Class Syllabus for NT 620: Exegesis of Romans

Instructor: James P. Sweeney, Ph.D.
Day & Location: Friday afternoons in AC 240
Time: 1:15 to 5:15 p.m. (Note that each class session is 4 hours in duration)
Dates: This class will meet only on Sept. 12, 19; Oct. 3, 10, 31; Nov. 7; & Dec. 5

I. Course Description

This class is devoted to an exegetical analysis of Paul’s letter to the Romans, his longest and most influential letter, with specific focus given to the Greek text of Romans 1-8.

II. Course Relationship to the Curriculum

NT 620 is a required Greek exegesis course (NT Epistles) for students who are pursuing the M.Div. degree. It has as a prerequisite the successful completion of NT 502, New Testament Interpretation.

III. Course Objectives

Students who complete this class will:

A. Read Romans a minimum of six times total in two or more contemporary English translations, at least one of which should be in the NET Bible (http://www.bible.org/netbible/index.htm)

B. Apply the specific principles of exegetical analysis appropriate to the NT letters to Romans. This will include:

1. Establishing the historical and logical context of the letter
2. Applying the principles of textual criticism to specific textual issues in Romans, such as Romans 5:1
3. Performing lexical, grammatical, semantic, and syntactical analysis on the text of Romans
4. Drawing upon historical and cultural backgrounds that help to illuminate the background of this letter
5. Writing an exegesis paper on an assigned passage, applying the exegetical tools exemplified in the class sessions
C. Cultivate a greater ability to evaluate, in a discerning manner, the work of others who are formally engaged in the field of New Testament studies, in general, and the formal study of Paul and of Romans, in particular

IV. Course Texts

It is assumed that students own a copy of at least one of the following editions the Greek New Testament:

  OR

For aid in facilitating Greek reading, students should possess or have readily access to either a quality Bible software program designed for Greek language study (e.g. Accordance, Gramcord, Bible Works, Logos) or one of the following reading helps:


It is further assumed that students either own or may readily access to both of the following works:


A. Required texts:


B. **Recommended Texts**


• G. F. Hawthorne and R. P. Martin, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993). Abbreviated below as *DPL*. While not required, students should have access this text.

V. **Course Requirements and Grading**

A. **Quality of Class Participation (10%)**

Analyze the assigned portions of the Greek texts of Romans for each class session (in conjunction with the schedule listed in VII. below). Take whatever morphological (parsing), lexical (word meanings), and grammatical notes you deem necessary to aid you in discussing the details of the assigned portion of Greek text of Romans in class and in preparation for the final exam.

B. **Assigned Reading (10% of the course grade)**

• Read through the assigned portions of the Greek text of Romans.
• Read through Romans a minimum of six times total in at least two contemporary translations, one of which should be the NET Bible (other contemporary translations include: NRSV, NIV, NAB, NJB, NASB update, ESV, TNIV).
• Read through Bird, *Saving Righteousness*.
• Read through the assigned portions of Moo, *Romans*.
• Read through my posted notes and book reviews.
• Read through the introductory articles on the letter of Romans in *DPL* (see VIII.A. below).

A report on the assigned reading (Appended to the Syllabus) is to be submitted no later than the time of the final exam.

C. **Written Exam (35%): During the exam week (TBA)**

During the exam week, students will sit for a written exam. The exam will focus on the content of Romans, including issues covered in the class and in the
assigned reading (Moo and the assigned articles in *DPL*), and a translation of selective portions of Greek text of Romans. A general study sheet will be provided at least a month in advance to aid proper preparation.

D. Exegesis Paper (45%): Due at the beginning of our last class session (Dec. 5)

Write a research paper on Romans 9:1-5, applying the interpretive principles learned in NT 502, *New Testament Interpretation*, and reinforced throughout the present class. Its details will be specified precisely in a guide sheet that will be provided on Oct. 31. It will specify the guidelines necessary for a competent production.

E. At the completion of the course students will receive a conventional letter grade based on the quality of his or her work. Grading designations will be as follows:

- A+, A, or A- = signifying degrees (+ to -) of *conspicuously excellent work*
- B+, B, or B- = signifying degrees (+ to -) of *more than adequate work*
- C+, C, or C- = signifying degrees (+ to -) of *adequate work*
- D+, D, or D- = signifying degrees (+ to -) of *unsatisfactory work*
- F = failure to meet the necessary requirements of the course

VI. Course Administration

A. *Class Attendance*: Given the foundational nature of this class, the limited class meetings, and the duration of each class session, it is *required* that students attend *each class*. Students will not receive credit toward section V.A for any classes missed.

B. *Due Date for the Exegesis Paper*: Dec. 5, 2008. It is assumed that students will submit their exegesis paper on the date due. A grade penalty will be assessed to a late paper.

C. *Assistance*: Students may contact me weekdays at (978)-256-6463 (office phone). Ask for me by name. Should I happen to be unavailable, leave a message (include a phone number and convenient time to contact you). Electronic mail may be directed to me at jims@immanuelchurch.com

VII. Course Schedule

**Class 1 (Sept. 12):** Introduction to the Course and Survey of Introductory Issues:

A Survey of Introductory Issues: The interpretation of Paul and his letters; the historical background of Paul’s letter to the Romans; the content and argument of Paul’s letter to the Romans and exegesis of Romans 1:1-15.
Reading in preparation of class: The introduction of Moo, Romans, 1-35. Read also J. Dunn, “Romans, Letter to the,” in DPL, 838-50; and M. Reasoner, “Rome and Roman Christianity,” in DPL, 850-55.

Class 2 (Sept. 19): Exegesis of Romans 1:16-2:29
Read/Analyze the Greek text of Rom 1:16-2:29 (along the lines indicated in section V.A above). Read the commentary on the content of Rom 1:16-2:29 in Moo, Romans.

Class 3 (Oct. 3): Exegesis of Romans 3-4
Read/Analyze the Greek text of Rom 3-4 (along the lines indicated in section V.A above). Read the commentary on the content of Rom 3-4 in Moo, Romans.

Class 4 (Oct. 10): Exegesis of Romans 5-6
Read/Analyze the Greek text of Rom 5-6 (along the lines indicated in section V.A above). Read the commentary on the content of Rom 5-6 in Moo, Romans.

*Oct 17: No Class: First Reading Week*: Read Bird, Saving Righteousness, in its entirety.

Class 5 (Oct. 31): Exegesis of Romans 7-8
Read/Analyze the Greek text of Rom 7-8 (along the lines indicated in section V.A above). Read the commentary on the content of Rom 7-8 in Moo, Romans.

Class 6 (Nov. 7): A Survey of Paul’s Argument of and Prominent Themes in Romans 9-11 and Romans 12-16.
Read Moo, Romans 547-554 (introduction to Rom 9-11), 744-47 (introduction to Rom 12-15), + 912 (introduction to Rom 16).

*Nov. 14: No Class: Second Reading Week*: Work on exegesis papers and prepare for the final exam.

Class 7 (Dec. 5): NOTE: Exegesis papers are due at the beginning of class. Reflections on Paul’s Use of the Old Testament in Romans; Toward a Theology of Romans; and Guidelines on Contextualizing Romans in the Modern World

Class 11 (Exam week): TBA
Final Exam, covering content of Romans, interpretive issues, and the portions of the Greek text of Rom 1-8 examined in class
Reading Report

To be submitted the day of the final exam

(Circle Yes ONLY if you completed the assigned reading in full)

A. Did you complete the assigned reading of the Greek text of Romans 1-8? (2 pts.)
   Yes  If NOT, what percentage of the reading did you complete? _______ %

B. Did you complete the assigned reading of Romans in English (a minimum of six times total in two or more translations, one of which should be the NET Bible)? (2 pts.)
   Yes  If NOT, what percentage of the reading did you complete? _______ %

C. Did you complete the reading of Bird, Saving Righteousness? (2 pts.)
   Yes  If NOT, what percentage of the reading did you complete? _______ %

D. Did you complete the assigned reading of the following articles in DPL? (.5 pt.)
   1. J. Dunn, “Romans, Letter to the,” in DPL, 838-50
   Yes  If NOT, what percentage of the reading did you complete? _______ %

E. Did you read through my posted notes and book reviews? (.5 pt.)
   Yes  If NOT, what percentage of the reading did you complete? _______ %

F. Did you complete the assigned reading of N. T. Wright, “Romans and the Theology of Paul”: http://www.ntwrightpage.com/Wright_Romans_Theology_Paul.pdf? (.5 pt.)
   Yes  If NOT, what percentage of the reading did you complete? _______ %

G. Did you complete the assigned reading in Moo, Romans, introduction and commentary on the content of Rom 1-8, + 547-554 (introduction to Rom 9-11), + 744-47 (introduction to Rom 12-15), + 912 (introduction to Rom 16) (2.5 pts.)
   Yes  If NOT, what percentage of the reading did you complete? _______ %