

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BNT 540 Studies in the Synoptic Gospels/Acts: Mark

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Fall, 2008

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An exegetical and doctrinal study of the Gospel of Mark. The primary focus will be on how Mark's content and narrative structure reveals his contribution to NT Christology and the doctrine of Christian discipleship. Special attention will be given to the "Son of Man" sayings and so-called "Messianic Secret" motif as it relates to Mark's apology for the crucifixion of Christ.

OBJECTIVES

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

Knowledge

1. Discuss the major questions of introduction related to the Gospel of Mark (author, date, provenance, destination etc.), outline various scholarly positions, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.
2. Construct an "occasion" (*Sitz im Leben*) for the Gospel and support it with an appeal to the structure of the Mark and its internal evidence.
3. Outline and discuss the contribution of Mark to NT Christology. Use and refer to Mark's use of the "Son of Man" sayings and/or the "Messianic Secret" motif in your answer.
4. Write an essay on "What it means to be a follower of Christ" from a Markan perspective, using the internal evidence of his gospel.

Skills

1. Read a NT gospel as a literary work, appreciating its distinctive style, form and structure.
2. Critically evaluate conflicting ways of interpreting the content of a NT gospel, by identifying hermeneutical, historical and theological presuppositions operating in the handling of the text.
3. Develop a set of exegetical-type questions that need be asked and answered when interpreting a given text.
4. Identify the practical spiritual value that can be derived from the doctrinal teaching of a given text, or an entire gospel.

Attitudes

1. Recognize the *kerygmatic* nature of the Gospels and their contemporary value for preaching.

2. Appreciate the centrality of the cross of Christ and its theological implications to our understanding of "the Gospel" and what it means to be his disciples.
3. Understand more clearly that what we believe about Jesus is crucial to our identity and life as his disciples.

TEXTBOOKS

Required:

Green, Joel B. and Scot McKnight, ed.s, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992.

Witherington, Ben. *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2001.

Recommended:

Wessell, Walter W. *Mark*. In the *Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelin. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. Co., 1984.

BASIC OUTLINE

- I. Prolegomena: Introductory Issues
 - A. Background Reading Reports
 - B. Introductory Lectures
- II. Structural and Content Analysis
 - A. Structural Features
 - A. Literary Features
 - B. Thematic Features
- III. Exegetical/Doctrinal Analysis
 - A. Key Christological Passages
 - B. Key Discipleship Passages

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 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 can adversely effect your grade.
2. Completion of both all assigned reading before the completion of the course.
3. Focused Study Questions - answers researched and written out.
Background reading report - (oral and written) on one of the supplemental reading readings
 - a. 1-2 page outline for class distribution, fuller version including notes to professor
 - b. Oral presentation to class
5. (2) *Exegetical Outlines* (EOs) of key passages, AND a 3-5 page (doubled spaced) expository sermon (ES) on one of the passages chosen for the exegetical outlines.
6. 10-12 page *Inductive Thematic Essay* - Instructions to follow
7. Final Exam

Note: 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.

GRADING PROCEDURE

1. Grade Weights:

Reading	10%
Focused Study Questions	20%
Background Reading Reports	15%
Exegetical Outlines/Expository Sermon	15%
Inductive Thematic Essay	20%
Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
	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.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Beasley-Murray, G. R. *Jesus and the Future*. London: Macmillan, 1954.

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Cullmann, Oscar. *Christology of the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959

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Telford, W. R. *The Theology of the Gospel of Mark*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Todt, H. E. *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965.

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SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by James D. Hernando, Ph. D., June 28, 2008