

# THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS—BIBL-5159

Fall Semester, August 29-December 16, 2011

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## I. OBJECTIVES

1. To acquire *exact* knowledge of the content of this letter.
2. To understand the background and purpose of the letter.
3. To develop interpretive skills with specific concern to enhance the exegetical traditions of the Evangelical Covenant Church.
4. To become familiar with the most important critical, exegetical, and theological issues pertaining to Romans and through discussion of these issues to develop—not only one's theological skills and an understanding of Paul—but a theology of one's own.
5. To learn about secondary literature on Romans.
6. To apply the teaching of the letter to our own lives, i.e., to be formed spiritually by God as we work through this letter.
7. To develop facility in communicating the message of Romans.

## II. REQUIRED TEXTS

Richard N. Longenecker, *Introducing Romans: Critical Issues in Paul's Most Famous Letter*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.

No other texts will be required. Numerous good commentaries are available; none of them really satisfactory!—This is Romans!—but you should select a major commentary to assist your work. A bibliography will provide information about commentaries. You will be expected to make good use of the more technical commentaries, monographs, periodical literature, and Pauline theologies (such as James Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) for large assignments.

**III. PROCEDURE**—Romans is too long and involved for us to deal with the whole letter in a one-semester, three-credit course. We have fifteen weeks to treat introductory issues and sixteen chapters. We will work through the content and argument of the whole letter, but we will deal in detail only with the most important theological sections. Rather than focus on secondary reading, the primary goal of this course is that each person be personally involved in analyzing this important document. A study guide will assist your working through the letter, and the study guide will be a major component of the course and grading. If you have had Greek, you will be expected to translate major chunks of the letter and should discuss with the instructor which sections and how much of your investment in the course should be focused on translation, which is determined, of course, by your ability with the language. A select number of articles on important issues or texts in Romans will be assigned for reading as we work through the letter. Handouts will be provided on certain subjects to facilitate class discussions. **Always** bring a Bible (English/your mother tongue and/or Greek) to class. One person (at least) will be assigned to be the instructor's primary conversation partner for each class.

**IV. REQUIREMENTS**—90 hours expected outside of class

1. Completion of the study guide. The space left in the guide is not necessarily indicative of the space needed. Start working on the study guide immediately. Do the first section and then the *last* section on 15:14-16:27. Read Linda Belleville's, "Ἰουλιαν...ἐπιστημοὶ ἐν τοῖς

αποστολοις: A Re-Examination of Romans 16.7 in Light of Primary Source Materials,” *New Testament Studies* 51 (2005): 231-249. (If you have not had Greek, explanation of the Greek terms in the article will be provided.) Maintain a steady pace with the study guide so that you can complete it before the end of term, regardless of which texts are being treated in class. At several places in the study guide there are “special assignments.” Select *three* to do over the course of the term. Do not select the one on homosexuality, for responsibilities for treating the passage in Rom 1:24-28 will be made in class.

2. Read the following in connection with the appropriate class. A few additional articles may be added during the term.
  - 1) Read Longenecker, *Introducing Romans*, pp. 55-85, 169-256, 290-344, 378-458. You may want to read the last section fairly early.
  - 2) Stephen Moyise, “How does Paul Read Scripture?” on the Paul and Scripture Seminar website in preparation for class on Sept 6. (<http://www.westmont.edu/~fisk/paulandscripture/Papers.html>). (Note also the numerous resources available on such sites as <http://www.textweek.com/pauline/paul.htm> and [www.ntgateway.org](http://www.ntgateway.org)).
  - 2) Richard B. Hays, “Religions Natural and Unnatural: A Response to John Boswell’s Exegesis of Romans 1,” *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 14 (1986), 184-215 in preparation for class on Sept 13.
  - 3) Snodgrass, “Justification by Grace—To the Doers,” *NTS*, 32 (1986), 72-93 in preparation for class on Sept 20.
  - 4) Optional: Krister Stendahl, “The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West,” in *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, 78-96.
  - 5) Optional: Ernst Käsemann, “‘The Righteousness of God’ in Paul,” in *New Testament Questions of Today*, 168-182.
  - 6) Optional: Carl Trueman, “*Simul peccator et justus*: Martin Luther and Justification,” in *Justification in Perspective: Historical Developments and Contemporary Challenges* (ed. Bruce L. McCormack), 73-97.
  - 7) Snodgrass, “Spheres of Influence,” *JSNT*, 32 (1988), 93-113 in preparation for class on Nov 1.
3. Prepare a fifteen page paper (at least) on a section or theme in Romans. Use no less than ten resources, which must include at least two technical articles and a relevant monograph. Translations, lexicons, and concordances do not count for the ten resources! **Do not use quotations of any kind in the body of the paper.** Due: Dec 6 with grace to Dec 13.
4. Before the end of the course spend at least one half hour in a *new* (for you) context such as an impoverished neighborhood, a homeless shelter, Cook County Court, a funeral home, or some other interesting setting (agreed on with the instructor) contemplating the question “Is God a righteous God?”
5. Take home final exam.

**V. CLASS SCHEDULE**—The approximate class schedule will be as follows:

Aug 30—Introduction and purpose of Romans. Attention will be given to the “frame” of Romans, 1:1-15 and 15:14-16:27, and to some degree to 14:1-15:13.

Sept 6—1:1-17 with primary focus on Christology, the gospel, and faith

Sept 13—1:18-32 with focus on sin, wrath, and homosexuality

Sept 20—2:1-29 with focus on judgment  
Sept 27—3:1-26 with focus on faithfulness, righteousness, sin, and atonement  
Oct 4—3:27-4:25 with focus primarily on faith  
Oct 11—5:1-21 with focus on boasting, reconciliation, and the Adam Christology  
Oct 18—FALL BREAK—NO CLASS  
Oct 25—6:1-23 with focus on salvation, baptism, and new life in Christ  
Nov 1—7:1-8:7 with continued treatment of new life in Christ (7:1-6) and the subject of the law (7:7-8:7)  
Nov 8—8:8-39 with focus on the Holy Spirit  
Nov 15—Chapters 9-11 with focus on Israel and election  
Nov 19—12:1-21 focussing on Paul's ethical instructions  
Nov 26—13:1-14 with focus on continued ethical instructions, particularly the relation of the church and state.  
Dec 3—14:1-15:13 with focus on the theme of freedom  
Dec 13—Flexible class and discussion of the appropriation of the letter

### **GRADING**

Reading, translation, class involvement, and study guide 40%  
(You will be expected to turn in translation work sheets and an account of your reading with your study guide.)

Paper 30%

Final exam 30%

**EXTRA CREDIT**—Evaluate one of Martin Luther's essays in his *Three Treatises* from the standpoint of the theology of Romans. Two points added to final average.

Students with a disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the dean of student's office (Seminary: 773-244-6219). Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. If needed, appointments can be relocated. For further information please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/ada>.

