TEXT BOOKS

- Barth, Karl. *Philippians*
- IVP's *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*

ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Greek Competency Quiz</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Progress Exercise</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz (Nov 8)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Exegesis Paper (Dec 18)</td>
<td>60%</td>
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Class Participation: No positive grade assigned, but regular failure to prepare the Greek text of Philippians will result in severe penalties (up to 2 full grades for repeated inability to translate or discuss texts in class).

ABOUT THE COURSE

The book of Philippians could have as its sub-title, “Pilgrim’s Progress”. The congregation at Philippi had few major problems in comparison with some of the others churches Paul wrote to, and consequently a spirit of joy and thanksgiving permeates the letter. But Paul is clear that whatever one’s spiritual achievements in the past might have been, there is always room for progress in the faith. He holds himself forth as a model of someone who always looking to follow Christ more closely: “Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14).

We will listen to Paul’s message through a thorough examination of the Greek text of Philippians. You will be expected to translate the relevant portions of the letter for each class meeting, and you should be ready to discuss the text in light of its historical setting. At the same time, we will consistently seek to discern how the message of the letter should shape our own walks with God. For this reason, your *spiritual* preparation – your willingness to prayerfully consider the implications of the text for life, and your willingness to share openly with others – is as critical to the success of the course as your intellectual preparation.
ABOUT THE ASSIGNMENTS

On the Quizzes

The Greek Competency Quiz is required of every Greek exegesis class. You must pass this quiz to remain in the class. The quiz will be given the first class meeting and will consist of a translation passage from the New Testament with parsing. The middle of term quiz will consist of a translation passage from Philippians along with a number of short-answer questions drawn from the lectures and reading.

Spiritual Progress Exercise

The fourth article of GCTS’s mission statement reads, “To work with the churches towards the maturing of student so that their experiential knowledge of God in Christ is evidenced in their character, outlook, conduct, relationships and involvement in society…”

As I thought about the deeply personal nature of Paul’s message to the Philippians, I concluded that it was important for us as a class to go beyond a mere intellectual apprehension of the text, and to use this time as an opportunity to assess our own progress in the faith. While we cannot of course force the Holy Spirit to make us progress according to our own timetable, we can set up some structures to keep us aware of the need for a personal appropriation of the message.

The Spiritual Progress Exercise consists of two parts:

- The first will be due the fourth class meeting. It will consist of a 2-3 page discussion of your “spiritual history”, and the areas in your life in which you would like to see progress, particularly during the course of the semester
- The second will be due at the end of term. This will consist of a 2-3 page discussion of how your reflection on Philippians has helped you make progress in some of the areas raised in the first paper, or given you orientation for future growth in the faith.

One might well ask how such an assignment can be graded, since our progress is rooted in God’s work in us (Phil. 1:6). I would first note that the exercise is worth only 10% of the final grade, which enables me to mark them with a high level of charity. Having said that, you will be graded on the thoughtfulness and clarity of your exposition. In brief, do you appear to take the assignment seriously, and have you communicated that seriousness clearly?

On the Exegesis Paper

Lest anyone suspect we have lost sight of GCTS’ first two mission statement articles, (“To encourage students to become knowledgeable of God’s inerrant
Word, competent in its interpretation, proclamation and application in the contemporary world"; and "To maintain academic excellence in the highest tradition of Christian scholarship in the teaching of the biblical, historical and theological disciplines"), we bring you the exegesis paper. Each student is required to produce an exegesis paper of 12-15 pages (1.5 spacing, 12 point type; appendix accepted for charts, diagrams, illustrations, etc.) based on a portion of the Greek text of Philippians. You may choose a passage from anywhere in the book. Generally the passage should range from 6-12 verses, but there may be exceptions. This is meant to be an intensive exploration of the Greek text, and as such it should display the full range of exegetical skills developed in Interpreting the New Testament. A paper based on the English text is not acceptable. The format should be a brief introduction followed by a verse-by-verse discussion in the style of the Harper’s New Testament Commentary series. Your interaction with the Greek text, however, should often be more detailed than in the Harper’s commentary.

NOTE: If you wish to receive papers or quizzes back, you must include your box number on them. Material without box numbers will be retained in my office. Please do not put in an envelope unless absolutely necessary.

SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO REVISION)

Sept 11
  Introduction
  Overview

Sept 13
  1:1-11: Greetings and Thanksgiving

Sept 18
  1:1-11: Greetings and Thanksgiving

Sept 20
  1:12-30: The Progress of the Gospel

Sept 25
  1:12-30: The Progress of the Gospel

Sept 27
  2:1-11: Serving One Another as Christ Served Us

Oct 2
  2:1-11: Serving One Another as Christ Served Us

Oct 4
  2:1-11: Serving One Another as Christ Served Us
Oct 16
2:1-11: Serving One Another as Christ Served Us

Oct 18
2:1-11: Serving One Another as Christ Served Us

Oct 23
2:12-18: Living as Sacrifice

Oct 25
2:12-18: Living as Sacrifice

Oct 30
2:19-30: Sacrifice in Action: Timothy and Epaphroditus

Nov 1
2:19-30: Sacrifice in Action: Timothy and Epaphroditus

Nov 6
3:1-11: Paul’s Past and Paul’s Opponents

Nov 8
3:1-11: Paul’s Past and Paul’s Opponents

Nov 20
3:12-21: Imitating Paul

Nov 27
3:12-21: Imitating Paul

Nov 29
4:1-23: Concluding Exhortations

Dec 4
4:1-23: Concluding Exhortations

Dec 6, 11: Wrap-up