

EP 139 New Testament II

Spring 2017

The second course in New Testament centers on the Epistles and the Book of Revelation, the working out of the gospel in the lives of the churches. The main focus is to understand the reason why each book was written, the historical situation in each case, and the answers to the various issues involved supplied by the authors. Close attention will be paid to the theology, Christology, and human condition inherent in each work.

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Office Hours: before, during, and after class; Saturday mornings, 8-11.

Craig Building

Student Learning Objectives:

- 1) Content: Students know and understand the basic concepts and content of the Epistles and the Book of Revelation.
- 2) Context: Students understand the historical and cultural context of the various New Testament communities in their diversity.
- 3) Interpretation: Students interpret New Testament literature accurately according to the historical-critical method.
- 4) Application: Students apply the lessons of the New Testament literature in positive and healing ways, understanding and avoiding exclusivism and triumphalism.

Required Readings

The New Testament Epistles and the Book of Revelation. (Read these texts at least three times. The NRSV, often adjusted, will be used in class).

Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.

Riley, Gregory J. *The River of God: A New History of Christian Origins*. Harper San Francisco, 2001.

Roetzel, Calvin J. *The Letters of Paul*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991.

Ziesler, John. *Pauline Christianity*. Oxford Bible Series. Revised Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Available in the Library as Reference Material

Anchor Bible Dictionary for articles on each Epistle, Revelation, and all specifically Biblical subjects.

Reading Assignments:

Begin reading the Pauline Epistles and the relevant sections of Powell, Roetzel and Ziesler. Continue reading as applicable throughout the semester. These will serve as textbooks on many subjects addressed in the class.

Read Riley, *River of God*, in the first half of the semester.

Read the articles in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* on each of the Epistles and Revelation.

Read the portions of the New Testament to be discussed in class before that particular class meeting, and the discussion of the texts in Powell, Roetzel, Ziesler, and *ABD*.

Read the Epistles and Revelation at least three times through (the more the better).

Calendar Schedule of Class Meetings:

January 14

Introduction to the Course: Books, assignments, expectations.
Historical Survey of the rise of the Church in the first and early second century.
Survey of the Epistles and Revelation.

January 28

The Pauline Letters: Paul and the Pauline School
Life of Paul
Sayings of Jesus in the writings of Paul

February 11

1 Thessalonians
1 Corinthians

February 25

Philippians
2 Corinthians
Exegesis and Essay #1: Paul and the Schismatics in Corinth: 1 Cor 3:1-15. What were they doing and what should the church have been doing instead?
Please include discussion of:
1 Cor 2:1-9; 4:6-8; 6:12-13; 8:1-6

March 4

Galatians
Romans

March 18

Philemon
Colossians
Ephesians
Exegesis and Essay #2: Personal Eschatology in Paul's Epistles. What was Paul's view of his own death and destiny, and how did Paul's understanding change over time?
Please include discussion of:

1 Thess 4:13-5:3
1 Cor 15:49-54
Phil 3:20-21
2 Cor 5:1-10

March 25

1-2 Timothy, Titus

April 8

1-3 John
2 Thessalonians
Revelation

Exegesis and Essay #3: The Church and Its Organization. What was the NT theory of the Church, and how was it organized? Note that there is diversity of opinion.

Please include discussion of:

1 Cor 3:16-17
Eph 2:19-22; 4:11-16
1 Timothy 3:1-13; 5:9

April 22

Hebrews
James

May 6

1 Peter
Jude
2 Peter

Exegesis and Essay #4: Trials and Christian Character: James 1:2-4. How should a Christian face trials and what benefit do they afford?

Please include discussion of:

1 Cor 10:13; 11:19; Phil 1:29
1 Peter 1:6-9
Hebrews 12:1-13

May 13 Take-Home Final Exam Due: The "Occasion for Writing" of four NT books (excluding the Gospels and Acts).

"Occasion for Writing" is NT-speak for "Why did the author write this book?" The assignment is to explain why the authors of four NT books (other than the Gospels and Acts) wrote what they did. What prompted the writing? What were the issues that each needed to address, and what solutions were offered?

These four books must include Romans and one other letter of Paul, and then two other books from two other authors. Please explain from the letters themselves, not from modern authors, why they were written, although you should certainly consult modern authors to get help. Quote verses of the NT books to support each of your main points.

For example: Paul wrote (most of) Philippians in part as a thank-you letter because the Philippians had sent him money to support him while he was in prison, as we see in Phil 4:18, "I have received everything in full ... having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent...."

Or Philemon: Paul wrote to Philemon to appeal for mercy for his new convert and convicted runaway slave Onesimus, whom Paul was sending back to his owner, Philemon. This we see in Philemon 10: "I appeal to you for my child, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, Onesimus...."

Note that in both of these examples, my assertions about why the books were written are founded on verses from the NT texts themselves, not on what secondary sources claim were the reasons for writing. Please do the same in your final exam.

Explanation of Graded Course Requirements:

Essay and Exegesis Papers:

"Essay": Each of the papers is a treatment of a subject, an essay arguing a thesis, that includes exegesis of more than one passage.

"Exegesis" is a transliterated Greek word that means "explanation." One exegetes, that is explains, the meaning of a Biblical text in its historical context, using all the tools available to the scholar: language, history, archeology, ancient literature, and especially other Biblical texts. These help us to understand what the author meant and intended, including helping to evaluate the author's assumptions and biases. That is the historical-critical method used by all competent scholars.

There are four "Essay and Exegesis" papers assigned in the syllabus. Students may choose three out of the four. Students are encouraged to do all four and will receive extra credit if they do so, but only three are required.

Each Essay and Exegesis paper should be approximately five pages in length, but there is no upper limit. Five pages are sufficient, but in graduate school, the Spirit sometimes inspires one to greater lengths and depths. Be filled with the Spirit.

Each paper has several parts: a title page, five pages of text with footnotes, and a bibliography page, making [at least] seven pages in all. The body of the paper must include a thesis statement about the subject addressed, a logical argument explaining the thesis built upon and illustrated by the explanations [exegesis] of the texts, and a conclusion that sums up your argument. Please include descriptions and comparisons of the opinions of three or more secondary sources that relate to your thesis, and your own evaluation of the contributions and value of these secondary sources. These secondary sources should be commentaries, articles, and books of a scholarly nature. Type font is to be 12 point Times New Roman (as is this Syllabus).

In summary, this assignment is to include:

- 1) A title page.
- 2) Five pages of text; more is allowed if you are inspired, but five pages are sufficient.

- 3) At least three footnotes to three sources in secondary scholarly literature (i.e., books and articles written by respected modern scholars found in the CST library). These footnotes may not include devotional literature, your pastor's sermons, your professor's lectures, your Bible or its notes. Strive to be a scholar, and engage other scholars.
- 4) A formal Bibliography page. This is seven [or more] pages in all.

Please follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* for footnote and bibliography style.

Do not make unsupported assertions, but cite texts that back up what you claim (i.e., do not write anything that resembles "I think, for no apparent reason, that this means ...", as opposed to, "Paul states in 1 Cor 4:1 that this means ...").

Do not plagiarize. If you are dependent on a source (as you often will be), either restate the author's material in your own words and then cite the author in a footnote, or quote the author directly (using quotation marks), and then cite the author in a footnote. The footnote is an absolute "must" in either case.

Do not put your papers in folders. Simply staple them in the upper left hand corner once.

The point is twofold:

- a) You will learn about early Christian texts and traditions that matter most.
- b) You will learn how to write a research paper that follows the form used by all educated persons, a paper that includes a title page, footnotes, and a bibliography in the proper style, gaining the respect of all who read your work.

Take-Home Final Examination:

A Do-at-Home one-hour "examination" is required at the end of the course to be e-mailed in one week after the final day of class. The general subject will be: "The occasion for the writing of these four NT books." The four books are to include Romans and one other letter of Paul, and then two other books from two other authors, one of which may be the book of Revelation. The Gospels and Acts are not to be included.

The exam is designed for one hour of typing, about five pages or so. You may take as much time as you wish to prepare. You may use all of your notes, books, and helps of any kind. You may even discuss your exam with your classmates. Open books, open notes, open discussion, but individual composition. No collaboration in writing the exam is allowed. You must write your own exam in your own words with your own ideas.

Please see the description of the content of the exam above under the heading of **May 13** at the bottom of page three and the top of page four.