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NT 510 The Gospel of Matthew

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Subject:

Spring 2003 Syllabus

Name:

Abstract:

Keywords:

Matthew NT 510 (Inductive Bible Study)
Spring 2003

Instructor: Dr. Glenn E. Pfeiffer

E-mail Address: NT510 Office@AsburySeminary.edu

3 Credits

Enrollment Limitation- 20 Students

I- Welcome the the World Of Inductive Bible Study

Greetings from Philadelphia Pennsylvania- land of the Eagles, cheesesteaks and the Liberty Bell. My name is Glenn Pfeiffer and I am excited to welcome you to the process of Inductive Bible Study. Over the last couple of years I have had the opportunity to visit numerous churches throughout North America and listen to many sermons. Some of the sermons were entertaining, others were tear jerkers, still others were clever. The sermons, however, which had the greatest impact were the ones where the Bible's message came alive in practical and powerful ways. The Bible was not a "resource" for the sermon but rather the "source" of the sermon. Whether we are preachers, teachers or small group leaders we have the awesome responsibility and privilege of communicating God's word to our world. And it is vitally important that we do this well. Lives are changed not because of clever communicators but because God's word is spoken and heard. Together, over the next few weeks, we will plum the depths of the book of Matthew. And not only will we learn the content of this fascinating Gospel but also develop the exegetical tools necessary for future studies. We serve an awesome and wonderful Lord and He has a great deal to say. Together we will sit at His feet and hear his voice.

One of my favorite sections of Scripture is Paul's exhortations in 1 Timothy 4:13-16

"Until I come devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture to preaching and teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given to you through the prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them so that everyone may see your progress."

One of the things Paul instructs Timothy to handle with diligence is the word of God. This class is an opportunity to "devote yourself" and to be "diligent" in handling the Scriptures.

As we enter the IBS world, diligence and perseverance will be important for several reasons:

A- IBS may be a new approach

Unlike most undergraduate classes and numerous graduate level courses we will not spend the bulk of our time reading other people's opinions on the book of Matthew or listening to the professor's running commentary on the text. Instead we will present tools to help you better study, analyze and interpret the book for yourself. Our primary textbook will not be a commentary or secondary source, but the Bible itself.

When I was in seminary I took numerous IBS courses and the first one was a shock. When I picked up the syllabus I noticed that something seemed very wrong. The primary text for the class was not a commentary but the Bible. This was a "novel" approach. And at first I wasn't sure what to think. How would I learn about the book without some outside help. The good news is that I was pleasantly surprised. I was not given a fish; I was taught to fish. IBS 510 will teach you to glean insights from the text based on your own original work. The text will come alive as never before. You will never think about Bible study in the same way again.

B- IBS is hard work

Setting significant chunks of time aside from your busy lives will be very important for this class. You will have to work hard but you would not have signed up for this class if you were not committed to diligently studying the Scriptures. The normal expectation for this class is 10-12 hours a week. You will immerse yourselves in the biblical text following an inductive process. The process takes time. I would recommend that you designate blocks of time each week to focus on the class assignments.

C- IBS will stretch you

I have never been very handy at building things or working with my hands. At Christmas, my family used to joke about this by saying "Why don't we buy Glenn a saw or drill or some kind of power tool as his gift." At that time I was in seminary and all I asked for was books. I had no need for tools. All this changed, several years later, when my wife and I had our third child (we have since had a fourth) and our small townhouse was not big enough. We decided to refinish the basement. I bought books on the subject, talked with people, measured and remeasured and then made my way to Home Depot to buy- you guessed it- power tools. I had little experience with the task but soon, with a great deal of research and effort, I was able to effectively use these tools to accomplish the inconceivable- the basement was completed. The learning curve was steep at first. The task seemed formidable at first. But once you set your mind to the task and determine to persevere you can handle and even master new tasks. IBS will seem like a formidable challenge at first. You may wonder if it will ever make sense. I assure you it will. Early in the process determine to never give up. Stretch for success, and I will help you along the way. Eventually, the pieces will come together. If I can handle a power tool, you can deal with hermeneutical principles.

D- IBS will reward your hard work

You can do this. You do not have to be John Stott, Karl Barth or some hermeneutical genius to succeed. And if you work hard rewards will follow. My 11 year old son recently received glasses and the first time he put them on he said "Dad, I can read the words on that sign way down the road." A new world emerged for him as he had his sight corrected. The same will take place for us. We will look at the Scriptures with a new set of lenses and the words on the

pages will appear with even greater clarity. The work is hard but the rewards are great.

II- Personal Greeting

My wife Denys and I live north of Philadelphia. We have four children; Stephen 13, David 11; Austin 9 and finally- thank the Lord, our little caboose, Kayleigh 4. At this time I am wearing several hats. I am the founding pastor of the Crossroads Community Church. After pastoring in Lancaster county for nearly 6 years, the Lord called Denys and I to start a new church. In 1997 we held our Grand Opening in a movie theater. We praise the Lord for the awesome things He has been doing the last few years. It has been exciting to take the principles of inductive Bible study and utilize them in a church planting setting. I enjoy the challenge of communicating God's word to believers, seekers and skeptics. In addition, I do some leadership coaching and also teach communications and biblical studies. Denys has been home with our children for the last 12 years but has recently begun working, (and boy do I have a new perspective on house work) as COO for a Philadelphia area High School.

My academic training includes a degree in Christian Education from Messiah College and a Master's of Divinity degree from Asbury Theological Seminary. In 1999 I received a Doctorate of Ministry degree from ATS in Preaching and Leadership as a member of the Beeson Pastor's Program. My experience with the IBS method is broad. While at Seminary I took 8 Inductive Bible Study courses and also served as a student grader for both entry level and advanced courses. In 1990 I received the American Bible Society Award for Excellence in Biblical Studies. In addition, my dissertation involved the analysis of hermeneutical principles as utilized in numerous sermons. It has been a great joy and privilege to teach IBS principles in various setting over the past years. To relax, I enjoy chasing my kids around, playing sports, watching two of my boys play soccer, cutting my lawn (except when it's 100 degrees) and hanging out as a family. I especially enjoy the way the Lord has brought pink clothes, Barbies, lace, ribbons, and little girl dresses into a home once dominated by trucks and testosterone. Now if I could only get her to stop that high pitched squealing sound.

Now about you...

This class is much more than the transfer of information from a professor to students. It is our goal to develop a community where together we grow and learn and encourage each other on our spiritual journeys. On the FirstClass e-mail system there is a place for you to complete a Resume. Here you can introduce yourself to me and the others in the class. There is even a place for a picture although this is optional. Please place your profile in the NT510 Discussion Center by the end of the first week of class. Please include some information about your hobbies, family, and life beyond your work and educational experience. Also, in your NT510 biography, please indicate if this is your first ExL class. If you have some experience with the method indicate this too. Later in the class this information will help us when we form study teams.

III- The Asbury Cyberspace Community

A holistic approach to faith and learning is important to this class. It is our desire that you not only make strides academically as a result of this class but that you grow spiritually as well. It is my hope that we will not only learn together but also share our needs, praises and prayers as well. In the coming

weeks I look forward to praying with you and for you as the Lord leads your life. We will pray, as well, for each other. In addition to the community we hope to form, the larger Asbury community including staff and faculty play an important role in our time together. Our learning community involves several components:

A- ExL Support Team

Our ExL support staff is available to answer any questions you may have about the program. For general information regarding ExL please contact:

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

Amy Jo Adams
Academic Coach for Extended Learning
(859) 858-2276
ExL_Coach@asburyseminary.edu

B- Technical Support Team

In regard to technical issues, software related glitches, set up problems, etc. our ExL technical staff looks forward to helping you.

For technical support contact:

Andy Adams
ExL Technical Supervisor
Asbury Theological Seminary
(859) 858-2373
ExL_Support@asburyseminary.edu

C- Library Resources

All ExL students are encouraged to make use of their local library. However, if your local library services are unavailable or inadequate, ExL students may 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 e-mailed 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.

For Library services contact:
Hannah Kirsch
ExL Reference Librarian
859_858_2189
Hannah_Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu

D- Textbook Acquisition

To order textbooks or for textbook information contact:
Greg toll free at Asbury's Bookstore
1-866-855-8252
exlbooks@asburyseminary.edu

Please do not hesitate to contact any of our support staff. Moreover, I may refer you to them if a question is most applicable to their expertise.

IV- Teaching Community

Over the past few years I have had the privilege of learning from some exceptional teachers. Classes with Dr. Robert Traina (now professor emeritus), Dr. David Bauer, and Dr. David Thompson have significantly shaped my understanding, appreciation and expertise in this method. Many hours have been spent discussing, debating, dialoging and digesting IBS methodology and biblical content with these professors. As a result, my work and findings will reflect their influence. In a sense, I sit on their shoulders and build on what they have taught. As a pastor, preacher and professor of communications I will certainly add my own distinctive tone to the course content, but you will receive the benefits of not just one professor's insight but the expertise of an entire teaching community. I will at times use examples and insights from others' work and I will try and give them credit. As you do your work, I will also ask you to give credit to your information sources.

V- Matthew's Virtual Classroom

On-line learning, and teaching for that matter, may be a new experience for us but many of the traditional elements of on-site learning are present in cyberspace. Below you will find a description of the virtual classroom's components. Understanding each element and the folders and icons associated with the classroom will make it easy to navigate the software.

A- Discussion Center

Class discussion will take place in the NT510 Discussion Center. All participants in the class will be able to read and respond to items posted in the Discussion Center. Think of it this way: during an on-campus course, when you make comments in class, everyone hears it and has a chance to benefit and respond. That's the way it should be in this electronic community. There may be several levels of response on particularly "hot" or disputed topics. Feel free to ask each other questions, make thoughtful comments and analyze and affirm each other's work. Further, let's covenant together to avoid cliches such as: "I like that!" "Great thought!" "I have questions about that." Instead,

let's state our thoughts clearly and concisely. The more specific our critique and/or affirmation the more helpful it will be to the hearer.

Please note; 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 concise paragraphs. From time to time, usually at the end of a module, I will move old discussions into the Archives Center so that the Discussion Center doesn't get too cluttered. Remember, you can always refer to old discussions in the archive center.

If I have to be away for an extended time, I will let you know in advance. By the same token, if you are away from the virtual classroom for an extended time, please let me and all your peers know about it by posting a message to the NT510(IBS) Discussion Center.

B- Course Center

The Course Center is where the Modules for the course are posted. Inside of the Module folders you will find detailed instructions for each module, including assignments and study aids. I will post our current Module as well as the next Module, for those of you who work ahead, in the course center. This means, for example, that at the start of class, Module 1: Introduction to IBS Method, and Module 2: Let's Survey, will be posted. I will post Module 3 on the day that we begin Module 2 and so on.

C- Virtual Office Hours

I plan to designate time on Tuesday evenings and Friday mornings to read posts, respond to inquiries, and interact with class discussions. I may be able to check the classroom at other times during the week but my official office hours will be during these time blocks. I will answer the postings in the order in which I receive them. Please post all general questions and responses to the NT510(IBS) Discussion Center. Remember, this is our classroom, so questions you ask should be overheard (or in our case read) by others in the class. On the other hand, communication that you want to send me privately should be sent to the NT510 Office. Only I can access those messages. Please note, that in the case of emergency, please include "Urgent NT510" in the subject line of the email so I will know to get to it immediately.

D- Matthew Team Center

As part of this class we will form teams of three to four people. Each team member will exchange and interact with the class assignments posted by other members of the team. In these Team Centers, only team members will be able to read and respond to one another's work. Interacting with the work of another student will give you a whole new perspective on IBS. Therefore, part of your learning experience will be to critique and encourage others. We will explain this further in the first module.

E- Cyberspace Prayer Room

As noted earlier, our goal is to learn together in the context of community. To facilitate and build our community life together I will set up a folder called Cyberspace Prayer Room as a place where we can post our prayers and praises. We may come from different areas geographically but we seek and serve a God who transcends those barriers. As we pray for each other we can expect Christ's presence and power in our lives.

F- The Resource Center

The Resource Center contains links to the Library, Chapel, Registration, ExL Updates, and so forth. It also contains the PowerPoint Viewer, which you'll need to access when looking at PowerPoint presentations for various Modules.

G- The Chat Center

Lastly, there is a Chat Center. You can use this feature for real-time chats with me, your classmates, or both, depending on who is on-line at the time. On-line 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.

VI- Course Description

This course is designed to introduce you to the inductive Bible study process. We will emphasize the use of context as we study biblical texts and will work at understanding biblical books as wholes. In this class, Matthew's Gospel will supply the content and structure for our study. The goal of this course is to supply you with the inductive Bible Study (IBS) tools necessary to maximize your study time, expand your understanding of Scripture, and strengthen your ability to communicate biblical truth.

VII- Course Objectives

1. Demonstrate basic skills in observing the text, including original language work, with a view toward using these observations in the interpretation of the text.
2. 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.
3. Demonstrate ability to discuss some of the major hermeneutical issues surrounding observation and interpretation.
4. Demonstrate a preliminary and basic awareness of issues pertaining to the evaluation of passages for their contemporary application and to the process of actually applying passages to specific contemporary situations.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the content of the book in its literary, theological, and historical contexts.
- 6- Demonstrate a clear comprehension of the vocabulary associated with the IBS methodology.
- 7- Understand clearly how the various phases of IBS work together and comprise a holistic hermeneutical approach.
- 8- Begin to conceptualize how a preacher and/or teacher moves from the IBS study process to the application and communication of a biblical book's content.

VIII- Required Textbooks

- A- The Bible- (Wow that's a surprise :)

(Incidentally, my first Bible course in college required more time in commentaries than actual study in the Scriptures)

Revised Standard Version is preferred. The RSV is a good middle of the road translation which allows us to examine the text in more precise terms and language. Other versions are too interpretive or in some cases too wooden. We can and will refer to other versions from time to time but our core text will be the RSV. Please avoid a study Bible as your primary text. Study Bible's have chapter and segment headings as well as commentary which may, and likely will, predispose you to see the text in a certain way. The goal of this course is to equip you to divide the text, and draw conclusions from the text, based on your own original research. You will eventually dialog with and, perhaps even, disagree with, the conclusions other commentators draw.

B- Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study* (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury Press, 1980)

C- David L. Thompson, *Bible Study That Works* (Hereafter: BSTW) Revised edition. (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Press, 1994).

D- David R. Bauer, *Biblical Resources for Ministry: A Bibliography of Works in Biblical Studies*, (Hereafter: BRM), 2d ed. (Nappanee, Illinois: Evangel Publishing House, 1995). This is a useful way to familiarize yourself with numerous secondary sources.

IX- Recommended Textbooks

The following items are not required for purchase (hence, "collateral") but you will need to consult many of them throughout the course (hence, "recommended"). So, you may want to seriously consider purchasing some of them. However, be prepared. A reference library is a very expensive investment. Alternative possibilities for the time_being may include:

- 1) Seeing if a library near you (especially a seminary, Christian college/University, or major university library) has these volumes.
- 2) Contacting a local minister friend who might have some of these references and be willing to part with them for a semester __ or at least let you have access to them.

Resources For A Lifetime of Study

1. A Bible Dictionary and/or Bible Encyclopedia (See BSTW, 59 and BRM, 21). There are quite a few of these on the market, so let me be more specific. For the purposes of this class, and for the future, I recommend a well_known, scholarly Bible dictionary. Let me recommend a few:

Joel B. Green et al., eds, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1992). This is an excellent dictionary with 200+ articles, written from an Evangelical perspective. Edited by our own Joel Green. Worth having on your shelf. Abbreviated DJG.

Paul J. Achtemeier et al., eds, *HarperCollins Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996). This is the best one_volume dictionary currently on the market. Note that you want the 1996 revised edition. The earlier version is still useful, however. Abbreviated HBD.

David Noel Freedman et al., eds., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992). This is also available on CD_ROM (much better for searching). This is the best Bible dictionary on the market in coverage, bibliography, length, comprehensiveness, etc. It is quite costly, however. Abbreviated ABD.

Geoffrey W. Bromiley et al., eds., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, rev. ed., 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979_1988). Note that this is the second, revised edition. (The first edition, which is often available at a cheap, knock_off price, is not worth it.) This is the best set available if you want a distinctively evangelical approach. At four volumes it is also quite extensive. Again, cost is an issue. Abbreviated ISBE.

Also useful is the older and now dated *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. George A. Buttrick, 4 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), especially its fifth, supplementary volume (1976). Abbreviated IDB and IDBSupp.

2. Bible Atlas. This is not required but will be helpful for all of your future bible study. Maps are a wonderful way to familiarize yourself with the location of towns and regions mentioned in the gospels. You may also wish to consult articles on localities in your Bible dictionary/encyclopedia.

3. Matthew Commentaries. Two respected, contemporary commentaries on the Gospel of Matthew (See the bibliography for suggestions). Full length, critical commentaries are preferred. Try to stay away from homiletical ("sermonizing") commentaries.

Note about commentary use in this class. In any assignment, PLEASE DO NOT refer to any secondary source prior to your own inductive interpretative work. This includes commentaries, sermon notes, study Bible notes etc. There are more commentaries available today, as one professor told me, that are not worth the paper they are printed on. Unless we do our own work we cannot intelligently dialog with others' conclusions. Therefore we will only refer to commentaries after our own work is complete. We will quickly see how exciting it is to allow the biblical text to speak for itself.

4. An exhaustive concordance or (preferably) an "Englishman's" concordance that allows you to track original language words (See BSTW, 55 and BRM 20).

If you have taken NT500, you already have purchased the software program BibleWorks. This will give you more detail than a simple concordance.

X- Grading Policy

Since your IBS comfort level will increase as the semester progresses, the first couple of assignments will be graded on a credit/no-credit basis. However, please do not take these early assignments for granted simply because they will not have a letter grade attached. The skills which you begin developing during these early assignments are what will eventually be evaluated later in the course. Work hard early in the course, ask your questions, use any descriptive comments to improve your work and interact with fellow classmates.

In all there will be eight (8) graded assignments for this class apart from the final paper. I will expect progress in your understanding and utilization of the method as the semester progresses and therefore later assignments will be worth slightly more than earlier assignments. In addition to the regular IBS assignments, I will ask you to read Robert Traina's *Methodical Bible Study* and

David Thompson's Bible Study That Works and write a 1-2 page critical review of each book (details in module 1). Additional readings will be posted in each module. And please take seriously your interaction with Teammates. As you will see below, your comments and interactions will count for 15% of your final grade.

Please note the following very important instructions for submitting assignments:

Please send all assignments as a Microsoft Word 97 file or as a .RTF file. When you have completed your assignment go to the "save as" tab and choose proper formatting and save. Save each assignment using the following name: FirstNameModule#.rtf For example: GlennPMod1.rtf or JohnDMod3.rtf

Attach this to your e-mail and submit.

Each module will include careful and explicit instructions for readings and assignments. If anything is unclear, please do not hesitate to post a message in the NT510(IBS) Discussion Center, so I can address any confusion. Additionally, due dates will be given for each assignment. All work is due by twelve mid-night (EST) on the deadline date.

GRADES WILL BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

8 Graded Assignments	60%
(Including book reviews)	
Class Discussion	
and Team Interaction	15%
Final Paper	25%

Incompletes:

Since so many of us are over-worked and under constant time pressures, 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'."

In recent meetings, the school administration has made it clear to all professors that they will hold a hard line on the issuance of incompletes. Please keep this in mind as you proceed through the semester.

XI- Modules and Tentative Schedule

Module 1	Introduction to IBS Method
Module 2	Introduction to Book Survey
Module 3	Main Unit and Sub Unit Surveys
Module 4	Detailed Observation and Interpretation
Module 5	Survey and Analytical Interpretation
Module 6	Evaluation and Application
Module 7	Text- Sermon
Module 8	Synthesizing the Whole

The first two modules only last one week. Beginning with module three you will have two weeks to complete each assignment. Please carefully note the due dates for each assignment as detailed in each module file.

