



ERSKINE
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

For Christ and His Church

NT 601A
New Testament I
Spring Term, 2012
Mondays, 6-9 P.M.
Augusta
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- I. Course Description:** This one-semester course explores the background, literary art, theological teaching and contemporary message of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts. Attention is given to the canonical significance of these writings and to their value for ministry. *Required for M.Div., M.A.C.M., M.A.P.M., and M.A.T.S. students. Three hours.*

- II. Course Objectives:** The mission statement of Erskine Seminary indicates that its purpose is to educate persons “for service in the Christian Church”, in particular, the study of the Bible “in its own literary, historical and theological settings”, so that the student may “interpret it with relevance and meaning applicable for today.” This course examines the literary and historical aspects of the Gospels and Acts, as well as considering their particular characteristics and messages. Critical exegetical issues related to each New Testament genre will be explored. Emphasis will be laid upon acquiring a deeper understanding of the authors’ intentions, and communicating this message to the contemporary Church.

- III. Required Textbooks:**
Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors (CBD, Amazon, B&N, and Books-A-Million) and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The ETS SBA will receive a modest percentage of the profits from students’ and professors’ purchases through this portal. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

A personal study Bible. The NIV Bible text (Barker, Kenneth, general editor. *The NIV Study Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), notable for its affordable price, popular translation and excellent notes and maps, will be used in this course, and is a *suggested* study Bible. The selection of a Bible translation, however, will be left to the individual student.

Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997. ISBN # 0-385-24767-2.

Goodacre, M. and N. Perrin, *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004. ISBN # 0-8308-2769-2.

Evans, Craig A. *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2006. ISBN # 0-8308-3318-8.

In addition, there will be small reading assignments and/or handouts throughout the course to help the student organize and understand the relatively large amount of material to be learned.

- I. Course Requirements:** Students are expected to attend every class meeting. If a student must be absent due to an emergency or illness for all or part of a session, the student is responsible for all work done and due for that session. *No more than three sessions may be missed.* Due to the nature of the course, missing classroom discussion will almost certainly adversely affect the student's performance on the scheduled exams.

Students are expected to be adequately prepared for each class session, particularly the Biblical translation assignments due. Classroom discussion will constitute an important element of our learning together, and will be adversely affected by poor preparation.

Three objective one-hour exams will be administered, and will be related to the Biblical, background or critical material covered in the previous session. The tests must be taken on the assigned dates. See course outline for test dates.

Additionally, there will be a required book review of **either** *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* or *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. This review will be an analysis of several critical essays/chapters found in each respective book. A guide sheet will be provided for this analysis.

- II. Evaluation:** The Seminary grade scale will be used in determining a letter grade. The student's final grade will be calculated as follows:

Three one-hour tests (3 x 25%)	= 75%
Book review	25%

III. Class Meeting Dates: This course will meet Saturdays from 9 A.M.-5 P.M. See course outline below for details.

Seminary Policies: Click this link to view your syllabus contract with Erskine Seminary. http://seminary.erskine.edu/content_policies/SeminaryPoliciesforETSSStudents.pdf

Course Outline

Session 1: February 11

Introduction: The Study of the New Testament

- A. The New Testament as Literature
- B. The Development of the New Testament Canon
- C. Textual Development of the New Testament
- D. The World of the New Testament
- E. Geography of Palestine

Reading assignments for this session:

Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 3-93.

Session 2: March 3

Introduction: The Gospel Genre

- A. The Study of Jesus
- B. The Synoptic Gospels and their Development
- C. Critical Methodologies and the Study of the Gospels
- D. The Book of Mark and its Message

Reading assignments for this session:

Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 99-167;

Read the Gospel of Mark.

Note: Test #1 will be administered during the first hour of class.

Session 3: March 31

Introduction: The Gospels in Context

- A. The Gospel of Matthew
- B. The Gospel of Luke
- C. The Gospel of John
- D. Unique Features of John's Gospel
- E. Hellenistic and Jewish Worldviews and Piety

Reading assignments for this session:

Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 171-275.

Read the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John.

Note: Test #2 will be administered during the first hour of class.

The book review of *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels* and/or the review of *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* will be due this class session.

Session 4: April 28

A. **Introduction:** The Book of Acts as History and Genre

Reading assignments for this session:

Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 279-378.

Read the Book of Acts.

Note: *Test #3 will be administered during the first hour of this class session.*