

COS 121—Bible I, Fall 2021

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Introduction to the Class

Course Description: Goals and Objectives

The course introduces biblical interpretation. Attention will be given to the inspiration, formation, the function of the canon, and to the development of a methodology of interpretation consistent with the nature of scripture. Attention will also be given to the Bible as a witness to the life and faith of ancient Israel and earliest Christianity.

Students will begin to—

1. **Articulate the place and meanings of scripture stories** in the life of the Israelites and the early Church, as well that of the life of the present faith community.
2. Understand and begin to **apply historical, literary, theological, and pastoral approaches** to various types of literature in scripture **using Genesis, Hosea, Amos, Mark, Philippians**, and other selected scriptures.
3. Begin to **become comfortable with** using commentaries and work with a method of exegesis and hermeneutics in studying Biblical texts and stories.
4. Become more comfortable with articulating the meanings of faith stories, as well as **connecting those stories** to the present faith community's task in the culture and community of today.

Textbooks

REQUIRED TEXTS—

1. Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth, 3rd Edition*, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 2003; 9780310246046.
2. Hayes, John and Carl Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*, Westminster Press, Louisville, 2007; 9780664227753.
3. Anderson, Bernhard Anderson, *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2006; 9780800635602.
4. *The Interpreters One-Volume Commentary*, Ed. Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Petersen, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2010; 9780687334117.
5. Powell, Mark A., *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary: Revised and Updated*, Harper Collins, New 2011; 9780061469060.
6. Harrelson, Walter J., *The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2003; 9780687278329.

REFERENCE AND RECOMMENDED OPTIONAL RESOURCES—

1. *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary in Twelve Volumes* (Volume 1, 7, and 8 OR *Interpretation--A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*; James Mays, series editor. (Commentaries on *Genesis and Mark*)
2. Goff, Bob. *Everybody Always: Becoming Love in a World of Setbacks and Difficult People*; Nelson Books 2018; 9780718078133

PREPARATION Before Class Times

1. **Assigned readings** are essential and necessary for the student to complete **prior to class**.
 - **Pay particular attention to the scripture readings in each assignment.** Use commentaries to help you understand the historical and cultural setting of the time the scripture was written. **Ask the following questions, always:** What audience was the writer speaking to? What did the writers want to say about God, life, and the faith community? What would this then say to us now, today?
 - **After (AND ONLY AFTER) reading and studying, write out** your answers to questions using Microsoft Word with Times New Roman, with 12-point font size, double spaced. Please **number each page and include your name and class session on each page.** Use the Modern Language Association (MLA) format.
2. **Watch Video segments** will be part of the preparation for each Session. Right click on the video listing and then left click on the “open hyperlink”
3. **Facebook COS 121 Discussion Board.** Each student will be invited by the instructor to join the Facebook COS 121 Discussion Board. Each week the instructor will post a statement or question reflective of an aspect of the readings or video clips. In 100 words or less you are to post your thoughts and engage at least twice with another student’s thoughts/remarks. REMEMBER: this is not a message board nor to be used for personal reasons. It is a “discussion” board for this class.
4. **E-mail the instructor (derenrich@outlook.com) written assignments by designated date for each session.** ALWAYS make copies for your reference at class Zoom sessions.
 - **ALSO, E-mail a copy of your answers only for the questions in Zoom session # 1 also to Mark Jarrett logosian1@gmail.com by September 15th.** As the writing coach, Mark will evaluate your writing and composition and then will provide feedback.

As it pertains to grammar, structure, proper formatting, etc. He will return your paper with comments and recommendations to help you with further written work.

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COS 121 Session Readings AND Assignments
September 25th—November 13th Zoom Sessions.

September 25th Zoom Class # 1, 9-11 a.m.

READINGS

- *The Bible*, Genesis 1-12
- *How to Read the Bible*, Fee and Stuart, **chapters 1-2**
- *Biblical Exegesis*, Hayes and Holladay, **chapters 1-2-3**
- *Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, Bernhard Anderson, **chapters 1-2, and ALL Biblical lessons associated with each of the chapter's readings.**

WATCH the following video clips. (right click on video and then click on “open hyperlink”)

- [Reading Genesis 1 in Context, Part I: Seven Minute Seminary – YouTube](#)
- [Reading Genesis 1 in Context, Part II: Seven Minute Seminary - YouTube](#)

FACEBOOK DISCUSSION BOARD (post each week by Friday noon)

WRITTEN assignments for # 1 Zoom Class from your readings and reflections, write answers to the following questions. 1 1/2 pages in length, (except question 5) double spaced, for each question. Due by e-mail Word Document by September 22nd , Mark Jarrett by 9/15)

- 1)** After reading the Genesis creation accounts go out and ‘engage yourself, involve, and embrace’ creation in some manner and experience. Share your experience; did you learn and/or perceive anything new or different? What and where?
- 2)** Discuss the “truth” of what the Biblical account of creation seeks to convey to us and what the “truth” of the scientific research of our world and cosmos is. Is there a difference we should be cautious of? Be careful here to make sure you have read material and then spent some time **reflecting on this difference!**

- 3) After spending some time with the assigned readings and commentaries with Genesis 1, 2, and 3 give the meaning of Sin. Is Sin different than sins? Make note that the word “sin” does not appear in the stories.
- 4) **Pick one (1) of the following passages to study, reflect on.** Read not only the Bible passages, **but also commentaries and dictionaries.** Then and then only, **in 2 pages** share what the story is about; **why** was this story written; **what** is the story seeking to convey about God, about humankind, about human nature, about our place in God’s creation? **AND then, how and in what ways** do you see this story being “played out” in people’s lives and/or in our communities today? **Give examples, take this question seriously and stretch!**
- Adam and Eve, the fall from paradise
 - Genesis 4, Cain and Abel
 - Genesis 11, Tower of Babel

October 9th Zoom Session # 2, 9-11 a.m.

READINGS

- The Bible: Genesis chapters 12-22, 26-37, 45-49; Hoses, Amos
- Hayes and Holladay: chapter 4,6
- Fee: Chapters 5, 9, 10
- Anderson: chapter 3-4 and all Biblical passages associated with each chapter.

WATCH the following video clips (right click on video and then click on “open hyperlink”

- [What Is a Prophet: Seven Minute Seminary - YouTube](#)
- [Overview: Amos - YouTube](#)
- [Overview: Hosea - YouTube](#)

FACEBOOK DISCUSSION BOARD (every week by Friday noon)

WRITTEN assignments

(1 ½ pages in length, double spaced for each question but number 3. Due by e-mail Word Document to instructor by October 7th

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- 1.** What is the task of exegesis and hermeneutics and why should a pastor be concerned about this in preparing teaching lessons or sermons?
- 2.** Does it make sense in our time to say that “God acts in history?” What meaning does Exodus 3: 7-8 have for oppressed, exploited, or abused people today who can see no intervention on their behalf?
- 3.** There is a widely held view that religion belongs to one sphere of life, the spiritual. the political, social, and economic issues/concerns belong in another. Would Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah you are reading agree with this? Give reasons and scriptures to make your case.
- 4.** Based on your engagement with the required readings and videos, as well as Biblical texts, write **2-3-page paper** about what a prophet’s role was in the Israelite community and whether it is a necessary task for pastors. **Include what surprises** and impressions you now have. In other words, share any key learnings.

October 30th Zoom Class Session # 3 and # 4. 9-11 a.m. & 1-3:00 p.m

READINGS

- The Bible, Gospel of Mark
- Hayes and Holiday, chapters 7-8
- Fee, chapters 7-8
- Anderson, chapters 5-6

WATCH the following video clips. (right click on video and then click on “open hyperlink”)

[Gospel of Mark Chapter 1 - YouTube](#)

[Mark - YouTube](#)

[How Does the New Testament Use the Old Testament: Seven Minute Seminary - YouTube](#)

Facebook Discussion Board (post every week by Friday noon)

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (Due by October 28th)

- 1.** How was the cross a scandal and offensive to those DURING Jesus’ time? How and why is the cross scandalous today, **if at all anymore?** In what ways?

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2. From your readings, why is it important to understand that the entire New Testament was written within the framework of eschatology? What does this have to do with the “Kingdom of God” as understood in Jesus’ day and the early Church? What does it mean for us in the Church today? ***take up to 2-3 pages as needed on this question.**
3. What are the main emphases of Mark throughout his Gospel? In other words what two or three things does he want us to hear clearly and plainly? What does he want us to do? Give examples.
4. Mark ends his Gospel at 16:8. The rest was added by later writers. What is Mark saying? What does he mean to convey to the churches he is writing to? What might that say to us and our churches?

BEGIN to work on this next assignment now. It will be due on November 23rd

This will be your final assignment for the COS 121. (5-6 pages double spaced). Begin working on it before hand and treat it as a compilation of your readings, learnings, class discussions and the importance of commentary exegetical/hermeneutical work.

Choose one (1) selection from the listing below. NOTE: Do exegetical work on understanding the text or story as well as its placement by Mark in the particular “place” he has it. What does the author want to communicate about Jesus, the disciples or audience, Kingdom life? Share your summary AND learnings. THEN move to the hermeneutical “bridging” as discussed in class. Where and how might this text “speak” to situations today?

Mark 1: 9-20 Baptism and Call of Disciples

Mark 4: 1-20 Sowing Seeds

Mark 4:35-5:13 Storm at Sea and Crossing to the Other Side

Mark 6:30-44 Teaching and Feeding

Mark 10: 17-31 Rich Young Ruler

Mark 14: 66-72 Disowning Jesus

November 13th Zoom Class Session # 5. 9-11 a.m.

READINGS:

The Bible, Philippians

Fee, Chapters 3, 4, 13

Anderson. Chapters 7,8

Hayes, Chapters 11, 13

WATCH the following video clips right click on video and then click on “open hyperlink”

[Overview: Philippians - YouTube](#)

[The Importance of the Early Church: Seven Minute Seminary - YouTube](#)

FACEBOOK Discussion Board (post every week by Friday noon)

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (DUE by November 11th)

1. Do you think the breaking down of the “wall of separation” referred to between Jew and Gentile has any significance any implications for our present time for the church in the midst of today’s social changes, conflict, divisiveness? From readings and reflection: How and in what ways?
2. From your readings, what does it mean for the Church to be in mission to the world today? Where does this start and how does it happen? What does it mean for the pastor and church to seek God’s “Shalom” of the community? Is there risk involved? Seek to be specific and give examples.
3. After studying the text and using a commentary for Philippians 2:1-5 what was Paul saying to the church in his time, and what is your informed understanding of this text for your life and your church today?

Final Post-Class Assignment:

Continue to work on your “final” paper on a Mark passage as stated above--

Due by November 23rd in Word Document sent by e-mail.