

WESTERN SEMINARY - SACRAMENTO

Expositing Pauline Soteriological Literature: Romans.

BLS 562VM: Two credit hours.

Professor: David Nystrom, Ph.D.

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Teaching assistant: *[to be announced]*

Syllabus – Summer 2009 [Preliminary Draft, 4/3/09]

Session C: May 4 – Aug 15

COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday – Friday, June 16–19, 9 am–4:30 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

BLS562VM--Expositing Pauline Soteriological Literature: Romans. How to be justified and how to experience spiritual growth are the foundational concerns of Christianity. Expositing the English text of Romans, you will trace the argument of the author and do an intensive study of the great themes of salvation and sanctification, and other matters such as the significance of the Law and the covenants for the believer. You will also study the authorship, date, structure, and place of origin of the epistle. 2 hours.

This year's emphasis will be upon "the Rome of the book of Romans." That is, it will highlight Paul's effort to refocus the teaching of Jesus in such a way that it successfully penetrated the world of the Roman empire. This course will investigate the fashion in which Paul's key soteriological themes in Romans, along with Paul's Christology and "ecclesiology of the alternate community," addressed the culture of the empire.

COURSE CONTRIBUTION TO STATED DEGREE OUTCOMES

The objectives of this course are tied directly to the desired outcomes constructed specifically for the four seminary degrees for which this course is a requirement. Below is an excerpt of the degree outcomes to which this course relates:

- 1) Be a person whose Christ-like character is worthy of being emulated, and whose integrity imparts credibility to his/her ministry
 - a) reflects biblical balance and skill in life management, appropriately fulfilling the roles and responsibilities mandated by God (MFM 500; SFS 501, 502; overarching)

- 2) Know the major themes and developments of God's redemptive activity revealed in Scripture
 - a) understands the basic framework of biblical history (BLS 501-3)
 - b) understands the major contribution of each book to the canon (BLS 501-3)
 - c) understands the basic argument of each book and its relevance for contemporary ministry (BLS 501-3)

- 3) Be able to think biblically and critically so that various truth claims can be effectively evaluated
 - a) has embraced a biblical world view (THS 501-3 overarching)
 - b) able to apply the basic elements of critical analysis and sound reasoning (MFM 500; overarching)
 - c) sensitive to cultural variations in styles of thinking (overarching)
 - d) reflects an appropriately humble and charitable spirit in applying biblical criteria for truth (overarching)

- 4) Be able to communicate God's truth clearly, accurately, and convincingly
 - a) able to communicate one's thoughts effectively in writing (MFM 500; overarching)

- 5) Be a true life-long learner, building upon his/her seminary training
 - a) committed to pursuing growth and learning in key areas of need (MFM 500; overarching)
 - b) able to access and manage information (including that available via computer/on-line resources) so that it is readily available when needed (overarching)

COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES

Interpretation of the Scriptures must first be appropriate to the character, composition, and context of the particular book. This foundational effort to "rightly handle the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15) calls for the application of solid interpretation skills to identify what is central and particular to the New Testament letters, and for an appreciation of "the major themes and developments" within biblical history to understand the 'big picture' of God's redemptive program. Toward that end this course is part of a curriculum that surveys the content of the entire canon, intends to lead students to a basic cognitive grasp of the literature, to a more positive emotional response to the text and its Author, and to an ever more faithful application of its teachings.

TEXTBOOKS

As Western Sacramento is an Amazon Associate, please support your seminary by using the following link for all your Amazon purchases: click [here](#).

Required

- Dunn, James D. G. (1998). *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Eerdmans. ISBN 0802844235.
 - Hawthorne, Gerald; Martin, Ralph P. and Reid, Daniel G. (1993). *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. InterVarsity Press. ISBN 0830817786.
- [Romans: Encountering the Gospel's Power \(John Stott Bible Studies\)](#) by John Stott (Paperback - Jul 2008). InterVarsity Press. ISBN 0830821651

Recommended

- Guthrie, Donald. (1990). *New Testament Introduction* (rev. ed.) InterVarsity Press. ISBN 0830814027.
- Men Made New: An Exposition of Romans 5-8* (Paperback) by [John R. W. Stott](#). Baker Book House (July 1984). ISBN 0801082447.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading

A general familiarity with the Dunn book prior to class is expected.

Assignments

Reading Report: A 5 page reflection paper on the Dunn text is required in this course, highlighting the most valuable contributions of the book to your understanding of Paul. **This paper is due on the email server of Janet Gluck in the Western Seminary Sacramento office by midnight at the end of the first class session, Tuesday June 16: JGluck@WesternSeminary.edu. DO NOT turn in to the class sessions.**

Expositional Paper: One 5-7 page paper leading to familiarity with Paul's soteriology in Romans is required for this course. The student may choose ONE of the following topics on which to write:

- The main points within, and the progressive development of, Paul's presentation on spiritual growth in Romans 5-8. Include a discussion of this section's relationship to the prior chapters.
- The relationships Paul develops between "Law," "flesh," and "Spirit" in the book of Romans.

This paper is due on the email server of Janet Gluck in the Western Seminary Sacramento office by midnight at the end of the first class session, Tuesday June 16: JGluck@WesternSeminary.edu. DO NOT turn in to the class sessions.

Biblical Theology Paper: One major research paper is required for this course on a topic germane to the course and approved by the instructor. The paper should consult and make use of several scholarly sources, balancing these with informed readings of the apposite Biblical text(s).

This paper should be ten to fifteen pages in length. **This paper is due on the professor's email server by 5pm on the last day of the term, Saturday, Aug 15.**

For all assignments, original interaction with the Biblical text is expected and arguments should be supported by the text. It is important to keep in mind that the instructor not only values interaction with secondary sources, but what the student thinks based upon and supported by the text. The student's task is to investigate, describe, and evaluate what the Scripture teaches about the chosen subject.

STANDARDS FOR WRITTEN WORK (MLA)

Papers must be written to a near-thesis standard. That is, minimum format standards must be met, as defined below. English grammar, idiom, and spelling must be up to graduate level. Always include a strong introduction paragraph (declare what you intend to show the reader) and conclusion paragraph. Qualities valued include clarity, succinctness, and precision.

This course employs the MLA (Modern Language Association) style guide. The basic elements are:

- Double-spacing, except for block quotes
- Single space block quotes
- Page numbers appear at the upper right on every text page
- Use footnotes rather than paragraph citations
- Footnotes follow a standard format.

Helpful web sites on MLA style include:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/index.html>

<http://www.english.uiuc.edu/cws/wworkshop/bibliography/mla/mlamenu.htm>

[These websites are expanded and pasted into Western Seminary's "How to Write a Research Paper"]

A good website with footnote/bibliography entries is

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocChicabgo.html>

For assignments that require the use of non-course texts and include a bibliography, of the resources mentioned in the bibliography for your project/paper, two must be from a physical library. Note the physical location of each book as an addendum to each bibliographical entry.

All work must reflect master's level use of the English language. Plagiarism will result in failure of assignment.

GRADING

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-
99-	95-	93-	91-	88-	86-	84-	81-	79-	77-	74-	70-

100%	98%	94%	92%	90%	87%	85%	83%	80%	78%	76%	73%
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Activity	Percent of Final Grade	Estimated Time to Complete
Reflection Paper	20%	20 hours
Expositional Paper	20%	15 hours
Biblical Theology Paper	50%	25 hours
Class Participation	10%	30 hours
Total	100%	30 class + 60 outside hours

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance and Late Assignments: Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students who miss class are responsible for missed work. Unexcused absences and tardiness will impact a student's grade. Students who anticipate an absence should discuss it in advance with the instructor.

Note: Any absence where the instructor is not notified ahead of time (in person, via phone, or e-mail) will be considered an *unexcused absence*. If the absence is excused, assignments due may be turned in at the next class session without affecting the grade for that assignment. Unexcused absences will incur a drop of one letter grade for the assignment if submitted at the following class session.

Assignments submitted after the due date and time constitutes a drop of one letter grade in the student's letter grade for that assignment (unless prior arrangements have been made and approved by the instructor). Two class absences will result in a drop of the student's overall grade of one letter.

Enrichment Students: Enrichment students are encouraged, but not obligated, to participate in assignments and class discussions. Professors are not obligated to grade participation for these students, but may opt to do so depending on class size.

Incompletes: Faculty members determine their own procedures and due dates for the completion of course assignments. The final deadline for submitting all course work is the last day of the semester as noted in the Academic Calendar and in the Sacramento class schedule. In the case of serious illness, family emergency, or similar extenuating circumstances, the instructor may, **if it is initiated by the student**, grant an extension. A 1-3 week extension is typical in all except the most extreme cases, and in all cases the standard decrease of a full letter grade for late work applies. Extensions desired by student beyond 3 weeks, with prof support, must be approved by the Sacramento Academic Coordinator with 5 weeks after the end of the course being the longest possible extension for work being due to the prof (this allows a 6th week for the grading of work and a grade change request to be filed). A temporary notation of "I" (incomplete) is assigned until a final grade can be determined. Under no circumstances may this six-week period be extended except by petition and approval of the Administrative Committee in Portland.

The Availability of Disability Services at Western Seminary: Western Seminary is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as outlined in both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Western students are assisted individually as their needs dictate. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities to identify themselves and the nature of the disability. Any student who has a disability should contact the seminary's Disability (Section 504) Coordinator, Ken Epp, at 503-517-1815/1-877-517-1800, ext. 1815. His office is at the Portland campus. Students at the northern California campuses may contact Carrie Priest (Student Services Coordinator – San José) or PJ Oswald (Director of Student Development – Sacramento), or they may contact Dr. Epp directly. Appropriate forms will be provided and must be submitted to the Disability Coordinator's office.

LIBRARY AND INTERNET RESEARCH

All class assignments with a research element require library research annotated as such in the bibliography. A minimum of two resources must be from a physical library. Note the physical location of each resource as an addendum to each bibliographical entry.

For complete library information including: hours of operation, interlibrary loan, local library resources, etc., please:

- Visit www.westernseminary.edu .
- Click the link “Sacramento Campus” in the left navigation pane.
- Click the link “Library Resources” in the left navigation pane.

Reserve Collection

The library carries all required readings for this course.

Print Resources

Use the Western-Arcade Library catalog to find books and other materials. To search the library collection:

- Visit <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC> .
- Click the link “Search the Library Collection Online”.

Periodical & Research Databases

As you complete your assignments for this course, don't forget about the resources in the Western research databases. Remember to evaluate and cite your information too. To access the Western research databases:

- Visit <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC> .
- Click the link “Research Databases” from the bottom menu.
- Click the link “Ebsco Host Research Databases”.
- Log in. [**User ID:** westsem / **Password:** seminary]
- Click the link “EBSCOhost Web”.
- Click the database(s) you wish to use. Start with *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*.

To cite your information, consider the following MLA composers:

<http://www.noodletools.com> and <http://www.citationmachine.net>

Western-Arcade Library offers a variety of ministry related software for student use including BibleWorks, Logos Bible Software, and SeminaryLibrary.

Course Packs (if applicable)

To access the course pack(s) for this course:

1. Go to the library homepage: <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC>
2. Click the link 'Course Packs'.

Reference and Research Contact Information

David Holifield, M.A., M.L.S. / (916) 488-3720, ext. 7 / dholifield@westernseminary.edu

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

To be announced