

COURSE SYLLABUS
THE NEW TESTAMENT
 Humanities RELS 213
 Spring 2008

Lecturer: Paul R. Shockley

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00am-1:00pm

or by appointment on Tuesdays/Thursdays

Location of class: HECC 209

Time of class: 9:35am-10:50am

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Office location: Bolton Hall 308

Office phone: 979-845-5660

I. Course Description: The origin and development of the religious and philosophical concepts of the New Testament. Cross-listed with RELS 213. 3 hours.

II. Course Objectives:

A. Cognitive:

- To orient ourselves to significant religious and philosophical concepts of the New Testament.
- To explore some of the major cultural, economic, historical and political issues of the New Testament era.
- To identify the Jewish and Greek religious and philosophical beliefs and practices of the New Testament era.
- To construct the economic situation of the New Testament era.
- To describe the geography of the New Testament era.
- To evaluate the synoptic problem and the major theories which seek to explain and resolve the problem.
- To construct the major events of the life of Jesus Christ in chronological order.
- To identify the major themes and literary structure of each New Testament book covered.
- To consider some of the more rigorous interpretative debates in New Testament theology.
- To identify the differences between narrative, epistolary, and apocalyptic literature.

B. Affective:

- To gain an awareness of some of the central religious and philosophical concepts and issues in New Testament scholarship.

- To gain skills in interpreting New Testament literature given the various types of literary genre, motifs, ideas, events, and characters.
- To critically reflect upon the religious and philosophical ideas of the New Testament that contributed to Western thought and culture.

III. Grade Policies, Requirements, & Quiz/Exam Information:

A. Course Policies and Requirements:

- 33.3% 11 pop quizzes on assigned readings. One free miss permitted. Others cannot be made up without a cogent documented excuse.
- 33.3% First Exam.
- 33.3% Final Cumulative Exam.
- Attendance is expected but not required. A complete attendance report may be filed with the student's dean and the registrar with the final course grade. Notwithstanding, all students are required to be present for announced exams. Because of the nature of pop quizzes, it is in your best interest to attend class, especially since they count 33.3% towards your final grade.

B. Required Books:

- F. F. Bruce, *New Testament History* (New York: Doubleday, 1969).
- Douglas Groothuis, *On Jesus*, Wadsworth Philosophers Series (London: Wadsworth, 2003).
- *New American Standard Bible*.

C. Quiz & Exam Information:

- I will assign 11 pop quizzes over assigned reading which includes New Testament portions, Douglas Groothuis' *On Jesus*, and F. F. Bruce's *New Testament History*.
- Each quiz will be given at the beginning of class. Punctuality to class is imperative. No one who arrives more than 15 minutes late will be able to take the quiz for that session.
- If you take all 11 quizzes, then I will drop your lowest score.
- Any missed quiz or exam without a cogent documented excuse will be counted numerically as a zero (00). This is considerably lower than an average F.
- You do not need scan-tron forms or blue books for the 11 pop quizzes. I will distribute writing material.

- The quizzes may include essay, true/false, multiple-choice, or short answer. Make sure you have a writing utensil each class period.
- Each exam will be an objective format made up of multiple choice and true/false questions. You will not need scan-tron or blue books. I will supply the paper. Please bring writing utensil.
- Each exam will cover lecture material and assigned readings as dictated on course schedule and reading assignments.
- I may add additional required readings as deemed appropriate. I will inform you if the material will be added to quizzes or exams.
- Use your quiz questions, lecture notes, and mid-semester exam to help prepare for final cumulative exam.
- Any student *who has* to miss the mid-semester exam on 4 March 2008 must personally contact me with a cogent documented excuse to re-take the exam within two class days. If you miss the final exam, contact me to take the exam immediately; otherwise, you receive no credit for the exam.

IV. General Rules:

- No use of cell-phones, text-messaging, games, I-Pods (or equivalent), or internet in class. No use of any technological device that may be a distraction to the learning process. Laptops are acceptable. Please silence cell-phones before class.
- No smoking or use of tobacco will be permitted in the classroom.
- All university rules governing academic dishonesty will apply.
- Students may eat snacks or breakfast during the class session provided they remove any resulting trash.
- Lectures may not be taped, recorded, or video transcribed.
- Respect your classmates and lecturer.
- If you have to step out to the restroom be sure to do so quietly.

V. How to do well in this course:

- Carefully read assigned books. Bombard your assigned readings with the following questions: why, where, what, when, who, and so what?
- Consider making an outline of the major units of thought in your readings. As you formulate your outline from the reading, ask yourself the following question: “*What do I see?*” The more observations you make, the better your interpretation of the author’s position or claim may be. Afterwards ask, “*What does it mean?*”

- After you outline the author’s position/claim go back and see what arguments are being provided to support that position or claim. Keep asking yourself, “*What is the issue?*” Then consider what objections can be raised against that issue, position, or claim. Lastly, what replies can be given to defend the position or claim against these objections.
- You should consult with me as often as possible to make sure you are understanding the material. Do not wait until the day before a test to begin studying. This is not the kind of course for which you can cram and expect to do well. Take advantage of the office hours.
- Consider forming study groups to prepare for quizzes and exams.
- Make sure you are able to contact another student for lecture material in case you happen to miss a class (es). I do not distribute my notes.
- Eight Strategies for First-Rate Studying:

Read Thoughtfully
 Read Repeatedly
 Read Patiently
 Read Selectively
 Read Imaginatively
 Read Purposefully
 Read Acquisitively
 Read Telescopically

If you want to improve your reading comprehension skills I would encourage you to purchase Mortimer J. Adler’s informative work, *How to Read a Book*.

VI. Class Schedule, Topics, and Assigned Readings:

Class meeting	Topic	NASB	Reading Assignment
Jan. 15 th	Introduction to Course: New Testament & Worldview Thinking	Must read Scripture portions before each class.	The reading assignments are due by corresponding class meeting.
Jan. 17 th	Hermeneutics & Translation Theory	Matt. 1:1- 13:52; Mark 1:1-6:30; Luke 1:1-9:10; John 1:1-5:47	Groothius: Ch. 1 Bruce: Ch. 1
Jan. 22	Introduction to the Gospels	Matt. 14:13- 20:34; Mark 6:31-10:52; Luke 9:10-19:28;	Groothius: Ch. 2 Bruce: Ch. 2

		John 6:1-11:54	
Jan. 24	The Gospel of Mark	Matt. 21:-23:39; Mark 11:1-12:44; Luke 19:29-21:4; John 11:55-12:50	Groothius: Chs. 3-5
Jan. 29	The Gospel of Mark: Is Humility a Necessary Virtue?	Matt. 24:1-26:46; Mark 13:1-14:42; Luke 21:5-22:46; John 13:1-18:1 Philippians 2:1-11	Groothius: Chs. 6-7
Jan. 31	The Gospel of John Theories of Atonement	Matt. 26:47-57:66; Mark 14:43-15:47; Luke 22:47-23:56; John 19:2-42	Groothius: Ch. 8 Bruce: Chs. 4-5
Feb. 5	The Gospel of John Theories of the Resurrection	Matt. 28:1-25 Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; John 20:21-25; Acts 1:3-8; 1 Cor. 15:5-7	Bruce: Chs. 6-7
Feb. 7	Debate on Resurrection of Jesus Christ with Marcus Borg & William Lane Craig	Acts 1:3-8; 1 Cor. 15:5-7; Rev. 1; Rev. 19	Bruce: Chs. 8-9
Feb. 12	The Book of Acts Pneumatology	The Book of Acts	Bruce: Chs. 10-11
Feb. 14	Introduction to the Apostle Paul & Book of Romans; Theories Concerning the Constitution of Humanity	Romans 1:1-3:23	Bruce: Chs. 12-13
Feb. 19	Romans Continued: Theories on Original Sin & Imputation	Romans 3:23-5:21	Bruce: Chs. 14-15
Feb. 21	Romans Continued: Theories on the Nature of Sin & Salvation	Romans 5:21-8:39	Bruce: Chs. 16-17

Feb. 26	<i>Is Goodness without God Good Enough?</i> Debate with Paul Kurtz and William Lane Craig	Romans chapters 12-16	Bruce: Ch. 18
Feb. 28	Romans Continued: Major Views of Election	Romans Chapters 9-11	No reading
Mar. 4	Exam 1	DO NOT BE LATE TO CLASS	Be sure to examine your lecture notes, reading material, and previous quizzes.
Mar. 6	1 & 2 Corinthians What is Love?	1 & 2 Corinthians	Bruce: Ch. 19
Mar. 18	Galatians Views of Sanctification	Galatians; Ephesians	Bruce: Ch. 20
Mar. 20	Ephesians What is the Church?	Ephesians; 1 Timothy; 2 Timothy; Titus	Bruce: Ch. 21
Mar. 25	Hebrews	Hebrews	Bruce: Ch. 22
Mar. 27	Philippians	Philippians	Bruce: Ch. 23
Apr. 1	Philippians Views of Kenosis	Philippians; Philemon	Bruce: Ch. 24
Apr. 3	James Faith vs. Works?	James	Bruce: Ch. 25
Apr. 8	Introduction to Peter & Petrine Theology; Did Jesus go to hell? 1 Peter 3:18-22	1 & 2 Peter	Bruce: Ch. 26
Apr. 10	The Epistles of John	1-3 John/Jude	Bruce: Ch. 27
Apr. 15	Introduction to Apocalyptic Genre and Eschatology	1 & 2 Thessalonians; Matthew 24-25	Bruce: Ch. 28
Apr. 17	The Book of Revelation Views on the Rapture & Theories of Rewards	Revelation 1-3	Bruce: Ch. 29
Apr. 22	The Book of Revelation A Heavenly Vision	Revelation 4-5	Bruce: Ch. 30
Apr. 24	The Book of Revelation	Revelation 6-18	No Reading

Apr. 29	The Book of Revelation Views of Millennialism, Hell, & Theories of Universalism.	Revelation 19-22	No reading
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FINAL EXAM: 2 MAY 2007
12:30pm-2:30pm

VII. OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS:

A. Topics, Assignments, and Office Hours are subject to change. It is best to contact me by e.mail at prshockley@juno.com to make an office appointment. I'm here for you.

B. ADA Policy Statement:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities, in Cain Hall or call 845-1637.

C. Academic Integrity: Aggie Honor Code

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.”

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. The Honor System Rules and Procedures may be found on the web at <<http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>>

Expressly prohibited by the honor code is plagiarism. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists in passing off as one's own ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated.