Reformed Theological Seminary
Synoptics and Acts
NT510 (3 Credit Hours)
Spring 2012
Wednesday 8:00-10:55 am
BS 1

Dr. Benjamin Gladd
Office: Biblical Studies Dept.
Phone: 601-923-1694
Email: bgladd@rts.edu
TA: Josh Darsaut (joshdarsaut@gmail.com)

I. Course Objectives
• Understand the facets of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection according to the Synoptics.
• Interact with and evaluate higher criticism in the Synoptics and Acts.
• Be familiarized with the various trends of synoptic interpretation and their presuppositions.
• Learn how to interpret the Synoptics.
• Grasp the redemptive-historical significance and theological emphases of the Synoptics and Acts.

II. Course Description taken from the Catalogue
• "This course emphasizes the distinctive portraits of Christ in Matthew, Mark, and Luke and the continuation of Christ's ministry in Acts. Attention is given to each writer's literary art, theological teachings, and pastoral purpose" (RTS 2009-2011 Catalog, p. 67).

III. Texts
• English Bible with cross references (NIV, ESV, etc.)!

IV. Procedures and Methods
• This class will be a combination of lecture, reading, and discussions. Each class the student should be prepared to discuss what they have learned from their reading assignments and take exceptional class notes.
• Though this class is tailored for MDiv students who have a working knowledge of Greek, it is possible for those who do not know Greek to take the class. “Non-Greek” students are required to do all the assignments except translations. Additional reading will be assigned to non-Greek students, however. When doing discourse analyses, non-Greek students must
take their translation from NASB (1995).

V. Course Requirements

- **Exams**- One exam will be given at the end of the semester. Questions will mainly cover the lectures and assigned reading.

- **Attendance**- Each student is expected to attend all lectures, which comprises 10% of the total grade. *Students who have more than two unexcused absences will be penalized 5 points off the total grade.* **Presbytery meetings and all conferences (ETS/SBL, T4G, Twin Lakes, etc.) are unexcused.** Students should consult their calendar at the beginning of the semester and discuss any conflicts with the professor. Any additional unexcused absences will result in 5 more points, and so on. If you are sick or have a family emergency, you must email the professor asap.

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<tr>
<th>Unexcused Absences</th>
<th>Penalty</th>
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<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>No Penalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
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<td>6-8</td>
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<td>-20 Points</td>
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- **Weekly Assignments**- Nearly every week, students will be assigned a particular aspect of synoptic interpretation (synoptic comparison, translation, discourse analysis, etc.). *Late assignments will result in a loss of one letter grade per class.*

- **Quizzes**- Students will take online quizzes based on the reading.

- **In-Class Electronics Use**- Students are prohibited from using computers, phones, and tablets during class.

- **Attendance**- Each student is expected to attend all lectures, which comprises 10% of the total grade. *Students who have more than one unexcused absences will be penalized 10 points off the total grade.* Two additional unexcused absences will result in 10 more points, and so on. If you are sick, you must email the professor.

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<td>2-5</td>
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<td>-20 Points</td>
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<td>9-11</td>
<td>-30 Points</td>
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- **Grading:**
  1. Weekly Assignments 35%
  2. Exam 25%
  3. Reading 30%
  4. Classroom Participation/Attendance 10%

- **Grading Scale**: The grading scale for this course is the seminary’s grading scale. You may find it listed at the *RTS Catalog*, p.44.
• **Plagiarism:** Any cheating (quiz, paper, exam, etc.) will result in a failure of the course.

VI. Assigned Reading/Lecture Topic

August 21- Introduction to the Course/Genre/Audience
**Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 24-42

August 28- Source Criticism/Form Criticism/Redaction Criticism
**Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 44-63

September 4- Eyewitness Testimony/Narrative Criticism/Historical Jesus
**Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 68-85;

September 11- Introduction to Mark/Discourse Analysis
**Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 172-206
**Weekly Assignment #1:** Synoptic comparison of the Transfiguration #161 (Matt 17:1-6; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-35)

September 18- Discourse Analysis/Exegesis of Mark
**Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 399-408
**Weekly Assignment #2:** D.A./Synoptic Comparison/Translation of Mark 4:10-12 (Reason for Speaking in Parables #123; Matt 13:10-17; Mark 4:10-12; Luke 8:9-10)
**Non-Greek: Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 411-419

September 25- Introduction to Matthew/Exegesis of Matthew
**Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 214-253
**Weekly Assignment #3:** D.A./Synoptic Comparison/Translation of Matt 8:23-27 (The Stilling of the Storm #136; Matt 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25)
**Non-Greek: Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 425-430

October 2- Exegesis of Matthew
**Weekly Assignment #4:** D.A./Synoptic Comparison/Translation of Matt 21:1-9 (The Triumphal Entry #269; Matt 21:1-9; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-40)
**Non-Greek: Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 435-449

October 9- Reading Week

October 16- Exegesis of Matthew
**Weekly Assignment #4:** D.A./Synoptic Comparison/Translation of Matt 24:29-31 (The Coming of the Son of Man #292; Matt 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:25-28)
**Non-Greek: Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 450-457

**Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 260-291
**Weekly Assignment #6:** D.A./Synoptic Comparison/Translation of Luke 11:1-4
(The Lord’s Prayer #185; Matt 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4)
**Non-Greek: Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 455-466

October 30- Exegesis of Mark
**Reading:**
**Weekly Assignment #7:** D.A./Synoptic Comparison/Translation of Mark 15:33-39
(The Death of Jesus #347; Matt 27:45-54; Mark 15:33-39; Luke 23:44-48)
**Non-Greek: Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 469-488

November 6- Exegesis of Matthew
**Reading:**
**Weekly Assignment #8:** D.A./Synoptic Comparison/Translation of Matt 27:57-61
(The Burial of Jesus #350; Matt 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56)
**Non-Greek: Reading:** Strauss, *Four Portraits*, 493-504

November 13- Exegesis of Luke
**Reading:**
**Weekly Assignment #9:**
**Non-Greek:**

November 20- ETS- No Class

November 27- The Book of Acts (Guest Lecture)
**Reading:** Richard Bauckham, “James and the Jerusalem Church,” 415-450
**Weekly Assignment #10:**
**Non-Greek:**

December 4- The Book of Acts
**Reading:** Richard Bauckham, “James and the Jerusalem Church,” 450-480
**Weekly Assignment #10:**
**Non-Greek:**

December 10-13- **FINAL EXAMS**
**MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes**

*In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>The course strongly engages Scripture and the Jewish milieu of the first century, furnishing students with knowledge of a variety of topics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>With their nose in the text, students will spend a significant amount of time studying and mediating upon Scripture. The class requires students to research and write on topics pertaining to the Synoptics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Central to this class is the exaltation of Christ and his role in redemptive history.</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Since students are exposed to the various facets of the Synoptics and Acts, a love for Christ will inevitably grow as they continually look upon his character.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Key to this course is living in light of Jesus’ kingdom message. Jesus taught that his kingdom inverts the world’s ideals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Though most Synoptic scholars are not evangelicals, there is much to be gained by their insights.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Throughout the course, attention will be given to how students are to preach the Synoptics. We will often seek to answer “what difference does it make?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>As a result of this course, students will be wiser in how they worship Jesus by having a more concrete picture of who he is.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Having a right view of Jesus and his ministry is central to pastoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>As a net result of studying this Synoptics, students will have the ability to discern whether or not a teaching or</td>
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| Articulation (oral & written) | Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. |
| Scripture | Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.) |
| Reformed Theology | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. |
| Sanctification | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification. |
| Desire for Worldview | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. |
| Winsomely Reformed | Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) |
| Preach | Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. |
| Worship | Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service. |
| Shepherd | Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide. |
| Church/World | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. |
The movement is faithful to Jesus’ message.