Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary ~
NT 613: Exegesis of Mark (Fall, 2016)
Mark A. Jennings

Class Dates: Sept 23-24; Oct 21-22; Dec 2-3
Class Times: 6:00-9:00 p.m. (Friday evenings); 8:30-11:30 a.m. & 12:30-3:30 p.m. (Saturdays)
Last Day for Written Work: Dec 20

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Course Description

This course is an exegetical study of the Greek text of the Gospel of Mark with special attention to its overall narrative structure, language, and theology. A typical session will include translation, discussion, and lecture. Some attention will be given to Mark’s relationship with the other Gospels, but the primary focus of this course will be what Mark was inspired to write. Each student will be expected to employ all the exegetical tools at their disposal to better interpret the original intent of the Gospel. Finally, significant portions of each class will be devoted to discussing what our exegesis means for the church, for discipleship, for obedience of faith, for ministering etc. In other words the exegesis of Mark (or any Biblical text) is never the end in itself, but is the essential preparatory step of listening to the Word of God to hold to and hold forth the truth revealed.

I am teaching under three working assumptions:

1. You desire to know the authorial intent because you hold it to be the inspired, inerrant Word of God.
2. You desire to teach and preach the Word of God in service to the church. (This “service” can take many forms.)
3. You agree to be taught by me and to do the required work necessary to benefit from the teaching.

Objectives

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Articulate the contemporary issues surrounding the interpretation of Mark. (Art 1-2 of GCTS Mission)
3. Translate into accurate and idiomatic English any portion of Mark. (Art 1-2)
4. Deeply examine and consider a particular passage, utilizing all the appropriate exegetical methods. (Art 1-2 of GCTS Mission)

5. Articulate personal conclusions based on sound exegesis regarding the overarching message and purpose of the Gospel whole as well as individual sections. (Art 1-3)

6. Consider the importance of this Gospel to one’s faith and understanding of who Christ is. (Art 3-6 of GCT Mission)

7. Consider how the Gospel of Mark informs our understanding of salvation, the church, our ministry, discipleship, etc. (Art 3-6 of GCTS Mission)

**Texts**

**REQUIRED**

- Greek New Testament (NA27/28 or UBS4/5)

  
  o NOTE: You may substitute Straus with a different exegetical commentary, but only with prior approval from Dr. Jennings.


*Other readings may be assigned

**Requirements**

1. You are to be prepared each session to translate and discuss the Greek “Focus” text assigned for that session. Each student will be reading the Greek, translating, and discussing the material for every class.

2. You are to read the relevant sections in Straus for the “topic” text before class. You are to read any additional assigned reading. You will be required to read all of the Osborne commentary before end of term.

3. You will be expected to read the entire Gospel of Mark in your native language before the start of class.
4. You are expected to read all of Garland’s *A Theology of Mark’s Gospel* and Straus’s commentary by Dec 20. You are strongly encouraged to be reading this text throughout the term.

5. Attendance at every class is expected. Besides, who wants to miss class? How often will you get a chance to meet with your peers (and Dr. J) to drink deeply from the Gospel of Mark?

6. You are to write ONE *Exegesis Paper* of 4500-6000 words (strictly enforced) in which you systematically analyze a complete passage of the Greek text in the Gospel of Mark.
   a. **The exegesis paper may not be written from Mark 14:1-16:8.** Papers from these pages will receive a zero.
   b. **The paper is due by Dec 20.**
   c. Dr. Ciampa provides some excellent guidance regarding writing sound exegesis papers at [http://www.viceregency.com](http://www.viceregency.com).
   d. This paper should employ all relevant exegetical methods developed in “Interpreting the New Testament” (original text, section boundaries, historical background, literary background, grammar, syntax, semantic/discourse analysis, narrative criticism, etc.). Part of your evaluation not only will be how you employed your method, but which methods you chose to use. Please note – not every method will provide the same level of insight to every passage, and some may be hardly useful to a particular passage.
      i. N.B. Only discuss author, audience, synoptic relationships, and textual critical matters if they are relevant to your argument (and each of these may be critically important).
   e. This paper should reflect knowledge of the scholarly secondary literature (commentaries, peer-reviewed articles and chapters, etc.), but the weight of your paper should be directed towards your findings and not simply a restatement of the conclusions of others. Be sure to read your sources carefully and cite his/her opinion, not simply an opinion they are discussing. This is especially true for commentaries where multiple opinions are discussed. Try to cite the best representatives of certain arguments. (For example, if Harry, Hermione, and Ron all cite Severus regarding a certain view – then it makes the most sense for you to follow suit and use Severus as the best representative for that point.)
      i. NOTE: DO NOT PLAGARIZE! ALL ACTS OF PLAGARISM WILL BE FULLY PURSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GCTS POLICIES. NO EXCUSES.
      ii. Limit your use of direct quotations. A good rule of thumb regarding quotations – only use them if the author said something much better, and more completely, then anyone else (including yourself).
   f. Your paper should be free of grammatical and syntax errors. Grammar mistakes overly burden the reading of your paper, and substantial mistakes can make the paper unreadable. Any writing submitted for critique and evaluation should not have more than five grammatical mistakes. Part of your evaluation will include your grammar and syntax. Points will be deducted for grammatical mistakes. A paper that is teeming with grammatical errors will be returned and a rewrite will
be required. In the event that a rewrite is required, there will be an automatic one-
grade penalty. I strongly recommend that you have someone read your work with
an eye towards grammar and syntax.
g. You are to follow SBL format or Chicago Style Format. (Format is taken very
seriously – attention to form often indicates that the paper was taken seriously. A
poorly written and poorly formatted paper will substantively harm a good idea.)
Also – since you will give the full bibliographic information the first time you cite
a text in the footnotes, you do not need to provide a bibliography.
h. The paper is to be double-spaced, 12-pt font, with 1 in. margins. If possible, try
to use a Unicode font.

i. Your paper is to divided into the following elements (strictly enforced):
   i. **Translation**: This should be in accurate and idiomatic English. It should
   be a “functional/dynamic equivalent” translation (in other words, not a
   paraphrase or something overly formal). Consider it to be a translation
   that would be useful for teaching and preaching in a church setting with
   newcomers, new believers, visitors, and old salts of the faith. It should
   reflect and anticipate the various exegetical decisions you made on your
   passage. (NOT PART OF WORD COUNT)
   ii. **Commentary**: This section should include the following:
       1. **Introduction**. No more than one page introducing the passage, the
       relationship of the passage to the broader context, and the major
       issues to be discussed.
       2. **Body**. Use a verse-by-verse approach (some flexibility if the
       versification overly disrupts your argument). Here is where you
       will exhibit your exegesis, interact with representative secondary
       sources, etc.
       3. **Summary**. No more than one or two paragraphs summarizing the
       argument of the passage.
   iii. **Theological Reflection**. One-two pages identifying the main theological
       point and the relevance of the passage to the life of the believer and the
       practice of the church. This section ideally would be the beginnings of a
       message you would deliver on this text (which is why we do exegesis!).
       This is not a summary. I take this section very seriously. Some key
       questions you may choose to consider are:
       a. What does this passage say about Jesus?
       b. What does this passage say about discipleship?
       c. What does this passage speak against?
   iv. **Appendix**. Include here any relevant diagrams. These can take different
       forms (Semantic Structure/Discourse Analysis, Detailed Outlines,
       Sentence Flow/Diagrams, Grammar, Text Critical, etc..) but they should
       naturally coincide with the exegetical and translational decisions. (NOT
       PART OF WORD COUNT)
       1. This is not the place to give me an extended discussion on some
       matter that you wanted to say, but couldn’t make it fit in the
       commentary.
v. **Word Count:** Please give the word count of the paper (including footnotes). Your word count does **not** include: a) Appendices; b) Translation; c) Bibliographic information; and d) Title and subtitle headings. **NOTE:** I stop reading once the word count is reached and your paper will be evaluated accordingly. For example, if you reach the word count during your commentary section – your evaluation will consider the “Theological Reflection” as having been omitted from your paper.

j. **The paper is due by Dec 20, 2016, submitted via Sakai as a .pdf:**
   i. You are to tell the Instructor the chapter from which you will be exegeting by the July class meeting. Once notified, the student is committed. If a student does not choose a chapter, one will be assigned to him/her.

k. **ANY STUDENT WHO DOES NOT SUBMIT AN EXEGESIS PAPER WILL FAIL THE COURSE.**

7. You are to complete a *Translation Notebook* on Mark 14:1-16:8. **It is due by Dec 20, 2016, submitted via Sakai as a .pdf.** The notebook is to take the following format and include the following elements:

   a. Each verse should be its own entry, unless the versification disrupts the natural thought.
   b. Translations: Cut and paste two or three representative translations of verses when (and only when) there are significant differences in the translations. You are encouraged to use the same translations throughout your notebook. Use from a spectrum of formal and functional/dynamic equivalent. Good options include (but are not limited to) NLT, TNIV, ESV, NRSV, NIV, NRSV. Note, you do not need to offer these English translations for every verse, but only those that reflect significant choices.
   c. Provide your own working translation with analysis.
   d. Using footnotes, your analysis should include:
      i. Explain forms that seem unusual or warrant explanation
      ii. Identify and Evaluate the following: relationships that offer differing meanings (types of dative, genitive, etc.); participial and infinitive functions (See Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*); transitional markers (conjunctions, etc.), types of conditional statements, and other relevant grammatical/syntactical observations
      iii. Comment on substantial lexical data: Certain terms may require brief comment regarding meaning.
         1. Offer your conclusions regarding the best sense of the term and the most likely sources for understanding of the term.
         2. (N.B. You do not need to do an exhaustive study, rather identify a few passages or places that you feel best explain the author’s use of the term.)
8. You are to write a Devotional Study on the Passion of Mark (14:1-16:8). It is due by Dec 20, 2016, submitted via Sakai as a .pdf.
   a. Your Devotional study should be comprised of 15 separate entries, and an introduction.
   b. You are to identify a specific
   c. Create brief devotional entries (no more than two pages per entry) for each section.
   d. These entries should include:
      i. Verse that best represents the main idea of the passage
      ii. A brief discussion on the main idea of the passage
      iii. An illustration of the idea
      iv. An exhortation/application built upon the main idea.
   NOTE: you do not need to divide your entry into these specific sub-sections, but the areas must be addressed.
   e. Do not consult any resources (especially other devotionals). This is to be entirely based on your exegesis and your prayerful consideration of the text
   f. Creativity is encouraged (in other words, you are writing a devotional, not a series of “mini-exegesis” papers.)

9. You will provide a “Reading and Translation Report.” It is due is due on Dec 20, 2016, submitted via Sakai as a .pdf.

NOTE: Be sure to be working on the assignments throughout the term. Also – be checking the “Resources” tab on Sakai for aids, including “examples” of the assignments.

**Grade Components**

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<tr>
<td>Exegesis Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Translation Notebook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devotional Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading and Translation Report</td>
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*Final semester letter grades will be assigned as follows:*

- A 93% and up
- A- 90
- B+ 86.6%
- B 83.3%
- B- 80
- C+ 76.6%
- C 73.3%
- C- 70
- D+ 66.6%
- D 63.3%
- D- 60
- F below 60

A Brief Word Regarding Translations for Class
The purpose of this course is not simply to teach Greek grammar but to interpret the New Testament from the Greek text. It is assumed that each student prior to class session will have translated the assigned text. Students will be called upon each class to translate and field questions regarding the assigned text. When we are discussing translations in class – it is to be done with a “hard copy” of the Greek New Testament – not an electronic copy. NO EXCEPTIONS. Failure to translate the assigned text (or at least to make a serious attempt) before class renders you ill prepared to sufficiently contribute. On those occasions where “life happens” and you must choose between doing all the assigned reading or doing your translation work, the latter should always take precedence (with the assumption you will “catch up” on your reading at the first possibility).

In the event that you are unable to translate all of the assigned text for the day, you are to notify the instructor before class of how much you did translate. If you fail to show up for class, it will be assumed that you did zero translation for that day. (If you did do some translation in preparation but were unable to make the class – please email me how much of the text you did translate). Naturally a failure to translate will impact your participation evaluation.

The reward of continually translating occurs in the effort. Therefore do not feel the necessity for a perfectly dynamic translation. This is part of what the class discussion is to accomplish. Also resist the temptation to do your translating work with contemporary Bible or computer software on hand. What good does it do to show that you can “copy well” or move your computer mouse? I encourage you use a lexicon and grammar and find your own translating mind.

**A Brief Note on Intellectual Property Rights**

No audio or video recordings are allowed. Furthermore no publication (audio, video, written) or live transmission of classroom proceedings will be permitted. Any requests for such privileges must be made in writing and must receive written approval from the instructor.

**A Brief Note Regarding Internet Usage**

Please do not access the internet (email, apps, websites, etc.) during class. This can be extremely distracting to all parties – and quite frankly it is unbecoming to do so. Exceptions may be made on occasion.

**Mark in weekend format** – This course is a demanding course, even more so when intensified in a Summer Study program. Each weekend there will be close to 120-150 verses of Greek to be prepared for translation discussion. Please be sure to be doing some translation work every day. Simply translating five-ten verses every day will make this process so much easier for you.

**A Final Note**

It is my prayer that through this study of Mark the Holy Spirit will guide your mind and illumine your heart, that your love will abound more and more in knowledge and deep insight, so that you may be able discern the more excellent matter and may be pure and blameless for the day of
Christ (Phil 1:9-11). Let us come together in full humility, full of joy, crying out in prayer that our Sovereign Almighty might be pleased to reveal Himself to us in the study of His Holy Word.

**Course Schedule** (subject to instructor’s revision at any time)

Translate the “FOCUS text.” Read in English and Commentary for the Entire Range

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<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>Part 1: Course Overview; Part 2: Introduction to Mark; Mark 1:1-11; 21-39</td>
<td>Read all of Mark in your native language; Read Intro materials in Commentary</td>
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<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Mark 2:13–3:6, 20-35; 4:35-41</td>
<td>Read Mark and Commentary</td>
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<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Mark 5:1-20; 7:1-13</td>
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<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Mark 8:1-38</td>
<td>Read Mark and Commentary</td>
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<td>Session 5</td>
<td>Mark 9:1-13; 10:1-12</td>
<td>Read Mark and Commentary</td>
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<td>Session 6</td>
<td>Mark 11:1-33</td>
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<td>Session 7</td>
<td>Mark 13:1-37</td>
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<td>Session 8</td>
<td>Mark 14:22-72</td>
<td>Read Mark and Commentary</td>
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