

STMA 593-02  
Deutero-Pauline Epistles  
Fall 2005  
School of Theology and Ministry  
Seattle University

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## SYLLABUS

**NB:** This syllabus is liable to amendment as the class moves forward. Make certain to stay current by coming to class, talking to classmates, and asking questions.

**Description:** An examination of the Biblical writings whose claim to Pauline authorship has been widely disputed: why the dispute? What relationship do they have with the undisputed letters? What do they have to offer today?

**Goals:** From the course, each student is to:

1. Acquire a working grasp of the particular theological issues, general literary layout, and the historical and social contexts of the Deutero-Pauline epistles as they surface in the content of those letters, so that s/he is able to differentiate between these letters in the headline exercise.
2. Be able to review issues surrounding pseudepigraphy, so as to present reasoned and supported judgment about authorship of at least one letter in the context of paper.
3. Engage at least two authors on from the perspectives of post-modernism and post-colonialism as they apply to Deutero-Pauline writings, so as to include discussion within the paper.
4. Grasp how these readings are used in lectionaries, so as to discuss the use of at least one epistle in lectionary.

**Required readings:** The books below are required for this course. There will be other readings assigned from time to time at the discretion of the instructor.

**ALWAYS BRING A BIBLE TO CLASS (NRSV).** You also will need to use a New Testament introductory text.

Adam, A. K. M., ed	Handbook of Post-Modern Biblical Interpretation	Chalice
Adam, A. K. M., ed	Post-Modern Interpretations of the Bible	Chalice
Brown, Raymond E.	The Church the Disciples Left Behind	Paulist

Donelson, Lewis R.	Colossians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus	Westminster/John Knox
Sugirtharajah, R. S.	Post-Colonial Reconfigurations: An Alternative Way of Reading the Bible	Chalice

Wright, N. T.	Paul for Everyone: the Pastoral Letters	Westminster/John Knox
Wright, N. T.	Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters	Westminster/John Knox

**Recommended:**

Harding, Mark	What Are They Saying about the Pastoral Epistles?	Paulist
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Martin, Ralph P.	Ephesians, Colossian, and Philemon	Westminster/John Knox
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**Assignments and evaluation**

A. The instructor will evaluate students on the basis of their demonstration of acquisition of the objectives cited above through the following activities:

1. Attendance and participation: Attendance in a once-a-week course is particularly important; each student is expected to be present for every class. Please let the instructor know in writing if you anticipate being absent on a given day. Students are responsible for making arrangements with one another for the work they miss. Attendance and participation are not computed in the grade, except to the benefit of the student in cases of outstanding participation.
2. Headline exercise: Each student will come up with a headline or title for each of the Deutero-Pauline epistles. These headlines or titles

should encapsulate the main ideas, context, and concerns of each letter clearly enough so that others in the class will be able to recognize the letters from the headlines. **DO NOT SHARE YOUR HEADLINES WITH OTHERS** because we will be using them in an exercise in class. For each headline write a commentary of three to five sentences explaining your choices in the headline and indicating what you had to leave out. Word limit for the headlines: 10 words. Entire assignment should be no longer than two pages. **It is due on 6 October.**

3. Lectionary exercise: Using a Eucharistic (Sunday) lectionary chosen by the student, each class member will write a short paper discussing how at least one of the Deutero-Pauline letters is handled in the lectionary. The paper will also offer either a post-colonial or post-modern examination of this usage. **It is due on 3 November.**
4. Final paper: After choosing a theme, word, or term that is common to both, each student will write a short paper comparing the use of that theme, word, or term in at least one of the undisputed Pauline letters and one of the Deutero-Pauline letters. **It is due on 1 December.**

B. Policy regarding due dates of assignments and of the returning of assignments: The instructor is not bound to accept any work late without arrangements made prior to the date on which the assignment in question is due.

### Guidelines for Reading NT Letters

Without the narrative appeal of the gospels, sometimes the NT letters seem dry and difficult to engage. The guidelines here are designed to give you specific information to track so that you can be an active participant this encounter. Pretend that reading this letter is like overhearing a conversation in a restaurant. You don't have all the details or the background, but you can try to construct the larger picture from what you hear. You may be off-base, but you are at least an active part of the interaction.

This method calls for multiple readings of the letters. However, as you become more proficient, you will be able to combine some of the readings.

1. The first reading is to be done quickly. Pay attention to what strikes you in any way, passages that are familiar, ideas that don't make sense, favorite lines, anomalies, etc. You are trying to find out what you are bringing to the text. What you are bringing to it may well affect what you see in it, so you need to take note of your first reactions.
2. The next reading is a literary one. Here you look first of all for logical divisions in the text: where there is a change of subject, a change of paragraph, a movement from instructions to greetings, etc. You want to end up with a very basic outline of the letter. Also watch for distinctive vocabulary, for repeated words or phrases, and for figures of speech.
3. The third reading is a social and historical one. You are looking for clues about the circumstances that led to this letter? What is the relationship between the sender and the recipients? What are the issues facing this community? What is their social status? Are they Gentile or Jewish in background?
4. The fourth reading is the theological one. You identify the terms that have theological impact to see how they are being used. Always ask if the writer is using these terms in the same way in which we understand them. Examine your own thinking about the passage. How does it sit with you given your concerns?
5. After you have finished these readings then write up a brief summary of them, no more than three sentences for each

reading. Now when you read textbooks and other works on the letter, you have your own work to bounce off them.

CHART FOR READING NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS

Verses	1 <sup>st</sup> reading: 1 <sup>st</sup> impressions	2 <sup>nd</sup> reading: literary details and structure	3 <sup>d</sup> reading: historical rhetorical and social context	4 <sup>th</sup> reading: distinctive theological message

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE LECTIONARY PAPER**

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how certain Deutero–Pauline texts are treated in the Sunday lectionary and what that might say about the theological perspective of the denomination concerned. This paper has two sections. The first is an analysis of the passages used, of those left out, and of the editing of the text. You may include more than one letter; you also may look at special feasts and fasts, if your lectionary includes them. If you come from a church that does not use a lectionary, get some help from your friends; or come see me.

The second part of the paper is to use one of the texts for the class on either post–modernism or post–colonialism and use it to interpret the patterns of usage in the lectionary. Does the pattern, for instance, betray a certain ideological bias? What is that bias? How does the reader interact with it?

The paper should be no more than five pages, double spaced, 10–12 point type. It is due on 3 November.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE FINAL PAPER**

The point of this assignment is to see how Pauline themes re–emerge in various forms in the Deutero–Pauline epistles. Choose a word, theme, or term that appears prominently in at least one Pauline letter and in at least one Deutero–Pauline letter. Look up its usages. Explain the patterns of meaning, how they are consistent, how they vary. Then explain what your analysis suggests about authorship of the Deutero–Pauline letter and how the themes from Paul are reworked in the context of the Deutero–Pauline letter.

The paper should be no more than five pages, double spaced, 10–12 point type. It is due on 1 December.

### CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	In class	Homework for next class
1. 22 September	Introduction to class; to syllabus What is pseudepigraphy?	Read all five letters; Brown, beginning to 30; Donelson, 182–189; <i>Handbook</i> , beginning through 13, plus one other article; <i>Interpretations</i> , 165–76; Start Sugirtharajah, 1–113.
2. 29 September	The churches the apostles left behind: Issues of the second generation. Why post-modernism? Why post-colonialism?	Work on headline exercise. Read NT introduction on all 5 letters; Sugirtharajah, 1–113.
3. 6 October	<b>Headline exercise due</b>	Close reading of Colossians and Ephesians. Read Donelson, 1–56; Wright, <i>Prison</i> , 141–196.
4. 13 October	Colossians	Close reading of Colossians and Ephesians. Read Donelson, 59–114; Wright, <i>Prison</i> , 3–80.
5. 20 October	Ephesians	Close reading of 1 Timothy. Read Donelson, 117–150; Wright, <i>Pastoral</i> , 3–80.
6. 27 October	1 Timothy	Work on lectionary paper.
7. 3 November	<b>Lectionary paper due</b>	Close reading of 2 Timothy. Read Donelson 151–69; Wright, <i>Pastoral</i> , 83–135.
8. 10 November	2 Timothy	Close reading of Titus. Read Donelson, 170–181; Wright <i>Pastoral</i> , 139–165.
9. 17 November	Titus, all three Pastoral epistles	Work on final paper
10. 1 December	<b>Final paper due</b>	