

BIBL 5150—INTERPRETING THE NEW TESTAMENT I

Online, Spring Semester, 2009/10

February 1–May 14

North Park Theological Seminary

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When: Tuesday and Friday will be the principal days on which Professor Chester will engage with this class on Blackboard, answer e-mails etc.

“There was a great teacher, and gathered around him was a small group of faithful followers. They listened to his message and were transformed by it. But the message alienated the power structure of his time, which finally put him to death but did not succeed in eradicating his message, which is stronger now than ever. . . . That description would apply equally to Jesus and Socrates. But nobody’s ever built a cathedral in honor of Socrates.” Jaroslav Pelikan

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this introductory treatment of the Gospels attention is given to hermeneutics, critical studies, historical background, the characteristics and message of each of the Gospels, Jesus’ proclamation of the kingdom, and the major features of his ministry. Three hours.

I. OBJECTIVES

1. To appreciate and assess the distinctive content and theological perspectives of each of the Gospels and, as much as possible, the process that brought them into being.
2. To develop a thorough knowledge of the information known about the life and ministry of Jesus and the historical quests seeking to understand him.
3. To become acquainted with the historical, social, religious, and literary contexts in which the New Testament emerged.
4. To become conversant with the terminology, presuppositions, and conclusions of various modern approaches to the Gospels and to assess these approaches by firsthand study of the Gospels.
5. To develop sound methods for lifelong study of the New Testament. Attention will be given throughout the course to the subject of hermeneutics.
6. To become aware of and be able to access the bibliographic and electronic resources available for study of the Gospels.
7. To develop a better understanding of Christianity, an opportunity for deeper commitment and spiritual development, and a broader basis for ministry. The ultimate objectives for all of us are to increase our integrity and our ability to care.

OBJECTIVES—SECOND SET

1. To allow critical insights gained from the class to deepen and develop our devotional appreciation of Jesus and his role in God’s Kingdom.
2. To determine who we are individually and collectively in God’s purposes. *Identity* is always the subject.
3. To develop insights based on the Gospels as to how Christians should order their lives.
4. To seek the work of God’s Spirit to form our own being. Identity is a process of becoming.
5. To become followers—actually—of Jesus so that our identity is shaped by his.

OBJECTIVES—THIRD SET

1. To develop a christologically driven sensitivity, care, and love that motivate ministry
2. To develop personal integrity that engenders trust and enables and sustains ministry
3. To acquire skills leading to legitimate confidence and allowing one to be a leader ministering to others
4. To develop critical insights from the Gospels into what churches should be and do.

II. PROCEDURE—The three sets of objectives are an awareness that this course deals with *three* different areas, the first of them sometimes unrelated to the other two: 1) the *discipline* of New Testament studies; 2) *Christian discipleship*; and 3) *preparation for ministry*. None of these areas may be neglected, even though some people try. The discipline of New Testament studies has the information needed for understanding and for ministry, but it hardly exists in its own right. This discipline is difficult to defend apart from issues of faith and ministry. The main obstacles to achieving the objectives are the immense amount of material important for studying the Gospels and the wide diversity of needs and abilities within the class. Readings, written material, and lectures will provide an introduction to general subjects such as hermeneutics, Gospels criticism, cultural background, and to subjects that arise from the Gospels themselves such as miracles, parables, and the resurrection. Students are expected to *master* the written materials posted for each topic. **General knowledge is not sufficient.** If you are to be a leader in the church, you need to be thoroughly knowledgeable about Scripture and issues related to its study. This course is only a beginning to help you develop such knowledge. In addition to the posted material and readings, analysis of specific Gospels texts will take place in online tasks, discussions, and research projects. Questions specifically to the instructor can be placed in the “Qumran Corner.” In all your writing, **do make every effort to be sensitive to gender and culture issues.**

III. ACCOMMODATIONS

North Park Theological Seminary provides services for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to programs, services, facilities, and activities. Students with a disability who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Seminary Academic Services as soon as possible. If desired or necessary, discussion pertaining to documentation and accommodation can take place at another suitable location or by telephone. Further information about the American Disabilities Act Services is found in the Student Academic Handbook.

IV. ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are reminded of the regulations concerning Plagiarism and Cheating, which can be found in the Student Academic Handbook. Do not be tempted to plagiarize as a way out of difficulties in completing your assignments. If in difficulty, please contact the instructor.

V. TECHNICAL ABILITIES

In order to complete this class, students need to have basic computer skills. Proficiency is required in word processing and in the use of the internet and e-mail.

VI. REQUIRED TEXTS

1. The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000 or some other edition of the Bible that includes the OT Apocrypha.
2. **A synopsis of the Gospels.** For either Greek or English, the synopsis may be ordered from the American Bible Society, a non-profit organization. For those who have had Greek the standard synopsis used for Gospels study is Kurt Aland's *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*, 15th edition (which contains the Greek text of the 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament and parallels with apocryphal gospels and patristic sources). This synopsis is also available with an English translation on the facing page, but without the evidence from the apocryphal gospels and patristic sources, and it is much more expensive. If you have not had Greek, the English version is Kurt Aland's, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels: English Edition*. There are Gospels synopses on line, but you need one for class (and your library).
3. Mark L. Strauss, *Four Portraits, One Jesus: An Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007. As the title suggests, this is an introductory text. If you have already had some Gospel studies, consult with the instructor for a more advanced alternative.
4. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*. Simon & Schuster, 1995.
5. Klyne Snodgrass. *Divorce and Remarriage (An Occasional Paper, Number Three)*. Chicago: Covenant Publications, 1992.
6. Craig A. Evans, *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2006.

VII. HELPFUL RESOURCES—a more complete bibliography will follow, but these are basic resources that will provide significant help:

1. Everett Ferguson. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.
2. Richard Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 3d ed; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001. (One of the problems in theological studies is the technical language used. This book gives definitions of most relevant terms. Online glossaries are also available.)
3. Scot McKnight and Grant R. Osborne, eds. *The Face of New Testament Studies*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004.
- *4. Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall, (eds.). *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992.
- *5. James Dunn and Scot McKnight, eds. *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbraun's, 2005.
6. Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2005.
7. Darrell L. Bock, *Jesus in Context: Background Readings for Gospel Study*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
8. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*

9. Roger Omanson, ed., *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament: An Adaptation of Bruce M. Metzger's Textual Commentary for the Needs of Translators*, American Bible Society, 2006.
10. Graham N. Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus*, 2d ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- *11. Paul Copan and Craig A. Evans, eds. *Who Was Jesus? A Jewish-Christian Dialogue*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.
12. NT Gateway, a portal for a significant amount of information: <http://www.ntgateway.com>.
13. Google Scholar and Google Books

VIII. REQUIREMENTS

1. **Read all four Gospels between Jan. 1 and May 14, 2010.**
2. Involvement in all online discussions (which will not require class members to be online at the same time) and completion of all online tasks. Each week you will have material I have posted and tasks to do. In addition, each week you are to post questions and enter into dialogue with other class members. It is essential that discussion board entries are posted on time.
3. Submission of assignments on time. Requests for extensions due to illness or genuinely unforeseen circumstances will be considered sympathetically (being generally busy does not count) but late submission without good reason will result in reduced marks.
4. Invest about 8 hours reading in the field of **hermeneutics**. A statement of completion of the eight hours, what was read, and a two page evaluation of your reading is **due March 1**. Select one or more readings from the following list:

A.K.M. Adam, S.E. Fowl, K.J. Vanhoozer and F. Watson, *Reading Scripture with the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006)

J. Brown, *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007)

Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays, eds., *The Art of Reading Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006)

J. Goldingay, *Models for the Interpretation of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995)

J.B. Green (ed.), *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995)

D. Jasper, *A Short Introduction to Hermeneutics* (Louisville: WJKP, 2004)

Y. Khiok-khng, *What has Jerusalem to do with Beijing? Biblical Interpretation from a Chinese Perspective* (Harrisburg: TPI, 1998)

R. Lundin (ed.), *Disciplining Hermeneutics: Interpretation in Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997)

I.H. Marshall, *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004)

Eugene H. Peterson, *Eat this book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading* (His comments on *epiousios* are incorrect!)

S. Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991)

R.S. Sugirtharajah (ed.), *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible from the Third World* (London: SPCK, 1991)

A. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992)

K. Vanhoozer, *Is there a meaning in this text?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998)

V. Wimbush (ed.), *African-Americans and the Bible* (New York: Continuum, 2000)

5. **Read the handouts**, the pamphlet on divorce, select primary sources, *Four Portraits, One Jesus*, *Fabricating Jesus*, the assigned pages from *The Cost of Discipleship*, and the other assigned readings on the schedule below.
6. Write a five page paper on the significance of the Gospel of Luke for understanding and dealing with your own **self-centeredness**. The focus is the text of **Luke** and the way **Jesus and Luke** challenge ego-centeredness; the focus is not your life history, although specifics of personal appropriation of the text are welcome. There are no sources for this paper other than Luke and your reflections on the Gospel. You may choose to write an overview of texts within Luke on this theme or focus on one or two texts. **Due March 5.**
7. As part of a group assignment prepare a **one** page overview of the issues in *two* of the texts below, as assigned. Prepare a *one* page overview of the issues in the text as presented in *one* commentary. By default, for every text pay attention to structure, Gospel parallels, and background issues, especially OT background. This is **not** a research assignment. Use **one** good commentary from the bibliography **specified**: for Matthew use Davies and Allison, France, Keener, Luz, Nolland, or Hagner. For Mark use Collins, Edwards, France, Marcus, or Guelich and Evans. For Luke use Bock, Fitzmyer, Green, Marshall, or Nolland. For John use Barrett, Brown, Lincoln, Morris, Carson, or Keener.
Read critically!

John 3:3-8; Due March 1

Luke 17:20-24 Due March 1

Matt. 5:17-20; Due March 15

Matt. 19:16-26; Due March 15

Mark 4:10-12; Due March 29

Matt. 11:25-30; Due April 12

Matt. 16:13-20; Due April 12

Matt. 21:12-17; Due April 19

8. Do research as specified below on **one** of the following texts:

Matt 6:9-15; 16:21-28; 17:1-8

Luke 9:51-62; 10:25-37.

(If you want to work on a different text, discuss it with the instructor.)

You will be expected to do a thorough analysis of the text and the issues relevant to it. In the final version give attention to the following: differences between parallel accounts; historical and cultural factors that shed light on the text; literary factors that provide understanding, **especially** placement of the pericope in the overall structure; identification of genre; exegetical and critical issues; theological issues, especially as they are of **redactional** concern to the evangelist, but also as they are of significance to you; and the **relevance of your text for your own spirituality**. The primary purpose of this assignment is with **method**. Therefore the research will be done in three steps and for all three **use a content outline method** (similar to my treatments of topics like the kingdom of God and parables). **Those who have Greek MUST use it in each part of this assignment.** The three parts to this assignment are:

1) Analyze your text on your own without using commentaries or any other explanatory tools. I want *your* analysis. You may use *only* a concordance and a synopsis and the two items mentioned below. **Provide photocopied sheets from the synopsis** and mark **in detail** the similarities and differences in the accounts (scanning and sending these sheets as an e-mail attachment is best but if that is not possible do your work in plenty of time and snail mail it to the instructor). What is the **structure** of the text? What is the context before and after? How does the passage fit with the redactional concerns of the evangelist? What exegetical or theological problems are there and how would you resolve them? What can you learn about important words or themes? Are there other kinds of problems? Those with Greek should provide their own translation of the passage and neatly parse all the verbs. Those without Greek should compare at least three English translations and describe any significant differences between them. Provide your own explanation of the text and the issues by giving a verse by verse commentary on your passage. Include anything relevant from either Craig A. Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature* or Darrell L. Bock, *Jesus in Context: Background Readings for Gospel Study*. Finally, explain what you learned for your own spirituality. **Due March 24.**

2) Do research on your text. Use and take notes on a **minimum** of five **starred commentaries from the bibliography**, at least one periodical article on your text, and whatever tools you need to do a word study of one word. You may use Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* or Omanson's *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament* or one of the online resources for textual criticism to assist in treating textual variants. Select *one* word from your text that does not occur too frequently in the NT and do a word study. Show frequency of occurrence and location of your word, a brief history of its use (including if possible the use in the LXX and which Hebrew words it translates), its breadth of semantic field, and the meaning of the word in the Gospel(s). You may use dictionaries, concordances, and lexica for your word study. At this stage you are turning in the results of your research about what *other people* say, doing a word study, and evaluating textual variants. What do these resources add to your understanding of the text, what information do they provide, and what problems do they raise? **Summarize, but do not use quotations at all.** Document page numbers and bibliographical information to assist in preparing the final form. At the end of your effort provide a brief **evaluation** of the resources used and a list of the issues you must treat in the final version. **Due April 14.**

3) On the basis of parts one and two write your own commentary on your text. This is to be *your* explanation of the text, its issues, and its treatment by others as that helps you explain your passage. The result should provide a basis from which you could teach or preach on your text at the drop of a hat. Include the word study and the photocopied sheets from the first stage. Feel free to "cut and splice" material from the first and second parts and to discuss issues raised from the second, but do not merely staple parts one and two to the third section. This is to be an integrated and comprehensive treatment of your text. **Due May 7 with grace until May 13.**

Summary of Requirements:

1. Read the Gospels!
2. Reading on Hermeneutics

3. Reading of handouts (approximately 100 pages), McKnight (27 pages), works from the Apocrypha (27 pages), *Pesahim* in the *Mishnah* (15 pages), *The Manual of Discipline* (7 pages), Strauss (approx. 475 pages), Blomberg (17 pages), the section from Bonhoeffer's *Cost of Discipleship* (120 pages), the pamphlet on Divorce and Remarriage (17 pages), Evans (228 pages). (About 1000 pages total.)
4. A five page paper on Luke's assault on your ego
5. A one page analysis of a specific text
6. The three part research assignment
7. Two quizzes and two tests

IX. EXPECTATIONS OF INSTRUCTOR

Apart from urgent messages, Professor Chester will answer all e-mail or telephone enquiries related to the class on the next Tuesday or Friday. He will also use those days to give feedback on Discussion Board material, which will mean that posts made in any particular week (Monday-Sunday) should receive any necessary feedback by the following Tuesday. If this is not possible for any reason he will notify the class in advance.

He will also grade the quizzes and tests and the first two parts of the three stage final paper within one week. This is because the quiz and test results allow students to assess their acquisition of knowledge essential to success in the class while feedback on the first two parts of the research paper is necessary to help in the completion of the final part. For all other assessments (except the final paper) he will try to meet the same standard but may take a little longer.

X. GRADING

Reading on Hermeneutics	10%
Reading, paper on Luke and the Ego, class and Bb involvement	20%
Quizzes 1 and 2	20%
Tests 1 and 2	20%
Final Paper	30%

XI. CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS—Except for the first week, readings are to be completed by the date under which they are listed.

Week One (2/1-5) Introduction and Hermeneutics with John 7:37-39 as an example

- **Read** the online material on hermeneutics. Be sure to click the link and visit the website on textual criticism.
- At the end of section 3 of the hermeneutics material you are to analyze John 7:37-39 as directed.
- Then go on to the two sections (sections 4 and 5) that discuss this passage.
- Finish the remainder of the materials in the hermeneutics learning unit, especially paying attention to the diagram on communication. Note carefully the guidelines for doing exegesis and word studies.

- When you have finished, post any questions you have on the discussion board, especially for items you do not understand, and address the discussion items in section 11 before the summary of the whole treatment of hermeneutics. Do not exceed 500 words.
- **Begin** reading for the hermeneutics report assignment.

Optional: Read the article posted on Blackboard on a hermeneutics of hearing.

Week Two (2/8-2/12) Gospels Criticism and Quests for Jesus

- **Read** the online material on Gospels criticism, and Strauss, 19-89; Evans, 9-99.
- Note that there are web sites on the synoptic problem and on Q—and on most other subjects we will study. Spend at least twenty minutes browsing the NT Gateway website (<http://www.ntgateway.com>) for material pertinent to this course, i.e., material specifically on the Gospels, Gospel criticism (especially the synoptic problem), textual criticism, Judaism, the Qumran Scrolls, rabbinic material, etc.
- Using a synopsis compare *in detail* the similarities and differences of the wording in Matt 9:1-8/Mark 2:1-12/Luke 5:17-26. Post your reaction to your findings and any questions on the discussion board.
- Then post a short reflection paper on your reactions to the value or lack thereof of these various criticisms (500 words max).
- **Read** the online material on quests for Jesus and Strauss, 347-398; Evans, 180-203, 236-245; and Scot McKnight, “Jesus of Nazareth,” in *The Face of New Testament Studies*, ed. Scot McKnight and Grant R. Osborne, pp. 149-176.
- Post a short paper (250 words max) on ways we make Jesus over in our own image.
- Keep on reading for the hermeneutics report assignment.

Optional: Martin Kähler, “Against the Life-of-Jesus Movement,” in *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research*, ed. James D. G. Dunn and Scot McKnight, pp. 67-84; and R. Bauckham, “For Whom Were the Gospels Written,” in *The Gospels for All Christians*, ed. Richard Bauckham, pp. 9-48.

Be prepared for a quiz on Feb 17 (date to be finalized later) covering Hermeneutics, Gospels Criticism, and Quests for Jesus. You will be expected to be able to define all the major terms or movements pertaining to hermeneutics, Gospels criticism, and the quests for Jesus.

Week Three (2/15-2/19) Jewish Background of the NT and the Use of the OT in the NT

- **Read** the online material and Strauss, 92-167, and Evans, 100-122, 158-179
- **Read** from the Apocrypha: 1 Maccabees 1-4; Wisdom of Solomon 1-7; and Sirach 1-5.
- **Read** Tractate *Pesahim* in Danby’s translation (or some other translation) of the *Mishnah*.
- **Compare** the length of *Pesahim* in the *Babylonian Talmud*. **If you do not have access to a theological library**, for this assignment and the next you may go to <http://virtualreligion.net/iho/#texts> and read a portion of the texts listed there. Read at least three of the offerings under each heading (political, social, and intellectual climate). There are a number of good sites like this in my list of websites in the resources folder.

- **Read** The Manual of Discipline (1QS) columns 1-5 in F. G. Martinez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 71-83 or in Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 72-80 (he uses the title “The Community Rule”).
- **Post** a general reflection on the week 3 materials - 250 words maximum.
- **Write** your reading report assignment on hermeneutics

Week Four (2/22-2/26) The Use of the OT in Specific Gospels Texts and an Overview of the Gospels

- **Work** through the questions on Luke 4:18-22 and then read my online materials on this text.
- **Work** through the questions on John 1:14-18 and then read my online explanation. Using a concordance (or concordances) or biblical software find all the occurrences of the Greek word *monogenēs* in the NT and, if possible, in the Septuagint (LXX). If you do not have access to a theological library, you may have trouble here, but your instructor can help if necessary! Let him know. *Monogenēs* is the word sometimes erroneously translated as “only begotten.” Write a brief summary of your findings of the use of the word in the LXX and the NT. Note the guideline on doing word studies. It would do us no good to look up the texts where “only begotten” occur for two reasons: (1) it is a wrong translation; (2) it would not give us all the occurrences of the word in question.
- **Post** a brief theological statement explaining who Jesus is from the quite different perspectives of Luke 4:18-22 and John 1:14-18.
- **Read** the material on the Overview of the Gospels and Strauss, 170-296.
- **Finalize** your reading report assignment on hermeneutics.

***Be prepared for the second quiz on March 3 (subject to change). The quiz will cover Judaism and the use of the OT in the NT. You will be expected to know the following:**

- a. The major persons and events of the Maccabean War**
- b. The major parties in Judaism and their beliefs**
- c. The major features of the chronology from 200 B.C. to 30 A.D.**
- d. The distinctions between the Herods**
- e. The geography of Palestine in the first century.**
- f. The material (concepts, terms, etc.) from the handouts on the use of the OT in the NT***

Week Five (3/1-3/5) The Kingdom

- **Submit** your reading report on hermeneutics (due 3/1).
- **Write** the five page paper on Luke’s assault on self-centeredness (due 3/5).
- **Read** the online material and Strauss, 297-343, 399-447, and Craig L. Blomberg, “John and Jesus,” in *The Face of New Testament Studies*, ed. Scot McKnight and Grant R. Osborne, pp. 209-226.
- **Those assigned John 3:3-8 and Luke 17:20-24 must** by March 1 before noon **post** their summaries of the issues needing to be treated in these texts and their own initial reflections on the significance and meaning of the passage. After their posting others should interact with them by raising other questions or offering other insights.
- **Select** your text and **begin** working on part one of your research paper.

Week Six (3/8-3/12) SPRING BREAK AT NORTH PARK.

- Take a break (but do not forget anything!) or get ahead on your reading or the first part of your research paper.

Week Seven (3/15-3/19) Law in Matt and the Sermon on the Mount

- **Read** the online material on the history of interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount and on Matthew and the Law.
- Read Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*, 35-154 (119 pages; the introduction, the section on grace and discipleship, and the section on the Sermon on the Mount dealing with Matt 5; other editions may have different pagination.) If you have read this recently, as an alternative read Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount*, pp. 3-146.
- **Those assigned** Matt 5:17-20 and 19:16-26 **must** by March 15 before noon **post** their summaries of the issues needing to be treated in these texts and their own initial reflections on the significance and meaning of the passage. After their posting others should interact with them by raising other questions or offering other insights.
- Given what you have read about obedience from Bonhoeffer and the discussion of these texts, **post** a brief reflection paper (minimum 500 words) on Bonhoeffer's argument and especially how it affects your understanding of the relation of obedience and salvation.

Week Eight (3/22-3/26) Divorce

- **Submit** part one of your research paper (due 3/24).
- **Read** *Divorce and Remarriage*
- What other *Gospels* passages can you find that deal with marriage and/or sexuality? **Go** to <http://www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk>; click on "Online Resources," then on "Jewish Divorce" and browse through the resources made available here.
- **Post** a short reflection paper (max 500 words) explaining how you think the church should deal with these issues. How does this discussion impact you personally?

Be ready for a test on 3/31 (date to be verified) covering everything since the last quiz.

Week Nine (3/29-4/2) Parables

- **Read** the online material, including the instructor's article on Luke 11:5-8, and Strauss, 447-454, and Evans, 123-138.
- **Those assigned** Mark 4:10-12 **must** by Mar 29 before noon **post** their summaries of the issues needing to be treated in this text and their own initial reflections on the significance and meaning of the passage. After their posting others should interact with them by raising other questions or offering other insights. **Read** the instructor's explanation of 4:10-12.
- **Post** a brief (max 500 words) treatment for lay people explaining the pitfalls in parable interpretation and what they should do in interpreting the parables.
- **Using no resources except the Gospel of Matthew**, isolate and summarize in no more than four pages Jesus' gospel, the good news he preached. What was *his* message and what was *the problem* he sought to address? The focus is *Jesus*, not Matthew, not the early church, not our preaching. What did Jesus preach? Anything you say must be demonstrable from what Matthew records Jesus as actually saying. **Due** April 4. *After*

and only after your paper is turned in, read Klyne's article posted on Blackboard on the Gospel of Jesus.

- **Work** on the second stage of your research paper.

Week Ten (4/5-4/9) Miracles

- **Read** the online material and Strauss, 455-468, and Evans, 139-157.
- **Read** Matthew 8-9; Mark 1-2; and John 6, 9, and 11. **Write** a short reflection (max 250 words) on the different approach to the miracles by these three evangelists.

Week Eleven (4/12-4/16) Christology

- **Submit** part two of your research paper (due 4/14)
- **Read** Strauss, 469-491, and Evans, 222-235.
- **Those assigned** Matt 11:25-30 and 16:13-20 **must** by April 12 before noon **post** their summaries of the issues needing to be treated in these texts and their own initial reflections on the significance and meaning of the passage. After their posting others should interact with them by raising other questions or offering other insights.
- **After** and only after completing the assignments, read the online discussion of Peter's confession.

Week Twelve (4/19-4/23) Discipleship and Cleansing of the Temple

- **Read** the material posted on line and Strauss, 493-509.
- **Those assigned** Matt 21:12-17 **must** by April 19 before noon **post** their summaries of the issues needing to be treated in this text and their own initial reflections on the significance and meaning of the passage. After their posting others should interact with them by raising other questions or offering other insights.
- **Work** on part three of the research paper.

Week Thirteen (4/26-4/30) Lord's Supper and Jesus' Future Expectation

- **Work** through Luke 22:14-23 using the online guided materials, then read the online explanation of the issues pertaining to this text.
- **Use** a concordance and/or topical Bible to find the other places in the Gospels that focus on Jesus and eating/meals. What is the significance of these meals for understanding the Lord's Supper and for understanding Jesus?
- **Post** questions to the discussion board and **write** a 250 word reflection on the theological significance of the Eucharist for you personally. **Also** in no more than 250 words discuss how the Lord's Supper might be more effectively observed in our churches.
- **Read** the online material on Jesus' Future Expectation.

Week Fourteen (5/3-5/7) The Passion of Jesus

- **Work** through the texts and explanations in the online material.
- **Post** your own theological assessment of the significance of the death of Jesus. How much of your assessment is demonstrable from the Gospels?
- **Submit** part three of your research paper (due 5/7 with grace until 5/13).

Week Fifteen (5/10-5/14) Resurrection

- **Read** Strauss, 511-525 and the online material on the resurrection.
- **Post** on the discussion board your explanation of why and how the church should present its message of the resurrection.

Prepare for and take the last test on 5/14 which will cover everything since test 1 (i.e., everything starting from miracles on).

XII. EXTRA CREDIT — Two points will be added to your final average if before May 14 you:

1. Read the following primary sources and submit a three page report on **two** of them:

a. Psalms of Solomon 17-18

b. Testament of the 12 Patriarchs, Testaments of Levi and Judah

(a-b can be found in James H. Charlesworth, ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*

c. 1QH (The Thanksgiving Hymns) columns 4-5

d. 4QP^{Hab} (Peshar on Habakkuk)

(For c-d see the translations of the Dead Sea Scrolls by F. G. Martínez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* or Vermes or Gaster)

e. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XVIII.55-64 and 116-119 (Loeb edition)

f. Tractate *Aboth* in the *Mishnah* (ed. Danby)

g. Tractate *Shabbath* in the *Mishnah* (ed. Danby)

h. Philo, *On the Posterity of Cain and His Exile*, 1-11 (Loeb vol. 2)

i. Read the first ten pages of the *Babylonian Talmud* on Tractate *Shabbath* (*bShabbath*)

j. The Targums on Genesis 1:1 (Onkelos, Fragment, and Pseudo-Jonathan in Etheridge's translation)

k. The Gospel of Thomas 1-25 (ed. Guillaumont et al.) or the translation at the back of the Greek version of Aland's Synopsis.

Or—not and

EXTRA CREDIT — Three points will be added to your final average if before May 14 you

2. Read **and** provide a three page reflection on three hundred pages from *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research* (ed. by James Dunn and Scot McKnight; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbraun's, 2005).

Other options can be arranged with the instructor.