



Greek I: A Guide to Biblical Languages

NT 3P1071

Spring Term 2026

Online: May 4–June 26
Synchronous Meeting: Friday 10:00–11:50am

Instructor: Jihyung Kim, PhD Cand.

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All course content/assignments
will be accessed through [Avenue to Learn](#) (A2L).

Note: This is an online course. Students must have a basic familiarity with computers and navigating webpages in order to participate; this includes the ability to video-conference over Zoom, and the ability to upload files to Avenue to Learn.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

People like to talk about what the Bible means, sometimes, even with reference to “the original Greek.” However, for readers and teachers of the Bible to access useful resources and make insightful observations about the meaning of a text—without making regrettable errors—they need to understand how languages make meaning, and they need to understand how Greek makes meaning.

This course explores the world of human language: language theory and how it applies to understanding texts. It will also review English grammar—which many students were never taught—as a basis for understanding Greek grammar. This will enable students to be better prepared to engage without main task: learning the basics of Greek and focusing on how the linguistic elements lead to meaningful and accurate interpretation. In this course, there will necessarily be some memorization of vocabulary and the three main paradigms (the article, nominal endings, and verb endings), but this course will also significantly reduce the amount of memorization usually required in language learning, since the focus is on understanding and application.

This course will apply to two types of students:

1. Those who want to begin the process of learning biblical languages, especially those who plan on doing more advanced learning (Subsequent courses will teach the intelligent use of Greek resources as well as a more detailed knowledge of the languages and application to the biblical text).
2. Those who do not plan to study biblical languages in depth (or those who are not sure whether they want to) but want to understand how language works, how to move from one language to another, and how to interpret the biblical text responsibly (those who want to continue with deeper study are encouraged to do so!).

LEARNING OUTCOMES



Knowing

- Know the major grammatical categories in English and Greek
- Understand how language makes meaning
- Understand the functions of language (experiential, interpersonal, textual)
- Understand what constitutes a legitimate “word study”
- Recognize and understand a number of words from the Greek New Testament
- Begin to learn the grammatical forms/paradigms in Greek



Being

- Be “one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (2 Tim. 2:15)
- Be someone who allows scripture to motivate, form, and transform your faith, worship, and Christian way of life
- Be a mature interpreter of scripture as taught by the Spirit (1 Cor 2:6–16)



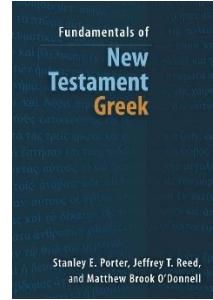
Doing

- Be able to describe how choices in language affect the meaning of the biblical text
- Be able to describe the functions of the basic grammatical forms in Greek and use them in interpretation
- Be able to communicate the biblical text meaningfully without committing common mistakes

TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Note: this course will be conducted as a “flipped classroom,” which means that the students are required to come to the weekly tutorial having already studied the relevant materials for the given week. Our weekly meeting via Zoom will be dedicated to answering questions, clarifying concepts, consolidating learning, discussing interpretation, and practicing skills.

1. **Reference Grammar:** Porter, Stanley E., Jeffrey T. Reed, and Matthew Brook O'Donnell. *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010.
While your learning content will be covered in online materials, this text will serve as a valuable reference for both Greek I and Greek II.
2. **Greek Summary:** Mounce, William D. *Biblical Greek Laminated Sheet*. Zondervan Get an A! Study Guides. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.
You may find this sheet (it is a few pages) helpful as a quick reference to some of the basics you will learn in Greek I and II; you will find more detailed charts in the back of the textbook above.
3. **Online Greek Source:** Tyndale House: Scripture Tools for Every Person (STEP): available free from stepbible.org. Supplemental handouts will also be provided.
4. **MDC Video Lectures:** A series of video lectures has been prepared by MDC's Dr. Francis Pang specifically for this course, focusing on language theory and interpretation. They also review and explain concepts in the textbook. These video lectures will be found on A2L, and are required viewing for your learning content.
5. **Materials: Assignments, Handouts, Lesson Slideshows:** Greek materials will be posted on Avenue to Learn and will be accessible there; this includes your weekly practice exercises and supplemental material. **Vocabulary:** A *Quizlet* (free online flashcard program) group will be created which includes study sets for students to memorize and review vocabulary for the course.
6. **Additional Resources: (these may be helpful for your own prep and understanding)**



Lamerson, Samuel. *English Grammar to Ace New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

Baxter, Benjamin. *“In the Original It Says”: Word-Study Fallacies and How to Avoid Them*. Critical Christian Issues. Gonzalez, FL: Energion, 2012.

Textbook Purchase: All required and recommended books for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416.620.2934 or 416.668.3434 (mobile); or by email at books@readon.ca. The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Note: All assignments must be submitted to the appropriate Assignment Box on A2L in **PDF Format**.

A. Mangled Language Discussion 5%: Participation mark.

Each week, a question (in video form) will be posted in a discussion on A2L. It will deal with a “questionable” interpretation of a biblical text. Students should watch this video and engage on the Mangled Language forum. This is a 5% participation mark based on the level of thoughtful engagement; if you participate, you will get the grade!

B. Practical Language Assignment: Weekly Exercises 25%: Due as detailed below.

Students will complete weekly exercises provided by the instructor that involve the use of material covered in the weekly Greek videos and tutorials. The online workshops will focus in part on discussing and answering questions about these exercises to help you learn; we will work through examples together.

C. Weekly Vocabulary Quizzes 10%: Due as detailed below.

You will be responsible for learning 150–200 most common words in the Greek New Testament as well as the most common paradigms (the article, verb endings, etc.). You will be required to give an English gloss for each. The vocabulary and paradigms will be quizzed weekly on A2L.

D. Mid Term Exam 20%: Friday, **May 29**

E. Sermon/Commentary Analysis 15%: Due on Sunday, **June 21**, by 11:59 PM Evaluate and critique a sermon, article, or an excerpt of a commentary (which will be provided by the instructors) in terms of the handling of the original Greek language. Students should utilize what they learn in the course of study and identify the common exegetical and linguistic fallacies (which will be covered in language theory lectures). The entire report should be under 6 pages and must follow the “McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses.”

F. Final Exam 25%: Friday, **June 26**

Mangled Language Discussion	5%
Practical Language Assignment	25%
Weekly Vocabulary Quizzes	10%
Mid Term Exam	20%
Sermon/Commentary Analysis	15%
Final Exam	25%
Total	100%

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Week of	Mangled Language (ML)	Language Theory (LT)	Practical Language (PL)	Paradigm	Exercise/Quiz
1	May 4–10	Love I [ML 1]	Course Introduction and Syllabus	Alphabet and Pronunciation [PL 1] Parts of Speech and the Auxiliary System [PL 2]	Alphabet, pronunciation and vowels	Quiz 1 due May 10
2	May 11–17	Love II [ML 2]	Functions of language [LT 1]	Nominal System 1 – Nominal Features and the Greek Article [PL 3]	The Greek article	Exercises for PL 1–3 due May 17 Quiz 2–3 due May 17
3	May 18–24	Δικαιοσύνη [ML 3]	Theories of language [LT 2]	Nominal Systems 2 – Noun and Pronouns [PL 4] Nominal Systems 3 – Greek Adjectives [PL 5]	1/2 declension nouns and adjectives	Quiz 4–5 due May 24 Exercise for PL 4–5 due May 24
4	May 25–31	Divine Necessity [ML 4]	Words and Theology [LT 3] Greek Lexicons and Lexicography [LT 4]	Review and Introduction to Verbs [PL 6] Verbal System 1 – Verbal Categories I [PL 7]	Verbal system	Exercises for PL 6–7 due May 31 Quiz 6–7 due May 31 **Mid Term Exam: May 29
5	June 1–7	Word Study [ML 5]	Exegetical Fallacies [LT 5, 6]	Verbal System 2 – Verbal Categories II [PL 8] Primary Endings [PL 9]	Primary active endings	Quiz 8–9 due June 7 Exercises for PL 8–9 due June 7

6	June 8–14	Gender Inclusive Language [ML 6]	Meaning and choice [LT 7]	Verbal System 4 – Primary M/P and Secondary Active Endings [PL 10] Verbal System 5 – Imperfect and Secondary M/P Endings [PL 11]	Primary middle/passive endings; secondary active endings	Exercises for PL 10–11 due June 14 Quiz 10–11 due June 14
7	June 15–21		punctuation and interp. [LT 8]	Verb review and practice; chunking and translating [PL 12]	Secondary middle/passive endings	Analysis Paper due June 21 Quiz 12 due June 21
8	June 22–26	Exam Review Week				** Final Exam: June 26

POLICY STATEMENTS FOR MDC

A special note about Generative AI: You are expected to do your own thinking and to write your own papers, etc. Generative AI is not to be used to do this work for you. Using AI to produce content for you and then submitting that content as if you produced it is considered plagiarism (i.e., submitting work that is not one's own as if it is one's own) and is a violation of the academic honesty policy. Additionally, although there may be value in using an AI tool to correct mistakes in English grammar, usage, and mechanics, Generative AI is not to be used for translating from your native language to English. All degree programs at MDC are taught in English language. Students are expected to be sufficiently proficient in English to engage fully in academic discourse in these programs.

1. Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/MDC-Press-Style-Guide-Version-1.2.pdf> Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

2. Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresenting the ownership of written work by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations; plagiarism, i.e., submitting work that is not one's own (regardless of the means of its production, including Generative AI) but passing it off as if it is; submitting work for credit in a course for which credit is being or has already been given, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been deemed acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student's dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit;

giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; forging or falsifying McMaster University or McMaster Divinity College documents.

3. AODA

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), McMaster Divinity College (MDC) is committed to supporting a learning environment that is inclusive and accessible to all students, including those with disabilities. Students who require academic accommodations to participate fully in this course must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) (<https://sas.mcmaster.ca/>) of McMaster University. SAS will work directly with the MDC Registrar to ensure reasonably appropriate accommodations are in place. Students with accommodations must use the SAS portal to activate the accommodations relevant to each course at the start of each term they are enrolled in. This will generate a notification to course instructors outlining the activated accommodations for the student in their course. Please note that accommodations must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation. Accommodations will be implemented once the faculty member has been notified.

Accommodations are not retroactive and will not be applied to coursework or activities that have already concluded.

Contact Information:

- **Student Accessibility Services General Inquiries:** sas@mcmaster.ca
- **Roksana Sobota (SAS Representative for MDC):** sobotar@mcmaster.ca
- **MDC Registrar:** mdcreg@mcmaster.ca

4. Gender Inclusive Language

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, for example, the following: NRSV (2022), TEV/GNB/GNT (1976), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), NIV (2011), and the CEB (2011).

5. Online Course: Presence and Participation

Presence and participation in this course are expected. Faculty know from many years of experience that a student's level of presence and participation in the course will impact how well she or he will score in the course. Although there are exceptions to this rule of thumb, low levels of presence and participation tend to translate to low grades; mediocre presence and participation tend to translate to mediocre grades; and high levels of presence and participation tend to translate to higher grades.

A word needs to be said about what constitutes "presence" (attendance) and "participation" in an asynchronous course. Students must establish a record of participation in academically related

activities to meet the expected level of attendance and meaningful participation. Be aware that merely logging into the online class is not, by itself, sufficient as a demonstration of attendance and participation by the student. “Academically related activities” certainly includes participation in and completion of the course requirements that are described below. Additionally, just as students are expected to engage with the course content/materials throughout the week outside of the learning management system (A2L), so also students are expected to engage one another in formative dialogue “outside of class.” This is an important part of belonging to and maintaining a community of learning and is a staple ingredient in what constitutes “presence.”

6. Online Course: Etiquette

It is critical in any MDC class that students show respect for classmates and the instructor. This is even truer in the online environment because many of the non-verbal cues that we use to interpret what a person is communicating to us are not present online (except, perhaps in video posts). Therefore, it is especially critical that we be mindful of how our words will be interpreted by those who are reading them. As the instructor of the course, it is my responsibility to monitor communications to ensure that all students feel comfortable expressing their views in a respectful manner. Most if not all courses at MDC are devoted to the interpretation of Scripture. Invariably there will be disagreements; these disagreements must be discussed and negotiated in a respectful manner. This applies to individual and group communications involving the instructor and the others enrolled in the course. The instructor will expect that you will give some thought to your postings. Excessive postings are also frowned upon because these amount to dominating the discussion. Please limit your postings to less than 300 words. Instructors reserve the right to ask students to take a step back to allow others discussion time if she or he feels that an individual is dominating the discussion. In your responses, please try to be clear which point your response refers to. Students who violate these guidelines may be dismissed from class.

7. Absence Due to Illness

If you must miss class due to an illness, you must contact me as soon as possible to let me know. Likewise, if I should become ill, I will communicate with you via A2L about how we will make up class sessions. Even if much of the course content will be made available via A2L, it would still be a good idea to have a friend take notes for you, if possible.

8. Late Submission Policy

All assignments must be submitted on or before the due date unless other arrangements are made in advance. A late penalty of 2% per day will be applied to all assignments submitted after the deadline unless an extension has been obtained from the instructor prior to the deadline. Assignments cannot be submitted after **June 26, 2026** without written permission from the Office of the Registrar (mdcreg@mcmaster.ca).

DISCLAIMER

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently-available information; the instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class, or in unanimous agreement with the students.