Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary—Charlotte


Summer 2012

I. **Course Instructor:** Paul Bowers

II. **Email Contact:** bowersgcts@bellsouth.net

III. **Class Schedule:** May 14-18, 2012; Monday through Friday, 9:00 am—4:00 pm

IV. **Course Description.** This course is designed as a general introduction to the literature, history, and message of the New Testament, for those seeking a broad, foundational orientation to this part of Scripture. Attention will be given to the background of the New Testament as a whole, and to the setting, theme, purpose, and general content of the individual books of the New Testament, as well as to the message of its principal writers. As part of the course, the entire New Testament will be read.

V. **Course Relationship to the Curriculum.** NT 501 is a non-required course designed especially for those without a formal background in biblical studies. It is a *Foundations Phase* course within the GCTS curriculum, providing an overview of the New Testament. Students in any program who achieve a B- grade or better in this course are exempt from taking the New Testament Bible Content Exam.

VI. **Course Objectives.** On completing the course, the student should be able:

- demonstrate a general familiarity with the historical, geographical, and cultural background of the New Testament period;
- demonstrate a more detailed familiarity with New Testament literature, including the setting, theme, purpose and content of individual books;
- demonstrate a growing familiarity with the message of the principal New Testament writers, and with the relevance of this for life and ministry today.

VII. **Course Texts**

- *The Bible* (preferably the NIV, RSV, or ESV) [*your Bible is to be brought to each class session]*

VIII. **Course Requirements.** Achievement of the course objectives will be facilitated through a variety of engagements and assignments. The successful completion of these will require each student to spend approximately 135 hours devoted to coursework, both in class and outside of class. The following chart indicates how these hours are distributed across the various course assignments. More specific description of the assignments are given below.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Expected Time Commitment</th>
<th>Student’s Actual Time Spent</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Class sessions</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>80 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate quiz</td>
<td>8 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>17 hours</td>
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A. **Required reading.** Given the modular nature of this course, the reading assignments are essential for its effectiveness, and are therefore mandatory. The grade for required reading will be based on timely completion of the readings. Confirmation of completion of all assigned reading is mandatory for receiving a final grade. A reading report sheet will be provided, and is to be submitted with the final exam, due by **July 16, 2012.** The following is required reading:

- *The New Testament* in its entirety. (This reading must be done in a version other than the one the student normally uses)
- 250 pages in any *one or two* of the books listed at the end of this syllabus (you select which).

**Important:** Before the beginning of the first class session on Monday, May 14, the student is required to have read Elwell & Yarbrough, pages 15-190. We have only a single week together for this intensive course. Essential to the usefulness of the week for all of us is therefore that this modest assignment should be fulfilled by everyone. Students will report at the beginning of the first class session whether the assignment has been completed as directed, and this report will be calculated into the final course grade.

The student is also encouraged, before the first class session, to work ahead in the reading assignments, by reading *Matthew through Acts* in the New Testament (this reading must be done in a version other than the one the student normally uses).

B. **Intermediate quiz and final exam.** On Thursday morning of the class week, May 17, students will take an extended intermediate quiz covering material presented in class through Wednesday of that week. At the end of the week students will receive a take-home final exam, covering all material presented in class sessions during the week. The intermediate quiz will be objective. The final exam will have objective, short answer, and essay questions. The student will be allowed two hours for the final exam. The exam will be due by **July 16, 2012.**

Students are to know the books of the New Testament, in order, with correct spelling. This will be tested both on the intermediate quiz and on the final exam.

IX. **Course Submissions.** The reading report and final exam must be handed in or mailed to the Seminary on or before **July 16, 2012.** Address the mailing to: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, attention Trish King for NT 501, 14542 Choate Circle, Charlotte NC 28273.

X. **Course Grading**

- required reading 25%
- quiz 25%
- final exam 50%

A passing grade for the final examination is required for passing the course.
Grading scheme for required reading: A—all readings completed, on time; B—all readings completed, with at least 80% on time; C—all readings completed, with at least 50% on time (but not 80%); D—all readings completed, but less than 50% on time; F—all readings not completed by **July 16, 2012**. Confirmation of completion of all assigned reading is mandatory for receiving a final grade.

**XI. Course Administration**

*Attendance Policy:* With only a single week available for the course, faithful attendance is an essential part of this course. Students should take care to organize their schedules beforehand to avoid any absences. Emergencies will be handled according to the set seminary policies.

*Grade Penalty for Late Submissions.* Students are required to complete all required submissions by the stated due dates. If a student fails to submit the work by the due date, the professor has the right either to refuse the work or to accept it with applicable penalties. The penalty for late submission is one full letter grade at time of lateness, and a further full letter grade per week thereafter. Penalties do not apply to course work with approved extensions. Work turned in later than July 16, 2012 will normally require an extension approved by the Seminary.

*Final Exam Process.* The final exam will be handed out in class sealed. The exam is to be taken in the presence of a proctor arranged for by the student. The exam proctor must be neither a family member nor a GCTS student. The exam will have space for a proctor’s validating signature, in verification that it was opened, taken, and closed in the proctor’s presence, completed at one sitting within the specified time frame, and that no study aids were used. The exam must be returned in a sealed envelope with the proctor’s signature across the sealing. The envelope must either be handed in at the GCTS office by the stated due date, or be post-marked to the GCTS office by that date.

*Internet Use During Class Sessions.* Students are to refrain from accessing the internet at any time during class sessions, unless otherwise instructed by the professor. Surfing the web, checking email, and other internet-based activities are distracting to the conduct of class sessions, and prevent the student from participating to best personal advantage.

*Contact:* The instructor may be reached most conveniently by email at: <bowersgcts@bellsouth.net> Otherwise leave a message for the instructor with Trish King at the GCTS office (1-800-600-1212). In cases of special need, brief personal contact time prior to or following class sessions may be arranged on request.

**XII. Course Outline**

- **Monday**
  1. Preliminaries, Background
  2. Greco-Roman World
- **Tuesday**
  3. Jewish World
  4. The Gospels
- **Wednesday**
  5. Jesus
  6. Jesus
- **Thursday**
  7. Acts
XIII. Assignment Schedule

May 14, 2012 . Elwell & Yarbrough, 15-190
June 4, 2012 ... Elwell & Yarbrough, 193-286
Matthew through Acts
Romans through Revelation
July 9, 2012 .... 250 pages selected reading
July 16, 2012 .. reading report, and final exam

XIV. GCTS Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work”, as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades

Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades. Those individuals, who need an official grade report issued to a third party, should put their request in writing to the Registration Office. Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade.

Returned Work

Submitted course work will be returned to the student provided s/he provides a self addressed and postage paid envelope with his/her final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed once the grade has been assessed and issued.

XV. Selected Texts for Reading Assignment. The student is to read 250 pages from any one or two of the following books. Report your completion of this required reading on the reading report sheet to be handed in on or before July 16, 2012, along with the final exam.

Barnett, Paul. The Birth of Christianity: The First Twenty Years, 2005
Brauch, Manfred, Abusing Scripture : the consequences of misreading the Bible, 2009
Bruce, F.F. Paul: An Apostle with the Heart Set Free. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977
deSilva, David A. An introduction to the New Testament : contexts, methods, and ministry formation, 2004
Ferguson, Everett. Backgrounds of early Christianity, 2003
Ladd, George, and Donald Hagner. *A Theology of the New Testament*
Strauss, Mark L. *Four Portraits, One Jesus: An Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels*, 2007
Witherington, Ben. *New Testament History: A Narrative Account*

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