

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
DEGREE COMPLETION COURSE
BNTD 533 STUDIES IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL: 1 CORINTHIANS
(3 credits for Fall Semester, 2008)**

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Aug. 28, Sept. 4, 11, 18, 25

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course consists of an exegetical study of 1 Corinthians with special emphasis on the social setting of Paul and his readers, the letter's rhetorical framework, and the charismatic dimensions of chapters 12-14.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to help students, using the English Bible, insightfully interpret New Testament epistles (particularly 1 Corinthians) 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 social-historical background and occasion of 1 Corinthians and how that information enriches the interpretive task.
2. Explain the structure and development of Paul's message to the Corinthians in light of the problems in the assembly.
3. Interpret texts in 1 Corinthians in terms of their meaning to the original audience.
4. Enhance your biblical preaching and teaching by being able to apply the intended meaning of texts from 1 Corinthians in relevant ways to contemporary Christian life *on the basis of sound exegesis*.
5. Identify Paul's most important theological contributions to biblical theology evident from 1 Corinthians.
6. Understand and appreciate various interpretive approaches (e.g. rhetorical, social-scientific) which add texture and depth to our understanding of the inspired text.

TEXTBOOKS

Fee, Gordon D. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

Murphy-O'Conner, Jerome. *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and Archaeology*. Good News Studies. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990. Reprint. Originally published: Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983.

Witherington III, Ben. *Conflict & Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

BASIC OUTLINE

Session 1, August 28

Topics: Prolegomena: The Nature and Interpretation of Epistles
 What is “Rhetorical Analysis” and is it helpful?
 Social-Scientific Criticism and the Setting of Corinthians

Reading*: Witherington, *Preface*, x-xv and 1-48; Fee, 1-23; Murphy-O’Conner, 1-178
 [255 pp.]

Writing: Review of *St. Paul’s Corinth* due at beginning of class.

Session 2, September 4

Topics: Exegesis of 1 Cor. 1:1-6:20

Reading: Fee, 27-265; Witherington, 69-169 [340 pp.]

Writing: “Commentary Comparison” paper due at beginning of class.

Session 3, September 11

Topics: Exegesis of 1 Cor. 7:1-11:1

Reading: Fee, 266-491; Witherington, 170-230 [287 pp.]

Writing: “Commentary Comparison” paper due at beginning of class.

Session 4, September 18

Topics: Exegesis of 1 Cor. 11:2-14:40

Reading: Fee, 491-713; Witherington, 231-290 [283 pp.]

Writing: “Commentary Comparison” paper due at beginning of class.

Session 5, September 25

Topics: Exegesis of 1 Cor. 15:1-16:24
 Student Research Presentations

Reading: Fee 713-840; Witherington, 291-324 [162 pp.]

Writing: Interpretive paper (draft) due at beginning of class. Final version due Oct. 2nd.

*AGTS Guidelines: In keeping with the standards of graduate level work, 1,500 pages of reading are required for a 3-credit course.

METHODOLOGY

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). *The instructor reserves the right to adjust the final grade in*

light of class attendance and participation, raising or lowering the grade for significant lapses or contributions.

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. **Book Review*:** A five-page written analytical review of *St. Paul's Corinth* is due at the beginning of session 1. Including a brief overview of the book, you should give attention to such issues as the quality of the writing and research behind the writing, the purpose of the book, whether the author is successful in fulfilling the book's purpose, the major contribution(s) of the book, the most significant insights to be gained from its reading, questions it raises for further research, and its importance/relevance for a study of Paul's Corinthian correspondence.
4. **“Commentary Comparison” Papers*:** An analysis (five pages minimum) of the assigned readings is due at the beginning of sessions 2, 3 and 4. In each paper you should highlight significant comparisons (matters that are similar) and contrasts (matters that are handled differently) between Fee and Witherington in how they interpret the same texts. Do you think the authors' different interpretive approaches (e.g. classical evangelical hermeneutics vs. socio-rhetorical analysis) contribute to differences in interpretation or to complementary viewpoints? If so, then how? Note especially any cases in which the author's interpretive method provides particular insights that otherwise might not have been as obvious. To avoid footnotes and conserve space, simply document specific points from the textbooks parenthetically in the body of your paper in this manner: (author, page number). Because the reading assignments contain far more information than can be addressed in five-page reports, you will need to be selective in choosing to critique what you believe to be the most valuable and important contrasts and comparisons. *By your documenting these comparisons and contrasts, the paper should give ample evidence of your thorough reading of the assigned material.*
4. **Interpretive Paper*:** A major interpretive paper focusing on a paragraph from 1 Corinthians is due at the end of the course. The topic will need to be selected in consultation with the professor by session 2. Students may collaborate on this project if any prefer to work in teams. This paper should adhere in format to the style manual adopted by the AGTS Bible/Theology Department, which is the latest edition of Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Based on their draft, students shall give oral presentations to the class during session 5, and the final paper should be submitted by October 2nd.

*For all your writing assignments in this class, 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 does not count toward the number of pages in the assignment.) Staple the pages together. Do not use any kind of cover for the papers. Please note that your writing must reflect graduate-

level work, particularly with respect to grammar, spelling, and syntax (sentence and paragraph construction). In the final assignment (the interpretive paper) only, proper documentation of references must be adhered to strictly.

GRADING PROCEDURE

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

Book Review	15%
Commentary Comparison Papers	60% (three 5-page papers @ 20% each)
Interpretive Paper and Presentation	25%

Prompt and timely completion of assignments is essential to the degree completion program. Late work will be accepted only by pre-arrangement with the professor and only on sufficient grounds. Late work submitted beyond agreed-upon dates, if accepted, may be penalized by one letter grade per week late.

See attached *Grading Criteria for Resident and Adjunct Professors*.

NOTE: A \$30.00 fee will be charged to the student's account for every grade change even if the instructor has approved an extension for completing the work. Any exception to the policy will be made by the registrar.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

An outstanding annotated bibliography of socio-rhetorical resources on 1 Corinthians appears in Witherington, pp. 48-67. An excellent list of commentaries, journal articles, and other significant works related to the study of 1 Corinthians is provided in Fee, pp. xxi-xxiv. Murphy-O'Conner (pp. 183-192) provides a significant bibliography of social-cultural (including archaeological) studies and ancient texts relative to Corinthians. The following bibliographic entries reflect only some key materials that are not otherwise listed in the above and/or have become available since the publication of the bibliographies appearing in the course textbooks.

Ackerman, David A. *Lo, I Tell You a Mystery: Cross, Resurrection, and Paraenesis in the Rhetoric of 1 Corinthians*. Princeton Theological Monograph Series Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2006.

Adams, Edward and Horrell, David G, eds. *Christianity at Corinth: The Quest for the Pauline Church*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.

Arrington, French. *Divine Order in the Church: A Study of 1 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980.

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Bittlinger, Arnold. *Gifts and Graces: A Commentary on 1 Corinthians 12-14*. Translated by Herbert Klassen. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967.

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- Bratcher, Robert G. *A Translator's Guide to Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians*. New York : United Bible Societies, 1982.
- Bundrick, David R. "Equal for Edification: A Response to 'Biblical Glossolalia—Thesis 7' and Its Critics." *Paraclete* Vol. 29 No. 1 (Winter 1995): 1-12.
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- Chester, Stephen J. *Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul's Theology and the Corinthian Church*. Studies of the New Testament and its World. London: T & T Clark, 2003.
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- Engberg-Pedersen, Troels, ed. *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.
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- Furnish, Victor Paul. *The Theology of the First Letter to the Corinthians*. New Testament Theology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

- Gardner, Paul Douglas. *The Gifts of God and the Authentication of a Christian: An Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 8-11:1*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994.
- Gee, Donald. *Concerning Spiritual Gifts*. Rev. ed. Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1972.
- Glen, John Stanley. *Pastoral Problems in First Corinthians*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964.
- Gordon, J. Dorcas. *Sister or Wife? 1 Corinthians 7 and Cultural Anthropology*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
- Grant, Robert McQueen. *Paul in the Roman World: The Conflict at Corinth*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Horton, Stanley M. *1 & 2 Corinthians*. Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 1999.
- Hunt, Allen Rhea. *The Inspired Body: Paul, the Corinthians, and Divine Inspiration*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996.
- Johnson, Alan F. *1 Corinthians*. IVP New Testament Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
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- Lee, Michelle Vidle. *Paul, the Stoics, and the Body of Christ*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
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- Newton, Derek. *Deity and Diet: The Dilemma of Sacrificial Food at Corinth*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series. Sheffield, England : Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.
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SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by Dr. David R. Bundrick, July 9, 2008.

GRADING CRITERIA FOR RESIDENT AND ADJUNCT PROFESSORS

In order to ensure the integrity of our academic processes, the following Academic Affairs Committee recommends the following criteria for grading at AGTS. It is our desire to reject the tendency in American schools toward grade inflation. We recognize that for graduate-level education, grades lower than C should not be considered as passing.

1. Grade rosters reporting that all students have received undifferentiated A's will not be accepted. If the professor truly believes that all students have done excellent quality work, he or she may limit the scale to A- through A+, but each grade must include a specific narrative justification by the professor.
2. Professors will be normally expected to do the hard work of distributing grades across a spectrum of C- to C to C+ to B- to B to B+ to A- to A to A+. Students who have not earned such grades should receive an F.
3. The giving of D's is acceptable only when students have completed all of the work required by the course, but such grades are discouraged.
4. The grade of A+ should be reserved for students whose work is deemed to be publication-quality and should include the professor's encouragement for the student to submit the work for publication or an offer to co-author an article for publication.
5. It is highly recommended that syllabi should include detailed criteria for grading major assignments.

AGTS Grading Scale

Publishable = A+
100% - 94% = A
93% - 90% = A-
89% - 87% = B+
86% - 84% = B
83% - 80% = B-
79% - 77% = C+
76% - 74% = C
73% - 70% = C-
69% - 67% = D+
66% - 64% = D
63% - 60% = D-

(Approved by AAC, 4/13/05, and Faculty 4/20/05)