

COS 121: Bible I: Introduction

WESTERN JURISDICTION COURSE OF STUDY 2016

June 27- July 5; 1:30-4:30 pm

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Course Description

The books of the Bible were written or preserved orally over a period of 2,000 years. Many different writings were considered sacred by various communities until the canon was established and agreed upon. The development of the texts and ideas within the texts will be considered by looking at the books of Mark, Philippians, Genesis, and Amos. Means of viewing the Bible by critical analysis, by Christian tradition, and by spiritual discernment will be presented.

Exegesis and the art of preaching will be presented and discussed, with students given the chance to exercise new skills informed by class information and discussion.

Student Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate the place of scripture in the life of the congregation and the role of the pastor in interpretation.
2. Understand the inspiration and formation of the canon and its authority within the community of faith.
3. Understand and apply historical, literary, and theological approaches to various types of literature in scripture using Genesis, Amos, Mark, and Philippians.
4. Develop a method of exegesis consistent with the nature and authority of the Bible.

Required Textbooks:

What They Don't Tell You: A Survivor's Guide to Biblical Studies,

Michael Joseph Brown. ISBN: 0-664-22220x

The Bible: The Book that Bridges the Millennia Part 1: Origins & Formation,

Maxine Clarke Beach, ISBN: X933523 (This book can also be purchased at Amazon.com used books for \$3.71 plus shipping, when the site was last checked. Do not buy Part 2.)

How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible

Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart ISBN-13: 978-0310246046

Suggested texts:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha NRSV

The Bible Makes Sense, Walter Brueggemann. ISBN: 0-664-22495-4

How to prepare your Homework and Class Papers

1. Prepare your work with the class number COS121, your name and the instructor's name on the first page top. Please number all pages. It is not necessary to write out the questions in your paper. Make sure that your papers meet the length criteria for each item of written work.
2. Type your work, unless you have no computer available to you. At Claremont School of Theology the computer lab will be accessible to you at all times. Double space your work.
3. When quoting from a book, a journal, a teacher, a website, or another student, quotations marks must surround the quote. Also the source of the quote must be noted with the page number of the book or journal preferably in a footnote or in parentheses following the quotation. If you use another's ideas you must also show the source in a footnote, etc.
4. Often a copy of your paper is useful in class for your own reference. Either on your laptop or as a paper copy.

Pre-class assignments: Before coming to Claremont:

The date for turning in the following homework assignments is May 27-June 6. You may send these by email (sbell@cst.edu), or by post office mail (Susan Bell, 1325 N. College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711). The homework will be accepted on the first day of class for a reduced grade. Students must do the pre-class assignments and other written work to get an acceptable grade in this course.

A. Read the first four chapters of *The Bible: The Book that Bridges the Millennia*.

- i. **Pre-class Paper One** (Due May 27 – June 6): Write a paper that includes your own thoughts about God's inspiration of the Bible, and yet the humanity of the authors, how the canon was formed, and anything else in these first chapters of the book that you want to reflect upon (at least 1 1/2 pages).
- ii. There will be a very short quiz over the first four chapters of *The Bible: The Book that Bridges the Millennia* on the first day of class.
- iii. Be familiar with the timeline in the back of the book. Pay attention to these events: a. Life of King David, b. Northern Kingdom of Israel taken into exile, c. Southern Kingdom of Judah taken into exile and the first temple destroyed, d. King Josiah's renewal and discovery of the Deuteronomic writing, e. Reading of "the Book of the Law" (Torah) by Ezra in Jerusalem, f. Essences arise, begin writing the Dead Sea Scrolls, g. Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in a cave near Qumran, h. Destruction of the second Jerusalem Temple, i. Septuagint (Old Testament in Greek) translated into Greek from Hebrew, j. Birth of Jesus, k. Council of Jamnia, l. Gospel of Mark written, m. Gospels of Matthew and Luke written, n. Gospel of John written, o. Epistles of Paul written, p. Marcion challenges the

use of the Old Testament by Christians, q. Athanasius writes the first list of the 27 books of the New Testament, r. Council of Nicaea, s. Council of Constantinople,

t. Cannon ratified by the Council of Trent, u. Gutenberg Bible produced (printing press first used for printing the Bible).

B. Read all of *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*.

- i. **Pre-class Paper Two** (Due May 27-June 6) at least 3 pages for i. ii. and iii. At the beginning of the paper differentiate between ‘exegesis’ and ‘hermeneutics’ in a couple of sentences. Include in the paper what historical exegesis and literary exegesis are (called historical and literary context in the book). Also add, how you would describe theological exegesis (at least 1 page).
- ii. Concentrating on Chapter 3, after reading the Biblical Book of Philippians completely, continue with your paper by: a. Finding 3 things that could describe what Paul finds to be problematic in the church at Philippi or with Christians of his age. b. Sighting three things which Paul wants the Philippians to do as corrective of the problems. Are these things applicable to today’s church? 3. Do you find anything in Philippians that has relevancy only to 1st century and not to today’s audience? (at least 1 page)
- iii. Concentrating on Chapter 7, tell why the 4 Gospels were written and why they differ. Also, tell how this is helpful for us in our preaching and teaching. (at least 1 page)

C. Pre-class Paper Three

- i. Write a paper that describe the characteristics of Jesus found in Philippians 2:4-11 and Mark 2:3-14. Is it our role as Christians to make these characteristics part of our own lives, even healing the sick?
- ii. Write a prayer that you will pray before writing a sermon: take into consideration the Biblical author’s meaning in the text, your intention in preaching the sermon, and the presence of the Holy Spirit for inspiration in your preparation and preaching of the sermon. In writing the prayer, think about the qualities you would like to have preaching the sermon and that you would like to present to the congregation (ie. humility, faithfulness, wisdom, courage..etc.) (at least 1 page for i. and ii.)

Homework Summary: You will have the following items turned in before arriving at Claremont: 3 papers. Your homework is to be emailed by June 10 (or mailed). Please email (sbell@cst.edu) if possible, or by post office mail (Susan Bell, 1325 N. College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711).

Course Work while at CST

All work must be completed before leaving CST. Grading will be on the basis of

A: 90% - 100% + a 3-5 page Gospel paper (see above);

B: 80%-89% + a 3-5 page Gospel paper (see above);

C: no Gospel paper + 70-79%; etc.

Presence and participation: Students must be present for every class session for all of the three hours. Full participation of the students in group projects and class discussion is expected.

Papers to be completed:

Papers should be typed and double spaced. Computers are available in the CST Library's computer lab. Good grammar and sentence structure is expected. You must produce your own work. When you use an author's ideas in your work, make sure to footnote that use. Do not compose a paper of quotes of other individuals. This type of paper gives no understanding of your own creative process and your ability to write and think.

SCHEDULE FOR PAPERS/REPORTS during class time:

Daily Reports

Each student will be assigned several of "the rules of thumb" found in Brown's book, *What They Don't Tell You*, to explain and comment upon during the class sessions. A short period at the beginning of class will be given for each oral presentation daily. Greater clarity will be given on the first day of class

Group Class Reports

To be given: Friday July 1

Length: 15-20 minute

A group of 3 students will make an exegetical assessment of one of the following scriptures: Genesis 32:22-29; Hosea 14:8-9; Jer. 31:31-34; Mark 10:17-22; Philippians 2:1-4; Romans 8:9-11.

Content: The group participants will divide the exegetical questions (i.e. Historical Exegesis, Moral Exegesis, and Theological Exegesis) with each participant assuming responsibility for a section of the Exegesis. Each group of three will be given 15-20 minutes of class time to orally present their Exegesis. Each student will also present their own theme sentence for a sermon taken from the team's exegetical work.

Paper on Amos

Due: Monday July 4

In the Hebrew Bible Book of Amos find how the prophet Amos enforces the Covenant or the Laws of God.

1. Find 3 things in Amos that cite the punishment to come upon Israel and Judah if they do not follow the tenants of God that mirror or are found in earlier statements of the Law (Leviticus 26:14-39; and Deuteronomy 4:15-28;15:11-16:20; 28:15-32:42).

2. Find 3 things in Amos which tell of blessings that will come to Israel and Judah, if they live faithfully by the Covenant (especially Deuteronomy 4:32-40; 28:1-14 and Leviticus 26:1-13) as the source of God's Law. This draws on Chapter 10 of HtRtBfAIW. (at least one page)

Final Oral Exam:

Exam will take place on July 5

Content: Compare the healing of the multitudes in the three Synoptic Gospels: Matthew 12:15-21; Mark 3:7-12; Luke 6:17-19.

Compare wording, placement, content, and style. Take what you have learned about these three Gospels and apply it to these three passages to explain the likenesses and differences in these texts. Other questions will be added.

A daily schedule will be given on the first day of class.

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.