

NS501: NEW TESTAMENT 2: ACTS THROUGH REVELATION. (4 units)

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DESCRIPTION:

This Internet-based survey course introduces the nature, the background, and the message of the second "half" of the New Testament, namely the Book of Acts, the epistles, and the Revelation, although most of the agenda focuses on the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul, as seen in Acts and in the "Pauline corpus." The life and works of Paul and the dynamics of early Christianity, as reflected in the New Testament, provide not only a record of the effect that Jesus Christ had on the first-century Mediterranean world, but also the authoritative basis for perpetual, thoughtful reassessment of the theology and practice of contemporary Christian faith. The course is a companion to (though independent of) NS500, which surveys the four Gospels.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

A student successfully completing this course will (1) be able to grasp the process by which these ancient documents arose and were recognized as "canonical," (2) have a vivid sense of the historical and cultural setting(s) out of which they arose, (3) understand them on their own terms, as writings anchored in real first-century life, (4) be able to explain their pastoral/theological message(s), both in their original settings and in ours, and (5) be able to present theological ideas clearly and persuasively. All of this is essential for faithfully proclaiming the New Testament's significance for the church and the world today.

COURSE FORMAT:

Conducted online, the ten weekly lessons align with Fuller's academic calendar. The course involves reading, writing, use of libraries and other resources, and interactive discussion. Each week students and the instructor will interact with the material through journaling, threaded discussions, and web-based research.

REQUIRED READING:

- Careful reading of all twenty-three New Testament documents, Acts through Revelation. [c. 200 pp.]
- Achtemeier, P. J., J. B. Green, and M. M. Thompson. *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology*. Eerdmans, 2001, pp. 1-51, 245-608. [415 pp.]
- Graves, R. I. *Claudius*. Vintage International, 1989 [1934, 1961]. [468 pp.]
- Witherington, B., III. *New Testament History: A Narrative Account*. Baker Academic, 2001. [400 pp.]
- Wright, N. T. *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* Eerdmans, 1997. [175 pp.]
- Various written lectures and articles (mostly online).

RECOMMENDED READING: List provided in the online syllabus.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- 1 Reading of all material assigned in weekly lessons; subject to four bi-weekly quizzes and a final exam (28%)
- 2 Short weekly exercises and threaded discussion, based on and designed to aid comprehension of assigned reading (18%)
- 3 Weekly journaling and web research (10%)
- 4 Three short research papers (1500 words each, maximum) due in Weeks 4, 7, and 10 (45%)

PREREQUISITES: None.

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: MDiv: NT2; MAT: Biblical Studies; MACL: NT2; Ministry Focus Elective in MA in Global Leadership program.

FINAL EXAMINATION: Yes.

Updated January 2008