

Erskine Theological Seminary

Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning

DN 940 FJ
Galatians and the Ethics of Grace
Fall Term, 2009
Saturdays, 9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.
9/19, 10/10, 11/14, 12/12
Fort Jackson
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Course Description: This course surveys the historical background, contents and history of interpretation of the book of Galatians. Special attention is given to the debates surrounding the Pauline understanding of justification by faith and its relationship to ethical conduct in the Church. *Norms Elective. Three hours.*

I. Course Objectives: The mission statement of Erskine Seminary indicates that its purpose is to educate its students “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 book of Galatians, with particular emphasis upon critical examination and interpretation of the biblical text. In addition to the close exegesis of the text and its historical context, theological issues connected with the interpretation of Galatians are treated. Students will be expected (see Course Requirements below) to demonstrate a familiarity with the backgrounds, message and critical issues related to the study of the book of Galatians.

II. Required Textbooks:

NOTE: Students continue to be responsible for securing their own required textbooks. As a convenience, there is a bookstore on the seminary's home page. To access this site and its information, locate textbooks, and compare prices, go to <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. A limited number of copies of each textbook will be available from the Erskine Campus Bookstore, and copies may be ordered through that Bookstore.

J.D.G. Dunn, ed., *Paul and the Mosaic Law*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 199-.
ISBN# 0-8028-4499-5

Gaffin, Richard. *By Faith, Not by Sight: Paul and the Order of Salvation*. Waynesboro: Paternoster, 2006. ISBN# 1-84227-418-X

R. N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Vol. 41 in the Word Biblical Commentary, B. Metzger, gen. ed. Dallas: Word, 1990 (alt. Nelson). ISBN# 0-8499-0240-1

Wright, N.T. *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Saul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. ISBN# 0-88028-181-2

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 suggested reading of each student. The selection of a Bible translation, however, will be left to the individual student.

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.

III. Course Requirements: Students are expected to attend every class meeting. Attendance in the first meeting of the class is mandatory; if the student cannot attend this meeting, please do not register, or if registered, complete the drop/add procedure. 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 one session may be missed.* Due to the nature of the course, missing classroom discussion will almost certainly adversely affect the student's grade.

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

Two papers will be assigned treating 1) the Law of Christ in Galatians, and 2) the relationship between Galatians and the book of James. Guide sheets will be provided for these assignments.

Each student will be required to present the results of an exegetical exercise based on a portion of the text of Galatians. Please consult the professor for details and exegesis guidelines. A guide sheet will be provided for the preparation and presentation of this exercise.

Finally, there will be two required book reviews from our book list. The student may choose from *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, *What Saint Paul Really Said* and *By Faith, Not by Sight*. These reviews will be an analysis of the contents in each volume. A guide sheet will be provided for this analysis.

IV. Evaluation: The Seminary grade scale (*Catalog*, p. 42) will be used in determining a letter grade. The student's final grade will be calculated as follows:

2 Book reviews, 20% each = 40%

2 Papers, 20% each = 40%

Exegesis Exercise = 20%

Note: Completed and graded tests and papers will be returned to the student in a subsequent class period. Papers tendered at the end of the semester (where impossible to return in class) will be held by the professor for pick-up by the student. Alternately, if the student wishes, the paper/s may be mailed to the student. In such cases, the student should indicate the mailbox number on the paper/test, or, when mailed, supply a SASE.

V. Class Meeting Dates: This course will meet for four eight-hour sessions on the following Saturdays: September 19, October 10, November 14 and December 12. See course outline below for details.

VI. Seminary Policies: Once you have completed, signed, and submitted your registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract. The student is encouraged to read the Erskine Seminary 2008-2009 *Catalog* for important information regarding drop/add procedures and deadlines (p. 4, "Academic Calendar"), class withdrawal (p. 35, 37), as well as the correct manner of dealing with the grade status of "incomplete" (p.44). Please consult the Student Handbook and D. Min. Manual for policies re. writing style and ethics, e.g., inclusive language and plagiarism, as well as the Seminary Catalogue, p. 40f. A brief summary of these policies is as follows:

A grade of "**incomplete**" is not a privilege if the student. It is the prerogative of the professor. It can be given as a final grade only when (1) the student has completed most of the assigned coursework and (2) when the student has been providentially hindered from completing the rest. The student and professor must complete the appropriate form before an "incomplete" can be given. The final date that an "incomplete" can be changed to a grade for the Fall semester is March 1, 2008. After this date, the grade of "incomplete" will automatically become an "F", and cannot be altered. Note that there is a fee associated with "incompletes".

Drop/Add/Withdrawal Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a **binding contract** and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a "drop/add" form and secure the appropriate signatures prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline,

one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student's receiving a grade of "F" for the course and full tuition charges will apply. **No exceptions will be made to this policy.**

Language about God and Humanity Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").

Conduct in Theological Discussions Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the *Catalog* for more information.

Papers submitted in this class should be submitted in typed, double-spaced format, and written according to Erskine Seminary's "Doctor of Ministry Manual". The student must be especially careful regarding citation of sources in all Seminary course work, including both footnotes and a full bibliography. Failing to cite a reference, or claiming other's material as one's own constitutes a type of fraud known as **plagiarism**. A charge of plagiarism is serious, and can result in the student's expulsion from the Seminary.

Course Outline

Session 1: Saturday, September 19 (9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.)

Introduction: An overview of Galatians. Issues regarding the integrity of the letter, intended audience, occasion, history of interpretation etc. will be treated. Please read Longenecker, *Galatians*, xli-cxix in preparation for this class.

Session 2: Saturday, October 10 (9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.)

Exegetical Work: Galatians 1-2. In this session, we will begin our exegetical examination of the letter. Student presentations of selected pericopes from chapters 1

and 2 will be given during this session. Please read Longenecker, *Galatians*, 1-96 in preparation for this class.

Work due: Paper # 1: The Meaning of the Term “The Law of Christ” in Galatians.
Book review #1 due at this time.

Session 3: Saturday, November 14 (9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.)

Exegetical Work: Galatians 3:1-4:11. In this session, we will continue our close exegesis of the text, including student presentations of selected pericopes. Please read Longenecker, *Galatians*, 97-183 in preparation for this class.

Work due: Paper #2: James, Paul and the Role of Works in Salvation.

Session 4: Saturday, December 12 (9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.)

Exegetical Work: Galatians 4:12-6:10. We will finish our examination of the text of Galatians in this session. Student presentations from this section of the text will continue. Please read Longenecker, *Galatians*, 184-301 in preparation for this class.

Work due: Book review #2 will be due at this time.