

1-1-2005

NT 638 Epistle to the Romans

Kenneth Schenck

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Schenck, Kenneth, "NT 638 Epistle to the Romans" (2005). *Syllabi*. Book 1590.
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Document

NT638XLFA05.doc

Name:NT638XLFA05.doc

Subject: Schenck

Category:

Abstract:

Keywords: **Romans IBS Syllabus**
NT 638 (IBS) XL
Fall 2005

Instructor: Kenneth Schenck

**E-Mail Address: Use the Office Icon in our Class; In Emergency:
ken.schenck@indwes.edu**

Office Phone (765) 677-2258

**Office Hours: Mondays 8:00-9:00 EDT (until the time change,
then 9-10); Other Times by Arrangement**

Some Preliminary Remarks:

1. Different IBS Professors do things differently

I respect the other IBS professors immensely. That means that in many cases, if you prefer to do things their way, that's fine. In fact, I love to hear how they have you do things--I can learn then too!

2. This course assumes awareness of IBS method

While we will review the Asbury IBS method at every point, it is worth mentioning that this course does assume you have had the basic Matthew or Mark introductory course. **If you have never had Asbury IBS 1, you should drop this course!** I am a charitable soul and am always willing to help in theory. But in practice I know I will not be able both to teach this class and teach you a method you should already know. It just won't happen, and your grade will fry.

3. A request for grace and feedback

Please be gracious to each other in your posts, remember that we are all only here by the grace of God. Also, I am well aware of my own shortcomings and do not mind feedback at all. **Please feel free to prod me at any point.**

One way to get direct feedback quickly is to include my mailbox with posts you particularly want me to read. Obviously, if everyone did this for every post, my mailbox would be as full as the discussion center. But I welcome selective copies to my mailbox--it helps me.

4. A word of comfort

I am trying to adjust the amount of posts that make their way to the Discussion Center--to lessen the number. But I want to let the "J's" out there know that you do not have to read every post. A "J" in Meyers-Briggs lingo is someone who is bothered if they cannot complete things. This personality is often distressed with a large number of posts you have not been able to read.

I ask for five "substantive" posts on any line of discussion. That's far from reading and commenting on every post. Let yourself off the hook. I personally always want and intend to read every post, but sometimes it doesn't happen and I have to go ahead and archive. I assume that if I've missed something you really want a comment on, you will follow up. Please feel free to do that. But if it happens, I will try to let myself off the hook. The online format can become a monster and you have to set time limits if you are a J Online-oholic. Of course there are Non-post-oholics too :)

5. 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). Much of this course was created in conjunction with a grant from the seminary. That portion is the

property of Asbury Theological Seminary.

Personal Greetings:

Let me welcome each and every one of you into the Fall 2005 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 39 years old, married to Angela and have four children (14, 11, 6, and 5).

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 NT(IFS)638 Discussion Center by the end of the first week of class**. If you prefer, make it a casual profile.

To the Church at NT(IFS)638

ExL classes are community experiences: students interacting with seminary staff, faculty, and other students. Let me remind you of some of the members of our Asbury ExL community:

(1) ExL Support Community

For **general questions and administrative assistance regarding the ExL program**, contact Dale Hale:

ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu

Phone: (859) 858-2393

For **technical support, library research support, library loans,**

and **ExL media** contact Information Commons:
Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu

Phone: (859) 858-2233

Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

Accessing Information Commons Materials:

1. General Questions:

§ The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here:

<http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/hours.shtml>.

2. Materials Requests:

§ To search the library catalog for available materials, click here: <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml>

§ ExL Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/reference books from Asbury Seminary's Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.

§ ExL students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions:

§ ExL students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help choosing a paper topic, determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases:

§ To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/icommons/index.shtml> and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section

of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0_s to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id).

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" three years ago 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.

Feel free to disagree with me. I admire intelligent disagreement. Knowing past classes, I expect a lot of disagreement when we get to Romans 6-7. I don't think Paul is giving us autobiographical comments in Romans 7:13-25. Many of you will disagree and that will make the dialog all the more interesting!

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 plan to check the classroom at least every other day. **I want to try something new. I plan to be online sometime between 9-12 ET on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. This would be a good time to invite me to a chat if you are having questions or just want to get acquainted.** I will officially check in on the course, read posts, and answer email. Post your general questions and responses to the *NT(IBS)638 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 *NT(IBS)638 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

The principal class discussions will take place in the *NT(IBS)638 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. **May we all be Christ-like in our hearts and tones.**

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 try to say a week ahead of where we are is posted at any one time (as well as past modules).

Team Center. Our teams, usually made up of five or six members, will be set up for you to exchange materials with one another and to interact with one another's work. "Collaborative learning" is the name of the game online. Part of your learning experience will involve critiquing and encouraging others. **I am going to keep it possible for you to read and post in the other Team Centers.** I assume few will have time to do this, but the added input can only help. I plan for us to do much more discussion in teams this time around than I have in previous courses.

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 try to set up a non-required chat the first week of class to try to help us all get better acquainted with one another.** In addition, I plan to have a chat with each team about half way through the course.

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), the New American Bible (NAB), and now the English Standard Version (ESV). 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) We will read the following articles at various points in the course. They can be purchased from the bookstore in a packet:

- Richard B. Hays, "*Pistis* and Pauline Theology: What Is at Stake," and James D. G. Dunn, "Once More, *Pistis Christou*," both in *Looking Back, Pressing On, Pauline Theology* Vol 4, edited by E. Elizabeth Johnson and David M. Hay (Atlanta: Scholars, 1997) 35-81.
- Krister Stendahl, "Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West," *HTR* 56 (1963): 199-215, also found in *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 78-96.
- Ernst Käsemann, "'The Righteousness of God' in Paul," in *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM, 1969), 168-82.

(3) N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997)

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

Other Resources

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.

The Structure of the Course

Except for the first week, the modules will be two weeks long each in length. At the end of each module an assignment will be due that I am calling an "IBS sequence" or an "IBS package." By and large, such a sequence consists of the following components (I will vary the assignments a little in selected modules).

1. The survey of a specified unit
2. A detailed observation (hereafter DO)
3. An interpretation based on an interpretive question from either the survey or the DO
4. An abbreviated evaluation based on your interpretation
5. An abbreviated appropriation based on your evaluation

Sometimes I will allow you to choose your own verses and questions. At other times I will select the assignments.

We will have four teams. After each module, two teams will post one of their members' IBS sequence in the Discussion Center. Otherwise, discussion of the other team members' work will take place in the Team Centers. Anyone is welcome to post in any other Team Center. By the end of the course, every person will have had their work in the Discussion Center at least once for class discussion.

The Tuesday after the end of each module is "Archiving/Grading Day" for me. Assignments turned in after that time will be considered late. It is also at about this point that I will post my own IBS package for the preceding module. **Class participation consists of at least five significant posts in relation to each issue under discussion in the Discussion Center, as well as five significant posts in your Team Center for each issue.**

Grading

Class participation will be calculated per module. With 20 points for six modules and 10 points for two, that makes the class participation component 140 points/1000.

For each module there will usually be four sets of discussions you will need to comment on:

1. Make 5 posts in relation to a student's work in the Discussion Center.
2. Make 5 posts in relation to the professor's work in the Discussion Center.
3. Make 5 posts about the work of the individuals in your team.
4. Make 5 posts in relation to the discussion topic or topics the professor poses for the module.

A *book review* of N. T. Wright's book will be due by the end of the second module. For guidelines on how to write one, see "How to Write a Book Review" by Joel Green in the Resources Folder. 60 points/1000

There are six "IBS sequences." While you need to do all of them, I

will consider the lowest one a completion grade worth an automatic 50 points/1000 if all the components are present. You can of course plan which two week module you want to use this "easy grade" on. As long as you have at least some basic work for each component, you will get these points.

The remaining five "IBS packages" will be worth 150 points /1000 each.

The grade for the course will thus be:

Class Participation	140 points
Book Review	60 points
Completion Assignment	50 points
IBS Sequences	750 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 Mondays from 8:00-9:00am, EDT (and from 9-10 after the time change). 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

**Module
Begins**

Module 1 Introduction to Romans
Sept. 5

Module 2 Prescript, Thanksgiving, and Proposition
13 **Sept.**
Read and discuss Käsemann article.

Module 3 Romans 1:18-3:20
Sept. 27
Read and discuss Stendahl article.

Module 4 Romans 3:21-4:25
Oct. 11
Read and discuss articles by Hays and Dunn.

Module 5 Romans 5-8
Oct. 25

Module 6 Romans 9-11
Nov. 8

Fall Reading Week: November 20-24

Module 7 Romans 12-16
Nov. 29

The semester ends Thurs., Dec. 15.
Note: The modules are of varying length.