

NE567: EPHESIANS (English text) (4 units).

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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.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students successfully completing NE567 “Ephesians” will have demonstrated (1) enhanced knowledge and understanding of the Letter to the Ephesians; (2) the ability to interpret this particular book, and the Bible generally, through reading and critical interaction, using historical, cultural, literary and other methods; (3) enhanced skill in reading the Bible theologically in view of their own contexts; and (4) clarity regarding the nature of the Bible, and particularly the Letter to the Ephesians, as both human word and holy Scripture.

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 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. 25 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]
- Lectures posted online.
- 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. Three readings of the entire Book of Ephesians (twice rapidly, each in one sitting, and once carefully) in at least three different versions, at least one of which must be either the NRSV or the TNIV, as well as two rapid readings of the entire Book of Colossians. Describe in three maximum 500-word essays your personal observations based on these readings, and submit them for group discussion in Weeks 1, 3, and 8. [10%]
2. Preparation of assigned passages, web-based research, and collateral readings for weekly online interaction with instructor and students. [30%]
3. Five short bi-weekly journals for individualized interaction with instructor. [5%]
4. Five bi-weekly quizzes based on assigned collateral material. [15%]
5. A coordinated seminar-style discussion of the Paillard and Paton books, focusing on the influence of imagination and the mystical on interpretation, conducted in Weeks 5-7. [15%]
6. A maximum 2000-word sermonic treatment of a short assigned text from Ephesians, developed in group discussion, with a maximum 2000 words of explanatory exegetical endnotes. [25%]

PREREQUISITES: None, but NS501 (or NS500) would be beneficial.

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

FINAL EXAM: No.

This ECD is a reliable guide to the course design but is subject to modification.

Updated October, 2008