

STMA-538-01: LETTERS OF PAUL

(NOTE: syllabus subject to change)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this advance course we will examine the letters of the apostle Paul as both, Sacred Scripture and cultural texts which are literary, rhetorical and ideological products that emerged from the particular historical reality of the Roman Empire of the 1st century CE.

In order to explore and engage some of the several dimensions of these texts, we will employ perspectives such as postcolonial studies, border theory, deconstruction, feminist, ideological and literary criticism, as well as some findings from historical-critical methods.

At a first level, our examination will concentrate on the biblical text itself, using our experience as lens to understand the formation of the Christian identity within these letters. At a second level, we will analyze the text with the assistance of scholarly interpretations, looking to identify their methodological approaches, their reading strategies, the role of the authors' social location, as well as the significance of their ideological agendas for interpreting Paul's letters. At a third and final level, you will be encouraged to develop your own reading strategy, using elements from other approaches, or creating your own in order to appropriate the message of the letters for today's world.

Ultimately, the purpose of this course is to familiarize you with some of the academic interpretive approaches, and to enable you to become critical and informed readers of diverse "cultural texts," such as the Pauline letters.

The class will have three main components: lecture, group discussion, and group exegetical work.

OBJECTIVES

1. Equip students with the necessary tools to understand the Pauline letters in their own cultural and historical context.
2. Enable students to become critical and informed readers of cultural "texts," fully aware of their social locations and they ways they inform their interpretations.
3. Practice a variety of interpretive models to help students appreciate the richness of meaning in the biblical text when diversity and inclusion are considered.
4. Explore the ramifications of the Pauline letters for ministry.

REQUIREMENTS

1. PARTICIPATION IN CLASS (50%):

a. Careful reading of assigned materials: You are expected to complete the assigned readings and be prepared to share your views during appropriate time in class.

b. Active participation in group-discussions: In the interest of promoting a dynamic discussion please, come prepared to share at least two ideas, views, reactions, responses, insights, opinions or comments that emerged while reading the material for class.

c. Committed attendance to class: Your active presence is vital for the group's learning process. If you cannot come to class, for whatever reason, please notify the instructor ahead of time.

d. A 30-minute team presentation of your assigned letter(s): At the beginning of each class, starting on October 4, each team will present a contextual reading of their teams' letters. Detailed instructions for this presentation will be given in class.

2. WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (50%): Two academic papers of 8 pages each, the first will be due on November 2nd; the second will be due on December 7th. Detailed instructions for these written assignments will be given in class.

M.Div. Learning Outcomes:

- Ability to reflect theologically on the central themes of Christian Tradition.
- Ability to read scriptural texts critically.
- Awareness of their own social location/ assumptions/ hermeneutics as they engage the text in their own lives, their communities, and the larger world.
- Ability to use biblical tools and resources as a way to inform their own exegesis for the purpose of doing ministry.

- Ability to draw critically and constructively on Christian moral traditions to lead toward a more just and sustainable world.
- Ability to be a responsive, discerning listener who can enter another's worldview.

Academic Honesty: The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the Academic Policy concerning Academic Honesty as published in the Seattle University Student Handbook. (see the Seattle University website).

Students with disabilities: If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an "invisible disability" such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/ or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

The Bible

1. The Letters of Paul: Conversations in Context (4th edition)
by Calvin J. Roetzel

2. Paul Among Jews and Gentile
by Krister Stendahl

3. Final Account: Paul's Letter to the Romans
by Krister Stendahl and Jaroslav Pelikan

4. Paul and the Roman Imperial Order
by Richard A. Horsley

5. A selection of Electronic Handouts

COURSE CALENDAR – STMA-538-01: LETTERS OF PAUL

S #	Presentations & papers	Topics for discussion and assigned readings:
1	Sep. 28	<p>Introduction: syllabus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • texts: perceptions and approaches • readers: history and identity • meaning: ideology and the text-reader tension • Biblical Criticism today: hermeneutical paradigms • Class dynamics
2	Oct. 5	<p>Paul and his World</p> <p>Read: Roetzel pp. 1-50; Horsley pp. 1-23</p>
3	Oct. 12	<p>Anatomy of the Letters and Traditions behind them: 1 Thessalonians</p> <p>Read: 1 Thessalonians; Roetzel pp. 51-83; Horsley pp. 47-66, 103-123; E-Handout</p>
4	Oct. 19 1 Thess. team	<p>The Corinthian Correspondence</p> <p>Read: 1 & 2 Corinthians; Roetzel pp. 83-96; Horsley pp. 67-101; E-Handout</p>
5	Oct. 26 1 & 2 Cor. teams	<p>Galatians</p> <p>Read: Galatians; Roetzel pp. 96-103; E-Handout</p>
6	Nov. 2 Galatians team 1 st Paper	<p>Romans</p> <p>Read: Romans; Roetzel pp. 103-113; Stendahl's Final Account pp. 1-76; Horsley pp. 25-46</p>
7	Nov. 9 Romans team	<p>Philippians & Philemon</p> <p>Read: Philippians & Philemon; Roetzel pp. 113-132; Horsley pp. 125-153; E-Handout</p>
8	Nov. 16 Philip & Phile teams	<p>First Interpreters of Paul: Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians</p> <p>Read: Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians; Roetzel 133-152; E-Handout</p>
9	Nov. 23 C-E-2T team	<p>First Interpreters of Paul continues: The Pastorals</p> <p>Read: Pastorals; Roetzel 153-160; Horsley pp. 155-183; E-Handout</p>
10	Nov. 30 Pastorals team	<p>Conclusion: a second look at Paul</p> <p>Read: Roetzel pp. 161-190; Stendahl's Paul among Jews/Gentiles pp. 1-96</p>
	Dec 7	2nd paper