

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BNT 533 Studies in the Letters of Paul: Galatians

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an exposition of Paul's letter to the Galatians. Emphasis will be placed on the doctrinal content of the epistle, particularly on Paul's presentation of the Gospel in light of the historical occasion of the writing. Our study will explore the apologetic letter genre as a plausible literary vehicle that Paul uses in the defense of the Gospel. Consequently, an attempt will be made to understand Paul's letter against the background and thinking of his opponents in Galatia. Additional emphasis will be given to the role of the Holy Spirit in Paul's understanding of Christian faith and existence.

OBJECTIVES

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

Knowledge

1. Identify the major introductory issues to the Galatian letter over which there is considerable debate and discuss the major views.
2. List the main components of a Graeco-Roman apologetic letter and briefly explain their literary function. Be able to identify the sections of Galatians that correspond to those functions.
3. Reconstruct the major theological views of Paul's opponents in Galatia and outline his responses to the same.
4. Discuss what role Paul assigns to the Holy Spirit in his understanding of the Gospel and Christian existence.

Skills

1. Read a New Testament epistle with genre sensitivity, conducting ones interpretation with a view to literary style and purpose.
2. Interpret a New Testament epistle with regard to its *Sitz im Leben*, i.e., the concrete historical situation that gave rise to its writing.
3. Interpret a passage of Scripture within its larger literary context and in respect to the literary purpose of the Galatian epistle.

Attitudes

1. More fully appreciate the literary environment of the New Testament and Paul's letter as representative of Graeco-Roman epistolography.
2. Recognize the value and interpretive insight to be gained by understanding the humanness of Paul and that he penned Galatians in the heat of polemical debate.
3. Realize the complex nature and difficulty of historical reconstruction of the *Sitz im Leben* from the fragmentary evidence of a New Testament letter.
4. Appreciate how the Pentecostal/charismatic experience is the implicit assumption of Paul in his understanding of the Christian life.

TEXTBOOKS

Required:

Gaebelein, Frank E. ed. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Vol. 10. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1976.

Hawthorne, G. F. and Ralph P. Martin eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Recommended:

Fee, Gordon D. *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.

BASIC OUTLINE

- I. Prolegomena: Introductory issues to the background and literary composition of the book
 - A. Historical Questions
 - B. Theological Issues of Debate
- II. Expository Analysis:
 - A. An Interpretive Framework: Apologia
 - B. Exposition
- III. Theological Analysis and Synthesis: Oral presentations and term papers

METHODOLOGY

In this source we will seek to meet our objectives through:

1. Classroom lecture.
2. Guided classroom discussion of issues related to assigned reading, lectures, and written class assignments.
3. Individual reading, research, and writing.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance at all class sessions is expected. Whenever possible absences should be announced beforehand to the professor. Excessive absenteeism is defined by the AGTS catalog and is subject to grade reduction.
2. Class participation - Throughout the semester students are expected to come prepared for class discussion and to interact with the professor and other students by posing with questions and making relevant comments .
3. Completion of all reading assignments.
4. Completion of Reflection Study Questions.
5. Oral Reading Report: on Prolegomena Issues
6. Project Paper - Options
 - a. Theological Application Paper OR
 - b. Thematic Exposition Paper
7. Final Exam

Note: Except in rare cases of extenuating circumstances, work turned in late without the prior permission of the professor will receive a grade reduction of $1/2$ letter grade for every day late.

Oral Reading Report

1. A reading assignment related to prolegomena issues is to be presented orally in class on the day the topic is discussed, or as assigned
 - a. Present a summary review of the reading assignment that:
 - 1) clearly and succinctly defines the topic or problem addressed in the reading.
 - 2) describes the author's position.
 - 3) briefly outlines/presents the author's supporting evidence and/or arguments.
 - b. The student should:
 - 1) **limit** his presentation to **10-12 minutes**.
 - 2) provide a one page outline of his presentation (include complete bibliographic information at the top of the page).
 - 3) **NOT** exceed the 12 minute limit
 - 4) **NOT read** from a manuscript, but speak using note cards

Theological Application Paper (10-12 pages in length)

1. Topics must be chosen before Sept 29, 2004. Submit a brief description and reason behind your choice.
2. The paper should :
 - a) Present an coherent and integrated picture of Paul's teaching on a particular theological topic or theme from this epistle.
 - b) Show how consideration of Paul's teaching needs to be implemented in some aspect of the church's life and ministry .
 - c) Show evidence of building on, but clearly expanding our classroom investigation and discussion.

- d) Show evidence of a careful inductive study of all relevant passages/texts.
 - e) Use scholarly resources to *support* your conclusions, but **NOT** in place of your own inductive study and presentation of the internal evidence of the epistles.
3. Write your paper using a modified APA format for footnoting (See enclosure). Your bibliography should conform to the style and format for bibliographies found in the latest edition of Turabian, Kate L. A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. 6th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Thematic Exposition Paper (10-12 pages)

1. Topics must be chosen before Sept 29, 2004. Submit a brief description and reason behind your choice.
2. The paper should :
 - a) Present an coherent and integrated picture of Paul's teaching on a particular theological topic or theme from this epistle.
 - b) Analyze exegetically the key passages that deal with your topic or theme.
 - c) Attempt to synthesize and present a systematic summary of what Paul is teaching on this topic or theme.
 - d) Use scholarly resources to *support* your conclusions, but **NOT** in place of your own inductive study and presentation of the internal evidence of the epistles.
 - e) Show evidence of building on, but clearly expanding our classroom investigation and discussion.
3. Write your paper using for footnote or endnote documentation that conforms to the style and format for bibliographies found in the latest edition of Turabian, Kate L. A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. 6th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

GRADING PROCEDURE

1. Grade Weights

a. Class readings	100pts	10%
b. Class participation	50pts	5%
c. Reading Report	150pts	15%
d. Study Questions	200pts	20%
e. Research Paper	300pts	30%
f. Final Exam*	<u>200pts</u>	<u>20%</u>
TOTAL	1000pts	100%
2. The total number of possible points to be earned in the semester is 1000. Point totals at the end of the semester are tabulated and a grading curve plotted relative to the collective grade profile of the class.

* The final exam will consist of three parts: 1) Two essay questions chosen from questions submitted by the entire class; 2) One section (either an essay or a set of objective questions) from the professor; and 3) One essay question that you personally submitted.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Gromacki, Robert G. Stand Fast in Liberty: An Exposition of Galatians. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979.
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SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by James D. Hernando, Ph. D., July 2, 2004