NT 630: Exegesis of Colossians and Philemon
Syllabus, Fall 2016
Wed, Fri 935-1100
Lecturer: Sean McDonough
Email: smcdonough@gcts.edu

TEXT BOOKS

ASSESSMENT
Greek Competency Quiz 0%
Book Review 20%
Quiz (around class 10) 20%
Exegesis Paper (Dec 20) 60%

Class Participation: No positive grade assigned, but regular failure to prepare the Greek text of Colossians and Philemon 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 Colossians contains a wealth of theological and Christological insights as Paul seeks to build up his brothers and sisters in Colossae. The book of Philemon, meanwhile, opens doors both into Paul’s personal relationships, and into the broader issue of masters and slaves in the ancient world.

We will listen to Paul’s message through a thorough examination of the Greek text of Colossians and Philemon. 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. Because the letters are very brief, I will have high expectations for the quality of your preparation. We will also devote considerable attention to Christological issues, especially in light of the so-called “Colossians hymn” in 1:15-20.

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.

Continued on next page
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 Colossians along with a number of short-answer questions drawn from the lectures and reading.

Book Review

You are asked to provide a four page book review of either MacMullen’s book or Bauckham’s book. (Note that you must read both books, and questions from either book might appear on the quiz.) The review should consist of about three pages of summary and one page of critical response.

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 Colossians or Philemon. 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 papers in an envelope unless absolutely necessary.
SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO REVISION)

Class 1
   Introduction
   Overview

Class 2
   1:1-8: Greetings and Thanksgiving

Class 3
   1:9-14: Overview of the Gospel

Class 4
   1:15-23: Christ at the Center

Class 5
   1:15-23: Christ at the Center

Class 6
   1:15-23: Christ at the Center

Class 7
   1:15-23: Christ at the Center

Class 8
   1:24-2:5: Love’s Labours

Class 9
   1:24-2:5: Love’s Labours

Class 10
   2:6-23: The Colossian Heresy (?)

Class 11
   2:6-23: The Colossian Heresy (?)

Class 12
   3: 1-11: Out with the Old…

Class 13
   3:12-17: …In with the New

Class 14
   3:12-17: …In with the New

Class 16

Class 17

Class 18
4:7-18: Final Greetings

Class 19
*Philemon*

Class 20
*Philemon*