

NS500: NEW TESTAMENT 1: GOSPELS (4 units)

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DESCRIPTION:

This Internet-based course introduces the nature, structure, and message of the New Testament Gospels in their historical, literary, and canonical contexts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students successfully completing this course will be able (1) to articulate the character of the Gospels as witnesses to Jesus Christ; (2) to demonstrate familiarity with the historical background, content, structure, literary features, and message of each of the New Testament Gospels; and (3) to demonstrate skill in the interpretation of the Gospels as appropriate for effective leadership in Christian communities.

RELEVANCE FOR MINISTRY:

The life and works of Jesus of Nazareth constitute the core datum of the Christian faith. Much of the church's "memory" of this event, together with four of the earliest interpretations of the meaning of that memory, are deposited in the New Testament Gospels. Increased understanding of these documents on their own terms is absolutely essential for faithfully proclaiming the Gospels' 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:

- All four canonical Gospels, each in one sitting, using either the NRSV or the TNIV for each
- 100 pages (minimum) of "primary texts" (suggestions in syllabus)
- Aland, K., ed. *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*. Revised. UBS, 1985. [RSV text; students anticipating Greek-based courses may wish to purchase the Greek-English edition instead: *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*.]
- Douglas, K. L. *The Black Christ*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994. [134 pp.]
- Hanson, K., and D. E. Oakman. *Palestine in the Time of Jesus: Social Structures and Social Conflicts*. 2nd ed.; Fortress, 2008. [231 pp.]
- Potok, C. *The Promise*. Fawcett, 1990. [384 pp.]
- Powell, M. A. *Fortress Introduction to the Gospels*. Fortress, 1998. [173 pp.]
- Wright, N. T. *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is*. IVP, 1999. [202 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 (24%)
- 2 Weekly threaded discussions, journaling, web surfing and research (31%)
- 3 Three papers: (a) thoughtful response to reading non-canonical primary texts (2000 words max); (b) detailed redactional analysis of a Gospel text (2000 words max); (c) critical reflection on interpreting the Gospels in light of history, culture, and criticism (2000 words max) (45%)

PREREQUISITES: None. *No Auditors*

RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM: MDiv: NT1; MAT: Biblical Studies; MACL: NT1; Ministry Focus Elective in MA in Global Leadership program.

FINAL EXAMINATION: Yes.

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

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