

NE534: Ephesians (English text) (4 units). Richard J. Erickson, Associate Professor of New Testament.

DESCRIPTION:

An Internet-based, detailed study of the English text of the Letter to the Ephesians and of the way the letter “makes known the mystery of God’s will.” Primary attention is given to the text and its theological message, as well as its relevance for the Church today. Secondary attention is paid to authorship and to the place of Ephesians in the New Testament canon.

COURSE GOALS/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

From taking this course students can expect to gain understanding of the structure and argument of the *message of Ephesians* as well as increased ability (1) to discern it exegetically, (2) to discuss its underlying theology, and (3) to articulate its continued impact on human society and Christian hope.

RELEVANCE FOR MINISTRY:

Skill in handling text of the New Testament in terms of its original setting is essential for all Christians who are serious about understanding the will of God as expressed in Scripture. In the process of analyzing God’s mysterious will in terms of redemption, adoption, and the call to Christian obedience, Ephesians also addresses the themes of power and authority, personal character, the mystery of being in Christ, Christian unity among diverse groups, family relationships (including those between women and men), and “spiritual warfare.”

COURSE FORMAT:

Conducted online, the ten weekly lessons align with Fuller’s academic calendar. The course involves reading, writing, web-based research, and weekly interactive discussion with other students and the instructor.

REQUIRED READING:

- Multiple readings of Ephesians and Colossians in various translations. [c. 60 pp.]
- Thirteen selected dictionary articles, mostly from G. F., Hawthorne et al., eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (InterVarsity, 1993). [c. 92 columns; see syllabus]
- Online lectures.
- Best, Ernest. *Ephesians: A Shorter Commentary*. T & T Clark, 2003. [416 pp.]
- Lincoln, A. T., and A. J. M. Wedderburn. *The Theology of the Later Pauline Letters*. Cambridge, 1993. [92 pp.]
- Paillard, Jean. *In Praise of the Inexpressible: Paul’s Experience of the Divine Mystery*. Hendrickson, 2003. [156 pp.]

- Paton, Alan. *Cry, the Beloved Country*. Scribner, 1987 [1948]. [320 pp.]
- Perkins, Pheme. *Ephesians*. ANTC; Abingdon, 1997. [240 pp.]

RECOMMENDED READING: See syllabus.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Six readings of the entire Book of Ephesians (three times rapidly, each in one sitting, and three times carefully) in at least four different versions, and two rapid readings of the entire Book of Colossians. An account of your personal observations based on these readings submitted in three stages, each a maximum length of 1000 words. [10%]
2. Reading of assigned commentary material and collateral texts and articles. Weekly quizzes [15%] and final exam [13%] based on this material.
3. Weekly online interaction with instructor and students, plus web-based research. [28.6%]
4. A maximum 1200-word academic review of Paillard, *In Praise of the Inexpressible*. [8.3%]
5. A maximum 1200-word discussion of Paton, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, as it relates to the message of Ephesians. [8.3%]
6. A maximum 2500-word interpretive treatment of a short, coherent text from Ephesians, with an accompanying plan for a sermon or Bible study based on it. [16.6%]

PREREQUISITES: None.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: MA: Biblical Studies; MDiv/MAT-BS: Elective; MA in Global Leadership Ministry Focus Study elective course.

FINAL EXAM: Yes.