Introduction to New Testament 2
United Theological Seminary
February 10-13, 2014 Intensive
T-F, 8:00am – 6:30pm
K. Edwin Bryant, PhD

Description

This course is an introduction to the literature that comprises the New Testament in its ancient cultural contexts. Attention will be devoted to the historical setting of the New Testament, the process by which the New Testament writings came into existence, and the structure and content of each writing.

Students will encounter major themes in early Christian tradition, such as: salvation, sin, faith, discipleship, the Spirit, and the church. Where appropriate, comparisons will be made with similar themes in Jewish and Greco-Roman literature of the period.

The course provides opportunities for students to utilize various methods of interpretation that have been applied to the New Testament. A secondary concern of the course involves the use of the New Testament as a source for reconstructing the social experience of the first Christians.

Aims and Outcomes

The aims of the course are: a) to acquire a sound knowledge of the literary and theological characteristics of the New Testament writings; b) to appreciate the role of historical, cultural, and social contexts in the composition of the texts of the New Testament; c) to nurture the skills of close, comparative reading of the New Testament texts; d) to provide opportunities for exegetical practice; e) to gain a critical perspective on the variety of interpretations which one encounters today, so as to provide a framework for reading which is responsible to religious communities and to the academy.

Requirements

1. It is expected that students will prepare for class by reading the primary texts and required secondary literature, and will reflect that preparation in class discussion.

2. Students will prepare a written exercise, approximately five double-spaced pages in length, on Acts 2:43-47. Students will interact with Acts 2:43-47 and address the following: a) the history of interpretation of the passage, b) the import and implications of the Spirit within the context of the early church (as depicted in Acts), and c) the reception of the Apostle’s teaching by early Christian believers. Please cite and properly document all sources (according to UTS academic guidelines). The exercise is due on or before February 9, 2015.
3. **Critical Reflection Papers:** Each student will be required to submit three (3) critical reflection papers. These reflection papers will cover material presented in lectures, discussions, and contained in assigned readings. Please submit your papers at the beginning of each class session. Papers should not exceed two (2) typewritten pages (not including the cover page) and should conform to an argumentative essay style (e.g., see the style guidelines of Kate L. Turabian, et. al., *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Sixth Edition. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).

4. **Students will prepare one (1) comprehensive exegesis paper on one (1) of the following texts:** Romans 6:12-23; 1 Corinthians 9:1-12; 1 John 4:7-12; Revelation 4:1-11. Papers are due on or before February 20, 2015.

5. **A final examination will be administered on February 13.** The exam will cover material presented in lectures, discussions, and contained in assigned readings. The exam will consist of brief identifications and short essay questions.

A course of this nature can be successful to the extent that each student brings to his or her work a commitment to the materials and a willingness to assume the responsibility for assigned readings and classroom discussions.

**Required Texts**


**Recommended Texts**


Please engage the following steps (in part or in whole) as you prepare your critical analysis of Acts 2:43-47, critical reflection submissions, and exegesis paper.

1. Become familiar with your selection by comparing it in at least four (4) different translations of the NT. One of these translations must be the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) found in your New Oxford Annotated Bible (NOAB) or similar. Read the text aloud. Make notes on the following: What is the selection about? Write a brief summary of the passage; and what are the differences between translations? Identify and make note of these differences. Make copies of the various translations for your journal.

2. Read 2 or 3 chapters before and after your passage. You may benefit from reading the entire book. This is called checking the literary context. Make notes on the following: Write a brief summary of the broader context; how does checking the context in this way help you understand your passage? How does your passage fit with what happens before and after your passage or how does the message of your passage fit with what is taught in the literary context?

3. Look at the footnotes and study notes relating to your particular text in your NOAB and one other study Bible. Be sure to examine parallels of your text, which may appear in other NT books. Give a full citation of each of the study Bibles you are using here. Make clear, complete, and careful notes, being sure to give credit to the writers of these notes. Use the following format:


4. It gets tough here so PAY ATTENTION! Are there textual or translation questions you need to understand? That is, are there questions about what the wording of the original Greek text actually was or about how to translate a word or phrase in English? Use the margin and footnotes in NOAB. Be careful to read the text with each option applied. How is the reading of the text affected with each option?

5. Be careful while taking notes to avoid plagiarism. The source must be given credit for ideas, words, and phrases you borrow. Use quotation marks even in your notes to identify what you have borrowed. Record the full citation for the Bible dictionary you used here. Remember to record the name of the person who wrote the article not just the editor of the volume.

6. Preceding your particular Bible book in your NOAB is an introduction to the book itself. Read this introduction and make notes of any insights you gained from learning about the situation of the writing or the author. In addition, using the Bible dictionary, read the introductory article for your book of the Bible. Make careful notes and remember to give the writer credit for ideas and words you borrow.
7. Write a paraphrase of your passage. In other words, restate the passage, line-by-line, sentence by sentence, in your own words. Answer the following: What is it saying? What issues or questions arise in this passage that need further attention? Identify these.

8. Now it is time to test your thoughts and impressions. Study the comments on your passage in at least two (2) one-volume commentaries, looking for answers to your questions and suggestions about the passage's meaning. Choose from the following commentaries for this project:

Harper-Collins Bible Commentary
Mercer Commentary on the Bible
The Interpreter’s One-Volume Commentary on the Bible
The Women’s Bible Commentary
The New Jerome Biblical Commentary

9. Make careful notes with full citations for each commentary you use. When you borrow ideas, words, phrases, etc, of another you MUST give credit to the one from whom you borrow the information. Moreover, be sure to give the name of the author, not just the editor of the volume. The format used for the Bible dictionary should be used here. Give the page number when the information is borrowed. Do not wait until the end of the note taking to give the range of pages.

10. Study the comments in at least two (2) full-scale commentaries, comparing the conclusions to which the commentators come. Make careful and complete notes. You will be graded on thoroughness. Choose from the following commentaries:

The Interpreter’s Bible
The New Interpreter's Bible
Word Biblical Commentary
The Anchor Bible
Interpretation
Jerome Biblical Commentary
The International Critical Commentary
The New American Commentary

Write a two-page reflection paper. Answer the following questions: What does the text mean in the setting of Jesus’ ministry? What did the text mean to the early church that collected these writings? What does the text mean today, as it is applied in contemporary situations?
Intensive Course Outline

February 10, 2014

2/10  Paul in Acts
2/10  1 and 2 Thessalonians
2/10  Corinthian Correspondence, Part A
2/10  Corinthian Correspondence, Part B

February 11, 2014

2/11  Corinthian Correspondence, Continued
2/11  Galatians
2/11  Philippians
2/11  Philemon
2/11  Colossians and Ephesians

February 12, 2014

2/12  The Pastoral Epistles
2/12  The Petrine Epistles
2/12  Hebrews
2/12  James

February 13, 2014

2/13  Romans
2/13  The Johannine Literature
2/13  The Apocalypse

Schedule of Classes and Readings

2/10 Paul in Acts

Primary:
Gal. 1:11-2:21; Phil. 3:4-7; 2 Cor. 11:22;
1 Cor. 15:8; 2 Cor. 1:8-11; Rom. 15:14-21

Secondary:
2/10 1 and 2 Thessalonians

Primary:
1 Thess. 1:1-5:28

Secondary:

2/10 Corinthian Correspondence

Primary:
1 Cor. 5:9-13;
1 Cor. 6:12-20; 10-11
1 Cor. 7-9, 12-16
1 Cor. 1:1-6:11

Secondary:

2/10 Corinthian Correspondence

Primary:
2 Cor. 8
2 Cor. 10-13
2 Cor. 2:14-7:4
2 Cor. 1:1-2:13; 7:5-16

Secondary:

2/11 Galatians

Primary:
Gal 1:1-6:18

Secondary:
2/11 Philippians

Primary:
Phil. 4:10-20
Phil. 3:2-4:3; 4:8-9
Phil. 1:1-3:1; 4:4-7; 4:21-23

Secondary:

2/11 Philemon

Primary:
Philemon

Secondary:

2/11 Colossians and Ephesians

Primary:
Col. 1:1-4:18
Eph. 1:1-6:24

Secondary:

2/12 Pastoral Epistles

Primary:
1 & 2 Timothy; Titus

Secondary:
2/12  The Petrine Epistles

Primary:
1 & 2 Peter
Jude

Secondary:

2/12  Hebrews

Primary:
Hebrews

Secondary:

2/12  James

Primary:
James

Secondary:

2/13  Romans

Primary:
Romans 1-16

Secondary:

2/13  The Johannine Literature

Primary:
The Gospel of John
1, 2 & 3 John

Secondary:
2/13 The Apocalypse

Primary:
Apocalypse of John

Secondary: