

COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL OF OHIO at MTSO

2018 Summer

June 22-23 & July 13-14

COS 321 – Bible III: Gospels

Instructor:

Rev. Britt Leslie Ph.D.

Email: bleslie@united.edu

Phone: 219-201-1623

facebook: www.facebook.com/dr.bleslie

Contacting me: You may contact me by email (preferred) or phone (if urgent). We can also arrange a phone or Skype etc. meeting if needed. Don't use the facebook page to contact me about the course since I do not check it regularly.

Greeting:

Welcome to Bible III. I am excited about the opportunity to explore the New Testament with you. I was once a pastor too and working another job at the same time while attending seminary. I know how busy things can get. I have done my best to keep the readings and assignments reasonable and still cover all that needs to be covered. If any of you think that you may have a problem completing an assignment for a given week let me know right away and we can work something out.

I find that students and teachers can learn a great deal from each other and I am sure that will be true here. I am eager to hear about your individual ministry contexts and looking forward to discovering together ways to apply New Testament insights to those various contexts. It is my goal that this course will be helpful to you as a pastor. Thanks and feel free to contact me by e-mail with any questions.

I. Course Description and Goals:

This course focuses on the content and message of the Gospels, as well as the theological perspectives of the Gospel writers. The practice of exegesis will be emphasized. Students will be able to:

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

II. Textbooks

(Students are responsible for obtaining their own books):

Required Textbooks: Please note that the required Study Bible, Dictionary and Commentary will be used in this class and in future COS classes, as well as being valuable additions to your pastoral library. You should *already own these first three listed* below from prior courses.

- 1) Harrelson, Walter J. *The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003 ISBN 0-687-27832-5 [NISB] \$31
- 2) Mark Allan Powell, ed. *The Harper-Collins Bible Dictionary*. Harper: SanFrancisco, 2011. [HCBD] \$31
- 3) Gaventa, Beverly Roberts, and David L. Petersen, eds. *The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary*. Abingdon Press, 2010. [NIOVC] \$53
- 4) Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2009. ISBN 0801028687 \$27
- 5) Hayes, John H., and Carl R. Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*. 3 edition. Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007. ISBN 0664227759 \$15
- 6) A Gospel synopsis: (Pick *one* of these. This is a tool which allows you to compare the differences and similarities between gospels in a side by side layout. Note: a) is more useful for *pastors* and *teachers* and *include John*. b) does *not include John* but *includes non-canonical* gospels such as Thomas and seems more helpful to someone in *academics* rather than pastoral ministry.)
 - a. EITHER: Aland, Kurt. *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*. New York: American Bible Society, 2010. ISBN 1585169429. (uses the Revised Standard Version) \$30
NOTE: Make sure you get the English version (See ISBN above) of this and not the Greek only version or the Greek/English version (unless you know Greek and want one of those versions).
 - b. OR: Jr, Burton H. Throckmorton. *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels, NRSV Edition*. 5th ed. Thomas Nelson, 1992. ISBN 0840774842. (uses the New Revised Standard Version) \$27

Note that the abbreviations in brackets [] above are used in the syllabus to indicate that resource. An advantage of the NISB is its introductory articles to books of the Bible and also the excursuses*. I will assign these in reading assignments. An intro to a biblical book is at the beginning of that book in this study bible. Excursuses appear throughout this book. The list of excurses by subject is found on pg. xxiv - xxv. A list by title of the particular excursus follows on pg. xxv - xxvi. (* an excursus is a useful article set apart from the main text that explains an aspect of the text or a related issue.)

Supplementary: (You won't have assigned readings from these but they might be good for a pastor to own.)

- 1) DeSilva, David Arthur. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation*. InterVarsity Press, 2004. \$30
- 2) Malina, Bruce J. *Windows on the World of Jesus: Time Travel to Ancient Judea*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993. ISBN 978-0664254575 \$20
- 3) Rhoads, David M. *The Challenge of Diversity: The Witness of Paul and the Gospels*. Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress Press, 1996. ISBN 0800629825 \$20

III. Course Schedule:

General:

- ☞ Bring your textbooks
- ☞ Bring your laptops/tablets/i-pads, etc. if you have them, we will look at online resources.
- ☞ As a rule of thumb one should study for two to four hours outside of class per every one credit hour. Taking an average of three hours per credit hour, one spends 3 hours in class plus 9 hours outside of class for a total of 12 hours of study plus class time per week. For a three credit hour course *online* of course there is no “in class” time but the rule still applies of about 12 hours per week total of reading, writing papers, posting and responding in discussion forums etc. For reading one can plan on taking an average of 60 minutes per 30 pages (two minutes per page). For writing plan about 60 min. per 1 page. Don’t stress out about this. These are just guidelines to help you plan.
- ☞ Thanks and feel free to contact me by e-mail with any questions.

Weekend 1: 6/22-23

Topics: Jesus in his NT culture; NT writings; What is a gospel; Synoptic Puzzle; Mark; Exegesis; helpful websites and software; explanation of the first exegesis assignment

Readings by topic:

- Jesus in his NT culture
 - Powell Chapters 1 and 3
 - NIOVC under general articles: Culture of Early Judaism; Cultures of the Greco-Roman World
 - Malina: (We will talk about the topics covered in these readings but the readings are *not required* given that this is a supplementary text.)
 - Introduction, pp. xiii – xv
 - Section I Honor and Shame, pp. 1-19
 - Section III In Group, Introductory Window, pg. 47and Windows 20-24, pp. 52-61
 - Window 36, pp. 95-96
 - Section IV Lovingkindness, pp. 103-112
- New Testament Writings
 - Powell Chapter 2
 - NIOVC: Under General Articles: Canon of the NT; Narratives of the New Testament
- What is a gospel; Synoptic Puzzle
 - Powell Chapter 4
- Mark (the first gospel story)
 - Book of Mark
 - HCBd articles entitled: Mark; Mark, The Gospel According to;
 - NISB: Introduction to Mark; All the excursuses listed under Mark on pg. xxv
 - NIOVC: Overview of Mark
 - Powell: chapter 6
 - Rhoads: chapter 3 (*Not required*)

- Exegesis
 - Hayes and Holladay: Chapter 5: Literary Criticism, paying particular attention to the subsections:
 - Literary Context
 - Literary Structure
 - Literary Form and Function: Some Examples
 - Hayes and Holladay: Chapter 8: Redaction Criticism (pay more attention to the sections dealing with the Gospels rather than the OT narratives)

Weekend 2: 7/13-14

Topics: Matthew; Luke; John; more on Exegesis; explanation of the second exegesis assignment

Readings by topic:

- Matthew
 - Book of Matthew
 - HCBDB articles entitled: Matthew; Matthew, The Gospel According to
 - NISB: Introduction to Matthew
 - NIOVC: Overview of Matthew
 - Powell: chapter 5
 - Rhoads: chapter 4 (*not required*)
- Luke
 - Gospel of Luke
 - HCBDB articles entitled: Luke; Luke, The Gospel of
 - NISB: Introduction to Luke; and all excursus for Luke listed on pg. xxv.
 - NIOVC: Overview of Luke
 - Powell: chapter 7
 - Rhoads: chapter 5 (*not required*)
- John
 - Gospel of John
 - HCBDB articles entitled: John; John, The Gospel of
 - NISB: Introduction to John and all excursus for John listed on pg. xxv.
 - NIOVC: Overview of John
 - Powell: chapter 8
 - Rhoads: chapter 6
- more on Exegesis
 - Hayes and Holladay: Chapter 4: Grammatical Criticism

IV. Assignments and Evaluation

A. Explanation of assignments and due dates:

- Assignments are due *11:59 pm* at the night of the due date.
- Email submission of written work:
 - Assignments will be submitted to my e-mail address bleslie@united.edu.
 - Assignments should be submitted in MS Word (*.doc or *.docx) format or Rich Text format (*.rtf). Most word processor programs (even for the Macc and I-Pad) have the capability to save documents in those formats. This is usually

- accomplished by choosing the “save as” feature on the program and then selecting the “rich text” or “word” file type.
- Adobe Acrobat format (*.pdf) is also acceptable. Some programs have the ability to save files in this format. Also there are some third party programs and websites which will convert many file types into this format.
 - All assignments will be returned to you in Adobe Acrobat (*.pdf) format since this is the most efficient way I have found to comment on the contents of written work. So you will need something like the Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download) to read the comments on the graded and returned assignments.
 - General information on the papers:
 - Use of sources, citation and bibliography:
 - Papers will follow Turabian/Chicago Manual of Style standards for reference citation and bibliography
 - This may be footnoting with a bibliography
 - This may be author/page (parenthetical) citation with a bibliography
 - Quotations should be placed in quotation marks and quotations over four lines should be single spaced and indented one half inch from the left margin of the main text. See various examples and style sheets in the course main module.
 - For help see:
 - http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html
 - <http://hbl.gcc.libguides.com/c.php?g=339562&p=2286665>
 - <http://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/turabian-footnote-guide>
 - <http://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/turabian-paren-guide>
 - Note that most of your work will be from your own observations of the biblical text and the exegetical tools you will use to understand that text.
 - You won't be using a lot of secondary resources but when you do, those resources should be given their due. See the Academic Honor Policy below.
 - Quoting verbatim or nearly verbatim from a print, electronic, or internet source *must* be indicated as a quotation and the source cited. Also, when using information or an idea from a particular source it *must* be cited. Failure to do so will result in one or more consequences listed in the Academic Honor Policy below.
 - Each paper will report the findings of an exegetical method. (1 and 2 below. This is the “what” of your paper.)
 - Each paper will conclude with how the information discovered will affect preaching and teaching. (This is the “so what” of your paper.)
 - Literary Context and Synoptic Comparison (6-8 pages *double spaced*)
 - **DUE:** 11:59 pm 7/2
 - Passage: Luke 9:28-36
 - See **handout** to be provided for more information.

- Detailed Analysis (6-8 pages *double spaced*)
 - **DUE:** 11:59 pm 7/23
 - Passage: John 3:16-21
 - See **handout** to be provided for more information.
- 1. Vital Info Sheet (VIS) (**no more than two pages** single spaced)
 - a. **DUE:**
 - 1) Mark due 11:59pm 6/21
 - 2) Matthew; Luke; John each due 11:59pm 7/12
 - b. *See example* VIS attached to the end of this syllabus
 - c. Taken primarily from the readings from Powell, any of the supplementary texts, the New Interpreter's Study Bible, and from any other material that might be assigned. (Avoid information from websites as these often contain errors or reflect minority scholarly opinions)
 - d. Will contain information on the particular book of the bible assigned.
 - e. Will address the following:
 - 1) Authorship
 - 2) Date
 - 3) Place (where was it written and where was it received)
 - 4) Audience
 - 5) Exigence (why was it written)
 - 6) Summary of the message
 - f. Basically you are answering: WHO (author) said WHAT (content, major themes) to WHOM (audience)? WHEN (date) did they say it? WHERE was it said (place of writing)? WHERE was it heard (audience location)? WHY (exigence) did the author say it?
 - g. The purpose of these "stat. sheets" is so that *you will have a ready reference* each time you prepare to preach or teach from one of these biblical books.
 - h. With that in mind:
 - 1) Don't worry about form. The sheet can be in outline form with bullet points etc. and organized in a way helpful to you in later ministry, just as long as it contains the info listed above.
 - 2) Citations should be a simple author and page number in parenthesis method, such as (Powell, 200) or (Harrelson, 1953), placed beside a bit of info so later you will be able to find it.

B. Assignments by Due Date:

Vital Info Sheet on Mark	6/21
Exegetical Exercise on Literary Context/Synoptic Comparison	7/2
Info sheets on Matthew, Luke, and John	7/12
Exegetical Exercise on Detailed Analysis/Close Reading	7/23

C. Grading:

- Letter grades will be assessed
- The weighting of assignments are as follows:

Element	% Value
Literary Context and Synoptic Comparison (6-8 pages)	30
Close reading/detailed analysis (6-8 pages)	30
Vital Info Sheet for each Gospel (1-2 pages each, total 4-8 pp.)	7.5% each x4 = 30
Course participation*	10
Total	100

*Note: I have assigned a percent value to assess the quality of student interaction which should reflect familiarity with the course content and reading material and thoughtful response to the comments of others. However simply *not participating* at all or a large amount of unexcused attendance may result in a greater reduction in the student's final grade than the total percentage assigned to this element and possibly failure of the course.

Grades will be turned in to the COS/METHESCO office no later than 30 days after the course ends.

D. ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY

The Course of Study School of Ohio requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling academic requirements must be the original work of the student. Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations include, but are not limited to, cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination. Plagiarism is the act of presenting the published or unpublished words or ideas of another [including online resources] as if it were one's own work. A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly (whether intentionally or unintentionally) uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism. A student found guilty of a violation of the academic honor policy, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following actions:

- (1) warning
- (2) probation
- (3) suspension for the remainder of the course
- (4) dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio
- (5) failing grade for the course
- (6) reduction in grade for the assignment

Regardless of the outcome, a letter will be sent to the student's District Superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry.

V. Bibliography of recommended resources

A. Study Bibles

Harrelson, Walter J. *The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version With the Apocrypha*. Abingdon Press, 2003. (Most recommended of the three)

Attridge, Harold W., and Society Of Biblical Literature. *HarperCollins Study Bible - Student Edition: Fully Revised & Updated*. Rev Upd. HarperOne, 2006

Coogan, Michael D., Marc Z. Brettler, Carol A. Newsom, and PHEME PERKINS. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*. Fourth Edition. Oxford University Press, USA, 2010.

Renovare, Richard J. Foster, Dallas Willard, Walter Brueggemann, Eugene H. Peterson, Bruce Demarest, et al. *The Life with God Bible NRSV*. HarperOne, 2009.

[NOTE: This is a more “devotional” oriented annotated bible written by sound biblical scholars. You may want to supplement your primary study bible with this.]

B. Bible Dictionaries

1. One Volume

Freedman, David Noel, Astrid B. Beck, and Allen C. Myers, eds. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

Powell, Mark Allan. *HarperCollins Bible Dictionary - Revised & Updated*. HarperOne, 2011.

2. Multi Volume

Freedman, David Noel. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vol. Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1992.

Sakenfeld, Katharine Doob. *The New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*. 5 vol. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009.

C. Biblical world

deSilva, David A. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Malina, Bruce J. *Windows on the World of Jesus: Time Travel to Ancient Judea*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993.

D. One Volume Commentaries

1. General

Barton, John, and John Muddiman, eds. *The Oxford Bible Commentary*. 1st ed. Oxford University Press, USA, 2001.

Brown, Raymond E., Roland Murphy, and Joseph A. Fitzmyer. *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Continuum, 2003.

Dunn, James D. G., ed. *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.

Gaventa, Beverly Roberts, and David L. Petersen, eds. *The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary*. Abingdon Press, 2010.

Mays, James L. *HarperCollins Bible Commentary - Revised Edition*. Rev Sub. HarperOne, 2000.

2. Written with social location in mind

Blount, Brian K., Cain Hope Felder, Clarice J. Martin, and Emerson B. Powery, eds. *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary*. Fortress Press, 2007.

Newsom, Carol A., and Sharon H. Ringe. *The Women's Bible Commentary - expanded*. Expanded. Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Patte, Daniel. *Global Bible Commentary*. First ed. Abingdon Press, 2004. [NOTE: highly recommended]

E. Multi Volume Commentaries or Commentary Series

- Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
- Anchor Bible Commentaries
- Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament
- Black's New Testament Commentaries
- Feminist Companion
- Hermeneia (requires biblical languages)
- Interpretation
- New Cambridge Bible Commentary
- Sacra Pagina
- New International Commentary on the New Testament
- New Interpreter's Bible (this is an update of the Interpreter's Bible)
- New Testament Readings
- Westminster Bible Companion
- Word Biblical Commentary

EXAMPLE: Vital Information Sheet for James

Authorship: The letter is traditionally attributed to Jesus' brother James, who became leader of the church in Jerusalem. Also known as James of Jerusalem or James the Just (Powell, 447). May have been written in the name of James (Rhodes, 473).

Date: If the author is James, it would have been written prior to his death in 62 CE, probably in the late 40s to mid-50s. If it is pseudepigraphical it may not have been written until possibly 80-100 CE (Powell, 451).

Place: If James is the author it probably would have been written in Jerusalem and sent to Christians who had been scattered due to persecution (Powell, 451).

Audience: Directed towards Christian communities outside Palestine, addressing the 12 tribes who viewed Judean law as the means of salvation. The intended audience may have been poor people experiencing oppression at the hands of wealthy elitists, while being in danger of conforming to the ways of the world (Rhodes, 473).

Exigence: The author wrote to encourage Judean Christian communities to endure faithfully until Christ's return. The author did so by writing about wisdom from above, highlighting correct beliefs, proper values and right behavior that would allow the communities to thrive in dependence on God (Rhodes, 473-474).

Summary of Message: There are four major themes found in James (Powell, 451-458).

1. Trials and temptations: James promotes the idea that testing of faith, by resisting temptation to sin, is ultimately beneficial to believers. James focuses on tests of faith that come from within. While God is not the source of temptation to sin. However, yielding to temptation brings about sin, and ultimately it is sin that gives birth to death.. Trials help believers towards their goal of becoming spiritually mature, becoming complete, and lacking in nothing.
2. Wisdom from above: Wisdom tradition deals with what can be known through reason and observation and is often contrasted with prophetic tradition, which presents revealed truth. James utilizes Jewish wisdom tradition, but is ultimately interested in wisdom revealed by God from above. This wisdom is primarily ethical, how people ought to live in relation to God and to each other. This type of wisdom favors humility, meekness, mercy, gentleness, peace and patience; while decrying self-ambition, envy, and boasting. Problems occur from what James calls double-mindedness. People trying to maintain friendship with God and the world, embracing Gods generosity, while striving to fulfill self-interests. This produces halfhearted commitment and compromise. Of those who are wise and understanding.
3. Faith and works. James states that faith without works is dead and a person is justified by works, not by faith alone. James sees works as acts of obedience to God. Faith needs to be more than an intellectual exercise or simply believing something to be true. James is promoting a belief that Christians need to think through the implications of their faith commitments in every aspect of their life; as well as what the faith community has to say about social responsibilities in the world at large.
4. Rich and poor: In James there is a contrast between concern for the poor and hostility towards the rich. The book denounces wealthy people who try to attain or preserve their position at the expense of others. James also criticizes congregations that show favoritism to wealthy persons. James expectation of the rich is that they obey the royal commandment and love their neighbors as themselves. The poor in this world are to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom of God.