TEXT BOOKS

Required:
- Gordon Fee, New Testament Exegesis
- Bruce Metzger, The Text of the New Testament
- Everett Ferguson, Backgrounds of Early Christianity, 2nd ed.
- “The Beale Packet”

Recommended:
- Kevin Vanhoozer, Is There a Meaning in this Text?
- Richard Bauckham, ed., Jesus and the Eyewitnesses

GOAL
- To become competent in the skills of exegesis in the Greek New Testament (Mission Statement 1)

ASSESSMENT (DUE DATES SUBJECT TO REVISION)

Assignment 1 (text criticism) 5% Due Feb 14
Assignment 2 (word study) 20% Due March 7
Assignment 3 (semantic s. analysis) 5% Due March 14
Assignment 4 (Paul/Epictetus) 10% Due April 11
Assignment 5 (literary context) 10% Due April 25
Exegesis Paper 50% Due May 6

CLASS 1
- Foundations of Interpretation
  Respect…even Love?
  Humility
  Diligence
  Faith

CLASS 2
- Some Models of Interpretation
  Staring at the Fish
  The Exegetical Pyramid
  The Iceberg Principle (How to Sink Titanic Errors)
Pack Your Own? Pick Your Own! Of Apples and Exegesis

Reading: Wright, pp.1-144; Begin reading Fee
Assignment: begin choosing your text for your exegesis paper (no, it’s not too early!)

Classes 3-4
- Introduction to the Twelve Step Method
- Text
  - Why textual criticism?
  - How it is done
    - Variant readings
    - Manuscript families
    - External criteria
    - Internal criteria
    - Lectio brevior, lectio difficilior, and other little Latin phrases
    - Working with the apparatus of the Greek NT

Assignment: A textual –theological problem: Rev. 4:11
Reading: Metzger, all

Classes 5-7
- Lexical Data
  - Overview of (very simple) linguistic theory
  - Doing a word study

Assignment: word study

Classes 8-9
- Genre and Form
  - What is this?
- Structure
  - How is it set up?
  - Tricks of the trade
    - Parallelism
    - Chiasm
    - Repetition
  - How to follow an argument: the use of semantic structure analysis

Assignment: semantic structure analysis of Romans 3 (graded)
Reading: Fee

**CLASSES 10-11**

- **Historical Context**
  - The importance of history
  - History and Faith
  - The Jewish background: sources and problems
  - The Greco-Roman background: sources and problems

  *Assignment: Paul meets Epictetus*

  *Reading: Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*; Wright, pp.146-end (both to be completed by end of term); Fee*

**CLASSES 12-3**

- **Literary Context**
  - Context is King
  - Making connections

  *Assignment: John 9 meets John 8 and John 10*

**CLASS 14**

- **Grammatical Data**
  - Sentence flows and diagrams

**CLASSES 15-18**

- **Biblical Context**
  - The Old in the New

**CLASSES 19-23**

- **Theology**
  - Keeping the focus

- **Secondary Literature**
  - Things you should own
  - The use and abuse of commentaries

- **Application**
  - Keeping the focus
  - Keeping the edge
CONCERNING THE ASSIGNMENTS

NT 502 is the foundation for the remainder of your education in the New Testament at GCTS. As such, it is meant to equip you with the full panoply of skills required for interpreting the NT. There is no disguising the fact that this is an intensive course. It may be one of the most challenging in the curriculum -- but it can also be one of the most valuable. The assignments are an essential part of the NT 502 experience.

The five graded assignments are designed to give you practical training in a variety of exegetical problems. You will be marked on the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of your answers, not necessarily on the aesthetic appeal of your presentation. In other words, I am primarily interested in your ideas. You need not and should not present formal essays, but may rather present notes, summaries, charts, etc. which show that you have earnestly wrestled with the task at hand. Detailed instructions will be given during class. I will be giving additional ungraded assignments throughout the term (e.g. looking at a given passage in preparation for the following class). Some of these are already noted on the syllabus. Diligent work on these assignments will greatly enhance the quality of class discussion. Please note: If you wish to have your papers returned to you, you must include your name and box number on them. Otherwise the papers will be kept in my office until you collect them.

The exegesis paper affords you the opportunity to bring these various skills to bear on a single passage of the NT. At times, brief notes or charts may be appropriate (e.g. summarizing material on authorship, diagramming the structure of the passage), but more polished writing will also be necessary, especially in the sections on Theology and Application. For further details, you may consult the sheet on the exegesis paper. But note this well: You must begin choosing your topic and working on your paper NOW!! The paper should be done throughout the course of the semester as you learn the exegetical skills one by one.
NT 502: Assignment 1
Text Criticism of Rev. 4:11

You have had a basic introduction to text criticism. Now is the time to put it into practice. I have chosen a text with a few interesting variant readings. The number of variants and manuscripts involved is fairly small, so I hope it will give you a smooth introduction into the technical aspects of text criticism. But determining the reasons these variants may have arisen will take some thinking. Here is the procedure for the assignment:

1. Read through Revelation chapter 4 in translation to get an overview of what is going on in the chapter.
   Read Rev. 4:11 in Greek. Our concern is with the second half of the verse: 
   ὅτι σsterol στὸ πᾶν ὅ τὸ θέλημα σου στὰ στὶ καὶ πᾶν καὶ στὴ σησαν.

2. You will notice there are some text critical markers at the end of the verse.

3. Using the techniques shown in class, write down the variant readings in Greek and translate them into English.

4. For each of the variants, tell me what their textual witnesses are, and what is their quality (date and if possible textual family). Based on this external evidence, would we expect any of these variants to be more likely than the others?

5. Now turn to the internal evidence. Please explain how and why each of these variants might have arisen. Consider the theological implications of the different readings as well as any accidents in transmission that may have occurred.

6. Final assessment. What do you think is the original reading of Rev. 4:11, and why? Summarize your findings.

Every blessing on you as you enter the world of text criticism!
NT 502: Assignment 2
Word Study

The Bible, as you may have noticed, contains a lot of words. Figuring out what these words mean is one of your chief tasks in exegesis. In this assignment, you will do an in depth study of either πηλǾν in John 9:6 or ὅβυσσον in Luke 8:31. This is a major assignment which will comprise 20% of your grade, so do your best. The paper should range from 4-8 pages. Use the following steps in your study (please note that some words may not occur in some of these sources):

A. Investigate the Hellenistic background to your word
   1. Refer to the Liddell-Scott-Jones Lexicon (searchable on-line at www.perseus.tufts.edu) and summarize the various possible meanings of your word. Do the same with Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker Greek-English Lexicon. This will give you the basic range of meaning.
   2. Now you will need to look up the sources mentioned in these lexicons and any other occurrences of the word you can track down in the Greek sources. Naturally, you will want to check the context to determine the precise nuance of the term in a given passage. Tracking down the terms can take three forms: a. Searching through concordances of various ancient authors (inefficient and inexhaustive); b. Using the Thesaurus Linguae Graece in the library to search all occurrences of your word in all Greek literature (efficient and exhaustive, but exhausting); c. Searching an abundance of literature on www.perseus.tufts.edu (efficient, not exhaustive but not exhausting, either!). If you find a huge number of occurrences in these sources, try to grab a few from different time periods. You are looking for perhaps 5-10 references total here. (Of course, the more you look at, the better!) Pay particular example to sources close to the New Testament era (roughly two centuries before and after Christ). Summarize your results.
   3. Read about your word in Moulton and Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament (on reserve). Summarize your findings.

B. Investigate the Jewish Background
   1. Josephus: The Rengstorff concordance to Josephus is thorough and easy to use, but you can also search Josephus via Perseus, the TLG, or Bible Works. 5 references would be good, if you can find them.
   2. Philo: The Index Philoneus is useful, but you can also search in on the TLG (or Bible Works if you have purchased Philo). Again, 5 references if you can find them.
   3. Dead Sea Scrolls: This is very difficult to do without Hebrew, but if you have Hebrew, it is great fun and very worthwhile. For instructions on how to try and go about this without Hebrew, see the instructions in the Reference Manual for NT Interp (http://www.viceregency.com/ReferenceManual4NTInterp.pdf), p92. Certainly I would look favorably on any effort you make to get into the Scrolls.
4. Septuagint: Use a Bible search program (e.g. BibleWorks or Accordance). The Septuagint material is crucial: you will want to examine at least 5 references (for this assignment), using the Greek-English version of the LXX to help you. Again, if you are confronted with a huge number of occurrences, whittle it down by getting some from the Pentateuch, some from Prophets, some from Wisdom, etc.

5. Writings of Church Fathers: Search in Lampe’s Patristic Greek Lexicon and the *Clavis Patrum Apostolicorum* per the instructions in the Reference Manual, p.93. Try to get 3 references or so.

C. Investigate the Use in the Rest of the New Testament
   1. Using a Bible search tool, track down the other NT uses of your word.
   2. First survey the use of the word outside your author. Try to grab a few from the synoptic Gospels, a few from Paul, a few from the Johannine literature, and a few from the rest of the NT.
   3. Then focus on the use of the word (and cognates, where relevant) in your author’s works.

D. Analyze the Meaning of Your Word in Your Passage
   1. As you sift through the various meanings your word might have, what meaning seems to suit it best in this particular passage? Why?
   2. Then ask yourself: are there any nuances or associations this word might have which make it especially appropriate for use in this passage? For example, Jesus goes up the “mountain” (Gk. *oros*) to deliver his sermon in Matt.5:1. A thorough word study will not only include the various geographical features which could be subsumed under the word *oros*. It would also have to take into account the *symbolic* value of the mountain in Judaism, in particular the importance of Mt. Sinai in the giving of the Law to Moses. Such an understanding is crucial for understanding Matt. 5:1. Be alert to these types of issues as you do your paper.

E. Consult the Secondary Literature: At this point you may bring in the work of other scholars who have looked at your word. But be sure to do your own work first!

I hope you will enjoy this assignment and gain a very valuable exegetical skill in the process!

**NT 502: Assignments 3 and 4 will be handed out in class**
This week’s assignment will help you work through the question of literary context. You are to look at the Gospel of John, chapter 9, and try to discern why John has placed it where he does, between chapters 8 and 10. Be on the lookout for thematic links, common vocabulary, and anything else which might serve to link these passages together. You can use your English translation to help you in this process, although the more you can work through the Greek text the better. Summarize your findings clearly and concisely in a page or two (1.5 space, 12 point font; use charts to summarize some material if you like). Then investigate how chapter 9 fits in with the broader themes of John’s gospel; take one-half page to a page to do this. **Thus your final paper should by no means exceed three pages.** Every blessing as you continue in your study of God’s word.
NT 502: Exegesis Paper Guidelines

Your *magnum opus* for the course is the exegesis paper. The format, which is detailed below, will be a mixture of the twelve step method and a verse by verse treatment. You will have twelve to fifteen pages to complete your assignment (please see note below). Sometimes you can put your information in the form of notes or short sentences. For example, under “historical context” for a passage in 1 Corinthians, you might begin: “Corinth: city in Greece, destroyed by Romans in 146 BC, rebuilt by Caesar 46 B.C.; prosperous trading city…” etc., with a footnote explaining where you got the information. At other times -- particularly in the verse by verse discussion – a more polished style will be appropriate.

The format, then, is easy: just list the steps with the information needed. *The important thing will be to decide how much space to devote to each topic.* You might wish to speak very briefly about historical context in a passage from Romans, for example, while you devote a lot of space to questions of structure. On the other hand, if you are dealing with Jesus’ action in the temple, you may spend several pages on historical context. Distribute space according to importance. This is good training for sermons, since in a sermon you want to spend the most time on the most important things.

Here then is the format in detail.

1. Background material
   a. Text: I want everyone to do *some* text criticism, even if your passage contains only minor variants. If you do have a few minor variants, do a thorough job telling me about the various manuscripts involved and how the variants may have arisen. If you have some major questions, you can focus on the most important manuscripts involved, the nature of the changes, and how this affects the interpretation of your passage. As with every step, it is up to you to determine how much space to devote to this subject in the final presentation.
   b. Translation: Provide me with your own translation of your passage, explaining any interesting or unusual translation choices you have made. You may certainly consult other translations after doing your own work, but make every effort to produce a “home grown” translation.
   c. Genre and Form: Tell me what sort of literature you are dealing with (genre), and if possible what “form” of literature your particular text represents (e.g. wisdom saying, parable, miracle story, diatribe). It would be appropriate here to note how your passage may deviate from the norms of your form.
   d. Structure: Show me the flow of your passage. It may be appropriate to use charts or diagrams (such as the parallelism thing we did with Colossians 1 in class) to graphically demonstrate what is going on. For a Gospel pericope, you may be content with a simple description of the flow of the passage, although a passage like the bread of life discourse in John may require a diagram illustrating the repetition and progression of the discourse.
   e. Historical Context: You may begin here by giving a brief note concerning date, authorship, and possible place of writing (you can devote a little more space to this if these matters are hotly disputed). You will need to *think through* all the areas of historical inquiry we discussed in class: history proper, archaeology, social structures, etc. This does not mean all your thoughts will make the final draft of the paper.
   f. Literary Context: How does your passage fit in its immediate context? How does your passage fit into this section of your gospel or letter? How does it fit with the work as a whole? Crucial questions to answer!

2. Verse by Verse Commentary: You will now begin a verse by verse commentary for the remainder of your paper. This should generally take up at least half of the paper, i.e. 7-8 pages. The format should follow that of the Harper New Testament commentary series, which couples exegetical detail with a more flowing style than some of the choppier commentary
series. You should have a more in-depth discussion of the Greek than is customary in the Harper series, which employs transliteration and has less detailed grammatical and lexical discussion. You may certainly refer back to information gleaned in the first section of the paper (e.g. “As we noted under historical context, v.6 is likely a reference to emperor worship…”). Be sure to include any relevant information from the remaining twelve-step categories (except for application, on which see below): grammatical data, lexical data, biblical context, and theology. **Note that secondary literature should be properly footnoted throughout the course of the entire paper.**

3. Summary and Application: Briefly summarize the main point of the passage and describe its relevance to the modern world. The summary should in all cases be brief. In terms of relevance to the modern world, you may expand this if you feel the application of the passage calls for extended discussion (e.g. if you are doing the passage in Corinthians about women being “silent” in church, or if you are handling Jesus’ teaching on divorce.) Just be sure your applications are grounded in a thorough exegesis of the text as evidenced by the rest of your paper!

### An Important Note on Paper Length and Format:

I realize most of you will have more information than you think can reasonably be included in a fifteen page paper. Resist the temptation to go over the limit! I will become increasingly concerned with every page past fifteen, and your grade is likely to descend accordingly. Resist also the temptation to squeeze more information in by the use of tiny fonts, single spacing, and narrow margins. Please use 12 point font and 1.5 spacing, apart from footnotes and diagrams which will obviously have special considerations.

Remember this too: **Plagiarism will lead you to fail the paper, and thus fail the class.**

I am willing to make one exception to the page length rule: a page or two of charts or diagrams of grammatical structure or such-like may be attached as an appendix, since these can be quite useful but take up an inordinate amount of space on the page.

Every blessing on you as you study God’s word!