

RE 202 Christian Scriptures
Ladd 206

Instructor: Joel Tibbetts
Mondays and Wednesdays 2:10-3:30 pm
Office hours: 3:30-400 PM, Mondays & Wednesdays, Scribner 309
Or by appointment
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Course description:

This course is designed to provide an overview of the content and background of the twenty-seven documents that comprise the New Testament (NT). Through these texts we will explore the historical development of early Christianity as it is expressed in the literature of the various faith communities.

The course aims to:

- familiarize the student with the content and context of the four gospels, Acts, the epistles and Revelation, including information related to the composition and transmission of these writings
- introduce the student to early Christian writings that did not “make it” into the NT canon
- introduce the student to the function of different analytical methods or conscious “reading strategies” in the interpretation of NT texts

Textbooks:

Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (4th ed., Oxford University Press)

The New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha (3rd ed., augmented; Oxford University Press)

Assignments:

All quizzes and exams will be open book, open notes. Quizzes and exams missed without prior notice will receive a grade of zero. Papers turned in late without prior notice will be assigned a lower grade proportionate to their lateness. All written work should be typed double-spaced.

Assignments (continued):

Two quizzes, as noted in the Schedule (5% of final grade apiece)

A written analysis of a passage from the Synoptic Gospels (Mt, Mk, or Lk), discussing the passage's meaning, its place in the particular gospel, and its relationship to similar passages in other gospels, 1000 words more or less. A list of appropriate passages will be circulated.. Due October 19. (10%)

Mid-term exam, on everything covered thus far, open book, open notes.. (15%)

A written analysis of a passage in the writings of Paul (Romans, I Corinthians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon), exploring the meaning of the passage in its context, and its relationship to similar ideas in Paul's other writings, 1000 words more or less. A list of appropriate passages will be circulated. Due November 23. (10%)

Term paper of about 2500 words (8-10 pages), on a topic of your choice from the following list, due the last day class (25%):

- 1) An in-depth analysis of an important biblical passage (other than the two to which you have devoted your short papers);
- 2) Exploration of an important NT theme, such as a) Resurrection; b) Women in the NT; c) baptism and/or communion [mass, Lord's Supper] in the NT; c) the role of John the Baptist; d) the roles of Peter and Judas; e) justification by faith in Paul..
- 3) Study of one of the shorter NT books (e.g., Philippians, I John, I Timothy, James, I John) addressing structure, organization, and distinctive themes. Make a case if you can for omitting this book from the NT canon.

Final exam: comprehensive, 6 pm to 9 pm Thurs., Dec. 17 in Ladd 206. (20%)

Class attendance and participation:

Questions & answers work best for learning. (10%)

Reading Assignments:

Complete the reading by the day for which it is assigned.

Read **Introductions** to each NT book and as you read the biblical text check the **notes** for additional interpretation and meaning.

Become familiar with the **maps**. Where is often as important as what.

Read all of each assignment in Ehrman. Some of his "suggestions for further reading" will be on reserve in the library.

Schedule:

Date In Ehrman Special events In NT

W Sept 9 Introduction

M Sept 14 Chapters 1 and 18 Mark 1-5

W Sept 16 Chapter 3 Mark 6-13

M Sept 21 Chapter 6 Mark 14-16

W Sept 23 Chapter 8 Quiz on Mark Matthew 1-7

M Sept 28 no class

W Sept 30 Chapter 4 Matthew 8-19

M Oct 5 Matthew 20-28

W Oct 7 Chapter 9 Quiz on Matthew Luke 1-7

M Oct 12 Luke 8-21

W Oct 14 Chapter 2 Luke 20-24

M Oct 19 Chapter 11 gospel analysis due John 1-6

W Oct 21 Chapter 16 John 7-13

M Oct 26 Chapter 14 John 14-21

W Oct 28 mid-term exam

M Nov 2 Chapter 12 I, II, III John, Acts 1-2

W Nov 4 Chapter 10 Acts 3-14

M Nov 9 Chapters 19 & 20 Acts 15-28

W Nov 11 Pages 352-55, 339-348 I Thessalonians, Galatians, Philemon

M Nov 16 Pages 324-339, 348-352 I Corinthians, Philippians

W Nov 18 Chapter 22 Romans

M Nov 23 Chapter 24 analysis of Paul due Ephesians, Colossians

II Thess, I Timothy

M Nov 30 catch up

W Dec 2 Chapters 25-26 Hebrews, James

M Dec 7 Chapter 29 Revelation

W Dec 9 Conclusion; term paper due

Thursday, Dec. 17: Final exam, Ladd 206, 6:00 to 9:00 pm.