



McMaster Divinity
College

NT 1A03

Foundations in Biblical Studies

Winter Semester 2015

Tuesdays 3:30-5:20 p.m.

Professors	Dr. Paul S. Evans	Dr. Cynthia Westfall
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Course Description:

An orientation to the Bible that provides an interpretive framework that is biblically and theologically grounded, spiritually sensitive, critically aware and practically relevant. Attention will be paid to the contents of individual biblical books, their growth and development, and the historical contexts out of which they emerged (the ancient Near East, Second Temple Judaism and the Greco-Roman world). Focus will be given to the relationship between the Testaments, unity and diversity within the biblical canon and important theological themes and motifs. An orientation will be given to key interpretive principles for reading and applying the Bible.

Course Objectives

Knowing:

- To have an introductory knowledge of the contents of the Old and New Testaments.
- To become familiar with the assumptions, methods and conclusions of modern critical scholarship on the Bible.
- To grasp the content of the Bible as a whole
- To understand the Testaments in their historical contexts
- To comprehend the Bible in terms of its component parts including its growth and development,

Being:

- To experience the authority, understanding and application of the Bible as central to faith, life and Christian community
- To be a person who is changed by each encounter with the scriptures throughout the course and beyond
- To embrace the contemporary relevance of the Old and New Testaments for the Church and society today
- To grow closer to God through study of the scriptures

Doing:

- To complete an in-depth study of Old Testament Literature and Theology
- To develop research skills in the New Testament
- To be able to identify key people, places and verses in the New Testament
- To be able to discuss themes in the New Testament

Required Textbooks for the Entire Year

- Longman, Tremper and R. B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (2nd ed.). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.
- Provan, Iain, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman. *A Biblical History of Israel*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2003.
- deSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.
- A Bible in a modern critical translation (e.g., NRSV, TNIV, NIV, CEB, NLT, NASB). For the Old Testament, *The Tanakh: The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1985) is recommended.
- Readings posted on the web, emailed or handed out in class

Textbook Purchase:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON, M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; e-mail: books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Evaluation: The assignments and their weights are as follows:

1. 30% Literature and Theology of the Old Testament Paper. Due midnight Feb 6. Email pdf file.

- Follow the MDC Style Guide <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/MDCStyleGuide>, rev. June 5, 2014
 - Eg. double-spaced, 12 pt Roman font throughout entire paper. However, footnotes must be single spaced and 10 pt Roman font.
- 15 pg. minimum
- See 'Paper Evaluation' section below

After reading Longman-Dillard (2006) and the entire Old Testament, students will write a theological thematic paper on the Old Testament interacting with both Longman-Dillard, material covered in the classroom and at least **5** other secondary sources. By way of **supplement** to these 5 sources, a student may use a **maximum of 2** internet resources. Students are responsible for the quality of these internet resources. These secondary sources do not include primary sources (the Bible, Josephus, Qumran). Each source listed must be drawn on in the paper and evidenced in the footnotes etc.

The theological theme(s) covered in the paper must interact with each of the major sections of the Old Testament (Torah, the Prophets and the Writings) and show awareness of the diversity exhibited in the Old Testament while also pointing out continuity and unity in this theology. The closing section of the paper (2 pages) must identify preliminary links between this Old Testament theology and the theology of the New Testament and through this the impact on the church today. Your paper must include a statement on the title page stating the percentage of Longman-Dillard read prior to the completion of the paper.

2. 30% New Testament Research Paper—Due midnight Friday March 13. Email pdf file.

- Follow the MDC Style Guide <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/MDCStyleGuide>, rev. June 5, 2014
 - Eg. double-spaced, 12 pt Roman font throughout entire paper. However, footnotes must be single spaced and 10 pt Roman font.
- 15 pg minimum
- See “Paper Evaluation” below

Each student will write a research paper on the Gospels, Acts, Paul, the General Epistles, the Johannine Literature or related New Testament topics. The paper must contain a bibliography consisting of *at least 12 items* of varied secondary sources (commentaries, theological dictionaries, specialized books and *at least 2 articles from refereed journals*). By way of **supplement** to these 12 sources, a student may use a **maximum of 2** internet resources. Students are responsible for the quality of these internet resources. These secondary sources do not include primary sources (the Bible, Josephus, Qumran). Each source listed must be drawn on in the paper and evidenced in the footnotes etc. Text books do not count toward the 12 sources.

Choose a topic from the list below or in consultation with the professor :

Parables and Preaching of Jesus
Meaning of the Kingdom of God in the Gospels
Messiah
Jesus as Teacher
Jesus’ Ethics
Jesus and the Law
Josephus, the Jewish historian & NT Interpretation
Formation of the NT Canon
Pseudonymity and the NT Writings
Synoptic Problem and Source Criticism
Textual Criticism
New Perspective on Paul
The Formation and Care of Congregations in Acts or Paul
The Delay of the Parousia in Paul or the General Epistles
Typology & Symbolism
Structure of an NT book
Exegesis of an NT passage

- TOPICS MUST BE APPROVED BY PROFESSOR WESTFALL by Feb 10

3. 30%. Final Exam. Date April 7 at class time (During exam week)

The main purpose of the final examination is to help students master basic knowledge of the Bible and its historical context, identify major themes, and assimilate material from the course.

The final exam will consist of people, places, key passages (see attached lists), and 4 essays. Each student will list the books of the New Testament as well.

4. 10% Reading the OT Writings, the New Testament, Textbooks and Other Assigned Readings

Each student is to read the entire New Testament during this semester in order to get a sense of both its content and flow. On the date of the final exam, each student will submit a reading report on the final exam, stating the combined percentage of the reading completed on time.

Grading Summary

- 1. 30%** Literature and Theology of the Old Testament Paper
- 2. 30%** New Testament Research Paper
- 3. 30%** Final Exam.
- 4. 10%** Reading

Policy concerning late papers

Extensions for papers will not be given except in very exceptional circumstances. (serious illness, family crises, etc.). Busy-ness, computer problems etc. are not legitimate reasons to grant extensions and in the interests of fairness any request for extensions will take into account the entire class. Late assignments will be docked at the rate of 1% per day for the first 7 days (including weekends) and 4% per day after that. All assignments must be received by the last day of class in order to avoid a failing grade in the class.

Classroom Behaviour

Attendance & Participation

- Students are expected to be on time to class or ready to give an explanation for their tardiness to the professor.
- Students are also expected to stay for the entire class session, unless arranged in advance with the professor.
- More than 2 absences may result in a reduction of the final grade, more than 4 absences may result in failure
- Students are not to carry on off-topic conversations in class.
- Students are not to access e-mail, send or receive text messages, surf the net, etc., while class is in session
- All student participation in way of comments or questions must be done without disrespect or ridicule
- Students may eat or drink in class if they do not distract others and they clean up their desks.

MDC Policies

Academic Honesty

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.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~

<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

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

<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuide.pdf>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

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.

Office Hours

Westfall Office Hours

Mondays 3:00-5:00

Tuesdays 1:30-3:00 + availability after class

Wednesday 1:00-2:30

Other times by appointment

Evans Office Hours TBA

NT1A03 Daily Schedule

DATE	CLASS SESSION/Assignment	Reading	Bible Reading
Jan 6	Introduction to course, OT Literature: The Latter Prophets	Longman-Dillard chs. 20-21, 23	
Jan 13	OT Literature: The Latter Prophets		
Jan 20	OT Literature: The Writings	Longman-Dillard chs 15-19, 22	
Jan 27	OT Literature: The Writings	Longman-Dillard chs 19, 12-14, 24	
Feb 3	Synoptic Issues, Mark & Matthew Literature and Theology of the OT Paper Due Friday midnight Feb 6	DeSilva chs 5-6	Mark, Matthew
Feb 10	Narrative, Luke-Acts Submit NT Research Topic to Westfall for approval	DeSilva chs 7-8	Luke, Acts
Feb 17	Reading Week		
Feb 24	The Pauline mission begins Genre of letter/epistle Introduction to Paul Issues emerge	DeSilva chs 11-13	Bring examples of letters to class Galatians vs. James 1 & 2 Thess
Mar 3	Pauline controversy Issues clarified The New Perspective on Paul	DeSilva chs 14-15	1 & 2 Corinthians Romans
Mar 10	The Pauline mission operated from prison New Testament Research paper Due Friday midnight March 13	DeSilva chs 16-18	Philippians Colossians & Ephesians Philemon
Mar 18	The torch passes from Paul	DeSilva ch 19	1 & 2 Timothy & Titus
Mar 24	The early church in crisis	DeSilva chs 20-23	Hebrews. James 1 & 2 Peter & Jude
Mar 31	Ultimate Perspectives on early church problems: Johannine Literature	DeSilva 9-10 & 24	John, 1,2,3 John, Revelation
Ap 7	Final Examination Submit reading report on the final exam		

Paper Evaluation

Name: _____ Topic: _____

I. The next items are rated according to this scale: 1 = inadequate; 2 = adequate; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = superior.

Bibliographic consciousness	1	2	3	4	5
Range and Use of Sources	1	2	3	4	5
Clarity in Defining Issues	1	2	3	4	5
Strength of Argument	1	2	3	4	5
Awareness of Exegetical Issues	1	2	3	4	5
Accuracy of Data and Assertions	1	2	3	4	5
Analysis /Critical Thinking	1	2	3	4	5
Introduction (Thesis Statement /Clear Issue)	1	2	3	4	5
Development of Thesis (focus)	1	2	3	4	5
Literary Style (awkward, wordy, repetitive)	1	2	3	4	5
Organization/coherence of ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar/Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Neatness/Presentation	1	2	3	4	5

§ Note: this is a simple evaluation tool to assist in paper assessment. The categories are not weighted equally, and thus are not added together or averaged to calculate your grade.

II. The following need attention if so indicated

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use inclusive language | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper is too long/too short |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a unified essay | <input type="checkbox"/> Edit your paper more thoroughly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Line spacing, Font size, Margins, Page numbers etc. need attention | <input type="checkbox"/> The paper needs balance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cite primary resources correctly/consistently (e.g., Gen 1:26; Genesis 1; etc) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cite secondary resources correctly/consistently |

III. Comments

PEOPLE, PLACES AND PASSAGES TO KNOW/LOCATE FOR THE FINAL

People	Places	Key Passages
Ananias (1)	Antioch (of Syria)	Matthew 1:18-2:23
Ananias (2)	Antioch (of Pisidia)	Matthew 5-7
Anna	Asia (minor)	Matthew 13
Annas	Athens	Matthew 16:13-20
Apollos	Capernaum	Matthew 24-25
Aquila	Bethlehem	Mark 9:14-32
Barabbas	Bethany	Mark 16:9-20
Barnabas	Caesarea (Maritima)	Luke 1-2
Caiaphas	Colossae	Luke 4:14-30
Cornelius	Corinth	Luke 10
Elizabeth	Crete	John 1:1-18
Eutychus	Cyprus	John 3
Felix	Damascus	John 11
Festus	Dead Sea	John 13
Gallio	Decapolis	John 14-16 (general content)
Gamaliel	Emmaus	Acts 2
Herodias	Ephesus	Acts 9
Jairus	Galatia	Acts 15
Junia	Galilee	Romans 1:16 & 17; 18-32
John Mark	Italy	Romans 5:12-20
Joseph of Arimathea	Jericho	Romans 8
Judas Iscariot	Jerusalem	1 Corinthians 7
Lazarus	Jordan River	1 Corinthians 12-14 (esp. chap 13)
Levi	Judea	1 Corinthians 15
Lydia	Macedonia	2 Corinthians 4:7-12
Martha	Mediterranean Sea	2 Corinthians 12:1-10
Mary Magdalene	Nazareth	Galatians 3:28
Mary of Bethany	Perea	Galatians 5:22-26
Nathanael	Philippi	Ephesians 5:15-6:9
Nicodemus	Rome	Ephesians 6:1-10
Philip	Samaria	Philippians 2:5-11
Priscilla	Sea of Galilee (Genessaret)	Philippians 4:4
Sapphira	Syria	Col 1:15-20
Silas	Tarsus	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Simeon	Thessalonica	1 Timothy 2:11-15
Simon Magus	Troas	1 Timothy 3:1-12
Simon of Cyrene	Tyre	2 Timothy 2:2
Simon the leper		2 Timothy 3:16
Simon the Pharisee		Hebrews 6:4-8
Stephen		Hebrews 5-10
Theophilus		Hebrews 11
Timothy		James 1:2-8
Titus		James 2:14-26
Zaccheus		1 Peter 4:12-19
Zebedee		1 John 2:16
		1 John 3:11-15
		Revelation 2-3
		Revelation 17-18
		Revelation 20

10 people and 10 places and 10 passages will be chosen for the exam. For character names and passages, the question will involve a one-phrase description and you will supply the correct name. For places, on blank maps of Israel (for the Gospels list) and the Roman Empire (for the Acts list) you will write in the names at the correct locations.