



NT 601
NEW TESTAMENT I
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Due West Campus
Wednesdays, 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Fall, 2011

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The 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. Three hours credit.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Seminary's Mission Statement affirms: "The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church." (ETS 2010-2011 *Catalog*, p. 6) Central to any kind of Christian ministry is bearing witness in word and deed to the coming of Jesus into the world as the God-Man. The New Testament is an account of the life and work of Jesus as well as a witness to its significance for human life. Thus, a course that introduces students to the New Testament is at the very heart of the Seminary's mission.

More specifically, by the end of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Describe the major historical events that occurred in Palestine from the time of Alexander the Great through the Jewish War (336 B.C. – A.D. 70);
2. Define rabbinic and Hellenistic Judaism and describe the major commonalities and differences of the two;

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3. Describe the major geographical features of Palestine and show their importance for understanding the New Testament;
4. Describe the major religious and political parties of Judaism in Palestine in the first century A.D.;
5. Describe the major intellectual and religious movements in the Greco-Roman world in the first century A.D.;
6. Discuss the problems confronted in the quest of the historical Jesus;
7. Describe current attempts to uncover the historical Jesus;
8. Define “Gospel” as a literary form;
9. Describe the likely process by which the Gospels were written and transmitted and indicate the probable uses they had in the early churches;
10. Describe the basic process by which the canonization of the New Testament occurred;
11. Describe the process by which the text of the New Testament has come to us;
12. Describe the probable historical circumstances that called forth Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts;
13. State in his/her own words the major themes of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts;
14. Describe the picture of Jesus that emerges in each of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John;
15. Outline the basic contents of each of the four Gospels and the book of Acts;
16. List and describe major tools that are valuable in studying the New Testament.

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.

Each student must purchase the following textbooks for the course:

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

Patzia, Arthur G. *The Making of the New Testament*, Revised Edition. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011. **ISBN 9780-8308-2721-3.**

Roetzel, Calvin J. *The World That Shaped the New Testament*, Revised Edition. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. **ISBN 0-6642-2415-6**

Soulen, Richard N. and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. Third Edition, Revised and Expanded. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001. **ISBN 0-664-22314-1**

Two recommended but not required books are D. S. Russell. *Between the Testaments* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1965) and James C. Vanderkam. *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

In addition to these texts, the student will need a New Testament in the translation of his/her choice.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Each student must attend each session of class.** If the student must be absent from all or part of a class session, he/she is responsible for all work missed and for any work due. **A student who misses more than three class meetings for any reason will automatically fail the course.**
- B. The student must be adequately prepared for each class session. Adequate preparation consists of reading all required assignments and being able to participate intelligently in classroom discussions. Notice that in addition to textbook reading assignments, the student is also assigned reading from the New Testament. The assigned reading from the New Testament is important and should not be neglected.

- C. **Three one-hour tests will be given.** See the **COURSE OUTLINE** for the dates and contents of these tests. The professor will indicate prior to these tests the nature of the questions, the proper way to prepare, etc. These tests will be given during the first part of the class period. The class will resume after the test is finished. All tests must be taken on the assigned dates.
- D. The third test will be given during the Exam period at the end of the semester. **This test will be given Wednesday morning, December 7.**
- E. **Two book reviews will be required.** The student will write an analysis of Arthur G. Patzia, *The Making of the New Testament*. This analysis will be written in response to a guide-sheet which will be provided. This analysis is due **no later than Wednesday, October 12**. The analysis of Calvin J. Roetzel, *The World That Shaped the New Testament* is due **no later than Wednesday, November 9**. A guide-sheet will also be provided for this analysis.
- F. The student is encouraged to keep a loose-leaf notebook for the course. He/she can use it for class notes, reading notes, hand-outs, sermon ideas, bibliographical information, etc. If done properly, this notebook can be a helpful resource for further study, teaching, and preaching from the New Testament.
- G. The student needs to be aware of certain Seminary policies that are applicable for all coursework. The student should go to the following link to review these policies.
http://seminary.erskine.edu/content_policies/SeminaryPoliciesforETSStudents.pdf
- H. I have regular office hours posted on my door (Office 20) for the fall semester. However, the student is advised to set up an appointment first especially if he/she is driving a long distance to Due West.

V. EVALUATION

The Seminary grade scale (ETS 2010-2011 *Catalog*, p. 46) will be used. The student's final grade will be determined as follows:

Three tests	=	70%
Two book reviews	=	30%

COURSE OUTLINE

8-31 Course introduction, requirements, procedures, etc.

I. An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament

- A. Introduction
- B. Approaches to New Testament study
- C. The historical-critical method
- D. Type of New Testament literature and the interpretive significance of recognizing the types
- E. The New Testament canon and its development
- F. The history of the text of the New Testament

ASSIGNMENT FOR 8-31:

1. Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. xxxiii – xxxvii, pp. 3-54.
2. Read Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*: “Apocryphal N. T.” (pp. 11-12); “Biblical Criticism” (pp. 18-23); “Canon” (p. 29); “Codex” (p. 34); “Exegesis, etc.” (p. 57); “Historical Critical Method” (p. 78); “Historical Criticism” (p. 79); “Papyrus Manuscripts” (p. 128); “Postmodern Biblical Interpretation” (pp. 140-142); “Textual Criticism” (pp. 189-192); “Textus Receptus” (p. 192); “Theological Interpretation” (pp. 192-196); “Variant Reading” (p. 204); “Vellum” (p. 205).

9-7 II. The World of the New Testament

9-14

9-21

9-28

- A. Introduction
- B. The geography of Palestine in the first century A.D.

- C. Palestine under Roman rule
 - 1. Alexander the Great to the Maccabean revolt (336 – 167 B.C.)
 - 2. The Maccabean revolt and its aftermath (167 – 142 B.C.)
 - 3. The Hasmonean rule (142 – 63 B.C.)
 - 4. The Roman period (63 B.C. – A.D. 70)
- D. Judaism in the first century A.D.
- E. The Greco-Roman world in the first century A.D.

ASSIGNMENT FOR 9-7, 9-14, 9-21, 9-28:

1. Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 55-96.
2. Read Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*: “Am Ha Arez” (p. 6); “Dead Sea Scrolls” (pp. 43-44); “Gnosis, etc.” (pp. 67-68); “Haggadah” (p. 70); “Halakah” (p. 71); “Josephus, Flavius” (pp. 91-92); “Mishnah” (pp. 113-114); “Midrash” (p. 113); “Philo of Alexandria” (p. 137); “Talmud” (p. 186); “Targum” (p. 187).

10-5 TEST # 1 ON I AND II ABOVE (first part of period)(10-5)
10-12

III. An Introduction to the Gospels

- A. Introduction
- B. What is a Gospel?
- C. The probable process of composition of the Gospels
- D. The Synoptic problem
- E. The problem of finding the historical Jesus
- F. Disciplines for the study of the Gospels
 - 1. Source criticism
 - 2. Form criticism
 - 3. Redaction criticism
 - 4. Narrative (Rhetorical) criticism

ASSIGNMENT FOR 10-5 AND 10-12:

1. Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 99-125.

2. Read Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*: “Form Criticism” (pp. 61-64); “Four Document Hypothesis” (p. 64); “Gospel” (p. 68); “Griesbach Hypothesis” (p. 70); “Harmony of the Gospels” (p. 71); “Jesus Seminar” (p. 91); “Literary Criticism” (pp. 105-106); “Nag Hammadi Codices” (pp. 116-117); “Narrative, Narrative Criticism” (pp. 118-120); “Oral Tradition” (pp. 125-126); “Pericope” (p. 136); “Q” (pp. 151-153); “Quest of the Historical Jesus, etc.” (pp. 153-156); “Redaction Criticism” (pp. 158-160); “Rhetorical Criticism” (pp. 164-165); “*Sitz-em-Leben*” (pp. 173-174); “Source Criticism” (pp. 178-179); “Streeter” (pp. 179-180); “Synopsis” (p. 184); “Synoptic Problem” (pp. 184-185); “Two Source Hypothesis” (p. 200).
3. The analysis of Arthur G. Patzia, *The Making of the New Testament*, Revised Edition is **due on October 12**.

10-19 IV. The Gospel of Mark

- A. Introduction
- B. Unique features of Mark
- C. Authorship, date, recipients, historical situation addressed
- D. The purpose(s) of Mark
- E. The themes of Mark
- F. Resources for the study of Mark

ASSIGNMENT FOR 10-19:

1. Read Mark 1-16 in a translation of your choice. Note the tone of Mark’s account of Jesus. What are the particular emphases in Mark that strike you as being significant? What portrait of Jesus emerges from Mark?
2. Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 126-170.
3. Read Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*: “Aretalogy” (pp. 13-14); “Messianic Secret” (p. 110); “Theosis Aner” (p. 192); “Urmarkus” (p. 204); “Wrede, William” (p. 210).

10-26 V. The Gospel of Matthew

- A. Introduction
- B. Unique features of Matthew
- C. Authorship, date, recipients, and historical situation addressed
- D. The purpose(s) of Matthew
- E. The structure of Matthew
- F. The themes of Matthew
- G. Resources for the study of Matthew

ASSIGNMENT FOR 10-26:

1. Read Matthew 1-28 in a translation of your choice. What things seem to be emphasized in this Gospel? What is the relationship between Jesus and Judaism in Matthew? What is the portrait of Jesus that emerges from Matthew?
2. Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 171-224.
3. Read Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism: "Parable, etc."* (pp. 128-132).

11-2 TEST # 2 ON III-V ABOVE (first part of period)**11-2 VI. The Gospel of Luke****11-9**

- A. Introduction
- B. Unique features of Luke
- C. Authorship, date, recipients, and historical situation addressed
- D. The relationship between Luke and Acts
- E. The purpose(s) of Luke
- F. The themes of Luke
- G. Resources for the study of Luke

ASSIGNMENT FOR 11-2 and 11-9:

1. Read Luke 1-24 in a translation of your choice. Note the things that Luke emphasizes in his story of Jesus. What is the portrait of Jesus that emerges from this Gospel?

2. Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 225-278.
3. Read Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*: “Apology” (p. 12); “Benedictus” (pp. 17-18); “Proto-Luke” (p. 146).
4. The review of Calvin J. Roetzel, *The World That Shaped the New Testament*, is **due on November 9**.

11-16 VII. The Gospel of John

- A. Introduction
- B. Unique features of John
- C. Authorship, date, recipients, and historical situation addressed
- D. The thought-world of John
- E. The structure of John
- F. The purpose(s) of John
- G. John and the Synoptic Gospels
- H. The themes of John
- I. Resources for the study of the Gospel of John

ASSIGNMENT FOR 11-16:

1. Read John 1-21 in a translation of your choice. Note the tone of this Gospel. How is it significantly different from the Synoptic Gospels? What is the portrait of Jesus that emerges from John? How does this picture compare to that in Matthew, Mark, and Luke?
2. Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp.333-382.
3. Read Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*: “Realized Eschatology” (p. 157); “Signs Source” (p. 173).

11-23 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY)

11-30

VIII. The Book of Acts

- A. Introduction
- B. Unique features of Acts
- C. The relationship of Acts to the Gospel of Luke
- D. Authorship, date, recipients, and historical situation addressed
- E. The structure of Acts
- F. The purpose(s) of Acts
- G. The themes of Acts
- H. Resources for the study of Acts

ASSIGNMENT FOR 11-30:

1. Read Acts 1-28 in a translation of your choice. Note the selective nature of Luke's account of the history of the church. Note the peculiar features of the story. How does Luke show concern for the Jew-Gentile problem in Acts?
2. Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 279-332.
3. Read Richard N. Soulen and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*: "Glossolalia" (p. 67); "Kerygma" (pp. 93-94).
4. Read Frank Stagg, "The Unhindered Gospel" in *Review and Expositor*, Vol. LXXi, No. 4 (Fall, 1974), pp. 451-462. **(to be provided)**

12-7

TEST #3 ON VI – VIII ABOVE