

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
**BNTD 641 Experiencing the Passion of Paul, Peter and John (Galatians, 1 Peter, 1 John)**  
**March 23 – April 20, 2006**  
**(3 credits)**

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**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An interpretive analysis of three passionate apostolic letters whose central emphases reflect the Christian virtues of **Faith** (Paul's Letter to the Galatians), **Hope** (1 Peter) and **Love** (1 John).

**OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this course is to help students, using the English Bible, insightfully interpret New Testament Epistles (particularly Galatians, 1 Peter and 1 John) by utilizing interpretative methods that are consistent with a high view of Scripture; and apply the meaning of the texts derived thereby to the contemporary Church. Upon the successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Discuss the respective social-historical background of Galatians, 1 Peter and 1 John and how that information enriches the interpretive task.
2. Employ, with discernment, select hermeneutical methodology that facilitates exegesis of Galatians, 1 Peter and 1 John.
3. Interpret texts in Galatians, 1 Peter and 1 John in terms of their meaning to the original audiences.
4. Apply the meaning of texts in Galatians, 1 Peter and 1 John in relevant ways to contemporary Christian life.
5. Understand and appreciate a few various interpretive approaches (e.g. literary, rhetorical, social-scientific, Pentecostal) which add texture and depth to our understanding of these ancient, inspired texts.

**TEXTBOOKS**

McKnight, Scot. *1 Peter*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Thomas, John Christopher. *The Pentecostal Commentary on 1 John, 2 John, 3 John*. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2004.

Witherington III, Ben. *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

## METHODOLOGY

It is assumed that the students taking this class in either the Degree Completion Program or the regular curriculum have not had the benefit of an undergraduate degree in religion, biblical studies, or theology. Due to the paucity of classroom hours and the nature of adult learning, much of the course objectives will be accomplished through the diligent study and preparation of the adult learner outside the classroom via individual reading, reflection, and writing, which will be supplemented by classroom lectures and guided classroom discussion of issues related to the scheduled readings, written assignments, and lectures.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Class attendance and participation:** Participation in all class sessions is expected. The atmosphere of the class for adult learners is intended to be collegial, with relevant questions, comments and discussion both welcomed and expected as evidence of class preparation (see #2 below).
2. **Timely completion of the assigned readings:** The nature of the Degree Completion Program requires that class sessions move through a significant amount of material rather quickly. Therefore, thorough preparation for each class session is essential for maximum productivity in the face-to-face classroom time allotted. Please note the scheduled assignments below, which are to be completed prior to the designated class session.
3. **Reaction Papers:** A reaction paper (no less than four full pages and no more than five full pages) over the required reading is due at the beginning of each class. The paper should contain a concise summary of the reading, leaving at least half of the paper for a balanced critique of those issues in the reading that you have found to be either (a) particularly insightful and enriching or (b) inadequate and disturbing. Your critique may include such elements as: agreement or disagreement with the contents, and accompanying reasons for your position; an evaluation of the author's logic, view of Scripture, and/or use of sources; how the author's interpretive method provides particular insights that otherwise might not have been as obvious; an assessment of whether or not any of the author's assumptions or conclusions are inconsistent with a high view of the Scriptures. Because the reading assignments, due to their length, contain far more information than can be summarized in the space allotted, you will need to be selective in choosing to critique what you believe to be the most valuable and important aspects of the reading assignments.

For your writing assignments, use standard white 8 1/2 x 11" paper, double-spaced and printed in Times New Roman (or near equivalent) 12-point font. Use standard margins of 1.00" on both sides, top and bottom; and do not "justify" the margins. Include page numbers at the top of the page, centered. The cover page is considered page 0 and does not count toward the number of pages in the assignment. Place your name, course number and name, professor's name, and date on the cover page. Staple the pages together. Do not use any kind of cover for the papers. Reference specific points from the textbooks in the body of your paper as follows: (author, page number).

Bring five copies of each reaction paper to class—one to submit to the professor, and four to present to your small seminar group in which each student will present his/her critique and then field questions and comments.

4. **Final Exam:** A final, take-home essay examination will be given at the end of Session 4 and will be due at the beginning of Session 5. Material from your final exam will be shared with your seminar group for questions and comments.

## GRADING PROCEDURE

The final grade will be calculated according to the following formula:

Class Participation	10%
Reaction Papers	60% (four 5-page papers @ 15% each)
Final Exam (Take-home)	30%

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Session 1, March 23

- Topics: Prolegomena: The Nature and Interpretation of Epistles  
A Brief History of the Interpretation of Galatians  
Rhetorical Analysis of Galatians  
The Social Setting of the Epistle to the Galatians  
The Relationship Between Acts and Galatians  
Interpretation of Galatians 1:1 – 2:21
- Reading: Witherington, 1-196
- Writing: Reaction paper due at beginning of class.

### Session 2, March 30

- Topics: Interpretation of Galatians 3:1 – 6:18
- Reading: Witherington, 197-459
- Writing: Reaction paper due at beginning of class.

### Session 3, April 6

- Topics: Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter: “Home for the Homeless”  
Introduction: The Authorship, Date and Social Setting of 1 Peter  
Interpretation of 1 Peter 1:1 – 5:14
- Reading: McKnight, 17-286
- Writing: Reaction paper due at beginning of class.

### Session 4, April 13

- Topics: The Johannine Community and John the Elder  
The Setting of the Epistles of John  
Pentecostal Perspective: The Holy Spirit in 1 John  
The Literary Structure of 1 John  
Interpretation of 1 John 1:1 – 5:21
- Reading: Thomas, 1-14; 55-282

Writing: Reaction paper due at beginning of class.

Session 5, April 20

Topics: Faith, Hope and Love: Continuity and Discontinuity in Paul, Peter and John

Reading: As required for review and take-home exam.

Writing: Take-home final examination due at beginning of class.

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

*Galatians*

Betz, Hans Dieter. *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Church in Galatia*. Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979.

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.

Buckel, John. *Free To Love: Paul's Defense of Christian Liberty in Galatians*. Louvain: Peeters Press, 1993.

Bundrick, David R. "Ta Stoicheia Tou Kosmou (Gal. 4:3)." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34/3 (September 1991):353-364.

Cole, R. Alan. *Galatians*. Revised Edition. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1989.

Dunn, James D. G. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. Black's New Testament Commentaries. London: A & C Black. Reprinted, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993.

Fung, Ronald Y. K. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. New International Commentary on the New Testament [replaced H. Ridderbos]. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

Guthrie, Donald. *Galatians*. The New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981.

Howard, George. *Paul: Crisis in Galatia—A Study in Early Christian Theology*. Second Edition. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Jervis, L. Ann. *Galatians*. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999.

Longenecker, Richard N. *Galatians*. Dallas: Word Books, 1990.

McKnight, Scot. *Galatians*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.

Silva, Moises. *Interpreting Galatians: Explorations in Exegetical Method*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

Stott, John R. W. *The Message of Galatians*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1968.

Tenney, Merrill C. *Galatians: The Charter of Christian Liberty*. Revised and Enlarged Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957.

### ***1 Peter***

Achtmeier, Paul J. *1 Peter: A Commentary on 1 Peter*. Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996.

Davids, Peter. *The First Epistle of Peter*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Elliott, John H. *Home for the Homeless: A Social-Scientific Criticism of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.

Grudem, Wayne. *1 Peter*. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

Kelly, J. N. D. *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude*. Reprint Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Marshall, I. Howard. *1 Peter*. IVP New Testament Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991.

Michaels, J. Ramsey. *1 Peter*. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1988.

Selwyn, Edward Gordon. *The First Epistle of St. Peter: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Essays*. Second Edition, London: Macmillan, 1947; Reprint Edition, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Stronstad, Roger. *The First Epistle of Peter*. Companion Bible Commentary. Vancouver: CLM Educational Society, 1983.

### ***1 John***

Akin, Daniel L. *1, 2, 3 John*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001.

Barker, Glenn W. "1 John." In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 12:291-358. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelein. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981.

Brown, Raymond E. *The Epistles of John: Translated, with Introduction, Notes and Commentary*. Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982.

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes*. Revised. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.

Burge, Gary M. *The Letters of John*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of The Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1966.

Marshall, I. Howard. *The Epistles of John*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.

Rensberger, David K. *1 John, 2 John, 3 John*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.

Smalley, Stephen S. *1, 2, 3 John*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1984.

Stott, John R. W. *The Letters of John*. Revised Edition. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988.

#### **SPECIFIC DATA**

Prepared by David R. Bundrick, Ph.D., November 1, 2005.