

•Austin School of Theology
appointment

Spring 2010
Jeff Peterson, Instructor

Office Rm. 207; hours by

Ph. 476-2772 (O); 576-7426 (H)
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READING THE NEW TESTAMENT (NT 6301)

●MATS Educational Goals Supported by the Course

1. The student will identify and offer informed discussion of major issues in the interpretation of representative books of the New Testament (Gospels and Acts, Pauline letters, General Letters, Apocalypse).
2. The student will prepare papers, sermons, classes, and other assignments demonstrating familiarity with methods and principles of biblical exegesis in Old and New Testaments.

●Course Objectives

1. The student will increase familiarity with the contents and literary structure of the Scriptures of the New Testament, the founding documents of the Christian Church.
2. The student will acquire the essential information needed to profit from the literary, historical, and theological exegesis of Scripture available in English.
3. The student will compile a bibliography of works useful for the interpretation of Scripture in personal study and in the preparation of sermons and classes.

●Required Texts

1. David A. deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (InterVarsity).
2. Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel* (Eerdmans).
3. A collection of essays available for individual duplication in the David Worley Library. (See the detailed list included below.)
4. A recent translation of the Bible (e.g., RSV, NIV, ESV, NASB, NAB, NJB, REB, NRSV). Two excellent tools for study are the *HarperCollins Study Bible* and the *NIV Study Bible*, which give the reader rapid access to current mainline Protestant/academic and evangelical lines of interpretation, respectively.
5. Recommended texts:
 - a. The Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th ed.), for consultation of both the Greek text of the New Testament where applicable and the full marginal references to parallel passages.
 - b. Kurt Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels* (American Bible Society). Also available in Greek as *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*.

●Course Requirements

1. Prompt attendance at all scheduled meetings of the class, completion of assigned reading, and informed participation in class discussion. The student should note that the reading assignment includes consultation of the Scripture references in the secondary discussion.

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1. Serving as discussion prompter for one or two books of the NT (depending on enrollment). This will involve special attention to the assigned reading and the preparation of a brief (1–2 pp.) discussion guide to the significant questions involved in the interpretation of the NT book. The outline should be duplicated for distribution to all participants in the class.

1. Two (2) written examinations over the content and interpretation of the New Testament as treated in the reading and in class discussion. Each exam will take 1–2 hours and may include the following types of questions:

- a.) Identification and significance of key passages from various NT books.
- b.) Recognition of terms written on the board during lectures; definitions are to be based on lecture notes, assigned reading (note deSilva's full index), and (where necessary) consultation of a dictionary, either a general dictionary (Webster's, the *Oxford English Dictionary*, etc.) or a specialized dictionary such as Richard N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* (on reserve).
- c.) Matching of book titles written on the board during lectures with their authors and/or with the main contribution of the book to the understanding of the New Testament.
- d.) Short essay questions that will test the student's understanding of the major issues in the interpretation of various New Testament books.

1. A writing assignment to be completed and turned in by the end of the week scheduled for final examinations (i.e., by 5 PM on Thursday, May 13). The assignment is a critical book review (8–10 pp. in length) of Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the God of Israel*. The general sort of reading appropriate to a critical review is fully discussed in Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren, *How to Read a Book*. Specific criteria for evaluating works of biblical exegesis can be derived from Michael Gorman's *Elements of Biblical Exegesis*. Helpful models for the assignment can be found by consulting the reviews and review essays appearing in the monthly journal *First Things*.



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● **SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Required reading is in **Bold Type**, recommended reading in parentheses. Collections of essays by Nils Dahl are abbreviated as follows:

JMEC = *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church* (1976)
SP = *Studies in Paul* (1977)
JTC = *Jesus the Christ* (1991); this collection incorporates Dahl's
Crucified Messiah (1974)

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Tuesday, January 19

How to Read the New Testament: The New Testament as Literary Composition, as Historical Source, as Norm for Christian Faith, Preaching, and Discipleship; **deSilva 19–110**

Tuesday, January 26

The Pauline Mission and the Pauline Corpus: **deSilva 111–144, 475–492**; Paul's Letter to Philemon et al.

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Tuesday, February 2

Paul's Letters: 1–2 Thessalonians, Philippians, 1–2 Corinthians: **deSilva 527–597**; Dahl, "**Paul and the Church at Corinth**," SP 40–61

Tuesday, February 9

Paul's Letters: Galatians, Romans; **deSilva 493–526, 598–639**; Dahl, "**The Missionary Theology in the Letter to the Romans**," SP 70–94

Tuesday, February 16

Paul's Letters: Colossians, Ephesians, 1–2 Timothy, Titus; **deSilva 733–775**; Dahl, "**Christ, Creation, and the Church**," JMEC 120–140

Tuesday, February 23

EXAM OVER PAUL'S LETTERS

Paul, the Fourfold Gospel, and Jesus; **deSilva 484–485, 145–157, 174–193**; Dahl, "**Anamnesis: Memory and Commemoration in Early Christianity**," JMEC 11–29; Dahl, "**The Crucified Messiah**," JTC 27–47 (also recommended: E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, in toto)

Tuesday, March 2

The Gospel: According to Mark; **deSilva 194–233**; Dahl, "**The Purpose of Mark's Gospel**," JMEC 52–65

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Tuesday, March 9

The Gospel: According to Matthew; **deSilva 234–297**; Krister Stendahl, “*Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Matthew 1–2*,” *The Interpretation of Matthew* (ed. Graham Stanton) 56–66; **Dale Allison**, “*Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the Imitatio Christi*,” *Studies in Matthew* 135–155

Tuesday, March 16: NO CLASS MEETING (Spring Break)

Tuesday, March 23

The Gospel: According to Luke(–Acts); **deSilva 298–390**; Dahl, “*The Purpose of Luke–Acts*,” *JMEC* 87–98

Tuesday, March 30

The Synoptic Question (a.k.a. “Synoptic Problem”); **deSilva 158–173**; Mark Goodacre, “*Fatigue in the Synoptics*,” *New Testament Studies* 44 (1998) 45–58

Tuesday, April 6

The Gospel: According to John; **deSilva 391–448**; Paul Minear, “*The Original Functions of John 21*,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 102 (1983) 85–98

Tuesday, April 13

The General Letters; **deSilva 449–474, 776–884**; Richard Bauckham, “*Pseudo-Apostolic Letters*,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988) 469–494

Tuesday, April 20

The Apocalypse; **deSilva 885–932**

Tuesday, April 27

The New Testament Canon and the Faith of the Christian Church; Eugene Lemcio, “*The Unifying Kerygma of the NT*,” *Journal for the Study of the NT* 33 (1988) 3–17; 38 (1990) 3–11 (reprinted in Lemcio, *The Past of Jesus in the Gospels* [1991] 115–131, 158–162); **Dahl**, “*The Crucified Messiah and the Endangered Promises*,” *JTC* 65–79

Tuesday, May 4

EXAM OVER GOSPELS, GENERAL LETTERS, APOCALYPSE, AND CANONICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Thursday, May 13

Review of Bauckham’s *Jesus and the God of Israel* due by 4:30 PM (emailed as attachment, faxed to 512.476.3919, or hard copy left in my 1st floor mailbox)