



Grace Communion Seminary

TH06 Pauline Theology

Short Syllabus

Instructor: Michael Morrison, PhD

Course Description: Pauline Theology

This course examines Paul's letters to learn about the theological insights that were involved in Paul's written responses to the churches' various circumstances. Lectures will discuss theological topics that span all of Paul's letters; students will examine a topic in one or more letters. **Prerequisite:** Epistles of Paul.

Required Textbooks

Gorman, Michael J. *Reading Paul*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2008. ISBN: 978-1556351952. 196 pages. List price \$22.

Marshall, I. Howard. *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004. 978-0830827954. 765 pages. List price \$45, but often sold for less than \$30.

Wright, N.T. *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005. 174 pages. ISBN: 978-0800663575. List price 18.00.

Optional Resources (if you want more reading, pick one or two)

Bruce, F. F. *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977, 2000. A bit old, but still useful.

Dunn, James D. G. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998, 2006. A heavyweight book by an influential advocate of the "new perspective."

Fee, Gordon D. *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007.

Hawthorne, Gerald F., Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid. *Dictionary of*

- Paul and His Letters*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993.
- Horrell, David G. *Introduction to the Study of Paul*. New York: T & T Clark, 2006.
- Westerholm, Stephen. *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The "Lutheran" Paul and His Critics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. A response to the "new perspective" on Paul's view of Judaism and the law.
- Wright, N.T. *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009. A proposal for a sweeping reassessment of a key term in Paul's soteriology.
- . *What Saint Paul Really Said*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

Student Learning Outcomes for Pauline Theology

1. Learn the basic contours of Paul's theology, which he used as the basis for his written responses to circumstances as they arose in various congregations. This will be the focus of the lectures, and will form one component of the final exam.
2. Become informed about the primary theological controversies that dominate the academic study of Paul's letters. This will be evaluated by the final exam.
3. Read scholarly material with discernment, to weigh arguments as to whether they are persuasive, inadequate, or whether they merit further investigation. This will be reflected in the papers and online comments written by the students.
4. Research a topic in one or more passages in Paul's letters, come to conclusions, and support those conclusions with reasons based in the text of Paul's letters. This will be the focus of the student papers.
5. Excerpts from some student papers may be posted on the website (without the student's name). Using an online forum, students will critique the work of other scholars and other students tactfully, and with supporting evidence. The instructor will participate in the online discussion and provide additional guidance.

Course Requirements

1. **Reading:** Read the textbooks and the lectures. Materials on the website in the first seven weeks of the course will be written by the instructor. There will be a short open-book essay exam about the lectures and books at the end of the course; it counts for 20 percent of the final grade.
2. **Writing:** Each student will research a topic relevant to Paul's theology, write an 8-10 page paper (Times Roman 12, 1 inch margins, double spaced). Since the paper is due by week 8, research for these papers should begin immediately! Students should select their topic and request some resources by interlibrary loan *before the second lecture*. The instructor may edit some of the papers, make them anonymous, and post excerpts for other students to read and discuss. 50 percent of the grade.
3. **Analyzing:** Excerpts of papers, either from this class or from materials published elsewhere, will be posted online for discussion. Students will comment on these excerpts. These comments may be positive ("that point was supported well") or negative ("the conclusion seems to be based on something other than the text we are discussing"), and additional comments and interaction may be added to the discussion.
4. **Participation:** Student interaction is an essential part of this course, and part of the value of this course will come from student research and student analysis. Participation is essential, and *students who get behind in their work, or take a vacation in the last three weeks, are depriving the others*. Part of the grade will be based on a student's ability to contribute positively to a learning community, to encourage rather than discourage further studies. 30 percent of the grade.

Weekly Topics and Assignments¹

Week	Lecture topics	Reading assignments ²
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is biblical theology? b. The challenge of discerning general theology from letters addressed to particular situations c. Instructions for the class papers d. The “new perspective on Paul” 	Marshall, 17-47 Gorman, 1-21 Wright, 3-20
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Law and the covenants b. Christology 	Marshall, 209-235 Wright, 21-58
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Soteriology: the Atonement b. Our union with Christ c. Our union with his sufferings 	Gorman, 22-90
4	Ethics: Why be good?	Gorman, 91-166
5	Eschatology: individual and cosmic	Gorman, 167-188 Wright, 108-153
6	Ecclesiology: Paul’s teachings about the church, its organization, its functions, and the sacraments	Wright, 59-107, 154-174
7	Pneumatology: Paul’s teachings about the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts and spiritual growth	Marshall, 236-304
8	Online discussion: God, and “implicit trinitarianism”	Marshall, 305-365
9	Online discussion: humanity and sin	Marshall, 366-419
10	Online discussion: saved from what, by what, and for what?	Marshall, 420-468
11	Final exam – due in two weeks	

¹ The schedule and topics may be revised at the discretion of the instructor.

² Total reading is about 660 pages, or 66 per week.