



McMaster Divinity College Preaching Hebrews Using Greek

NT 2XT3

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Winter 2016 (Term 2)
Mondays 7-9 p.m.

I. Course Description

The study of the book of Hebrews will provide some of the best material in the New Testament for students who are studying the use of Greek in preaching. The Greek text of Hebrews is the best Greek in the New Testament. The significance of the theology of Hebrews and its impact on the church is huge. But Hebrews is “a word of exhortation” (Heb 13:22), and it is truly like a written sermon that alternates between teaching and exhortation, which is ideal for preaching through the book. Yet, the relevance of Hebrews to the church today is not transparent without careful exegesis that examines its context and brings the two horizons of the cultures of first century Jewish Christianity and twenty-first century Canada together.

The core of this course is an exegetical and interpretative study of the Book of Hebrews in English translation. This class involves an acquaintance with structure, content, message, context and other interpretive issues of Hebrews as well. However, all will benefit from the exploration of its meaning for today in discipleship, community and ministry.

II. Course Objectives

Specific Objectives – Through reading, lectures, discussion and assignments

Knowing

1. The student will know the Hebrews teaching on how to draw closer to God.
2. The student will understand Hebrews in its social, historical, literary and religious Jewish Hellenistic context
3. The student will be familiar with critical views concerning introductory questions (i.e. authorship, date, settings, etc.) and identify the features in the text that illuminate the options
4. The student will know the characteristic vocabulary of Hebrews, basic Greek grammar that will aid in preaching, exegetical skills for preaching and how to access resources for the use of Greek in ministry.

Being

4. The student will be spiritually challenged by the message of Hebrews.
5. The student will appreciate the distinctive content and theology of the text and goal(s) of the author.
6. The student will enter into partnership with Jesus in his heavenly calling.

Doing

7. The student will review the manuscript of the NCCS Commentary on the Book of Hebrews, and read other studies on Hebrews.
8. The student will develop skills in translating and reading Greek for preaching.
9. The student will apply insights from Greek to exegesis.
10. The student will learn to move from exegesis to the composition of a sermon.

III. Course Requirements for NT 2XT3**A. Class Participation (10%)**

Student participation in interactive lectures and class and group discussions is expected, based on your readings for the week.

B Reading (10%)

See the Daily Schedule at the end for the precise dates and pages.

1. Weekly read a commentary of your choice on the scheduled material or passage.
2. Weekly readings in Greek grammar.
3. Read through Hebrews in Greek.

C. Written Assignments

In order to pass the course, all assignments must be completed

1. Translations (30%, 10% each)

Due midnight Friday, Jan 22, Feb 12, Mar 4

Using translation helps such as Bible Works, interlinears, and commentaries, the student will translate 3 passages from Hebrews (12-15 verses each). The translation will include useful observations on the meaning of the grammar, and its syntax and structure. Specific instructions for formatting the translation and observations will be supplied by the instructor.

2. Exegetical Paper (25%)

Due midnight Friday Mar 18

The student will write an exegetical paper on one of the translated passages that reflects the traditional evangelical exegetical skills that are used in sermon preparation, utilizing the insights from translation, due by midnight Dec 12. Instructions for writing an exegetical paper will be supplied by the instructor.

3. Sermon (15%)

Due 7:00 p.m. April 4

Utilize the exegesis of your passage to write a sermon, which also includes contemporary illustrations and applications.

F. Vocabulary Test (10%)

Mar 28

Based on the more common words in Hebrews and words in Hebrews that occur 50x or more in the NT (based on Sakae Kubo's *Greek-English Lexicon*).

F. Grading Summary

| | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Participation | 10% |
| 2. | Reading | 10% |
| 3. | Translations | 30% |
| 4. | Vocabulary Test | 10% |
| 5. | Exegetical paper | 25% |
| 6. | Sermon | 15% |

V. Textbooks and Materials**A. Required**

1. Manuscript of Westfall, Cynthia Long. *Hebrews*. NCCS. Wipf & Stock, forthcoming. Distributed by the professor.
2. The Greek New Testament
3. Porter, Stanley E. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*. 2nd ed., with corrections. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
4. Greenlee, Harold E. *An Exegetical Summary of Hebrews*. Dallas: SIL, 1998.

B. Recommended

1. Porter, Stanley E. *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
2. Ellingworth, Paul. *Commentary on Hebrews*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

C. 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 Bookstore, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

D. Additional Materials

Handouts for lectures and class discussion will be made available during class and/or through the course DropBox or Avenue.

V. Classroom Behavior**A. Attendance**

1. Students should be on time to class or be prepared to offer an explanation to the professor.
2. Students are expected to stay for the entire class session, unless arranged in advance.
3. More than 2 absences may result in a penalty. More than 4 absences will result in a failure of the course.

B. Participation

1. Please respect the opinions of others without disrespect or ridicule, even if you do not agree with them. However, feel free to respond logically and critically in an orderly manner.

2. Students are not expected to be doing work on any other subject except that which is appropriate in the course outline.
3. Students are not to carry on off-topic conversations in class.
4. Students are not to access e-mail, send or receive text messages, surf the net, etc., while class is in session
5. Students may eat or drink in class if they do not distract others and they clean up their desks.

Students who fail to respect these guidelines may lose participation points and/or be dismissed from the class.

C. 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>

D. 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.

E. 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.

Appointments

Contact me if I can assist you in any way via E-mail: westfal@mcmaster.ca

Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 23605

Office hours:

Monday 3-5

Tuesday 1:30-3:00

Other times by appointment 9-10 a.m.

Thursday 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Please Note: 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 until the first day of class.

Weekly Schedule

| DATE | CLASS SESSION | Porter | New Testament Reading |
|--------|---|------------|--|
| Jan 4 | Introduction to the course Approach to specializations The critical introductory issues | | |
| Jan 11 | Pay attention to what the son said—Hang on! | Chs. 1-2 | 1:1-2:4 |
| Jan 18 | Think of Jesus as an apostle and high priest First translation due midnight Jan 22 | Chs. 3-4 | 2:5-3:1 |
| Jan 25 | Let's not be like the Israelites—let's enter the rest—Move forward! | Chs. 5-6 | 3:1-4:1 |
| Feb 1 | Since the promise of rest is open, let's enter the rest—Move forward! Themes: Move forward! Hold on! Draw near! | Chs. 7-8 | 4:1-4:16 |
| Feb 8 | Let's press on to maturity with the new teaching about Jesus' priesthood—Move forward! Second translation due midnight Feb 12 | Chs. 9-10 | 5:1-6:3 |
| Feb 15 | Family Day | | |
| Feb 22 | The new teaching results in access to God | Chs. 11-12 | 6:1-7:4 |
| Feb 29 | Jesus is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek Third translation due Mar 4 | Chs. 13-14 | 7:4-28 |
| Mar 7 | Jesus' priesthood Part 1 | Chs. 15-16 | 8:1-9:14 |
| Mar 14 | Jesus' priesthood Part 2—Draw near! Themes: Draw near! Hold on! Move forward! Exegetical paper due midnight, Friday Mar 18 | Chs. 17-18 | 9:15-10:25 |
| Mar 21 | Let's run the race—Move forward! | Chs. 19-20 | 10:26-12:2 |
| Mar 28 | Climax: Let's serve God as priests in heavenly Jerusalem—Draw near! Vocabulary test | | 12:1-13:25 3rd reading of Hebrews in its entirety |
| Apr 4 | Conclusion Short presentations & discussion Sermon due at 7 p.m. | | |

Selected Bibliography on the Book of Hebrews

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- Brown, Raymond. *The Message of Hebrews*. The Bible Speaks Today. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984.
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- Buchanan, G. W. *To The Hebrews*. Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972.
- deSilva, David A. *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
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- Glaze, R. E. *No Easy Salvation: A Careful Examination of the Question of Apostasy in Hebrews*. Nashville: Broadman, 1966.
- Gromacki, Robert G. *Stand Bold in Grace: An Exposition of Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.
- Guthrie, Donald. *The Letter to the Hebrews*. Tyndale New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
- Guthrie, George H. *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis*. Biblical Studies Library. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
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- Hughes, R. Kent. *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul*, 2 Volumes. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1993.
- Hurst, L. D. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
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- Koester, Craig. *Hebrews*. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 2001.
- Lane, William L. *Hebrews 1-8*. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, 1991.
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- Thompson, James W. *Hebrews*. Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008.
- Westcott, B. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek Text with Notes and Essays*, 3d ed. New York: Macmillan, 1903.
- Westfall, Cynthia Long. *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews*. London: T&T Clark, 2005.