

INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS—NT 1023

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Spring 2015
Professor: Dr. Marion L. Soards

Statement of Method and Purpose

The goal of this course is for students to develop a working knowledge of (1) the methods for exegesis of the NT writings and (2) the use of these methods in reading and interpreting the books of the NT. We will examine the methods of exegesis and illustrate the application of these methods to various kinds of New Testament writings. Along the way students will apply the exegetical methods to a selected passage of Scripture, first (artificially) in an isolated/independent fashion and, then, (more appropriately) in an integrated treatment of the text. But, it is important even here, before any work is done, to recognize that every interpretive method is not relevant to every text to be interpreted. Forcing a methodological fit never serves interpreting a passage well.

The goal of the course is for students to be able to apply the relevant methods of biblical interpretation to any NT text and to prepare an exegesis paper on the passage.

Requirements and Grading

1. Students should prepare all assigned texts in advance of the class sessions in which they will be studied. There will be in-class recitation, wherein we shall read the Greek text aloud, translate into reasonable English (with notes but without access to translations or electronic tools), and explain noteworthy grammatical features. Preparation and participation will count **25%** of the total grade.
2. Ms. Angela Morris (in the library) will be offering training in BibleWorks. She has scheduled times that are available for getting this training. She will keep a record of those who attend these sessions and your attendance at the sessions will count for **5%** of the total grade. If you have already done this training, simply ask Ms. Morris to mark your name on the list she will keep of those who have done the work.
3. Students will write a concise exegesis paper of *no more than 3,600 words in length*. The NT text for the paper is Luke 23:32-38.

This paper is, first, to be done in installments—a series of short papers of ½ to 1 page in length (often less, or nothing at all, if the method is not applicable to the text)—as outlined on the syllabus; and, second, the pertinent portions of the installments are to be developed in a reorganized, integrated, and rewritten final form. The various brief papers will count **35%** of the total grade. As stated above, the final paper should be *no more than 3,600 words* including footnotes or endnotes. This complete final paper will count **35%** of the total grade.

N.B. Please plan ahead. There will be no extensions given. A late paper will be marked down one full grade level for each day that it is overdue. There can be no exceptions. *Please don't ask.*

Textbooks

Required books:

Either: *Novum Testamentum Graece*. Nestle-Aland 27th or 28th edition;
 or: *Greek-English New Testament*. Nestle-Aland 27th/RSV;
 or: *Greek-English New Testament*. Nestle-Aland 28th/NRSV & REB;
 or: *The Greek-English New Testament*. Nestle-Aland 28th/ESV.

Fee, Gordon D. *New Testament Exegesis*. 3rd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002. (Cited as *NT Exegesis* with pertinent page numbers.)

Green, Joel B., ed. *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010. (Cited as *Hearing* with pertinent page numbers.)

Highly Recommended:

Soulen, Richard N. and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 4th rev. and expanded ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011. (Cited as *Handbook* with the title of the assigned article.)

Freedman, David Noel. *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Furthermore:

Copies of

Blass, F. and A. Debrunner (trans. and rev. by R. W. Funk). *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (cited as BDF with paragraph numbers rather than pages);

Brown, Raymond E., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy, eds. *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (cited as *NJBC*); and

Trible, Phyllis. "Feminist Hermeneutics and Biblical Studies" is on reserve in the library (this seminal essay is available online).

Other items mentioned in the syllabus are on reserve in the library—as well as copies of the required books for the course.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

(N.B., this schedule is *not* carved in stone and may be altered if necessary.)

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| February 5 | <p>Introduction to the Course—Its Shape and Sense</p> <p>Note: In relation to almost any relevant topic imaginable, you will find helpful articles in <i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>, <i>Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible</i>, and <i>The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>. Furthermore, the major topical articles in the <i>NJBC</i> are always worthwhile.</p> |
| February 10 | <p>Textual Criticism</p> |
| February 12 | <p>Read: <i>Hearing</i> pp. 1-14, 15-33;
 "Modern New Testament Criticism," <i>NJBC</i> pp. 1130-45; <i>NT Exegesis</i> pp. 59-70;
 <i>Handbook</i>: "Textual Criticism" and see "Appendix."

 Translate: Mark 1:1; Luke 23:32-38.</p> |
| February 17 | <p>Translation, Key Words, and Grammatical Analysis</p> <p>Read: <i>Hearing</i> pp. 189-217;
 <i>NT Exegesis</i> pp. 71-95;
 <i>NJBC</i> pp. 1109-12 (look over pp. 1104-9).

 Translate: Luke 23:32-38 and, then, read the renderings of this passage in an interlinear, ESV, NASB, NIV, NKJV, NRSV, REB, TNIV, TEV (other translations if desired).

 Paper: Using critical commentaries on the Greek text (e.g.,
 (Due: 2/26) Brown [<i>Death of the Messiah</i>], Bock, Bovon, Culpepper, Fitzmyer, Green, Johnson, Marshall, Nolland, and Plummer) work through the text-critical problem(s) related to Luke 23:32-38 and write up your findings and conclusions.</p> |
| February 19 | <p>Grammatical Analysis: Subjunctives, Infinitives, and Participles</p> |
| February 24 | <p>Read: <i>NT Exegesis</i> pp. 71-95; and</p> |
| February 26 | <p>consult BDF §§ 357-425.

 Translate: <i>Subjunctives</i>: Rom 14:13; Mark 12:14;
 <i>Infinitives</i>: Luke 2:27; John 3:7;
 <i>Participles</i>: Mark 4:3; Luke 4:15; Matt 9:18; John 20:20.</p> |
| March 3 | <p>Grammatical Analysis: Pronouns, Adjectives, and Adverbs</p> <p>Read: <i>NT Exegesis</i> pp. 71-95; and
 consult BDF §§ 64, 277-306; 59-62; 241-46; 434-37.

 Translate: <i>Pronouns 1</i>: Mark 12:16; John 1:1;
 <i>Pronouns 2</i>: Rom 8:26; 2 Cor 4:13;
 <i>Pronouns 3</i>: John 8:18;
 <i>Adjectives</i>: Acts 28:13; Rom 10:19; Heb 1:4;
 <i>Adverbs</i>: John 3:3; Acts 17:15.</p> |

- April 14 **Redaction Criticism**
 Read: *Handbook*: "Redaction Criticism"; and
 Stephen S. Smalley, "Redaction Criticism" in *New Testament Interpretation*, ed. I. Howard Marshall (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977) 181-95 (on reserve).
 Translate: Philemon 11-13.
 Paper: Consider redactional elements in Luke 23:32-38.
 (Due: 4/16) Write up your findings and observations.
- April 16 **Rhetorical Criticism**
 Read: *Handbook*: "Rhetorical Criticism"; and
 G. A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press) 3-38 (on reserve).
 Translate: Philemon 14-17.
 Paper: Consider rhetorical elements in Luke 23:32-38.
 (Due: 4/21) Write up your findings and observations.
- April 21 **Narrative Criticism**
 Read: *Handbook*: "Narrative Criticism"; and
 Hearing pp. 240-58.
 Translate: Philemon 18-22.
 Paper: Consider narrative elements in Luke 23:32-38.
 (Due: 4/28) Write up your findings and observations.
- April 28 **Historical Issues and Archaeology**
 Read: Again, *NT Exegesis* pp. 96-111;
 consult Brown and North, "Biblical Geography," *NJBC* pp. 1175-95; and
 North and King, "Biblical Archaeology," *NJBC* pp. 1196-1218.
 Translate: Philemon 23-25.
 Paper: How do history and archaeology elucidate Luke 23:32-38?
 (Due: 4/30) Write up your findings and observations.
- April 30 **Theological Exposition and Hermeneutics**
What a Text "Meant" and What a Text "Means"
 Read: (Spread these readings throughout the rest of the semester.)
 Hearing pp. 259-413;
 NT Exegesis pp. 181-85;
 Soards, "Philemon" and "the Pastoral Epistles";
 Brown & Schneiders, "Hermeneutics," in *NJBC*, pp. 1146-65;
 Tribble, "Feminist Hermeneutics and Biblical Studies" (available online).
 Translate: Look back over the Greek text of Philemon in preparation for the forthcoming reading and discussion sessions.

- May 5/7 **Philemon Reading and Discussion Sessions**
 Read: *NT Exegesis* pp. 1-38, 133-79.
- May 13 **Final exegesis papers are due *no later than* 4:00 p.m.**

NT 1023 Course Policy Statements

Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. For more information, see:

<http://www.lpts.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-support-center/online-writing-lab/avoiding-gender-bias>

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Attendance Policy

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Three or more absences (1/4 of the course sessions) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:

- American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.
- Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Use of Electronic Devices in Class

Serious work requires serious attention. Serious study is serious work. Jesus once said, "If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand" (Mark 3:25). Let us do everything that we can to maintain our unity as we work together in class. Along these lines: Do not send or read text messages during class. In the event that you have a legitimate need to be accessible during class, you may ask for an exception to this rule prior to breaching it. Laptops should not be used if you cannot trust yourself to restrict your use to note-taking. You may not access the Internet during class time. Any misuse of electronic devices during class time, including checking of email or social networking sites, will be grounds for being excused from the session and will negatively affect the course grade.

Late Papers

Papers are expected at the times indicated by the syllabus. Papers that are late will be marked down one full letter grade for each day that they are overdue. There can be no exceptions. *Please don't ask.*

Der Ungeduldige, dem es bloß um Ergebnis und mögliche praktische Verwendung geht, soll die Finger von der Exegese lassen. Er taugt nicht für sie, rechtschaffen betrieben sie nicht für ihn.

Ernst Käsemann
An die Römer