

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
BNT 533 STUDIES IN THE PAULINE LETTERS: 2 CORINTHIANS

James D. Hernando, Ph. D.  
[jhernando@agseminary.edu](mailto:jhernando@agseminary.edu)

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An exegetical and doctrinal study of 2 Corinthians, in particular those passages that serve to reveal Paul's understanding of the Gospel, his apostolic calling and ministry, and the criteria for judging true apostleship. Special emphasis will be given to the distinctive theological contribution of this epistle as well as its practical value in addressing and providing guidance for the Pentecostal/Charismatic church today.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the successful completion of this course the student should be able to:

*Cognitive:*

1. Discuss the cultural, historical background of the city of Corinth and how it is reflected in some of the accusations made by Paul's opponents at Corinth.
2. Outline briefly a historical reconstruction of Paul's visits to Corinth and the various exchanges of letters.
3. Identify and discuss the various critical issues related to this letter and suggest some plausible solutions to the problems raised.
4. Describe the criteria/tests Paul would use to judge an authentic "apostolic" ministry or a "true apostle".
5. Explain the role the Holy Spirit plays in Paul's understanding of the New Covenant Charismatic theology.

*Skills:*

1. Investigate a particular pragmatic or theological concern in this Pauline letter, define the content and nature of the problem using both the internal evidence of the letter and relevant cultural-historical evidence.
2. Read a New Testament epistle as a literary whole, being aware of the issues and concerns of genre and its impact on interpretation.
3. Read and analyze a NT pericope, by constructing an exegetical outline (in English) which considers both the immediate literary context and its relationship to the NT letter as a whole.
4. Isolate and identify the moral-ethical and theological truths expressed in this Pauline letter and move to a relevant and legitimate application of such in the life of the present-day Church.

*Attitudes:*

1. Appreciate the historical-cultural nature of all the New Testament writings and how examination of their life-setting serves and aids the task of interpretation.

2. Appreciate more fully the complementary nature of apostolic kerygma and apostolic presence -- i.e., the demonstration of Gospel along with its proclamation.

#### TEXTBOOKS:

##### *Required:*

Hernando, James D. *2 Corinthians*. In the *Life in the Spirit Commentary to the New Testament*. Edited by F. L. Arrington and Roger Stronstad. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003. ISBN-10: 0310252709

deSilva, David A. *The Credentials of an Apostle: Paul's Gospel in 2 Corinthians 1-7*. N. Richland Hills, TX: Bibal Press, 1998. ISBN: 094103755X

Hawthorne, Gerald F. and Ralph P. Martin, ed.s. Dictionary of Paul and His Letters. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993. ISBN: 9780830817788

##### *Recommended:*

Harris, Murray J. *2 Corinthians*. Vol. 10 in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelein. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976. ISBN: 0310201101

#### COURSE OUTLINE

- I. Prolegomena
  - A. Historical Setting
  - B. *Sitz im Leben*
- II. The Opponents of Paul: Identity and Character
  - A. Exposition of key passages
  - B. Relevance for the Church
- III. The Challenge to Paul's Apostleship
  - A. Exposition of key passages
  - B. Relevance for the Church
- IV. The Challenge to Paul's Gospel
  - A. Exposition of key passages
  - B. Relevance for the Church
- V. The Defense and Vindication of Paul
  - A. Exposition of key passages
  - B. Relevance for the Church

## METHODOLOGY

This course will seek to meet its objectives through class lectures and discussion, independent research and writing.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Daily attendance - excessive absenteeism is defined by the AGTS catalogue. (*Note: Students are expected whenever possible to notify the instructor of a planned absence. When absent the student is responsible for finding out the assignment for the next class and to come prepared for the next class.*)

2. Reading Required:

- a. The entire section of 2 Corinthians commentary in the *Full Life Bible Commentary of the New Testament*.
- b. The monograph *The Credentials of an Apostle* by David deSilva

*Suggested Reading* (for background and context) - I suggest the following articles in *The Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (a copy will be placed on reserve in the library)

- a. Collection for the Saints
  - b. Corinthians, Letters to
  - c. Coworkers, Paul and His
  - d. Cross, Theology of the
  - e. Financial Support
  - f. Jesus and Paul
  - g. Jew, Paul the
  - h. Law - esp. sect. 3 - "The Jewish Law in the Context of Paul's Letters"
  - i. Opponents of Paul
  - j. Preaching From Paul Today
3. Write a 5-8 page critical book review on deSilva's book (See handout on how to write a critical book review)
4. Mid-term (essay exam) over the background and introductory issues to 2 Corinthians
5. Research Project: Choose ONE

### *Option #1 - Term Paper*

- a. Reflecting on the teaching of Paul *in 2 Corinthians*, write a 10-12 page research paper on one of the following topics:
- b. The Spirit and the New Covenant
- c. The Hope, Promise and Significance of the Resurrection for the Christian
- d. The Significance of Christ's Death/Crucifixion
- e. The Eschatology of 2 Corinthians
- f. Paul's Collection for the Poor and Benevolence Ministry

- g. The Role of Trial and Suffering in the Life of Paul
- h. Paul's View of Satan's Work/ Influence in 2 Corinthians

*Option #2 - Oral Debate* (written notes and bibliographies to be turned in).

Two students pair off and after considerable research<sup>1</sup> debate one another over ONE of the following topics. Their arguments should show substantial study and reflection on the material contained in 2 Corinthians.

- a. The Legitimacy of Paul's Apostleship
- b. Are There Apostles in the Church Today?

- 6. Final (essay) Exam - background and or interpretive issues

### CHAPEL ATTENDANCE

Students are encouraged to attend chapel services whenever they are on campus and their schedules allow. This semester the community chapel service falls on one class date – *April, 8 at 9:30– 10:45 a.m.* Students should come to class at the regularly appointed class time of *8:00 a.m.* and we will dismiss class early to attend chapel.

### GRADING PROCEDURE

- 1. Grade Weights:

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| Required Reading     | 10%        |
| Critical Book Review | 15%        |
| Mid-term Exam        | 25%        |
| Research Project     | 25%        |
| Final Exam           | <u>25%</u> |
|                      | 100%       |

- 2. The total number of possible points to be earned for the course is 1000. Point totals at the end of the course are tabulated and a grading curve plotted relative to the collective grade profile of the class.

*NOTE: Written projects and papers that are turned in late will be penalized one grade movement (e.g., A to an A-) for each day late.*

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<sup>1</sup> Notes, and bibliography made available to the professor, outline and bibliography distributed to the class.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baird, William. *1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980.
- Barnett, Paul. *William. The Message of 2 Corinthians: Power in Weakness*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988.
- Barrett, C. K. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993.
- Belleville, Linda L. *2 Corinthians*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Reflections of glory: Paul's polemical use of the Moses Doxa tradition in 2 Corinthians 3.1 18*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.
- Best, Ernest. *Second Corinthian*. Atlanta: J. Knox Press, 1987.
- Bratcher, Robert G. *A translator's guide to Paul's second letter to the Corinthians*. London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1983.
- Bruce, F. F. *1 nd 2 Corinthians*. In the NCB series. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1971
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Paul & His converts: How Paul Nurtured the Churches He Planted*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1985.
- Danker, Frederick W. *II Corinthians*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Pub. House, 1989.
- Dean, John T. *Saint Paul and Corinth*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1947
- Denney, James. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1894.
- Green, Michael. *To Corinth With Love : Paul's Message to the Troubled Church at Corinth and Its Relevance to Christians Today*. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1988.
- Hering, Jean. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Translated by A. W. Heathcote and P. J. Allcock. London: Epworth Press, 1967.
- Hodge, Charles, *A commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974.
- Hughes, Philip. *Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. In the NIC series. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1962.
- Kruse, Colin G. *The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Leicester, England : InterVarsity Press ; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. Vol.8

- Marshall, Peter. *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians*. Tübingen : J.C.B. Mohr, 1987.
- Meyer, H. A. W. A *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Corinthians*. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884.
- Plummer, Alfred and Archibald Robertson. A *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*. 2nd ed. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1915.
- Renwick, David Alistair. *Paul, the Temple, and the Presence of God*. 1988.
- Shoemaker, H. Stephen. *Strength in Weakness*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1989.
- Schmithals, Walter. *Gnosticism in Corinth: An Investigation of the Letters to the Corinthians*. Translated by John E. Steely. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971.
- Talbert, Charles H. *Reading Corinthians: a literary and theological commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*. New York: Crossroad, 1987.
- Thrall, Margaret E. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Edinburgh : T. & T. Clark, 1994.
- Witherington, Ben. *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, c1994.
- Young, Frances M. *Meaning and truth in 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1988.

## SPECIFIC DATA

Syllabus prepared by James D. Hernando, Ph. D. October 2, 2009