Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
NT 502: Interpreting the New Testament
Spring 2016
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I. Course Objectives:

This course will prayerfully pursue the following five objectives:

✧ Students will deepen their love for God by interpreting the Greek New Testament.
✧ Students will learn to approach the original text of Scripture with reverence as the divinely inspired Word of God and with humility due to the greatness of the subject.
✧ Students will acquire the core competencies of original language exegesis in order to:
   1) Understand and apply the historical-grammatical exegetical method.
   2) Follow the Author’s thought through a sentence flow and discourse analysis.
   3) Conduct responsible word and concept studies in the Greek New Testament.
   4) Recognize and evaluate manuscript variations in the textual tradition.
   5) Analyze the grammar and syntax of the Greek New Testament.
   6) Access historical and theological context through primary sources and scholarly commentary throughout the history of interpretation.
   7) Synthesize the results of exegetical study into a coherent exegesis paper written in an academic style.
✧ Students will improve their facility with the primary resources for original language exegesis, including critical editions of the Greek New Testament, Greek lexica and grammars, primary sources for historical context, and exegetical commentaries.
✧ Students will express the theological message of the New Testament for the benefit of the church that is the Body of Christ.

Each of these course objectives relates to the articles of the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Vision, Mission and Purpose Statement (see below Appendix I, esp. Article 1).

II. Course Required Texts:

III. Course Requirements:

1. Text Criticism 10%
2. Sentence Flow and Discourse Analysis (two parts) 20%
3. Word Study 20%
4. Exegesis Paper (10-12 pages) 50%
5. Required Reading (Percentage indicated at the end of the exegesis paper)

IV. Course Outline:

WEEKEND 1: JANUARY 29-30, 2016

INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION

OVERVIEW OF FEE’S METHOD FOR ORIGINAL LANGUAGE EXEGESIS

1. Survey the historical context
2. Confirm the limits of the passage
3. Become thoroughly acquainted with your passage
4. Analyze sentence structures and syntactical relationships (Sentence Flow)
5. Establish the text (Text Criticism)
6. Analyze the grammar (Sentence Diagram/Syntax)
7. Analyze significant words (Word study)
8. Research historical-cultural backgrounds
9. Determine the formal character of genre
10. Determine the historical context
11. Determine the literary context
12. Consider the broader biblical and theological contexts
13. Consult secondary literature (Exegetical commentaries/Academic articles)
14. Provide a finished translation
15. Write the exegesis paper

DETAILED DISCUSSION AND PRACTICE OF STEPS 1-5

1. Survey the historical context in general
2. Confirm the limits of the passage
3. Become thoroughly acquainted with your passage
4. Analyze sentence structures and syntactical relationships (Sentence Flow)
5. Establish the text (Text Criticism)


Please read as much of this as possible before the weekend.

TR Double underline and highlight Begin Text Criticism assignment and Sentence Flow and Discourse Analysis #1 (see below Assignments 1-2 for more detailed instructions).

SUBMIT ON SAKAI FOR DATE STAMP AND TURN IN HARD COPY BEFORE CLASS CLASS ON FEBRUARY 26TH !!!
WEEKEND 2: FEBRUARY 26-27, 2016

THE NECESSITY OF ORIGINAL LANGUAGE EXEGESIS: BARTH AND BIALIK

OVERVIEW OF FEE’S METHOD FOR ORIGINAL LANGUAGE EXEGESIS

DETAILED DISCUSSION AND PRACTICE OF STEPS 6-12

6. Analyze the grammar (Sentence Diagram/Syntax)
   Getting serious about syntax: an acquired taste
   Theology and grammar

7. Analyze significant words (Word study)
   Responsible study of words and concepts
   Introduction to lexical semantics and the study of linguistics
   How to use the major Greek lexica (BAGD, LS, Lust, Lampe)
   Importance of the Septuagint (LXX) for New Testament words

8. Research historical-cultural backgrounds
   History and culture matters: Jews, Greeks, and Romans
   The use of the Old Testament in the New

9. Determine the formal character of genre
   What type of material is this?

10. Determine the historical context
    What is the specific occasion of this entire document?

11. Determine the literary context
    How does this passage fit into the flow of this entire document?

12. Consider the broader biblical and theological contexts
    How does this particular passage contribute to the canon of Scripture?

Reading: Silva, Biblical Words and Their Meaning, 1-177.
Brooks and Winbery, Syntax of New Testament Greek, 1-186.


➤ Begin Sentence Flow and Discourse Analysis #2 and Word Study paper
(see below Assignments 2-3 for more detailed instructions).

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BEFORE CLASS ON APRIL 1ST !!!

➤ Select passage for exegesis paper. This passage must be different than the passage of your text critical, sentence flow, and word study passage.
WEEKEND 3: APRIL 1-2, 2016

THE INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT OF ORIGINAL LANGUAGE EXEGESIS:
THE HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

All translation involves interpretation: the Septuagint
Hellenistic Jewish writers: Philo, Josephus, Minor authors
Dead Sea Scrolls
The literature of the Rabbinic Sages
The New Testament in context
Early Christian interpretation
  School of Antioch
  School of Alexandria
Medieval interpretation
  Christian scholasticism
  Jewish medieval commentators
Reformation interpretation
Modern interpretation
Post-modern interpretation
Recent and emerging developments in interpretation

OVERVIEW OF FEE’S METHOD FOR ORIGINAL LANGUAGE EXEGESIS

DETAILED DISCUSSION AND PRACTICE OF STEPS 13-15

13. Consult secondary literature
   Exegetical commentaries
   Academic articles
   The use and abuse of commentaries
14. Provide a finished translation
   Go back to the beginning
15. Writing an exegesis paper
   A new type of writing
   SBL Handbook of style for proper citation

Reading:
Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*.

• Write full original language exegesis paper using the exegetical method of this course
  and applying the competencies introduced (see below Assignment 4 for more detailed
  instructions).

SUBMIT ON SAKAI FOR DATE STAMP AND EMAIL A WORD AND PDF
COPY TO THE PROFESSOR BEFORE MAY 2ND !!!
NT 502: New Testament Interpretation Assignment 1:
Text Criticism

Text criticism seeks to analyze variant readings within the manuscript tradition of the Greek New Testament. The task of text criticism is made possible by the vast quantity of Greek manuscripts, early translations, and patristic quotations. New Testament text criticism provides us with a window into the sacred labor of producing and transmitting texts over long distances of time and geography. New Testament text criticism retains a special importance due to the significance of these documents as the Word of God.

Your assignment is to examine the text critical issues in three different passages and become familiar with the two main critical editions of the Greek New Testament:

Passage 1: John 20:30-31
Passage 2: Acts 19:9
Passage 3: Romans 5:1

The procedure for each passage will be the same:

1. Read the passage in Greek and make an English translation.
2. Explain ALL of the text critical symbols and the variants in the NA 28.
3. Write out the variants and translate them into English.
4. List the manuscript evidence to support each variant according to date and quality using the chart provided as a template. Use the “Basic worksheet” available at http://www.viceregency.com/TextCrit.htm. This website is made available by Professor Roy Ciampa and used with his permission.
5. Explain how and why these variants may have arisen in the manuscript tradition. Consider both accidental scribal errors (e.g. dittography, homeoteleuton, etc.) and intentional corrections (for linguistic or theological reasons) as well as the theological implications of the different readings. Does it make a difference to the meaning of this text?
6. Turn to the same passage in the UBS 4 edition and focus on the most significant textual issue in each passage. The UBS editors have chosen one important variant in John 20:31, Acts 19:9, and Romans 5:1. Which is it?
7. Review the UBS discussion and evidence. Add anything evidence you do not already have listed. Make note the relative confidence of the editors (A, B, C).
8. Check your own work against the discussion in Bruce Metzger’s Textual Commentary and summarize your conclusion about each major issue.

SUBMIT ON SAKAI FOR DATE STAMP AND TURN IN HARD COPY BEFORE CLASS CLASS ON FEBRUARY 26TH !!!!
NT 502: New Testament Interpretation Assignment 2: Sentence Flow and Discourse Analysis

I received three gifts of incalculable value from Gordon-Conwell: 1) a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek in order to read Scripture in the original voice; 2) a framework for viewing the large narrative of Scripture with the glory of God in Christ crucified and raised from the dead at the center; and 3) the exegetical discipline and art of a sentence flow and discourse analysis. I use these gifts daily as a pastor. They are wellsprings of joy, insight, pleasure, and nourishment for the people whom I seek to shepherd toward Christ.

In this course, your assignment is to produce THREE examples of a sentence flow with discourse analysis bracketing. You will do an additional example as part of your exegesis paper. These must be distinct passages from the different genres of the New Testament, one from the Gospels, one from the Pauline epistles, and one from Revelation.

You must do this work on your own and may not consult any commentary or previous analysis from another student. Choose one passage from the Gospels (Assignment 1) and one each from Epistles and Revelation (Assignment 2):

**Category 1 Gospels:**
- Matthew 9:1-8; 20:1-16; John 1:1-18; or John 1:19-34

**Category 2 Epistles and Revelation:**
- Romans 3:21-26; Ephesians 3:1-12; Philippians 2:1-11; Colossians 1:9-14; Colossians 1:15-20 AND either Revelation 1:9-20 or 5:1-14.

The procedure for each passage will be the same:

1. Make a sentence flow of your passage in Greek and then in English showing grammatical subordination and the flow of thought using the method illustrated in Fee (DO NOT use his brackets but the straight brackets we have used in class).
2. Separate out the individual propositions of the text (subject and predicate).
3. Determine the logical relationships between the propositions using brackets as illustrated in class.
4. Trace the flow of the argument from step to step, establishing its main and supporting points.
5. Summarize in one concise paragraph the flow of thought and main point of your passage.

**SENTENCE FLOW AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS 1 (Gospels)**
**IS DUE BEFORE CLASS ON FEBRUARY 26TH !!!**

**SENTENCE FLOW AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS 2 (Epistles and Revelation)**
**IS DUE BY APRIL 1ST !!!**

The Word of God comes to us in words. God’s first act of Creation in Genesis is to speak. Christ takes on human flesh as the eternal Word of God. The precise wording of Scripture is important to the Christian faith. The proper study of words forms an essential aspect of original language exegesis. Your word study paper will be a detailed study of an important word in the Greek New Testament. This detailed study will help you to better understand how the meaning of words is determined in a specific New Testament passage. This is a major assignment forming 20% of your grade so you will need to do your best work. Use the following steps and organize your paper into the following sections.

1. Investigate the range of meaning and usage in Classical and Hellenistic Greek sources
   a. Begin with the BAGD 3rd edition lexicon and list the range of meaning. Document 5-10 occurrences of your word in non-Jewish Greek sources.
   b. You can also use the Liddell-Scott Lexicon to help you.
   c. List the author, work, and cite your passage using proper SBL citation.
   d. Read more about the usage of your word in Moulton and Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament and document the use of your word in the papyri. Cite 2-3 examples if possible.

2. Investigate the range of meaning and usage in Jewish sources
   a. Josephus. Use the Rengstorff concordance or a Bible search program from the Greek text of Josephus. Cite 5 examples if possible.
   b. Philo. Use the Philo Index by Borgen or a Bible search tool. Cite 5 examples if possible.
   c. Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. Use a Bible search program. Cite 5 references if possible.
   d. Septuagint. Use a Bible search program or the Hatch concordance. Use the Greek-English LXX to help you. Cite at least 10 passages if possible. If there are numerous occurrences, spread your references around the different genres of the Old Testament: Law, Prophets, Writings.

3. Investigate the range of meaning and usage in the rest of the New Testament. Use a Greek concordance or a Bible search program. Cite all occurrences.

4. Investigate the range of meaning and usage in your author’s work broadly. Cite all occurrences.

5. Investigate the range of meaning in your document (Cite all references in full citation). Analyze the meaning of your word in your particular passage.

6. Consult secondary literature, exegetical commentaries, Kittel’s TDNT, and Louw-Nida, Greek-English Lexicon Based on Semantic Domains to understand your word group.

7. Your word study paper should be 5-8 pages in length.

WORD STUDY CHOICES: ἐκκλησία in Eph 3:10; κόσμος in John 3:16; πληρόω in Matt 5:17; σάρξ in 2 Cor 5:16 (2x); ποιμήν in John 10:11; or δικαιοσύνη in Rom 1:17.

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The exegesis paper forms the major assignment for this course. You will apply the various core competencies to a particular New Testament passage. The paper will follow the exegetical method outlined in Gordon Fee, *New Testament Exegesis*. The total length of the paper should be 10-12 pages (excluding introductory matters and appendices). There will be a reduction in the grade by 2% per extra page. Remember that sermons must fit into a certain amount of time. Part of the challenge in exegesis is sorting out what is important and what is not. The format of the paper is as follows:

**Introductory matters:**
1. **Cover page** (Name, course, passage)
2. **Greek text** presented according to your sentence flow and discourse analysis
3. **Annotated translation** (similar to the Word Biblical Commentary series)

Then follow the steps in Fee’s method:
1. **Survey the historical context:** Introduce your passage, author, date, context
2. **Confirm the limits of the passage:** How does your passage fit into the literary context of this work?
3. **Become thoroughly acquainted with your passage:** Demonstrate awareness of other translations in your verse by verse commentary
4. **Analyze sentence structures and syntactical relationships (Sentence Flow)** Include with introductory matters, discuss in your commentary
5. **Establish the text:** Text Criticism should be included in your commentary when significant, also can be noted in annotated translation
6. **Analyze the grammar** (Sentence Diagram/Syntax): Reference the precise grammatical use and syntax of key expression citing Brooks and Winbery or a Greek reference grammar
7. **Analyze significant words** (Word study): Explain significant words and demonstrate abbreviated word studies in the paper
8. **Research historical-cultural backgrounds:** Explain backgrounds citing Wright, Ferguson, Keener, include primary texts where appropriate
9. **Determine the formal character of genre**
10. **Determine the historical context**
11. **Determine the literary context**
12. **Consider the broader biblical and theological contexts**
13. **Consult secondary literature** (Exegetical commentaries/articles/Hist. of Interp.)
14. **Provide a finished translation** (This is included as the annotated translation)
15. **Write the exegesis paper** including a summary and application as a conclusion.

Steps 3 and following should be written in a verse by verse commentary style similar to the Harper New Testament Commentary with complete footnotes. All secondary literature should be cited in SBL Handbook style footnotes and bibliography of at least fifteen works including advanced grammars, theological dictionaries, academic commentaries, and scholarly journals.

**THIS ASSIGNMENT IS DUE ON OR BEFORE MAY 2ND !!!**
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Introductions to the New Testament:


Text Criticism:


Greek Lexicons:


Intermediate and Advanced Greek Grammars:


Historical-Cultural Backgrounds:


Commentary Series:
Anchor Bible Commentary Series (Mainstream, liberal, in places brilliant)
Ancient Christian Commentary Series (Window into the History of Interpretation)
Eerdmans’ Critical Commentary (Mainstream, detailed discussion of critical issues)
Expositors Bible Commentary (Preaching commentary)
Hermeneia (Mainstream, technical discussion of original text)
International Critical Commentary (Mainstream, technical discussion of original text)
Word Biblical Commentary (Detailed commentary on original text, broadly evangelical)
New International Commentary on the New Testament (Evangelical)
New International Greek Testament Commentary (Broadly evangelical, detailed Greek)
Pillar New Testament Commentary Series (Evangelical Greek Text)
Tyndale Commentary Series (Succinct, evangelical, English style)

Commentary Recommendations:
Matthew (Dale Bruner, Donald Hagner, Davies and Allison)
Mark (Guelich, Gundry, Lane)
Luke (Marshall, Fitzmyer, Green, Bock)
John (Dale Bruner, Beasley-Murray, Brown, Bruner)
Acts (Marshall, Johnson)
Romans (Dunn, Cranfield, Stuhlmancher, Wright, Moo)
1 Corinthians (Fee, Thiselton)
2 Corinthians (Hafemann, Furnish, Martin)
Galatians (Longenecker, Martyn, Dunn, Betz)
Ephesians (Barth, Lincoln, O’Brien)
Philippians (Fee, Silva, O’Brien)
Colossians/Philemon (O’Brien, Dunn, Wright)
1-2 Thessalonians (Wanamaker, Marshall, Malherbe)
1-2 Timothy/Titus (Marshall, Knight, Mounce)
Hebrews (Lane, Bruce, Koester, Hagner, John Owen 7vols.!)  
James (Davids, Moo, Johnson, Martin)
1 Peter (Davids, Elliott)
2 Peter/Jude (Bauckham, Kelly, Green, Webb)
1-3 John (Brown, Marshall, Smalley)
Revelation (Beale, Aune, Mounce, Caird, Hendrickson)

Five books which have been significant in my development as an exegete:

Appendix 1: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Vision, Mission and Purpose Statement

“To advance Christ’s Kingdom in every sphere of life by equipping Church leaders to think theologically, engage globally and live biblically.”

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary is an educational institution serving the Lord and His Church. Its mission is to prepare men and women for ministry at home and abroad. The seminary undertakes this task as a training partner with the Church so that what is learned on campus may be complemented by the spiritual nurture and the exercise of ministry available through the Church.

Gordon-Conwell’s mission arises out of God’s redemptive work in this world effected in Jesus Christ, understood through the biblical Word and mediated by the Holy Spirit. As a theological seminary, it provides learning, resources and training through which men and women may acquire knowledge, gain skills and develop attitudes needed in Christ’s ministry. Its mission, accordingly, is to serve the Church in the following ways:

Article 1: To encourage students to become knowledgeable of God’s inerrant Word, competent in its interpretation, proclamation and application in the contemporary world. Because the teaching of God’s Word is indispensable to the well-being and vitality of God’s people, the seminary has a fundamental responsibility to encourage in its students a love for Scripture. The seminary is to teach exegetical skills by which they will be able to apply Scripture effectively.

Article 2: To maintain academic excellence in the highest tradition of Christian scholarship in the teaching of the biblical, historical and theological disciplines. Theological education, which is properly done within and for the Church, ought to function with rigor and academic integrity. The seminary, therefore, must provide an environment within which teaching and learning can best occur and encourage high levels of scholarly competence and research in its faculty.

Article 3: To train and encourage students, in cooperation with the Church, to become skilled in ministry. The Church and the seminary share the goal of seeing knowledge, skills and attitudes integrated in the person who ministers. Both in traditional degree programs and in continuing education, a combination of careful training and supervised experience in ministry are educational practices essential to achieving that goal.

Article 4: To work with the churches towards the maturing of students so that their experiential knowledge of God in Christ is evidenced in their character, outlook, conduct, relationships and involvement in society. Academic learning divorced from a life of biblical spirituality neither honors God nor serves His people. Such spirituality is to be expressed cognitively, relationally and socially. It is to be translated into action, God’s people embodying His compassion, declaring His justice and articulating His truth in society.

Article 5: To provide leadership and educational resources for shaping an effective evangelical presence in Church and society. Gordon-Conwell’s academic and institutional resources are to be put into the service of the Christian community to provide careful research on and informed understanding of critical issues, as well as in exercising leadership in learned societies, in movements of renewal and reform and in a variety of off-campus ministries in order to develop a more informed understanding of what the lordship of Christ means in our world.

Article 6: To develop in students a vision for God’s redemptive work throughout the world and to formulate the strategies that will lead to effective missions, evangelism and discipleship. The central mission of the Triune God is the creation of a fellowship of men and women who are mature in Christ and who will love and serve Him forever. This mission is realized evangelistically through the proclamation of the biblical gospel by those who embody the message they proclaim and who seek to make disciples from all peoples.