

New Testament Survey and Early Christian Literature

Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119.105

Shine within our hearts, loving Master, the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our minds that we may comprehend the message of Your Gospel. Instill in us also deep reverence for Your blessed commandments, so that having conquered all sinful desires, we may pursue a spiritual life, thinking and doing all those things that are pleasing to You. For You, Christ our God, are the light of our souls and bodies, and to You we give glory together with Your Father who is without beginning and Your all holy, good, and life giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

-Prayer of St. John Chrysostom

Instructor:

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Course Description:

Survey to acquaint the student with the content, message, and personal application to life of the books of the New Testament.

Course Objectives:

We will learn the content of the New Testament. Students will also be able to identify certain apostolic, early and later patristic fathers and will be familiar with their teachings and writings. Students will be able to connect and identify certain patristic writings and their origin in the New Testament. Students will become familiar with some of the patristic themes and how they relate to early Christian thought and practice.

Required Texts:

Bible, modern translations are permitted, e.g., NRSV, NIV, NASB, TNIV, etc.

Early Christian Fathers by Cyril Richardson, (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1996).

The New Testament: A Thematic Introduction by J. Christiaan Beker, (Minneapolis, MN, Fortress, 1994).

Recommended Reading:

Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers by Christopher A. Hall, (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1998). A basic introduction to the world of the Church Fathers and a critique on modern exegesis.
Apostolic Fathers (Outstanding Christian Thinkers) by Simon Tugwell, (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1990). An excellent introduction

to the Early Apostolic Fathers, no patristic texts are contained in this work, the author however does provide solid interpretation.

An Introduction to the New Testament, by Raymond E. Brown, (New York, NY, Doubleday, 1997). A standard and reliable introduction to the New Testament, and excellent reference guide.

Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First and Second Series

Anti-Nicene Fathers

The Early Christian Fathers, edited and translated by Henry Bettenson, (Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press, 1956).

The Later Christian Fathers, edited and translated by Henry Bettenson, (Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press, 1970).

Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, edited by Thomas C. Oden, (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2002).

The Holy Fire, by Robert Payne, (Crestwood, New York, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980).

Tentative Class Schedule:

Section I

Introduction, opening remarks

How we treat scripture, the world and perspective of the Church Fathers

Read: Hall, pp. 7-55

The Formation of the New Testament Canon

See: Brown, Introduction & Chapter 1

Matthew

Read: Matthew, Beker, pp. 79-88

Mark

Read: Mark, Beker, pp. 71-78

Luke

Read: Luke, Beker, pp. 89-100

Didache

Read: Richardson, pp. 161-179

John

Read: John, Beker, pp. 101-107

Acts

Read: Acts, Beker, pp. 89-100

Romans
Read: Romans, Beker, pp. 34-41

Section II

1 Corinthians
Read: 1 Corinthians, Beker, pp. 11-19

2 Corinthians
Read: 2 Corinthians, Beker, pp. 20-26

Galatians
Read: Galatians, Beker, pp. 27-33

Ephesians
Read: Ephesians, Beker, pp. 55-61

Philippians
Read: Philippians, Hall, pp. 177-200

Colossians
Read: Colossians

1 Thessalonians
Read: 1 Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians
Read: 2 Thessalonians

1 Clement
Read: Richardson, pp.33-73

Section III

1 & 2 Timothy
Read: 1 & 2 Timothy, Beker, pp. 42-54

Titus and Philemon
Read: Titus and Philemon

Hebrews
Read: Hebrews, Beker, pp. 108-117

James
Read: James

1 & 2 Peter
Read: 1 & 2 Peter, Beker, pp. 118-124

1, 2, & 3 John and Jude
Read: 1, 2, & 3 John and Jude

Revelation
Read: Revelation, Beker, pp. 125-132

Apostolic Letters, TBA
Read: Assigned Apostolic Letter(s), TBA

Catch-up, Review