to group discussion and (2) the final product, which is group-generated. Graduate Seminars will be graded on the basis of the quality of each individual's contribution.

(2) *Interpretive Assignments.* For (at least) four of the eight assigned "discussion" days (see the course schedule below), prepare and submit to the instructor at the beginning of class an interpretive assignment for the assigned text. These papers should be single-spaced, typed, no more than two pages (i.e., about 900 words) in length. These are not designed to be research papers, application papers, or homilies, and no secondary materials should be consulted in their preparation. (30%)

More information regarding my expectations of "interpretive assignments" is located in the "Course Center" in the "Assignments" folder. The range of issues to be discussed in interpretive assignments will also be discussed in sessions 3-4 of the course.

Instructions to students in Orlando regarding the submission of assignments are available in the file "How to Make Contact," located in the "Getting Started Folder" in the "Course Center."

(3) *A Critical Review.* A review of Veyne, Gonzales, or Felder, approximately 1100-1300 words (i.e., 5-6 pages) in length, typed, double-spaced. Due at the beginning of class, 7 November 2000. As a critical review, this essay should summarize the author's central theses; demonstrate the author's approach to the subject matter; and critique the author's analysis (e.g., with regard to the author's method, its faithfulness to the primary materials, its engagement with the wider discussion on the topic, and so on). (20%)

More information regarding my expectations of book reviews is located in the "Assignments" Folder in the "Course Room."

Instructions to students in Orlando for submitting assignments are available in the file "How to Make Contact," located in the "Getting Started Folder" in the "Course Center."

(4) *An Exegetical Paper.* An essay of approximately 8-10 pages (i.e., 2300-2800 words), typed, double-spaced, with appropriate notes and bibliography, presenting an exegesis of a New Testament passage chosen from the list of "discussion" passages noted on the course schedule. This paper should evidence both a close reading of the text and critical engagement with the range of secondary resources appropriate to the study. Due by 4:00 pm, 12 December 2000. (25%)

In addition to books mentioned in this syllabus—course reading, reference materials, and recommended reading—students should consult *New Testament Abstracts* (available in the library reference section). Commentaries for this assignment should be what I have called “critical” and “essential” commentaries. For definitions of these commentary categories and for more information regarding my expectations of research papers, see the material on Research Papers located in the “Assignments” Folder of the “Course Room.”

Instructions to students in Orlando for submitting assignments are available in the file “How to Make Contact,” located in the “Getting Started Folder” in the “Course Center.”

Dates	Subject	Required Reading	Recommended Reading	Assignments and Activities
5 Sept	1. The New Testament World (1)	Begin reading Malina	Johnson, chs. 1-3	Personal Introductions. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 10 September
12 Sept	2. The New Testament World (2)	Finish reading Malina Begin reading Green	Johnson, chs. 1-3	Group Project: Malina. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 24 September
19 Sept	3. Approaches to Understanding the New Testament: Models	Continue reading Green	Johnson, Epilogue Camery-Hoggart	Group Project: Malina. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 24 September
26 Sept	4. Approaches to Understanding the New Testament: Methods	Finish reading Green Begin reading Theissen	Johnson, chs. 4-6; Appendix 1	Graduate Seminar: Theissen. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 8 October
3 Oct	5. Jesus and the Gospels	Finish reading Theissen Read Mathew, Mark	Johnson, chs. 4-5; Appendix 2 Adela Yarbro Collins, <i>The Beginning of the Gospel: Probing of Mark in Context</i> (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992)	Graduate Seminar: Theissen. Post by 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time), 8 October
10 Oct	6. Jesus and the Kingdom of God	Johnson, chs. 7-8	Johnson, ch. 6 Bruce Chilton, <i>Pure Kingdom: Jesus' Vision of God</i> (Studying the Historical Jesus; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1996)	Interpretive Assignment. Mark 1:1-15 Break-out Groups
17 Oct	7. "God My Savior": Luke as Interpreter of Jesus	Begin reading Veyne Johnson, ch. 9 Luke Acts	Joel B. Green, <i>The Theology of the Gospel of Luke</i> (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995); Mark Allan Powell, <i>What Are They Saying about Acts?</i> (New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1991)	Interpretive Assignment: Luke 19:1-10 Break-out Groups
24 Oct	8. Paul: Minister of Reconciliation	Continue reading Veyne Johnson, chs. 10-11, 13-14, 16 Romans Galatians Philemon 1-2 Thessalonians	Gordon D. Fee, <i>Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God</i> (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1996)	Interpretive Assignment: Philemon Break-out Groups
31 Oct	9. Growth Pains at Corinth	Finish reading Veyne	Gerd Theissen, <i>The Social Setting of</i>	Interpretive Assignment: 1 Cor 11:17-34

Dates	Subject	Required Reading	Recommended Reading	Assignments and Activities
7 Nov	10. The Legacy of Paul: The So-called Pastoral Epistles	Johnson, chs. 12, 15, 17 1-2 Corinthians Philippians Colossians	Luke Timothy Johnson, <i>Letters to Paul's Delegates</i> (The New Testament in Context; Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Trinity, 1996)	Break-out Groups Critical Assignment Due Interpretive Assignment: 1 Tim 2:9-15
14 Nov	11. Word Made Flesh: John as Interpreter of Jesus	Johnson, chs. 18-19 Ephesians 1-2 Timothy Titus Johnson, chs. 24-25 John 1-3 John	Marianne Meye Thompson, <i>The Incarnate Word: Perspectives on Jesus in the Fourth Gospel</i> (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1988)	Interpretive Assignment: John 9:1-41
21 Nov	No Class: Reading Week			
28 Nov	12. (A) Faith at Work: James as Interpreter of Jesus; (B) Christians under Pressure: Peter as Interpreter of Jesus	Johnson, chs. 20-21, 23 Hebrews James 1 Peter	Andrew Chester and Ralph P. Martin, <i>The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude</i> (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1994)	Interpretive Assignment: <i>Either</i> Jas 4:13-5:6 <i>or</i> 1 Pet 3:13-22
5 Dec	13. Revelation and Crisis Christianity	Johnson, chs. 22, 26 2 Peter Jude Revelation	Richard Bauckham, <i>The Theology of the Book of Revelation</i> (New Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993)	Interpretive Assignment: Revelation 13
12 Dec				Exegetical Paper Due, by 4:00 pm