

# 1.205 - THE WITNESS OF THE GOSPELS

SPRING 2012

Dr. Mark Vitalis Hoffman

## RATIONALE

The four canonical gospels have stood at the core of the church's faith, confession, and witness. A basic understanding of these foundational Biblical books is essential for those called to rostered ministry in order to listen to God's Word in community and function as leaders in church and world through worship, education, service, and encouragement. Understanding the gospels includes engaging in critical reading and reflection on these texts as well as studying their social, literary, cultural, historical, source, theological, and textual dynamics. In this course, students will be introduced to the basic aspects of exegeting texts in their original language as foundational work for preaching, teaching, and integrating gospel texts for the life of faith and of the church. Through studying the four gospels, students will also come to a greater understanding of the early Christian proclamation of Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection as well as the meaning of discipleship and mission in the 1<sup>st</sup> century and the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The study of four distinct gospel narratives will also highlight the theological diversity that is fundamental to the biblical witness and to the life of the church at the crossroads of history and hope.

## OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able:

1. to describe the basic literary and theological framework of each gospel story including themes such as Christology, soteriology, discipleship.
  - Specifically, given a passage, students should be able to identify the Gospel in which it occurs on the basis of its vocabulary, thematic focus, geography, incident, etc.
  - Assessments: Quizzes 1, 4-8, NTPGEQuiz, Class & Online participation
2. to characterize the religious, social, geographical, and historical dynamics of 1<sup>st</sup> century Palestine as they relate to the life of Jesus, the growth of early Christian movements, and the formation of each gospel story.
  - Specifically, students should be able to: describe the main religious groups of 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Judaism; understand and note elements of 1<sup>st</sup> century Palestinian economics, politics, and honor and shame systems; identify the important locations of Jesus' ministry on a map
  - Assessments: Quiz 2, NTPGEQuiz, Class & Online participation
3. to explain the basic issues and attendant problems involved in scholarly quests for the historical Jesus.
  - Specifically, students should be able to describe key positions held regarding the historical Jesus by such scholars as Crossan, Borg, Sanders, Meier, and Wright
  - Assessments: Quiz 3, Class & Online participation
4. to demonstrate an ability to engage in a critical reading of select gospel texts in order to discern and communicate what those texts originally proclaimed in their canonical contexts and what they may proclaim to individuals and the church today.
  - Specifically, students should be able to present exegetical studies on assigned gospel passages using the Greek text as well as text, source, form, redaction, and narrative criticisms. In addition, they should be able to express the significance of such studies faithfully and persuasively for proclamation, teaching, and counseling.
  - Assessments: Exegetical Summaries, Final Exegetical Paper, Class & Online participation
5. to integrate the discoveries and studies from this course with their experiences and studies in Teaching Parish and in the Homiletics courses.
  - Specifically, students will choose a pericope in this course that will be used for preaching and/or teaching.
  - Assessments: Integrative Project, Class & Online participation

## STRATEGIES

In order to accomplish the stated Outcomes of this course, the following Strategies will be employed:

### 1. CLASS SESSIONS

Large group meets in Valentine 310. Small group sessions meet in Valentine 308.

- Large Group: Fridays, 8:30-11:45AM
- Small Group: Section A (1:00-2:30PM Fridays)  
Section B (1:30-3:00PM Mondays)

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BRING THE NET BIBLE TO EVERY CLASS (both large and small groups; BibleWorks9 is an acceptable alternative)

### 2. CLASS PARTICIPATION

The students will be expected to attend class regularly, have read all required readings prior to class, accomplish all pertinent translations/exegeses, and to be prepared to discuss the topics for each session both in-class and online.

### 3. CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be expected to hand in all assignments on time. Assignments will be accepted past the due date **ONLY** if the reason for tardiness is commensurate with a reason why a rostered leader would not be prepared to preach or teach as expected by their congregation on a given Sunday.

### 4. REQUIRED READING

The following are included as the required texts for this course:

- *The New Revised Standard Version Bible with Apocrypha* (recommended: HarperCollins Study Edition or *The New Oxford Annotated* [3<sup>rd</sup> ed.] or *The Access Bible*)
- NET Bible Nestle-Aland<sup>27</sup> Diglot ([http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page\\_id=2056](http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=2056))
- Theissen, Gerd. *The Shadow of the Galilean: The Quest of the Historical Jesus in Narrative Form*
- Hanson, K.C. and Douglas E. Oakman. *Palestine in the Time of Jesus: Social Structures and Social Conflicts*
- Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*
- Rhoads, David, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie. *Mark as Story. An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*

#### **RECOMMENDED READING** (NOT required, but optional extra credit possible)

- Powell, Mark Allan. *Jesus as a Figure in History: How Modern Historians View the Man from Galilee*
- Powell, Mark Allan. *God with Us: A Pastoral Theology of Matthew's Gospel*
- Carter, Warren. *Matthew: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*
- Green, Joel B. *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke*
- Smith, D. Moody. *The Theology of the Gospel of John*
- Malina, Bruce J. and Rohrbaugh, Richard L. *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*
- Malina, Bruce J. and Rohrbaugh, Richard L. *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John*
- For additional recommended resources:

<http://scrollandscreen.com/biblestudyresources/semresources.htm>

Note: there may also be periodic readings from other texts that may be found on reserve in the LTSG library or on the class web site

## 5. REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS

### A. Quizzes

Throughout the semester students will receive 7 take home quizzes that will be based on the readings for the coming week. **Quizzes are due at 8:30 a.m. on Friday mornings.** One final quiz will be given in class on the last day of the course. The quiz schedule may be found in the Course Schedule below. Note: These quizzes are very similar if not the same as previous years' ones. You are not allowed to consult them. These quizzes, you will find, are more like study guides to help you through the required readings.

### B. The Non-Trivial Pursuit Gospel Edition Quiz

Students will receive The Non-Trivial Pursuit Gospel Edition Quiz take home assignment on Friday, February 10. **It will be due Friday, March 9.** More specific instructions will be given at the time this assignment is distributed.

### C. Exegetical Summaries

Students will pick one of the following passages at the beginning of the semester to use for their focused exegetical summaries and final exegetical paper. You will be working in groups of not more than 7. You will need to sign up for a text study group by Friday, 29 January.

- Matthew 14.13-21 (Jesus feeds 5000: Proper 13A)
- Mark 4.35-41 (Stilling a storm: Proper 7B)
- Luke 19:1-10 (Jesus & Zacchaeus: Proper 26C)
- John 10.11-18 (Jesus the Good Shepherd: Easter4B)
- **Focused Exegetical Summaries:** You will be working on these online in your study groups. There are 7 of them, and your **initial round of comments is due by 5pm on Mondays** as noted in the syllabus. The summary guidelines I will provide will usually be less than 1 page long. Everyone in the group will receive the same grade for each exegetical summary, and the grade will be based on the quality of the group's work. The degree to which each student contributes quality work to the group outcome will be reflected in his/her class participation grade. Each member of the group will take responsibility at least once for making sure the group completes its work on time. The final version of the focused exegetical summary will be **completed by Tuesdays at 5PM.**
- **The Final Exegetical Paper is due on Wednesday, April 11 at 5:00 p.m.** It is composed of two sections:
  1. An Exegetical Summary, 1-2 pages long (single spaced; 1.25" margins on all sides; 12 point font), that summarizes the significant findings of your focused exegetical summaries.
  2. An Interpretive Summary, 5-7 pages long (double spaced; 1.25" margins on all sides; 12 point font), that presents a thesis about the passage's / author's intended message. More detailed rubrics for this paper will be given in class.

### D. Integrative Project

Based on the text used for the Final Exegetical Summary, each student will complete a project that integrates that text with a possible ministry application. It could take the form of a Bible study, sermon, art, music, web page, etc. The completed project is to be **completed by 8:30 a.m. on Friday, April 27.**

### E. Optional Extra Credit

Students may choose to write a 1-2 page book review of one of the books on a Gospel author in the "Recommended Reading" list. This review needs to be turned in by the last day of class.

## ASSESSMENTS

Evaluation of students will be as follows:

- Quizzes: 15 %
- Non-Trivial Pursuit Gospel Quiz: 10 %
- Focused Exegetical Summaries: 20 %
- Final Exegetical Summary: 25 %
- Integrative Project: 10 %
- Classroom Preparation and Quality Classroom and Online Participation: 20 %
- Extra Credit: 1-2 page Book Review (Matthew/Luke/John) up to + 4%

Grading scale:

- 93%-100%: A (Superior)
- 80%-92%: B (Good)
- 70%-79%: C (Sufficient)
- Below 70%: F (Failure)
- 70% or higher is a Passing grade

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### **RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY DISCOURSE**

In both written and oral discourse, students are expected to abide by the guidelines of the “Responsible Community Discourse Statement” found in the Student Handbook.

### **PLAGIARISM**

We will adhere to the definition of plagiarism and the consequences for it as elucidated on page 31 and in related sections of the 2011-2012 Student Handbook. If you have any further questions about plagiarism in your final paper, see the instructor or the Writing & Research Center specialist.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK OF: TOPIC	FRIDAY CLASS WORK DUE - READING ASSIGNMENT	FRI/MON SECTIONS Translation Work	EXEG. SUMMARIES DUE TUESDAYS at 5PM
January 27/30 <b>Getting a Grip on the Situation</b>		Mark 1.9-15 1LentB (2/26)	<b>Text Criticism Exercise</b>
February 3/6 <b>Jesus' World Part I</b>	<b>(Working on Quizzes 1 &amp; 2 due on 2/11 &amp; 18)</b> Palestine in the Time of Jesus, pages xvii-18 The Shadow of the Galilean ~ ¼ Powell, IntroNT, ch 1	Mark 1.40-45 6EpiphB (2/12)	<b>Translation Work &amp; Exegetical Tools Exercise</b>
February 10/13 <b>Jesus' World Part II</b>	<b>Quiz 1 on NT Background &amp; Gospels</b> Palestine in the Time of Jesus, pages 19-56 The Shadow of the Galilean ~ ½ Powell, IntroNT, ch 2 & ch 4	<b>Mark 4.35-41</b> Proper 7B (6/24)	<b>Source Criticism Exercise</b>
February 17/20 <b>Jesus' World Part III</b>	<b>Quiz 2 Palestine / Social World</b> Palestine in the Time of Jesus, pages 57-152 The Shadow of the Galilean ~ ¾	Mark 9.2-9 TransfigurationB (2/19)	<b>OT / NT Exercise</b>
February 24/27 <b>Jesus' World Part IV</b>	<b>Quiz 3 on Historical Jesus</b> The Shadow of the Galilean finish Powell, IntroNT, ch 3 3.1-5 online hyperlinks	<b>Matthew 14.13-21</b> Proper 13A	<b>Socio-Historical Criticism Exercise</b>
March 2/5 <b>Mark's Story Part I</b>	<b>Quiz 4 on Mark</b> Powell, IntroNT, ch 6 Gospel of Mark	<b>Luke 19:1-10</b> Proper 26C	<b>Form Criticism Exercise</b>
March 9/12 <b>Mark's Story Part II</b>	<b>NonTrivial Pursuit due 3/9</b> Rhoads, Dewey, Michie, Mark, pp. 1-7 (8-38) 39-62 Dostevysky, "Grand Inquistor's Tale"	<b>John 10.11-18</b> Easter4B (4/29)	<b>Redaction Criticism Exercise</b>
March 16/19 <b>Matthew's Story Pt I</b>	Rhoads, Dewey, Michie, Mark, pp. 63-146	John 20.19-31 2EasterA (4/15)	<b>Narrative Criticism Exercise</b>
March 23/26 <b>Matthew's Story Pt II</b>	<b>Quiz 5 on Matthew</b> Gospel of Matthew Powell, IntroNT, ch 5	Matthew 4.1-11 Lent 1A	
March 30/April 2 <b>Luke's Story Part I</b>	<b>Quiz 6 on Luke</b> Gospel of Luke Powell, IntroNT, ch 7	Mark 16.1-8 EasterB	
April 5-10, Maundy Thursday & Good Friday & Easter – NO CLASSES			
Wednesday, April 11	<b>Exegetical Paper Due</b>		
April 13/16 <b>Luke's Story Part II</b>	The Gospel of John (video in class)	Luke 24.36b-48 3EasterB (4/22)	
April 20/23 <b>John's Story Part I</b>	<b>Quiz 7 on John</b> Powell, IntroNT, ch 8	Luke 12.13-21 Proper 13C	
April 27/30 <b>John's Story Part II</b>	<b>Integrative Take Home Project due 8:30am</b> <i>If you complete your project early, please submit it to me for use in this class or the next.</i>	Matthew 28.1-10, 16-20 EasterA; TrinityA	
May 4/7 <b>Putting It Together</b>	<b>Quiz 8 Overview (in class)</b> Rhoads, Dewey, Michie, Mark, pp. 147-50 <b>Optional Matthew/Luke/John book review due</b>	John 1.1-14 ChristmasEve/Day ABC Christmas2ABC	

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Spring Semester 2012

## Descriptive Report for NAME

Student performance is scored on the following scale:

93-100 % - Superior competence (A)

80-92% - Good competence (B)

70-79% - Sufficient Competence (C)

69% or less- Unsatisfactory, Failure (F)

70% or higher is a Passing grade (P)

The stated outcomes of this course were that upon completion of this course, students will be able:

Course Outcomes	Competence
<p>6. to describe the basic literary and theological framework of each gospel story including themes such as Christology, soteriology, discipleship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specifically, given a passage, students should be able to identify the Gospel in which it occurs on the basis of its vocabulary, thematic focus, geography, incident, etc.</li> <li>Assessments: Quizzes 1, 4-8, NTPGEQuiz, Class &amp; Online participation</li> </ul>	
<p>7. to characterize the religious, social, geographical, and historical dynamics of 1<sup>st</sup> century Palestine as they relate to the life of Jesus, the growth of early Christian movements, and the formation of each gospel story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specifically, students should be able to: describe the main religious groups of 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Judaism; understand and note elements of 1<sup>st</sup> century Palestinian economics, politics, and honor and shame systems; identify the important locations of Jesus' ministry on a map</li> <li>Assessments: Quiz 2, NTPGEQuiz, Class &amp; Online participation</li> </ul>	
<p>8. to explain the basic issues and attendant problems involved in scholarly quests for the historical Jesus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specifically, students should be able to describe key positions held regarding the historical Jesus by such scholars as Crossan, Borg, Sanders, Meier, and Wright</li> <li>Assessments: Quiz 3, Class &amp; Online participation</li> </ul>	
<p>9. to demonstrate an ability to engage in a critical reading of select gospel texts in order to discern and communicate what those texts originally proclaimed in their canonical contexts and what they may proclaim to individuals and the church today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specifically, students should be able to present exegetical studies on assigned gospel passages using the Greek text as well as text, source, form, redaction, and narrative criticisms. In addition, they should be able to express the significance of such studies faithfully and persuasively for proclamation, teaching, and counseling.</li> <li>Assessments: Exegetical Summaries, Final Exegetical Paper, Class &amp; Online participation</li> </ul>	
<p>10. to integrate the discoveries and studies from this course with their experiences and studies in Teaching Parish and in the Homiletics courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specifically, students will choose a pericope in this course that will be used for preaching and/or teaching.</li> <li>Assessments: Integrative Project, Class &amp; Online participation</li> </ul>	

## Grades for Evaluated Strategies

Quizzes: \_\_\_\_\_ of 15

Gospel quiz: \_\_\_\_\_ of 10

Exegetical summaries: \_\_\_\_\_ of 20

Exegetical paper: \_\_\_\_\_ of 25

Integrative project: \_\_\_\_\_ of 10

Class participation: \_\_\_\_\_ of 20

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ of 100 >> GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: