

# COS 321 Bible III: Gospels

## Course Goals - 321 Bible III: Gospels

This course focuses on the content and message of the Gospels, as well as the theological perspectives of the Gospel writers. The practice of exegesis will be emphasized.

Students will be able to:

1. Understand the origin, message, and purpose of each Gospel.
2. Exegete this form of literature.
3. Apply exegesis to preaching, other pastoral responsibilities, and issues of the present day.

## Text-Book List

*Unless otherwise noted, please use most recent edition.*

## Required Texts for 321 - Bible III: Gospels

1. Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018);  
**ISBN** 978-0801099601.
2. Flemming, Dean. *Why Mission? Reframing New Testament Theology*. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2015);  
**ISBN** 978-1426759369.
3. Reddish, Mitchell J. *An Introduction to the Gospels*. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997);  
**ISBN** 978-0687004485.

## Reference Texts

1. Ringe, Sharon. *Luke in Westminster Bible Companion*. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1995);  
**ISBN** 978-0664252595.
2. Smith, Moody. *John in Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999);  
**ISBN** 978-0687058129.
3. Black, C. Clifton. *Mark in Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2011);  
**ISBN** 978-0687058419.
4. Brown, Jeannine K. *Matthew in Teach the Text Commentary*. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015);  
**ISBN** 978-0801092183.

## Recommended / Supplementary Texts

None

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### Advance Assignments or Pre-Class Assignments:

#### **Advance Assignment 1.**

First - Read the Gospel of Luke and then read the chapters on Luke in your textbooks. Use your reading of Luke and the required textbooks to answer the following question. Do **not** give lengthy quotes from your textbooks, but **make sure you cite each one in making your argument.**

**Question:** In a study of the Gospel of Luke, discuss the nature of salvation by focusing on the interactions of Jesus with the 'insiders' (religious leaders, Pharisees, scribes, rich/wealthy, chief priests, Sadducees, etc.) and the 'outsiders' (sinners, prostitutes, women, the diseased, beggars, the poor, tax collectors, widows, demon possessed, etc.). Begin your study by re-reading the following key passages: Luke 1:45-55; 2:1-33; 3:1-6; 4:16-21; 6:20-26; 7:18-23; 8:40-56; 13:31-35, 16:19-31, and 19:1-10.

Written Work: Outline, Criteria and Grading Weight:

#### INTRODUCTION

- State the thesis of the paper. (5 points) (1/2 page)

#### BODY

- What is the nature of the salvation that Jesus is bringing based on the Luke texts cited above? Give specific examples from the text of Luke to flesh out your answer. (2 pages) (30 points)
- How is that salvation related to the way Jesus interacts with insiders and outsiders? Give specific examples from the text of Luke to flesh out your answer. (2 pages) (30 points)

#### CONCLUSION

- What are the implications of this study for ministry in the community and congregation that you serve? (30 points) (1 ½ pages) (15 points)
- Please cite sources properly (1 page) (5 points) (Total 6 pages + bibliography)

This assignment constitutes 25% of the course grade and should be turned in the appropriate assignment tab in Moodle.

#### **Advance Assignment 2.**

First - Read the Gospel of John and then read the chapters on John in your textbooks. Using your Bible, a good concordance, and your textbooks:

Trace the theme of "life" throughout John's Gospel. Begin your study by re-reading the following key passages: 1:1-18; 3:1-21; 4:46-6:71; 10:1-18; 11:1-57; 14:1-7; 20:1-30.

Written Work: Outline, Criteria and Grading Weight

#### INTRODUCTION

- State the thesis of the paper (1 paragraph, 5 points)

#### BODY

- Define "life" in the way John uses the word/concept – [Do not use a dictionary definition] (½ page, 5 points)
- Show how John uses symbolism (or possibly other literary strategies like misunderstanding and double meaning) to relate the theme of "life" to Jesus' work/signs and to his teachings (especially some of the "I am" sayings) (3 ½ pages, 60 points)
- Describe how all this relates to God's mission in and for the world (1 page, 15 points)

#### CONCLUSION

- Summarize the thesis you have argued and how you did so (1 paragraph). Then discuss how this study of John might impact the way you preach from this Gospel in the future (1 page) (15 points)

This assignment constitutes 25% of the course grade and should be turned in the appropriate assignment tab in Moodle.

It probably goes without saying that I expect your written assignments to exhibit correct English grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. and that I will take this into account in assigning a grade to the assignment.

In terms of presentation, a strong essay will be presented in a professional manner with no, or very few, errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and paragraph construction. It will also adhere to word length requirements. On the other hand, a weak essay may contain numerous spelling and punctuation errors, major grammatical errors (e.g., sentence fragments, subject-verb disagreement), and might evidence no real attempt at proofreading. It may adhere to word length requirements but is likely close to the minimum word count or even under it.

## Saint Paul Course of Study School Expectations and Preparation:

The mission of the Course of Study School is to educate and share in the formation of Local Pastors as effective and faithful spiritual leaders of the ministry of the Church, the body of Jesus Christ in the world.

Our agreement with the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in Nashville is that we will provide a year-round experiential and classroom learning process. This process assumes cooperation between the instructors, the students and clergy mentors in the annual conferences.

The Division of Ordained Ministry recommends a guideline of 15-20 pages of written work for each course. That translates into 30 to 40 pages of written work for each module. If a student takes four classes (two modules), that individual will write about 80 pages during the year. Those papers are based on the reading of approximately 4-5 textbooks per class.

To keep our promise of **year-round learning**, and to keep the assignments from accumulating and overwhelming a student, the book list is available for students so that they can **begin reading** as early as possible. We encourage students to put dates on their calendars and plan for reading days, as well as time for writing. You know the demands of certain religious seasons such as Advent, Lent, and Easter. Work around them.

The writing manual approved by the Saint Paul Course of Study School faculty is: **Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7<sup>th</sup> edition**. It is recommended that each student have a good collegiate-size American English dictionary of the student's choice in paperback or hardcover and copyrighted since 1998.

### Related to Paper Structure

- Use Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition. You may find further help at [www.eturabian.com](http://www.eturabian.com).
- Unless otherwise indicated, all papers must be typed, 1" margins on all sides, Arial 11 or Times New Roman 12, double-spaced, with indented paragraphs (no additional line spacing between paragraphs), and page numbers. Cover pages and bibliography are not included in assigned page count.
- Cite any quoted sources with appropriately formatted footnotes (not endnotes or parenthetical notes); list these and other sources within an appropriately formatted bibliography. If you use a scriptural reference, cite the translation you use in a footnote and the actual Bible in the bibliography. Each paper should have a bibliography.
- Do not begin sentences with "and" or "but." Do not use contractions. Do not include parenthetical commentary in your papers.
- Use inclusive language when referring to God and/or humankind.
- Use appropriate formatting for page numbering, book titles, etc.
- Double-check spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence fragments, tense agreement, etc.

### **Related to Content**

- Read the assigned books thoroughly.
- Resist the temptation to write a book report! Instead, focus your writing on what the author(s) have to say about the assigned topic(s), integrating your own thoughts about the topic(s).

### Related to Critical Thinking

- Read the assigned books thoroughly, making notes of what resonates within you and what brings up resistance in you.
- Are there other books or resources that would be appropriate? Bring them into the conversation.
- Practice being in dialogue with all the authors and their material. Who would say what? How would you and the other writers respond? This practice dialogue will not be included in your papers, but it will help you to move into critical reflection.
- If you strongly agree or disagree with an author's point of view, offer your own affirmation or disagreement, supporting your view with additional resources.
- Watch for unsupported "leaps" made by a writer. What, in your opinion, is missing? Use additional resources to fill in the gaps.

### Related to Timeliness

- Submit all your assignments on time.

**In the event of an emergency situation**, a student may request an **extension** from the Director and assigned faculty to the due date for advance assignments. This request may be made via email, and if granted, may extend to a *three-week maximum*. A student may only receive ***two extensions during their tenure as a Saint Paul*** Course of Study student – so use them wisely. If assignments are not completed, the policies of the COS are such that the student may be asked postpone participation in a particular session of COS until that individual can complete all the work.

Learning can be fun! Consider your reading as a dialogue with authors – some will be more interesting than others. All will have something to teach us. Share the learning process with friends or colleagues or interested members of your congregations.

### **Book List:**

Each course has Assigned:

**Required Texts.** Students are required to read them, use them in their assignments and are accountable in the classroom for any discussion or presentation of materials.

**Reference Texts** (when applicable) are also required; assignments assure the use of the recommended books; they are not classroom texts. Assigned texts and recommended books help the student build their own library.

**Recommended (Supplementary) Texts** (when applicable) are valuable, but optional texts if a student wants to pursue an area of ministry.

Students may acquire the books in a variety of ways: Order from Cokesbury.com; order from another vendor such as Amazon etc.; purchase a used book; borrow from a colleague; Kindle or e-book.

### **Instructions for sending assignments to COS office at Saint Paul School of Theology:**

Course of Study Students are to upload their papers through Moodle. **You will need to set up a Moodle account in order to submit your assignments.** If you need assistance in setting up your Moodle account, please contact [cos@spst.edu](mailto:cos@spst.edu) for informational handouts. **Additional questions on Moodle can be directed to our IT help desk at [helpdesk@spst.edu](mailto:helpdesk@spst.edu) (hours: M – F 8:00am – 5:00pm).**