

**NT 3320 – Jesus and The Gospels**  
**Fall 2016**

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**I. Course Description**

This course is a historical study of the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth within the framework of the religion of Israel in the first century, C.E. We will focus *especially on Jesus and his message* as he emerges in the narrative accounts of the gospels.

Since Jesus is a pivotal figure in human history, it will not be possible to study everything he is attributed to have said or has been written about him. We will have to be selective in our approach. So, using *Gospel Parallels: A Synopsis of the Three Gospels*, with special emphasis on the Gospel of Mark, we will look at certain major stages and transitions in his life. These can function as essential clues as to who Jesus was and what he was up to in his ministry. Our secondary reading is designed to underscore obtaining a comprehensive knowledge of the overall intent of the ministry of Jesus. As noted above, we will concentrate on the Synoptic Gospels.

**II. Goals**

- A. The student will acquire mastery of the basic features of Jesus' life in conjunction with significant persons, events, and themes in the story about him as presented in the Synoptic Gospels and in the context of what we know about the Judaism of the time.
- B. The student will enhance his/her ability to function effectively as a participant or leader in adult Bible education programs on the study of the Gospels by understanding the Gospels as a genre of biblical literature and being able to work with the principles of biblical exegesis.

**III. Objectives**

- A. The student will gain a basic understanding of the religion of Israel in the context of the Greco-Roman world and the impact of the coming of Jesus upon it.
- B. The student will be able to identify the particular units (pericopes) and their sequence in the entire Markan account of the life of Jesus as well as attaining an overview of the Sermon on the Mount, the Lukan parables and the Gospel of John.
- C. The student will be introduced to the basic methodologies used by biblical scholars to study the Gospels and reconstruct the life of Jesus.

- D. The student will gain a deeper appreciation of the impact of the life of Jesus, not only in the church, but also in Western Culture.

#### **IV. Texts**

- A. A.B. Throckmorton (ed.), *Gospel Parallels*. Thomas Nelson, 1967. (Later editions are acceptable.)
- B. N.T. Wright, *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels*, Harper, 2016. (paper; Required)

#### **V. Library Resources**

- A. Austin Graduate School of Theology Library  
(8:30-10:00 Mon, Tues, Thurs; 8:30-4:30 Wed, Fri)
- B. APTS Library and the Episcopal Theological Seminary Library (both libraries have special arrangements for Austin Grad students).
- C. Instructor will facilitate student orientation and access to basic software and data based resources in the library.
- D. Mark Goodacre's web page is the basic tool for biblical resources on the Internet and can be found at <http://ntgateway.com/>. Other recommended resources are Oxford Internet Theology Resources at <http://info.ox.ac.uk/ctitext/theology/>, and Early Christian Writings at <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/>.

#### **VI. Required Work**

- A. Weekly attendance at class for lectures and discussion.
- B. Regular reading of assignments as noted in the course syllabus.
- C. Book Report due November 15 (5-7 pages).

#### **VII. Evaluation**

- A. Three tests will be given. The tests will be on the content of the biblical text, the secondary reading, and the class notes. The averages of the tests will determine 75% of your grade for the course. The grading scale will be:

90 -100 A  
80 - 89 B  
70 - 79 C  
60 - 69 D  
- 59 F

Each test will count 25% of the total grade. All tests should be taken on time. An unexcused makeup will have an automatic deduction of ten points. *No extra credit!*

- B. Book Report will count for 25% of the grade.

## VIII. Outline

### A. Preliminary Matters

Week 1: Sources on the life of Jesus; the Synoptic Problem; the Jesus of the Gospels

### B. The Markan Life of Jesus

Week 2: The initial announcement of the Kingdom of God in Galilee and the call of the disciples

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11.

The first miracles of Jesus' mission in Galilee

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §12, 13-14, 15-16, 45.

Week 3: The beginning of opposition to Jesus.

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §52, 53-54, 69, 70, 71-72, 85, 86 and 89.

The kingdom is explained by parables

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §90-91 and 93, 94, 95 and 97 and 99.

Week 4: Further dramatic activity by Jesus in Galilee

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §105, 106, 107, 108, 109-111, 112.

Misunderstanding about Jesus deepens

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §113-114, 115, 116, 117, 118-120.

Week 5: **Test 1: September 27**

Week 6: Jesus decides to leave Galilee

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §121, 122, 123, 124-125, 126, 127, 129-130, 131-132.

Week 7: Jesus arrives at the end of the way: Jerusalem

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §187, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193.

The Crisis in Jerusalem

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §196, 198-201, 202.

Week 8: Further confrontation in Jerusalem and final verdict on the temple and Jesus' statement on the future

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §204, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210-212, 213, 214-222.

The days before Jesus' arrest

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §231, 232, 233-235, 236.

Week 9: The arrest, first trial, and trial before Pilate

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 244, 246, 247-248.

Crucifixion, empty tomb

Readings: *Gospel Parallels* §249-250, 251, 253, Longer Ending.

Week 10: **Test 2: November 1**

C. **Selected Issues in the Life of Jesus.**

Week 11: Sermon on the Mount 1

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

Sermon on the Mount 2

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §28, 29-30, 31, 32-34, 35, 36, 37, 38-39, 40-44.

Week 12: Saying of Jesus in Luke

Reading: *Gospel Parallels* §143-144, 156, 172-173, 174, 177.

The Birth Narratives of Jesus in Matthew and Luke

Readings: *Gospel Parallels*, pp. 1-7.

Week 13: No Class November 22 – Thanksgiving Week

Week 14: John's View of Jesus

Reading: Article on the Gospel of John supplied by Instructor.

Week 15: **Test 3: December 6**

## IX. Bibliography (AGST Library Call Number)

- W. Barclay, *Life of Jesus for Every Man*, New York: Harper and Row, 1966.  
(BT 301.2 .B26 1966)
- M. Bockmuehl, *This Jesus: Martyr, Lord, Messiah*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994.  
(BT 301.2 .B62 1994)
- F. Bovon, *The Last Days of Jesus*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.  
(BT 440 .B6813 2006)
- C. H. Dodd, *The Founder of Christianity*, New York: MacMillan, 1970. (BT 202 .D57)
- J. Dunn, *Jesus' Call to Discipleship*, Cambridge University Press, 1992.  
(BS 2417 .K5 .D86 1992)
- S. Freyne, *Jesus, A Jewish Galilean: A New Reading of the Jesus Story*, T&T Clark, 2004.  
(BT 303.2 .F74 2004)
- M. Hooker, *Beginnings: Keys That Open the Gospels*, TPI, 1997. (BS 2555.2 .H67 1997)
- A. M. Hunter, *The Work & Words of Jesus*, London: SCM Press, 1950. (BS 2415 .H8)
- P. Jenkins, *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way*, Oxford University Press, 2001. (BS 2851 .J46 2001)
- G. Lohfink, *Jesus and Community*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984. (BS 2417 .C53 .L6413)
- T. Manson, *The Servant Messiah*, Cambridge University Press, 1961. (BT 230 .M33)
- J. Pelikan, *Jesus Through the Centuries*, Yale University Press, 1985. (BT 198 .P44)
- E. Rivkin, *What Crucified Jesus?*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1984. (BT 431.6 .R58 1997)
- E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, New York: Penguin, 1993.  
(BT 301.2 .S254 1993)
- E. Schweizer, *Jesus*, Richmond: John Knox, 1971. (BT 202 .S38213 1971)
- Walker, Peter, *Jesus and His World*, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003.  
(BT 303.2 .W35 2003)
- N.T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is*, InterVarsity Press, 1999. (BT 303.2 .W75 1999)
- N.T. Wright, *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospel*, Harper, 2016.