

COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL
 Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
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YEAR THREE
 2019

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COS 321 Bible III: Gospels

This course focuses on the content and message of the Gospels, as well as the theological perspective of the Gospel writers. The practice of exegesis will be emphasized.

Course Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the origin, message, and purpose of each Gospel.
2. Exegete this form of literature.
3. Apply exegesis to preaching, other pastoral responsibilities, and issues of the present day.

Required Textbooks:

- Fee, G.D. (2002). New Testament exegesis: A handbook for students and pastors. 3rd ed.
 Westminster John Knox Press. ISBN-13: 978-0664223168
- Johnson, L.T. (2010). The writings of the New Testament: An interpretation. 3rd ed. Fortress Press.
 ISBN-13: 978-080063612
- Malina, B., & Rohrbaugh, R. (1993). Social-science commentary on the Synoptic Gospels. 2nd ed.
 Fortress Press. ISBN-13: 978-080063612
- Throckmorton, B., ed. (1992). Gospel parallels: A comparison of the Synoptic Gospels. 5th ed.
 Thomas Nelson Publishers. ISBN-13: 978-0840774842

Optional Textbook:

- Culpepper, R.A. (1983). Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A study in literary design. Fortress Press.
 ISBN-13: 978-0800620684

Instructions for assignments:

There are two kinds of assignments. (1) There are written homework assignments (questions) which you will answer and e-mail to the Course of Study office (coshomework@garrett.edu) and submit to your instructor in the forum provided in the course shell by the required date. (2) There

are online assignments which you will access by going to the ECOS-321 course shell at www.moodle.garrett.edu and follow the instructions you will find there.

Assignments: You will submit the completed set of written questions to the COS office and to the instructor by the required date. Complete instructions for the online assignments are found on the course website.

1. Online Assignment 1: Watch the introductory videos posted by your instructor, post your introduction in the forum provided and respond to others in the class. (20 minutes)
2. Online Assignment 2: Watch the YouTube lectures online, list major points, and indicate whether each point is new information for you or is something you already know. Submit document online in the forum provided. (one hour and fifty minutes)
3. Online Assignment 3: Watch the 4-part video lecture by your instructor on “Ways of Understanding the Gospels.” This information will help you prepare your written assignments including the final exam. (40 minutes)
4. Online Assignment 4: In a first ZOOM video-conference session we will discuss the question: **Why is it important to understand the social context of the Gospels?** Also select 5 words from the index of the Social Science Commentary and be prepared to explain why they are significant for understanding Jesus’ ministry. (50 minutes) The Zoom session will take place between June 15 and July 15 (time to be arranged).
5. Online assignment 5: Read the explanation of honor and shame societies in the Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels. Then select two chapters in the Gospel of Matthew and identify passages where honor and shame concepts come into play in these two chapters. We will discuss the passages each of you has chosen in a second ZOOM video-conference that will take place between June 15 and July 15 (60 minutes, time to be arranged).
6. Written Assignment 1: Questions 1-24. (one written page on each question unless otherwise noted) You will find the instructions for the written assignments and the questions at the end of this syllabus and in a separate document in the topic titled Written Assignments.
7. Written Assignment 2: Questions 25-28. (one written page per question)

Instructions for written assignments:

Read the textbook, take notes, and answer the questions in your own words, using complete sentences (unless otherwise noted). Do not quote extensively from the texts you read. Digest the ideas and information, and then put them in your own words. If a question has more than one part, be sure to answer both parts.

Follow approximate length given for each item of written work. Your written work should be double-spaced, with a one-inch margin. Please use 12-point font. Do not use script, condensed, or all caps.

On each page of your work, include a header with your name, the class number, and the page number. You do not need to begin each new question on a new page. However be sure to write the number of that question at the beginning of your answer.

If you quote from a printed text, you must use quotation marks and note the source (including pages) in parentheses at the end of each usage. Quotations should never be more than a sentence or two long. Ideas and information should be stated in your own words, not in the words of the authors you have read. For assigned texts, you may abbreviate the titles by using the first letter of each word in the title. For example, if the source is *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, then use (*HBD*, pp. 34-35). If you refer to books that are not listed on the class reading list, then you must give full bibliographic information.

Add a title page to your document that includes the name and number of the course, and your name.

Submit your written work electronically to the Course of Study Office at coshomework@garrett.edu by the required date. In addition, submit your written homework to your instructor via the submission link in Topic five of the course shell. You might want to make a copy of your written material and bring it with you for your own use.

POLICY NOTE: Using other people's materials without documentation, whether from a book, journal, teacher, another student, sermon service, or lectionary aid, is unacceptable behavior. Such activity, otherwise known as plagiarism, usually means failure for the course with notification sent to the Conference Course of Study Registrar and the Division of Ordained Ministry. Professors will report all instances of plagiarism to the Director of the Course of Study. The Director will arrange for a meeting with the professor and the student, and the student will be given opportunity to explain the situation. The Director, in consultation with the professor, will make a decision about what action is appropriate for a first instance of plagiarism. Such action could include, rewriting the material, or failure of the course. A brief summary of the meeting will be prepared by the Director, and placed in the student's file in the Course of Study Office and kept there until the student completes the Course of Study Curriculum. If a second instance of plagiarism is documented, the student will fail the course and the Director will determine what other consequences may apply. (policy rev. 6/00)

Written Assignment Questions

1. Photocopy the Gospel parallels entitled "Confession at Caesarea Philippi and the First Prediction of the Passion" (#122) and "The Entry into Jerusalem" (#196), found in your Gospel Parallels (Throckmorton) and underline the words in color as follows: Blue ink = words found identically in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Yellow ink = words found identically in Matthew and Mark. Red ink = words found identically in Matthew and Luke. Green ink = words found

identically in Mark and Luke.

2. How can the large number of identical words in Matthew, Mark, and Luke in these two passages (those in question 1 above) be explained? Suggest as many different possibilities as you can. This is a question about oral and/or written sources. It is not specifically about the Synoptic Problem.
3. Read the article, “The Synoptic Problem,” in the Harper's Bible Dictionary or The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. What is the Two Document Hypothesis? What does it mean regarding the order in which the Synoptic Gospels were written? Discuss two other viable theories? Does it make a difference how you solve the Synoptic Problem (personally, historically, theologically)? (3 pages total)
4. What did you learn from the Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels? (2 pages)

Gospel of Mark

After reading chapter seven in The Writings of the New Testament (3rd ed.) by Luke Timothy Johnson, answer the following 5 questions:

5. Discuss three examples of Mark's literary care and skill in constructing his narrative.
6. Discuss the portrait of Jesus' disciples in Mark (give specific examples).
7. How does Mark's use of parables differ from Luke's use of Jesus' parables. (Give specific examples).
8. Make a case that Peter's recognition of Jesus at Caesarea Phillipi (8:29) is the fulcrum of Mark's Gospel.
9. What literary effect does the open ending of the Gospel (assuming it ends at 16:8) have on the reader?

Gospel of Matthew

After reading chapter eight in The Writings of the New Testament (3rd ed.) by Luke Timothy Johnson, answer the following 5 questions:

10. Why is Matthew's Gospel appropriately called “the Gospel of the Church”?
11. What role do the infancy narratives play in Matthew's Gospel?
12. How does Matthew's Gospel portray Jesus in chapters 5-7 (the Sermon on the Mount)?
13. Many have said that Matthew paints Jesus with the imagery of Moses. Give specific examples and discuss the implications.

14. Is Matthew anti-Jewish? Discuss what examples exist in the Gospel of Matthew to support this claim as well as how Matthew's Gospel might be defended against this charge.

Gospel of Luke

After reading chapter nine in The Writings of the New Testament (3rd ed.) by Luke Timothy Johnson, answer the following 5 questions:

15. What are the elements of Luke's portrayal of his leading characters as prophets?
16. How does Luke describe the disciples of Jesus differently from Mark?
17. How and why are the infancy narratives in Luke different from those in Matthew?
18. Assess what is meant by the claim that the author of Luke is an historian.
19. Offer an argument for calling Luke the "Book of the Holy Spirit."

Gospel of John

After reading chapter twenty-four in The Writings of the New Testament (3rd ed.) by Luke Timothy Johnson, answer the following 5 questions:

20. What are some of the key metaphors in the Gospel of John?
21. Identify some of the specific ways in which the Gospel of John is different from the Synoptic Gospels.
22. How does the depiction of Jesus' opponents in John differ from his opponents in the Synoptic Gospels?
23. How does the prologue of the Gospel of John relate to the Gospel as a whole?
24. How are the final words of Jesus on the cross (19:30) appropriate for the image of Jesus and his death in the Gospel of John?
25. Some parables can be interpreted allegorically (elements serve as symbols) very easily. See The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible or Harper's Bible Dictionary for allegory and parable. Read Luke 20:9-18 and Luke 10:29-37. How did the early Church interpret the first parable using allegory? Be specific. Why is more difficult to interpret the second parable using allegory? Did Jesus intend that his parables be interpreted allegorically? (2 pages)
26. Luke's Gospel is a treasure store of the parables of Jesus. List at least five parables found only in Luke (give the name, the chapter, and verse); consult your Gospel Parallels for verification.

Relate each parable to a possible situation in Jesus' ministry. Use a commentary for ideas. Give a one-sentence account of the point Jesus makes in each parable you list.

27. Write an exegetical paper 5 pages in length based on Luke 4:16-30 using Gordon Fees's New Testament Exegesis. Briefly indicate where you used Fee's steps that you consider most important for understanding this passage. Some examples are: Step 2—Confirm the limits of the passage; Step 10—Use a Gospel Synopsis to determine which parts of the passage are double or triple tradition and identify important differences; Step 11—Possible life settings in the ministry of Jesus.
28. Write a detailed sermon outline or complete sermon manuscript based on Luke's version of "The Rejection at Nazareth" (Luke 4:16-30).

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CLASS SESSIONS (Class assignments are subject to change.)

Session 1

Review approaches to understanding the Gospels—overview of form criticism, source criticism, redaction criticism, and literary criticism. An introduction to sociological and feminist/liberationist perspectives.

Assignment: Using what you have learned about literary criticism, write one-half page on either of these 2 questions: (1) How does Matthew characterize the Pharisees and what methods does he use? (2) Explain how the element of conflict with the Pharisees is central to the plot of the Gospel of Matthew. Be very specific. (1/2 page)

Session 2

Continued discussion of ways of understanding the Gospels. Discuss Synoptic Problem.

Assignment: Using a concordance, look up each occurrence of “Holy Spirit” in the Gospel of Luke and give the context. Which have parallels in Matthew and Mark? As a redaction critic, what conclusions can you draw about Lukan “additions”? (1 page)

Session 3

The Gospel according to Matthew—authorship, special emphases, purpose

Assignment: How do Jesus parables help us to understand his ministry? How does current scholarly interpretation challenge your understanding of the parables (1 page)

Session 4

The Gospel according to Luke —authorship, special emphases, purpose and the Gospel according to Mark—authorship, special emphases, purpose.

Assignment: Take home exam (1 page)

Session 5

The Gospel according to John—authorship, special emphases, purpose.

Grading System:

Your grade of A,B,C,D or F for this course will be based on the following:

60% assignments completed before the beginning of class

10% daily assignments

20% final exam

10% class participation

Instructor:

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Please contact me if you have questions.