

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

James D. Hernando, Ph.D

Fall, 2006

**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 seem to correspond to those functions.
3. Reconstruct the major theological views of Paul's opponents in Galatia and outline his responses to the same.
4. List and discuss from Galatians what is essential to Paul's understanding of the Gospel, i.e., what constitutes the message of God's salvific work in and through Jesus Christ.
5. 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. 9. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1996.

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.

Hernando, James D. *Dictionary of Hermeneutics: A Concise Guide to Terms, Names, Methods and Expressions*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2005.<sup>1</sup>

### **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**

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<sup>1</sup> Highly recommended for seminarians who do not have an undergraduate degree in Biblical Studies, or sense a need for help with the overall terminology of biblical interpretation and New Testament studies. The text is also presently used in the course: BIB 532 Hermeneutics.

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 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
  6. 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  $\frac{1}{2}$  letter grade for every day late.

*Chapel Attendance:* Seminary chapel intersects our class on September 7<sup>th</sup>. Class will meet on that day, but dismiss early for chapel which runs from 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.

#### *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 or perspective.
    - 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 (Time your presentation.)<sup>2</sup>
4. **NOT read** from a manuscript, (Use and outline or notecards)
2. Be prepared for a 3-5 minute question-answer session after your presentation.

*Theological Application Paper* (10-12 pages in length)

1. Topics must be chosen before Sept 30, 2006. 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 epistle.
3. Write your paper using 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*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Thematic Exposition Paper* (10-12 pages)

1. Topics must be chosen before Sept 30, 2006. 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 footnote or endnote documentation that conforms to the style and format for bibliographies found in the latest edition of Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual*

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<sup>2</sup> Reports that go more than one minute over the 12-minute limit will receive a ½ letter grade deduction.

for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### **GRADING PROCEDURE**

#### 1. Grade Weights

a. Class readings	100pts	10%
b. Class participation	50pts	5%
c. Reading Report	100pts	15%
d. Study Questions	250pts	20%
e. Research Paper	300pts	30%
f. Final Exam*	200pts	20%
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**

- Barclay, William. *Flesh and Spirit: An Examination of Galatians 5:19-23*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1962.
- Barrett, C. K. *Freedom and Obligation: A Study of the Epistle to the Galatians*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985.
- Blunt, A.W. F. *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1925.
- Betz, Hans Dieter. *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*. In the *Hermeneia Commentary* series. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979.
- Bligh, John. *Galatians: A Discussion of St. Paul's Epistle*. London: St. Paul Publications, 1969.
- Brinsmead, Bernard Hungerford. *Galatians – Dialogical Response to Opponents*. SBL Dissertation Series no. 65. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. In the *New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.
- Burton, Ernest de Witt. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921.
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- Calvin, John. *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians, Philippians and Colossians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965. Original edition, 1548.
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- Duncan, George. S. *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. In the *Moffatt New Testament Commentary*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934.
- Fung, Ronald Y. K. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. In the NICNT series, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988.
- Gromacki, Robert G. *Stand Fast in Liberty: An Exposition of Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979.
- Guthrie, Donald. *Galatians*. rev. ed. *New Century Bible* (commentary). London: Oliphants, Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1974.
- Hays, Richard B. *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11*. *SBL Dissertation Series* no. 56. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983.
- Hendriksen, William. *Exposition of Galatians*. In the *Hendriksen New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968.
- Howard, George. *Paul: Crisis in Galatia*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1979.
- Lightfoot, J. B. *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957 (reprint of 1865 ed.).
- Lull, David John. *The Spirit in Galatians: Paul's Interpretation of Pneuma as Divine Power*. *SBL Dissertation Series* no. 49. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980.
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- Neil, William. *The Letter of Paul to the Galatians*. In the *Cambridge Bible Commentary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.
- Ossiek, Carolyn A. *Galatians*. In the *New Testament Message Commentary*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1980.
- Ridderbos, Herman N. *Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia*. In the *New International Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953.
- Ropes, James H. *The Singular Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians*. Harvard Theological Studies, 14. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1929.
- Schutz, John Howard. *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.
- Tenney, Merrill C. *Galatians: Charter of Christian Liberty*. rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957.
- Wagner, Gunter, ed. *An Exegetical Bibliography on the Letters to the Galatians and to the Philippians*. Ruschlikon-Zurich: Baptist Theological Seminary, 1977.

## **SPECIFIC DATA**

Prepared by James D. Hernando, Ph. D., June 27, 2006