

**NT 3321**  
**Life and Letters of Paul**  
**Spring 2010**

Instructor: M. Todd Hall  
Office: 7640 Guadalupe Street, #144  
Conference: By Appointment  
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**I. Course Description**

The course will be concerned with the study of the life of Paul within the framework of the development of early Gentile Christianity. We will study the nature of Paul's background in the Diaspora, his conversion, and details of his Christian missionary work especially noting his paradigmatic role in shaping the doctrine and thought of Gentile Christianity.

The letters of Paul are the best sources for his life, so we will survey all of Paul's canonical letters and study in detail the major letters in order to get a broad picture of Paul's thoughts and the problems he encountered. We will also spend some time in noting the impact of his thought on the West and evaluate his significance for contemporary society.

Procedurally, each morning we will have a lecture with time provided for discussion. Occasionally we will spend some time looking visually at materials that are relevant to the lecture. This material either will be on slides or PowerPoint. The course will be divided into four segments. Three one hour quizzes will come at set times throughout the course.

**II. Goals**

1. To provide a comprehensive overview of the life of Paul—one of the most pivotal figures in shaping mainstream Christianity to this day.
2. To provide tools for the student to do historical study enabling him/her to teach New Testament letters at the level of serious Bible study in the life of the average congregation.
3. To promote reflection on the key theological features of Paul's way of looking at the world, which provided the basic agenda and much of the terminology of Christian theology.

### III. Objectives

1. The course will give the student essential information about the life and correspondence of Paul within the context of early Christianity enabling the student to appreciate Paul's significance.
2. By studying the basic order and sequence of Paul's letters the student will gain a deeper appreciation of the context and intricacies of Paul's theological development.
3. Through the use of visual materials, students will gain insight and knowledge of the wider Greco-Roman world in which, despite the consternation of many, Paul claimed that Jesus Christ is Lord and won many to this belief.

### IV. Texts

New Testament (preferably RSV)

David E. Capes, Rodney Reeves and E. Randolph Richards, *Rediscovering Paul: An Introduction to His World, Letters and Theology* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2007).

Michael J. Gorman, *Reading Paul* (Eugene, Oregon; Cascade Books, 2008).

### V. Requirements

- A. Regular attendance at class sessions.
- B. Weekly reading assignments - on schedule.
- C. One 5-page book report on Gorman, *Reading Paul*.
- D. Tests               75%  
    Book Report   25%.

### VII. Outline

#### A. The Early Years (32?-51)

Week 1: Overview of the Course; Jesus and his Messianic Movement as a presupposition for the study of Paul

**Readings:** Capes, *et al.*, Introduction and Chapters 1-2

Week 2: The Pre-Christian Paul; Paul's call and early Christian mission in the urban Greco-Roman World

**Readings:** Acts 9:1-30; 13:1-14:28; Capes, *et al.*, Chapter 3

Week 3: The Galatian problem

**Readings:** Galatians; Capes, *et al.*, Chapter 4

Week 4: Beginning of the mission of Paul in Europe (Thessalonians)

**Readings:** 1 and 2 Thessalonians; Capes, *et al.*, Chapter 5

**Suggestion:** By this time read Gorman 1-56

**Test 1:** February 18

B. Paul's Extended Mission in the Aegean area

Weeks 5-6: The church in Corinth

**Readings:** 1 and 2 Corinthians; Capes, *et al.*, Chapter 5

Week 7-8: Other churches in the Aegean area (1)

**Readings:** Philippians and Colossians; Capes, *et al.*, 201-226

**Suggestion:** By this time read Gorman, 57-110

**Test 2:** March 25

C. The Heart of Paul: Romans

Weeks 9-10: Paul's thought as expressed in Romans

**Readings:** Romans; Capes, *et al.*, Chapter 7

**Book Report** on all of Gorman 1-188 due April 15

D. The Later Paul

Week 11: Ephesians and the Pastorals

**Readings:** Ephesians; 1 and 2 Timothy; Capes, *et al.*, 226-234; Chapters 8-10

Week 12: Paul in later history and his significance today; Final Reflections

**Readings:** Capes, *et al.*, Chapters 11-12

**Test 3:** May 6