

BL5130 SURVEY OF THE GOSPELS AND ACTS

FALL 2022 – PHOENIX SEMINARY

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INSTRUCTORS

Lecturer & Online Instructor: Peter Gurry, Ph.D.

Lecturer & Online Instructor: TBD

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DESCRIPTION (from *Student Handbook*)

A survey of Matthew through Acts, placing each in its historical, cultural, and theological context, with appropriate attention given to its contribution to biblical theology and its relevance to Christian life and doctrine.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to

1. Appreciate the message and essential role that context and genre play in properly interpreting these books of the Bible.
2. Assess the most important scholarly questions about the origin (date, authorship, text, canonicity) and interpretation of these books.
3. Articulate the particular contribution these books make to biblical theology.
4. Apply these books to contemporary life and ministry.

COURSE TEXT(S)

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Gathercole, Simon J. c. Penguin Classics. New York: Penguin, 2021. You'll read the *Gospel of Thomas* and one other gospel of your choice from this book.

Schreiner, Patrick. *The Mission of the Triune God: A Theology of Acts*. New Testament Theology. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022.

Wenham, David and Steve Walton. *Exploring the New Testament: A Guide to the Gospels and Acts*. 3rd ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2021.

Williams, Peter J. *Can We Trust the Gospels?* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READING (SEE COURSE WEB PAGE):

Bailey, Kenneth E. "The Story of Jesus' Birth: Luke 2:1–20." Pages 25–37 in *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008.

Carson, D. A. "Athens Revisited." Pages 384–398 in *Telling the Truth: Evangelizing Postmoderns*, edited by D. A. Carson. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.

Green, Joel B., Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. 2nd ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2013. We'll read select articles from this.

Padilla, Osvaldo. "How Luke Writes History." Pages 75–122 in *The Acts of the Apostles: Interpretation, History and Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016.

Pennington, Jonathan T. *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. You will need ch. 9 to complete your narrative assignment.

Peterman, Gerald W. "Proclaiming Christ to Nonbelievers: The Gospel according to the Preaching in Acts." In *Proclaiming Jesus: Essays on the Centrality of Christ in the Church in Honor of Joseph M. Stowell*, edited by Thomas H. L. Cornman. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007. Available online at: https://www.academia.edu/4102913/The_Gospel_according_to_the_Preaching_in_Acts

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

Pennington, Jonathan T. *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. A good introduction on a method for reading and studying the Gospels. *ESV Reader's Gospels*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015. Designed to remove distractions like verse numbers and footnotes to allow for more immersive reading. Highly recommended!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

<p>Reading [15%] Outcomes 1,2 Due: See Course Web Page</p>	<p>The readings are due on the date listed. Please read the assigned text before class time. Late reading will be given half credit so, if you get behind, don't give up. You can read <i>Can We Trust the Gospels?</i> whenever you want, so long as you finish before exam day. Grading will be based on your report of percentage of on-time and late reading at the end of the semester.</p>
<p>Discussions [10%] Outcomes 3,4 Due: See Course Web Page</p>	<p>The course discussions will generally follow your reading of Wenham-Walton and will be either Q&A Forums or VoiceThread assignments. These are marked on the course web page. Your questions should be based on the prompts found at the end of each chapter in Wenham-Walton under "Some issues for today" and "Essay topics." In each case, you need to ask one question based on these prompts and answer two questions from your classmates. The prompts should be taken from your reading for the given week with the exception of the lesson when you turn in your synoptic assignment. In that lesson, your discussion should be about what you learned from your assignment.</p>
<p>Synoptic Problem [15%] Outcomes 1,2 Due: See Course Web Page</p>	<p>This assignment is designed to get you thinking about the synoptic problem. The two passages you will look at are Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3.13-17//Mark 1.9-11//Luke 3.21-22) and the rich young ruler (Matt 19.16-22//Mark 10.17-22//Luke 18.18-23). Your job is to note the similarities and differences and then comment on the best explanation for both. Along with your explanation, you will turn in a color-coded synopsis.</p>
<p>Narrative Exercise [20%] Outcomes 1,3 Due: See Course Web Page</p>	<p>This assignment will introduce you to reading Gospel narrative. You will need to read chapter nine of Jonathan T. Pennington's <i>Reading the Gospels Wisely</i> and then follow his steps on pp. 180-181 using Mark 2.1-12. Make sure to identify and describe the key elements of the scene: setting and characters; rising tension; climax; resolution; and following action/lessons. Conclude with some personal reflections on the significance of this story for theology and practice.</p>
<p>Final Exam [40%] Outcomes 1,2 Due: See Course Web Page</p>	<p>The final exam will be closed-book, essay format of three or four questions taken from a list of about ten that you will be given to study from (see course web page).</p>

GRADING INFORMATION

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Points	Description
A+	100-97	4.0	
A	96.99-93	4.0	Excellent; superior achievement.
A-	92.99-90	3.7	
B+	89.99-87	3.3	
B	86.99-83	3.0	Good; commendable achievement.
B-	82.99-80	2.7	
C+	79.99-77	2.3	
C	76.99-73	2.0	Satisfactory; acceptable achievement.
C-	72.99-70	1.7	
D+	69.99-67	1.3	
D	66.99-63	1.0	Poor; marginal achievement.
D-	62.99-60	0.7	
F	59.99-0	0.0	Failure to advance in the course. No credit earned. Computed in GPA.
S	N/A	N/A	Sufficient achievement of course objectives. Not computed in GPA.
U	N/A	N/A	Insufficient achievement of course objectives. Not computed in GPA.
EX	N/A	N/A	Extension. A formally approved petition for course extension.
NR	N/A	N/A	Not Received. Instructor has not yet submitted grade.
WP	N/A	N/A	Withdrew from class while passing. Not computed in GPA.
WF	N/A	0.0	Withdrew from class while failing. Computed in GPA until retake.

SEMINARY ACADEMIC POLICIES

All Seminary policies affecting student work, appeals, and grievances, as outlined in the Academic Catalog or Student Handbook will apply, unless otherwise indicated in this syllabus.

Course Evaluations

Each student is required to complete an anonymous course evaluation on this course's page at <http://ps.mrooms.net>. Course evaluations will be open the last week of the class until one day before grade reports are issued. All course evaluation results are reported anonymously:

professors have no way of linking a particular student to a particular evaluation. This anonymous information will be processed and distributed to professors in summary form and used to strengthen their teaching methods and courses.

COURSE DETAILS

Online Course Materials

Lectures, handouts and other course materials will be posted to <http://ps.mrooms.net>. Please note that when the course is completed, the student will not have access to course material on the website.

Participation

Students are expected to actively participate in the online learning environment. This may include logging on multiple times per week to view material, complete quizzes or exams, and to post responses to discussion questions.

Online Course Weeks

An online course “Week” corresponds to a 7-day week and runs **Monday – Sunday**. The course is based on **Phoenix, Arizona Time**. If you are in a different time zone, you are responsible for calculating the time difference and scheduling appropriately. There may be exceptions so pay close attention to the course web page for specifics.

Late Posts, Etc.

Because dependability and industry are virtues of Christian character, the faculty encourages students to be faithful and timely in the completion of all course assignments. Due to the interactive nature of discussion posts in online education, discussion posts cannot be made up. Failure to take quizzes, exams, or submit papers when they are due will result in a penalty and generally cannot be made up more than one week from their due date. Contact the instructor in cases of emergency that may warrant an extension. Procrastination is not an emergency.