

North Park Theological Seminary
BIBL 5151-NET
Interpreting the New Testament II
Fall 2014
Three credit hours

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Appointments: Online students can schedule a phone consultation via email.

Office hours: Tuesday, 10-12, Thursday 10-12

Introduction

This course continues the story begun in the gospels—the story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The shock waves of the events of his life roll through the book of Acts and the letters of Paul, Peter, and others. In one sense all of these works explore one question: what are the implications of Jesus of Nazareth. For those of us who are followers of Jesus this continues to be a crucial question. What are the implications of Jesus for our lives, our churches, our world. For those of us called as ministers of the gospel, we are called on each week in worship, in teaching, in spiritual direction to help the people we serve explore just this question. What does it mean for all of us that Jesus taught, loved, died and was raised? We will explore this larger question through the exploration of a number of smaller, those still large, questions. We will study these texts in their social, religious and cultural milieus while we reflect on our own social, religious and cultural milieus. Welcome to the class!

Learning Objectives

1. To assess the distinctive content and theological perspectives of the letters of the New Testament and the Acts of the Apostles as well as the processes that brought them into being.
2. To acquire through study and reflection a thorough knowledge of the information known about the life and ministry of Paul and the historical explorations seeking to understand him.
3. To assess the historical, social, religious and literary contexts in which the New Testament emerged.
4. To evaluate the terminology, presuppositions, and conclusions of the various modern approaches to the study of the Acts of the Apostles, the various epistles of the New Testament, and especially the life and theology of Paul.
5. To acquire, develop and demonstrate sound methods for lifelong study of the New Testament.
6. To become aware of, use, and assess the bibliographic and electronic resources available for study of the New Testaments.

7. To demonstrate a deeper understanding of the Christian faith and commitment to spiritual development to it so as to establish a broader basis for ministry.
8. To demonstrate effective communication of views and perspectives through collaborative learning with fellow students and the faculty member.

Required Texts

Hawthorne, Gerald, F. et. al. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993 [DPL]

Martin, Ralph, et. al. *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and its Development*. Downers Grove, 1997. [DLNT]

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Scripture and Discernment: Decision Making in the Church*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Longenecker, Bruce, W. *The Lost Letters of Pergamum: A Story from the New Testament World*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.

For your Bible I recommend either the NRSV or the TNIV. For students with Greek make sure you keep your Greek text at your elbow!

There will be a number of additional readings and videos posted on Moodle each week for you. I will not list them all in the syllabus, but you can check them out on the course page itself.

Assignments and Due Dates (all times refer to *your* local time)

1. Weekly Moodle postings: 200 points (max of 10 points per post and five points for responses, plus five points for a post the last week of class. Posts are required every week except fall break and Thanksgiving week. Posts are due by Thursday at midnight. Response postings are due by the following Sunday at midnight. Detailed instructions regarding posting on the discussion forum are on Moodle.
2. Short Essay #1 on *Scripture and Discernment*: 100 points. Due Friday, September 16 at 6:00 PM.
3. Short Essay #2 on *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*: 100 points. Due Friday, October 25 at 6:00 PM.
4. Biblical reference notebook (see instructions in Moodle): 150 points. Due by Thursday at midnight.
5. Final Exegetical Papers (worksheet + essay—see instructions in Moodle). 200 points, Due Friday December 13 at 6 P.M.

Late policy

If you must submit any assignment late, including a forum post, please request an extension from me in advance. Short extensions will be granted for genuine emergencies. Late posts will be penalized significantly. Your interaction with your fellow students is important to your learning. A failure to post and respond hurts both them and you.

My Commitment as Faculty

I intend to respond to each set of posts and response between Tuesday and Thursday of the week following their posting at Midnight Sunday. I intend to respond to all student essays within seven days of receiving them. I intend to respond to all emails within 48 hours.

Technical Competencies

1. Students who are taking an online course through the Moodle platform for the first time should work through the Moodle tutorial provided at the course site.
2. Students should be capable of working with MS Office, comfortable search the Web for information, and using North Park's library website and other library websites for information. If students have not done so before, they are asked to visit the Brandel Library site to explore resources that are available for their use. It is also recommended that distance students check with their local public and university libraries to determine what is required for them to use their resources. North Park is willing to help any student with required permissions to use other University/College libraries.

Weekly Assignments

Before beginning your readings or assignments for the week, always check the assignments in Moodle. There will be papers posted there for you to read. Some of them are quite extensive. I will not list each paper on the Syllabus, but only note that there will be such papers posted each week.

Week One 8/25-8/31

Introduction and the case of Philemon: Bible: Philemon; DPL "Philemon, Letter to", "Slave, Slavery", "Letters, Letter Form"; articles posted; begin *Scripture and Discernment*.

Week Two 9/1-7

Acts—spread of the gospel and discerning God's will in the early church; Bible: Acts; finish *Scripture and Discernment*; DNL "Acts of the Apostles"; articles posted.

Week Three 9/8-14

Introduction to Paul and Pauline Epistles: Bible, review Acts 9, 22, 26. DPL: "Paul in Acts and Letters"; "Jew, Paul the"; "Conversion and Call of Paul"; "Paul and His Interpreters". Posted articles and videos. Essay #1 due.

Week Four 9/15-21

Galatians—the Law and the Gospel; Bible: Galatians; DPL "Galatians, letter to the"; "Judaizers". Posted articles and video.

Week Five 9/22-28

Romans: The Righteousness of God; Bible: Romans; DPL: "Romans, Letter to"; "Justification"; posted articles and video.

Week Six 9/30-10/5

Philippians—Christ and Caesar/Excursus on Empire in Romans 12, 13; Bible: Philippians; review of Acts 16:11-40; DPL: “Philippians, the Letter to”; posted articles and video.

Week Seven 10/6-12

1 and 2 Corinthians: discipleship, community, and the unity of the body; Bible: 1, 2 Corinthians; DPL: “Corinthians, Letters to the”; “Lord’s Supper”: posted articles and video.

Week Eight 10/13-19 Reading Week

Note: this is not a fall break but rather an opportunity for you to catch up on your reading, and work ahead on assignments. This would be a good time to begin reading *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*. I think you will find this enjoyable and not taxing!

Week Nine 10/20-26

1 and 2 Thessalonians: the Greco-Roman milieu; Bible: 1, 2 Thessalonians, reviews Acts 17:1-10; *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*; DPL: “Thessalonians, Letters to the”; “Man of Lawlessness and Restraining Power”; articles and video posted; Essay #2 due.

Week Ten 10/27-11/2

Ephesians and Colossians: engaging the powers; Bible: Ephesians and Colossians; review Acts 19; DPL: “Principalities and Powers”; “Ephesians, Letter to the”; “Colossians, Letter to the”; articles and video posted.

Week Eleven 11/3-9

1, 2 Timothy, Titus—gender and pastoral identity; Bible: 1, 2 Timothy and Titus; DPL: “Pastoral Letters”; “Pastor, Paul as”; articles and video posted.

Week Twelve 11/10-16

Hebrews (Christology and Atonement); James (godly wisdom); Bible: Hebrews, James; DLNT: “Hebrews”; “Jewish Christianity”; Diaspora Judaism”; “James, letter of”. Articles and video posted.

Week Thirteen 11/17-23

1, 2 Peter and Jude; 1, 2, 3 John; contending for the faith; Bible 1, 2 Peter, Jude, 1, 2, 3 John; DLNT “1 Peter”; “2 Peter”; “Jude”; “John, letters of”; “Docetism”; “Watchfulness”; “Parousia”; articles and video posted.

Week Fourteen 11/24-11/30 Thanksgiving Week

Use this week to start work on your final paper or to get ahead or catch up on reading.

Week Fifteen 12/1-7

Revelation: apocalyptic literature; Bible: Revelation; DLNT: "Revelation, book of"; "Apocalypse, Apocalypticism"; "Old Testament in Revelation", "Millenium"; "Eschatology"; articles and video posted. Biblical reference notebook due.

Week Sixteen 12/8-12

Course summary. Final papers due on Friday December 13 at 6:00 PM. Check for final instructions on Moodle.

Grading

Total Points Earned:

709-750	A
708-695	A-
694-679	B+
678-656	B
655-641	B-
640-626	C+
625-596	C
595-581	C-

For descriptions of nature of grades see the Seminary catalog on line.

Criteria for Grading Moodle Discussions

Every week students are required to post at least one comment and one response to another post following the specific instructions in the Assignments section for that week. On the final week of class, only a post is required.

8-10 Points: Followed the prompt in a relevant and thoughtful manner; engaged both the biblical book ***and the required reading for the week***. Used correct grammar and spelling; wrote in a clear and understandable manner.

5-7 Points: Followed most but not all of the prompt or veered slightly off-topic; demonstrated adequate understanding of and some engagement with the week's materials. Some errors of grammar and spelling.

1-4 Points: Failed to answer the prompt; posted irrelevant or off-topic information; post was either extremely brief or demonstrated serious lack of engagement or understanding; multiple errors of grammar and spelling inhibit learning.

0 Points: Nothing posted.

Response Post

4-5 Points: Thoughtful and relevant response; engaged the original post in a way that genuinely contributed to the conversation; demonstrated critical, helpful and charitable interaction with the original post; correct spelling and grammar; clear and understandable.

1-3 Points: Somewhat helpful and relevant response with some demonstration of interaction and engagement, but no real depth; some small errors in grammar, spelling or understanding.

0 Points: No response posted or very brief response without genuine contribution or interaction (e.g. "I agree" or the like).

Academic Honesty

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park Theological Seminary is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to the discipline of up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. For more information refer to the Academic Dishonesty section in the catalog. Cheating includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Plagiarism—the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the Internet. If you have questions about how to use outside material, please consult with me or the library staff.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.

Support Services

If you need assistance with Moodle or other technical matters, please open a HelpDesk ticket through Moodle.

Disabilities Accommodations

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations on this class are encouraged to contact the program’s office. Please do so as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. For more information please review the following website:

<http://www.northpark.edu/Campus-Life-and-Services/Disability-Resources>.

Computer Requirements

In order to participate effectively in and complete successfully this course, each participant will need to have access to a computer and high-speed internet connection. Please visit <http://www.northpark.edu/Current-Students/Computer-Services/Network/Minimum-Requirements.aspx> for information on computer requirements.