

BibleJourney: Syllabus for Fourth Course

The Restoration of the People of God: Interpreting the Gospels

Course Coordinator: Dr. Rollin G. Grams

Online Access to this Course: <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/biblejourney>

Fall, 2011

Course Description

The course covers Jesus' ministry of restoring the people of God from captivity in their sins as told by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We begin the journey by getting back into the context of the first century in order to 'hear' Jesus and the Gospels in their historical and cultural context. We then take a careful look at each of the four Gospels. The middle of the course looks at Matthew's Gospel in more detail in order to cover topics about Jesus and his ministry that relate to Mark and Luke as well. The final class looks at Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection in the four Gospels together.

Dates, Times, and Place

Monday nights: 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 October; 7, 14, 21 (*not 28*) November; 5 December

Breakout Sessions (only for credit seeking students): 6:15-6:45 or 8:45-9:15 pm.

Class Sessions: 6:45-8:45 pm.

Place: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 14542 Choate Circle, Charlotte, NC 28273. Tel.: 704-527-9909 (front desk).

About *BibleJourney* and This Course

This course is the *fourth* in a series of courses making up the *BibleJourney* Program.

1. The Formation of the People of God from Eden to Canaan: Interpreting the Five Books of Moses
2. The Mission of the People of God in the Promised Land: Interpreting the Historical and Poetic Books
3. The Exile & Return of the People of God: Interpreting the Prophetic Books
4. The Restoration of the People of God: Interpreting the Gospels
5. The Mission of the People of God to the Nations: Interpreting Acts & Paul's Letters
6. The Sojourn of the People of God among the Nations: Interpreting Hebrews through Revelation

Objectives

1. Content: Students will be able to articulate the distinctive characteristics of the four Gospels by reading each of the Gospels, working through the workbook, and attending the lectures.
2. Analysis: Students will learn how to interpret the Gospels through the workbook exercises and attending the lectures. In particular, students will gain exposure to:
 - a. primary sources and reading the Gospels in their historical-cultural context;
 - b. reading the Gospels in light of the Old Testament and Israel's history;
 - c. reading the Synoptic Gospels (Mt., Mk., Lk.) in tandem;
 - d. reading the Gospels as independent narratives from an author's point of view;
 - e. reading the Gospels as theologies for the church.
3. Critique: Students will be introduced to some alternative perspectives on Jesus and the Gospels and gain skills in critiquing them through their working through the workbook exercises and attending the lectures.

Registration

Registration for courses is required. Please visit www.gordonconwell.edu/biblejourney or call Dr. Alison Littauer at 1-704-940-5814 for more information. Teaching Assistant Mark Poe can be reached throughout the semester at mpoe@gordonconwell.edu. Participants will sign up either as auditors (those who sit in the class for personal enrichment) or for credit (those who turn in weekly assignments and may receive credit toward a certificate). Credit students will have first preference for the available seats in this course. *A 30 minute breakout session each week is required for those taking the course for credit. Options before or after the core presentation time are offered.*

Certification

Credit seeking students who meet all the requirements for the complete 6-course Bible sequence are eligible to receive a Certificate in Biblical Interpretation. This certificate will exempt those successfully admitted into any masters or other certificate programs at Gordon-Conwell from three courses (OT Survey, NT Survey, and Biblical Interpretation).

Note: The cost of the 6-course sequence is the cost of one graduate level course. Therefore, students completing the Certificate in Biblical Interpretation will have taken three courses for the price of one!

Format

During each evening session, there will be two hours of presentation by Dr. Grams. Credit students will engage in discussion about the lectures and assignments during a 30 minute breakout session offered from 6:15-6:45 and 8:45-9:15 led by teaching assistants. Those not taking the course for credit will only attend the class sessions. Class outlines and notes will be available on the course website (www.gordonconwell.edu/biblejourney) and as handouts in class. Ideally, the assigned readings for each week should be done before class. The written/typed assignments are designed to follow class.

Preparation

Assignments

Weekly assignments are associated with the nine two-hour lectures (see course outline, below). They will guide students through reading and work that will prepare students for the lectures. So, they are designed to be completed prior to a class and will be discussed in the breakout sessions. Students should plan on about 10 hours each week for the reading and assignments.

Note that students will find guidance on the *BibleJourney* website to resources, often on-line, for these assignments and for future study and teaching of the Gospels. This is particularly important for the first class period, since the class session will meet *after* students prepare for it.

The assignments will guide students in research of the following kinds:

- historical research;
- source and redaction history of Matthew and Luke;
- literary interpretation of the Gospels;
- theological interpretation in the Gospels;
- the Gospels' use of the Old Testament.

Bible Reading

The following sections of the New Testament need to be read during this course: Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John. Students are requested to read these four Gospels both devotionally (with prayer and listening to God speak through His Word to you) and academically, paying careful attention to what is said, where stories appear, what the similarities and differences are between the Gospels, development of the narrative of each Gospel, etc.

Also, certain 'focus texts' are listed for each class period. These should be read in preparation for the lecture.

Students are directed to use one of the following English translations: New Revised Standard Version, English Standard Version, New International Version (2011 revision recommended). Any other version should be checked with the instructor.

Textbook Reading

G. D. Fee & D. Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for all its Worth* (Zondervan, 2003).
Gary Burge, Lyn Cohick, and Gene Green, *The New Testament in Antiquity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

The book by Fee and Stuart will be used for all OT and NT courses in *BibleJourney*. The book by Burge, Cohick, and Green will also be used for all NT courses.

Note: The number of pages is heaviest for the first two classes. Try to plan ahead for this rather than read all the chapters in one week's preparation for a class.

Credit seeking students will complete a reading assignment statement for the course.

Quizzes

Four quizzes will be placed online for students to check the level of their acquaintance with each of the four Gospels. Students should take the quiz after a careful, fresh reading of a Gospel. The primary purpose of each quiz is to check on students' understanding of the *structure* of a Gospel. Thus the quizzes are not about background material.

Credit seeking students will need to pass (60%) each of the four quizzes to receive credit for the course.

Research Paper

Courses 4, 5, and 6 of *BibleJourney* cover the entire New Testament. At the end of the 6th course, a research paper on the New Testament will be required of credit seeking students. Topics will be listed in the syllabus for the 6th course, and the paper needs to be passed in order to receive credit for courses 4, 5, and 6.

Attendance and Missed Classes

Credit students will need to be in attendance at least seven of the nine weeks. Students may download audio recordings of missed classes to maintain their pace with the course assignments.

Discounts and Refunds

Gordon-Conwell has significantly reduced the tuition for these courses to make them affordable to our community. We assume that churches may further subsidize this outreach for their members if hardship exists. Full refunds will be provided through the second week of the course for any reason.

Course Outline

Class	Topic	Reading, Assignments and Quizzes
1	The Journey Continues: Second Temple Judaism, the Graeco-Roman World; John the Baptist; the Kingdom of God	Burge, Cohick, & Green, chs. 1, 2, 3 Class Assignment Focus Texts for Lectures: Mt. 24.36-42; Mt. 20.29-25.46; Mk. 1.1; 15.39; Mt. 3.1-17; Mt. 4.17; 6.10; 12.28
2	Mark's Gospel , Study in the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus as Son of God and Son of Man	Burge, Cohick, & Green, chs. 6, 7, 9 Fee & Stuart, chs. 1 & 2 (if not read already); ch. 7 Mark's Gospel Focus Texts Class Assignment Quiz on Mark's Gospel
3	Matthew's Gospel ; Jesus: Righteous Israel; Davidic King; Redeemer from Exile (Mt. 1.1-4.16; 20.29-25.46)	Burge, Cohick, & Green, ch. 8 Start reading Matthew's Gospel Focus Text: Mt. 1.1-4.16 Class Assignment
4	Kingdom Righteousness (cf. Mt. 4.17-7.29)	Focus Text: Mt. 4.17-7.29 Class Assignment Quiz on Matthew's Gospel
5	Kingdom Authority (cf. Mt. 8.1-9.36)	Focus Text: Mt. 8.1-9.36 Class Assignment
6	Kingdom Mission and Discipleship (cf. Mt. 9.37-20.28)	Finish reading Matthew's Gospel Focus Text: Mt. 9.37-20.28 Fee & Stuart, ch. 8 Class Assignment
7	Luke's Gospel	Burge, Cohick, & Green, ch. 10 Luke's Gospel Focus Text: Lk. 4.16-8.3 Class Assignment Quiz on Luke's Gospel
8	John's Gospel	Burge, Cohick, & Green, ch. 11 John's Gospel Focus Text: Jn. 1.1-18; 2.1-4.54 Class Assignment Quiz on John's Gospel
9	The Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels	Class Assignment Focus Text: Mk. 14.1-16.8

Credit Seeking Student Completion Form

Please turn in this signed form to your teaching assistant on the last day of class.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Assignment	Completion
Reading of Burge, Cohick, & Green	Chapters Completed:
Reading of Mark's Gospel	Percentage Read On Time:
Reading of Matthew's Gospel	Percentage Read On Time:
Reading of Luke's Gospel	Percentage Read On Time:
Reading of John's Gospel	Percentage Read On Time:
Assignments for Class 1	Date Completed:
Assignments for Class 2	Date Completed:
Assignments for Class 3	Date Completed:
Assignments for Class 4	Date Completed:
Assignments for Class 5	Date Completed:
Assignments for Class 6	Date Completed:
Assignments for Class 7	Date Completed:
Assignments for Class 8	Date Completed:
Assignments for Class 9	Date Completed:
Quiz 1: Mark	Date Passed:
Quiz 2: Matthew	Date Passed:
Quiz 3: Luke	Date Passed:
Quiz 4: John	Date Passed:
Focus Texts for each Lecture	Completed On Time (state 'yes' or 'no'):

'I certify that I completed all the reading of the Gospels and passed all the quizzes.'

Signature