

# Philippians – 1.273 – Fall 2005

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## RATIONALE

Paul's letter to the Philippians provides both a remarkable insight into the relationship he nurtured with the first Christian community on European soil as well as some of the most memorable passages of the New Testament including the "Christ Hymn" in chapter 2. This blend of pastoral and theological expression continue to serve as important guides in modern Church practice.

Though primarily being an exegetical and theological analysis of Philippians, a particular focus of this course will be on digital resources (software and Internet) that are available for the study of Philippians. We will also use and evaluate technological and other media tools available for presenting our findings for teaching or preaching.

*Students should also be aware that this course may change in terms of directions and expectations in light of the backgrounds, expertise, and questions that they bring to it.*

## OBJECTIVES

Successful outcomes for this course include:

- Demonstrating an ability to understand the text of Philippians using appropriate translation aids
- Describing the basic content, socio-historical setting, and theological concerns raised by Philippians
- Demonstrating an ability to exegete a text from Philippians, using the Greek text if possible
- Demonstrating competency in using, evaluating, and composing Internet resources connected to the study of Philippians
- Integrating selected material from Philippians with students' own experience and contemporary settings for ministry

## STRATEGIES

To accomplish the stated objectives, the following learning strategies will be used:

- **WebQuest:** A 30 minute, non-directed search of the web for materials related to Philippi or Philippians. Report the results of your surfing by indicating (in a few sentences or bullets and no more than a single page)
  - questions raised,
  - observations on your surfing (this can include both issues regarding Philippians as well as your experience of doing this surfing exercise),
  - what information on Philippi or Philippians you found most interesting,
  - sites where you spent the most time,
  - issues regarding Philippians that you hope our class will discuss.Post the results of your WebQuest at the online discussion board.
- **Website Review:** Each student will be assigned a web site related to Philippians to review in a 1 page outline and to present in class. Guidelines for this review will be posted online. Due November 30.
- **Commentaries Review:** As we work through the Philippians letter, students will be asked to accompany it by reading along in two commentaries. (See the required texts listed below.) In a 2-3 page paper, review and contrast the two commentaries. This review is due November 23.
- **Outline and Introduction to Philippians:** By September 14, students will have read the entire letter of Philippians (in English) and composed a less than 1 page outline and introduction to the letter. By November 16, students will edit and resubmit it in the form of a less than 2 page document
- Each student will complete an **Interpretive Project** of a selected text from Philippians that will include five parts.

- **Part 1** – *Due as appropriate to the course schedule*  
**Leading class discussion** on the selected text (Students are encouraged to share any work in progress of the other parts of this assignment, especially the interpretive presentation.) Two or three students will work together on this aspect of the project.
- **Part 2** - *Due two weeks after Part 1*
  - An **exegetical paper** of 5-7 pages (double-spaced; 12 pt font; 1.25 inch margins on all sides) which attends closely to the text and, if possible, works with the Greek text
  - A **listing of resources** both written and from the Internet, including a brief summary, that are useful for the study of this text. (This listing should be limited to a maximum of the 15 most important resources.)
  - A **Bible study** (1-2 pages) on that text that could be used in a specified setting (e.g., Adult Education, Confirmation, etc.)
- **Part 3** - *Presented during the last two weeks of the semester*  
An **interpretive presentation** of that text: This could be a sermon, a song, an artistic representation, a PowerPoint presentation, recitation of a chapter from memory, etc. (Concepts should be approved by the instructor.)
- **Peer Review:** Each student will be assigned to review the interpretive presentation of one of the other students. This 1 page review is due the day following the presentation. One copy is to be submitted both to the instructor and to the presenter.
- **Class Participation:** The relatively high percentage of your grade allotted to this component reflects my commitment to this class as a forum not simply for information but especially for reflection, questioning, and discussion. We will learn together!
  - You must check the course home page at:  
<http://www.gettysburgseminary.org/mhoffman/philippiansF05> for the latest schedule, additional readings, and reading assignments!
  - Participants are expected to attend every class. If you know in advance that you will be absent, please notify me. Please contact me about any other absences to work out satisfactory arrangements. Unexcused absences may negatively affect the final course grade.
  - **Participants are to come to class prepared to discuss, having read the assigned materials and worked through the reading response assignments. This also includes having studied the (Greek) texts assigned and corresponding commentary sections and being ready to discuss any significant grammatical nuances.** I encourage you to work with others in preparing for the class.
  - Diversity of experience and opinion are to be expected, invited, and respected in class. With a working knowledge of the information, resources, and methodologies presented in the class, each participant is encouraged to ask questions, disagree, provide extending confirmation, or provide reasoned alternative perspectives.
  - Participation in the online forum (discussion board) may be required occasionally, but it will usually not be a course expectation. Meaningful contributions to the online discussion can raise the class participation grade.

## EVALUATION

- **WebQuest** 5%
- **Website Review:** 5%
- **Commentary Review:** 10%
- **Overview and Introduction:** 10%  
Initial: 4%; Final 6%
- **Interpretive Presentation:** 40%  
Part 1: 10%; Part 2: 20%; Part 3: 10%
- **Peer Review:** 5%
- **Class Participation:** 25%

A passing grade requires 70% or better. For those taking the course for a grade, the scale is:

- 90%-100%: A (excellent)
- 80%-89%: B (good)
- 70%-79%: C (unsatisfactory)
- Below 70%: F (fail)

## PRIMARY TEXTS

- A NRSV study Bible – recommended versions:
  - *The New Revised Standard Version Bible with Apocrypha* (HarperCollins Study Edition)
  - *NRSV Student Bible* (Zondervan)
  - *The Access Bible*
  - *The New Oxford Annotated 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.*
- *The New English Translation (NET) Bible* - available in the following versions:
  - For those who know Greek, you should get the NET Bible Diglot (Greek-English) available in the LTSG bookstore (cheaper here than online!)  
Even with this book, you should also consider these versions of the NET Bible:
    - Free online (<http://bible.org/netbible/index.htm> )
    - Free downloadable file ([http://bible.org/page.asp?page\\_id=3086](http://bible.org/page.asp?page_id=3086) – HTML, MSWordDoc, or as eSword module)
    - Free version available within BibleWorks

## Secondary Texts:

In connection with work on (and the translations of) Philippians, students are required to consult at least TWO of the following three books:

- *Philippians and Philemon* (Abingdon New Testament Commentaries) by Carolyn Osiek (Abingdon Press, 2000) – *Somewhat brief, but an excellent first choice*
- *Philippians* by Ralph P. Martin (Eerdmans, [revised edition] 1988).
- *Philippians & Philemon* (Sacra Pagina) by Bonnie B. Thurston and Judith M. Ryan (Liturgical Press, 2005) – *Thorough, attention to Greek, well-balanced perspective on issues*

Other recommended books that may be chosen in place of one of the above are:

- *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (New International Greek Testament Commentary) by Peter T. O'Brien (Eerdmans, 1991) – *Thorough, most attention to the Greek, theological interest (somewhat 'conservative')*
- *Philippians* (IVP New Testament Commentary Series) by Gordon D. Fee (Intervarsity Press, 1999) [also available online at: [www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/index.php?action=getBookSections&cid=8&source=1](http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/index.php?action=getBookSections&cid=8&source=1) ] – *Not my favorite, but quite acceptable and FREE*
- *Philippians* (Anchor Bible Series) by John Reumann (Doubleday, 2005)
- *Philippians* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the NT series) by Moisés Silva (Baker, 2005) – *Solid scholarship, attention to Greek*

## Other Recommendations:

I encourage you to use any Greek translation aids that you have such as software like Bibloi (BibleWindows) or BibleWorks, books such as Wallace's *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, or web resources located at:

<http://www.gettysburgseminary.org/mhoffman/xnlinks/bibletexts.htm>

## COURSE SCHEDULE

The course meets Wednesdays, 10:10-11:25 on the following days in Valentine 310.

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
September 7	Introduction	
September 14	1.1-11	WebQuest completed; Outline and Introduction due
September 21	1.12-30	
September 28	NO CLASS	
October 5	2.1-11	
October 12	2.12-18	
October 19	2.19-30	
October 26	NO CLASS	
November 2	3.1-11	
November 9	3.12-4.1	
November 16	4.2-9	Revised Outline and Introduction due
November 23	4.10-23	Commentaries Review due
November 30		Website reviews due
December 7		Presentations and Peer Reviews due
December 14		Presentations and Peer Reviews due

## PERICOPES

These are the pericopes from which you can choose to be your focus for this class. Note that the pericope you choose will commit you to a date for presenting it according to the course schedule. For the presentation, you will work with the others who have signed up for that day's text. No more than two people should sign up for the same pericope. You may choose to combine two consecutive pericopes as your focus.

1.12-18a  
1.18b-26  
1.27-30  
2.1-4  
2.5-11  
2.12-18  
2.19-24  
2.25-30  
3.1-11  
3.12-16  
3.17-4.1  
4.2-7  
4.8-9  
4.10-14  
4.15-20