

COS 521 - Bible V: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

Apr-May 2023

Mark Kim
mark.kim@cst.edu

This course focuses on the contents and context of the Book of Acts, the Epistles, and the Book of Revelation, and especially on the theological emphases of their writers. Students will learn to articulate a theology of Scripture.

Student Learning Outcomes

Successful students will be able to:

1. Distinguish these genres of biblical literature and understand the major theological themes in these writings.
2. Faithfully exegete these forms of biblical literature.
3. Apply exegesis to preaching, other pastoral responsibilities, and issues of the present day.
4. Articulate the unity and authority of Scripture as a whole.

Textbooks:

Bible (NRSV, NIV, NASB, or ESV translation)
Mark Allen Powell, *Introducing the New Testament*. [From COS 321]
Warren Carter and Amy-Jill Levine, *The New Testament: Methods and Meanings*.

Supplementary Textbooks:

Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Meaning and Message of Jesus Christ*. [From COS 321]
Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*.

Suggested Books and Commentaries:

Jouette Bassler, *Navigating Paul*.
Eds. Joel Green, Lee Martin McDonald, *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*
Anchor Yale Bible commentary series

Three Pre-class Assignments: Due Fri, April 21, 2023.

Please email both written assignments to Mark Kim at mark.kim@cst.edu.

Assignment One: Reading Acts and the Epistles

Please read Acts through Revelation in the New Testament in one of the following translations listed above.

Assignment Two: The Reasons for the Epistles

In approximately four double-spaced pages, please describe what our introductory textbooks (Powell, Carter & Levine) and/or our supplementary textbook (Holladay) has to say about the reasons that Romans, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, and Revelation were written.

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You may write more if you wish—and include more epistles—but four pages are sufficient. Please cite NT passages to illustrate your points. For example, John the Seer tells us in Rev 1:1 that the matters described were given "to show his servants what must soon take place." There are other reasons for writing, and Powell, Holladay, and Carter & Levine will help you discover them. The paper should be submitted as a Word document in Times New Roman font, 12 pt., with 1 inch margins all around, correct in grammar, spelling and syntax.

Assignment Three: The Authors

Please write an account in four pages of what our textbooks (same group of texts as above) tell us about Paul and the authors of Revelation, Hebrews, and 1 John. Again, you may write more if you wish—and you may include more authors of more epistles—but four double-spaced pages are sufficient. Who were they? When and where did they write? The paper must be in a similar format as the previous paper.

The Course

The course will engage the main issues found in Acts, the Epistles, and the book of Revelation. It will consist of 8 face-to-face class sessions by Zoom videoconference held over four weeks, 2 hours each. The Zoom link will be sent shortly before the sessions begin.

Dates: Apr 25-May 18, Tuesdays and Thursdays only (8 sessions total)

Time: 5-7pm PST

Forums:

Forums are a way for students to actively engage with New Testament scholarship and one another. Students will be assigned weekly articles pertinent to the material covered in class. Each student will read the article and write a reflection to be shared with the rest of the class. Every other student will then post a response(s) to the student's reflection. More instructions about forums will be provided at the beginning of the course.

Exegesis Papers:

"Exegesis" is a transliterated Greek word that means "explanation." One exegetes, that is explains, the meaning of a Biblical text in its historical context, using all the tools available to the scholar: language, history, archeology, ancient literature, and especially other Biblical texts. These help us to understand what the author meant and intended, including helping to evaluate the author's assumptions and biases. This is the historical-critical method used by all competent scholars. Learning to do exegesis is one of the main purposes of this course. Do not worry if you are new to exegesis. We will work on it together in class.

Exegesis Papers: Each student will hand in four short papers that exegete the Bible passages indicated. These should be written so that they may serve, it is hoped, as the basis for sermons and/or Bible studies. The papers are to address the issues listed and are due on the days assigned. They are to be submitted as Word documents in Times New Roman font, 12 pt., with 1 inch margins all around, correct in grammar, spelling and syntax, and approximately 3-4 double-spaced pages in length.

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Due Mon, May 1 - Exegesis Paper #1: Acts 1:6-8 Jesus Commissions the Disciples

Please include discussion of:

Acts 2:1-41 The Holy Spirit's arrival at Pentecost and Peter's sermon.

Acts 8:4-17 Philip, Peter, and John in Samaria.

Acts 9:1-19 The conversion and calling of Paul.

Acts 29 [to be explained in class]

Due Mon, May 8 - Exegesis Paper #2: Rom 8:1-5 The Mind set on the Spirit.

Please include discussion of:

Rom 6:1-14 Dead to sin but alive to God.

Rom 12:1-2 The Renewing of your mind.

Rom 14:17 The Kingdom of God.

Due Mon, May 15 - Exegesis Paper #3: Heb 1:3 Christ, the Radiance of God's Glory

Please include discussion of:

Heb 2:17 The Faithful High Priest.

Heb 5:8 He learned Obedience.

Heb 7:27 Christ the Offering.

Due Mon, May 22 - Exegesis Paper #4: Rev 7:9-17 The Great Multitude in Heaven

Please include discussion of:

Rev 14:14-19 The Harvest and the Grapes of Wrath.

Rev 16:15 See, I am coming like a thief!

Rev 19:1-9 The Marriage supper of the Lamb.

Grading:

The final grade will be determined as follows:

Class Participation:	20%
2 Pre-class Written Assignments:	20%
4 Weekly Forum Posts and Responses:	20%
4 Exegesis Papers:	40%

Plagiarism

All students are responsible for their own work, and must complete every assignment in their own words, with all scholarly sources and quotations properly cited. The Course of Study takes plagiarism seriously. All cases of plagiarism will be reported to the director, and will result in consequences to a student's grade. We do not want any of these things for our students so we are happy to answer questions and to help students learn to recognize and avoid plagiarism in their work.