



McMaster Divinity
College

MATTHEW

NT 3XM3 (BS/CC/PS)
NT 2XM3 (GREEK EXEGESIS)
NT 5XM5/6XM6 (DPT/PHD)

McMaster Divinity College
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Fall 2021 (Modified Hybrid)
Monday 10:00–11:50am

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an exegetical study of the Gospel of Matthew that relies on either contemporary English translations of the text or the original Greek. We will consider the ancient cultural context of Matthew, the canonical context in which Matthew is one Gospel among many, and various contemporary cultural contexts in which Matthew is read today. We will pay close attention to the text of Matthew and the messages it conveys. Finally, we will draw all of these things together into a frank, open dialogue about what Matthew means for readers today.

Some class meetings will be on campus; others will be online via Zoom. Students who are unable to attend an on-campus meeting can request permission to attend the relevant meeting online instead. Students in NT 3XM3 will prepare for each meeting by completing assigned academic reading, by locating useful academic resources, and by answering a list of questions about a key theme or passage from Matthew. Students in 2XM3 & 6XM6 will undertake weekly analyses of the Greek text. Students in NT 5XM5 will explore Matthew in relation to the practice that is the focus of their practice-led research. Class meetings will involve brief overview lectures followed by small and large group discussions.

SPECIALIZATIONS

The NT 3XL3 course is available for three different specializations:

- ≈ Students taking this as a *Biblical Studies (BS)* course will benefit from exploring the historical and cultural setting of Matthew's Gospel, as well as scholarly debates concerning the interpretation of its contents.
- ≈ Students taking this as a *Church & Culture (CC)* course will benefit from reflecting upon the complexities of Matthew's culture and the complexities that emerge when the Christian tradition engages with contemporary cultures today.
- ≈ Students taking this as a *Pastoral Studies (PS)* course will benefit from exploring how the ideas and exhortations in Matthew's Gospel are relevant for Christian faith and practice in the 21st century.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through their active participation in this course, students will:

KNOWING

- Know the basic narrative structure of Matthew's Gospel;
- Be familiar with contemporary scholarship as regards the origin of Matthew's Gospel;
- Know the main theological and ethical teachings of Matthew's Gospel;
- Better understand how Greek grammar enables the creation of coherent Greek texts (NT 2XM3 & NT 6XM6);
- Appreciate the significance of Matthew's Gospel for practice-led research (NT 5XM5);

BEING

- Assume a receptive and diligent posture towards the Bible;
- Become self-aware as a modern reader of the Bible, recognizing both the antiquity of the texts and the various ways in which contemporary life influences our understanding of it;
- Dispense with over-confidence (or lack of confidence) concerning knowledge of the Bible, adopting instead an attitude of life-long learning;

DOING

- Have the ability to quickly locate reliable scholarly resources that discuss a particular NT passage;
- Have the ability to ask key questions in order to explore the meaning of a text;
- Have the ability to reflect canonically, theologically, and contextually so as to explore how people can/should understand the New Testament today;
- Have the ability to exegete a Greek text in a way that responsibly relates its grammar to all of the other things that are significant for interpretation (NT 2XM3 & NT 6XM6);
- Have the ability to draw responsibly from Matthean scholarship in order to illuminate a specific contemporary practice (NT 5XM5).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Note: Students are required to complete all of the following assignments. No unfinished assignments are permitted. *Written assignments must be uploaded to Avenue to Learn either as Word documents (.doc, .docx) or in Rich Text Format (.rtf). Assignments cannot be submitted after December 10th without written permission from the Office of the Registrar (strickpd@mcmaster.ca).*

NT 3XM3/2XM3/6XM6: PREPARATORY ONLINE MODULES (90%)

Each week, students must work through an online module prior to attending class. These modules are due each Monday at 10:00am when class begins. The modules require the same type of work every week, so students can improve with practice and can apply feedback immediately. If all ten modules are completed, the student's lowest grade will be dropped. (If a student fails to complete a module, all ten modules will be

weighted equally.) Because these modules are the entirety of the coursework, it is expected that a suitable amount of time will be invested in them each week.

In each module, students in NT 3XM3 will perform two or three of the following tasks:

1. Read an assigned portion of Matthew's Gospel.
2. Read some academic literature related to Matthew's Gospel.
3. Pick one of the week's passages from Matthew's Gospel and then produce a list of academic resources that discuss the passage, per the following guidelines: (1) a minimum of eight suitable sources must be listed; (2) a maximum of four commentaries can appear in the list, and students must consult at least twelve different commentaries over the course of the semester; (3) at least two academic journal articles must be included in each list; (4) the resources must be quickly skimmed so as to reveal the general topics discussed and the ways in which they are approached; and (5) a sentence or two must be supplied for each resource, noting some interesting detail about its content. The point of this assignment is to help you to develop the skill of locating and skimming academic resources quickly, so that you can find and use a diverse range of sources in your ministry work. A tutorial will be given during our first meeting, and an A2L module will offer detailed guidance on finding electronic resources (esp. in the Digital Theological Library). You will become familiar with the major New Testament commentary series and will learn to find specialized research dealing with specific passages. While the grading of these lists will not require strict adherence to MDC bibliographic style, a bonus 5% will be added to any assignment that perfectly adheres to MDC style.
4. Answer a set of questions regarding either a key theme in Matthew's Gospel or a chosen passage from Matthew's Gospel. These questions will teach you to approach the New Testament from a variety of different perspectives. They will also orient you toward the text in ways that open up space for thoughtful reflection on its contemporary significance. The same questions will be used throughout the semester, and an introductory overview of these questions will be supplied during our first meeting.

In each module, students in NT 2XM3 & 6XM6 will perform the following tasks (see schedule on A2L):

1. Read an assigned portion of Matthew's Gospel in Greek;
2. Read and/or watch something that discusses the Greek language;
3. Work through an assigned passage in Matthew's Gospel, generating a list of observations and questions. Then, read at least two commentaries on the Greek text (see the bibliography below) and expand your list of observations and questions. Finally, come to class prepared to discuss your observations and questions.
4. Memorize a list of Greek words and/or complete a vocabulary quiz.

ALL COURSES: WEEKLY MEETINGS (10%)

Attendance at weekly meetings is expected, because class discussions are a significant part of the overall learning experience. Each week, we will have both small group and large group discussions in which we

will take up the questions answered in the online module. Greek exegesis students will meet with the professor and/or his graduate assistant.

NT 5XM5: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (25%)

While other students are doing weekly modules, DPT students will be doing independent research into the Gospel of Matthew. This will begin with an annotated bibliography that lists approximately 15–20 resources (not including commentaries) for a total of around 3,000–4,000 pages of reading. These resources should display the full range of New Testament studies, exemplifying a variety of different questions and approaches as well as a diverse array of confessional and/or non-confessional perspectives. Each annotation should, in approximately 100–150 words, summarize the content of a particular resource and its distinctive contribution to Matthean scholarship. It is due on **November 5th at 11:59pm**.

NT 5XM5: INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW (25%)

Drawing upon the above annotated bibliography, DPT students will compose an introduction to the Gospel of Matthew such as would be suitable for a graduate student (or alum) seeking to become conversant with the Gospel of Matthew in dialogue with the best available scholarship. This introduction should survey both what is intrinsic to Matthew (e.g. its content, themes, theological distinctives, etc.) and what is important for our understanding of Matthew (e.g. Synoptic problem, authorship & audience, etc.). The paper will be approximately 3,000 words. It is due on **November 5th at 11:59pm**.

NT 5XM5: RESEARCH PAPER (40%)

In consultation with both the professor and their doctoral supervisor, DPT students will define an area of intersection that involves both the Gospel of Matthew and the student's own practice-led research. A research paper of approximately 8,000 words will then be written, in which the student explores this area of intersection and thereby advances scholarly understanding of his or her practice. It is due on **December 6th at 11:59pm**.

GRADING SUMMARIES

NT 3XM3/2XM3/6XM6

Preparatory Online Modules	90%
<u>Weekly Meetings</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total	100%

NT 5XM5

Weekly Meetings	10%
Annotated Bibliography	25%
Introduction to Matthew	25%
<u>Research Paper</u>	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

TEXTBOOKS

All students are required to possess a copy of the Bible in whatever language or translation is easiest for the student to read.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the MDC chapel entrance. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, ON, M9A 3C3: phone 416.620.2934; mobile 416.668.3434; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Date	Venue	Preparation (Due at Meeting Time)	Discussion Topics
Sept 13	MDC	Read Course Syllabus	Introduction to the Course Resources for Studying the NT Questions Worth Asking
Sept 20	MDC	A2L Module: "Rome & Israel"	Empire & God's People
Sept 27	Zoom	A2L Module: "Matthew 1–4"	<u>Options for Passage #1 (NT 3XM3)</u> Genealogy & Birth (chs. 1–2) John the Baptist (ch. 3) Jesus's Ministry Begins (ch. 4)
Oct 4	MDC	A2L Module: "Torah & Obedience"	The Bible & Discipleship
Oct 11	Zoom	A2L Module: "Matthew 5–10"	<u>Options for Passage #2 (NT 3XM3)</u> Sermon on the Mount (chs. 5–7) Miracles (chs. 8–9) Sending of the Twelve (ch. 10)
Oct 18	MDC	A2L Module: "Justice & God's Kingdom"	Human Righteousness & Divine Action
Intensive Hybrid Week (No Meeting)			
Nov 1	MDC	A2L Module: "Matthew 11–18"	<u>Options for Passage #3 (NT 3XM3)</u> "This Generation" (chs. 11–12) Parables (ch. 13) "Feeding" (chs. 14–15) The Assembly (chs. 16–18)
Nov 8	Zoom	A2L Module: "Failure & Judgement"	Sin & Divine Wrath

Nov 15	MDC	A2L Module: “Matthew 19–25”	Options for Passage #4 (NT 3XM3) Hardness of Heart (chs. 19–20) Jesus in Jerusalem (chs. 21–23) Olivet Discourse (chs. 24–25)
Nov 22	Zoom	A2L Module: “Christology & Mission”	Jesus & Evangelism
Nov 29	MDC	A2L Module: “Matthew 26–28”	Options for Passage #5 (NT 3XM3) Passion (chs. 26–27) Resurrection & Commission (ch. 28)
Dec 6	Zoom		Concluding Reflections Course Evaluations

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Commentaries

NB: Commentaries that are more likely to discuss the Greek have been noted with an asterisk.

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Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

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McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

This syllabus is for information only and remains the property of the respective professor. This syllabus is prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course.