

**Reformed Theological Seminary  
Fall 2018**

**NT510          Synoptics and Acts          3 Hrs.  
Wednesday 1:00–3:55 P.M.**

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**Description (as per RTS Catalogue)**

“This course emphasizes the distinctive portraits of Christ in Matthew, Mark, and Luke [the Synoptics] and the continuation of Christ’s ministry in Acts. Attention is given to each writer’s literary art, theological teachings, and pastoral purpose.” (p. 68)

**Course Objectives**

- (1) To understand and to evaluate critically academic research in the life of Jesus.
- (2) To identify the major periods of the ministry of Christ and to identify significant events within those periods.
- (3) To understand issues of special introduction pertaining to each Gospel.
- (4) To understand and to articulate the characteristic features of each canonical Gospel.
- (5) To understand and to articulate key aspects of the person and work of Christ as revealed in the Gospels.
- (6) To understand the message of Acts and the place of Acts in the New Testament canon.

**Required Texts (see below for page assts.)**

- (1) The Greek New Testament (UBS5 or NA28). Students who are not competent in Hellenistic Greek should use a recent translation such as the New American Standard or the English Standard Version. Please bring your GNT or English Bible to each class session.
- (2) D. A. Carson, D. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2d ed.) [CM]
- (3) Craig Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels* (2d ed.) [B]
- (4) Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom* [R]
- (5) Dennis Johnson, *The Message of Acts in the History of Redemption* [J]

**Assignments & Requirements**

(1) A **mid-term**, worth **25%** of your final grade. The mid-term exam will be taken in class, **October 17**.

(2) **Memorization** of Matt 5:1-20 and Luke 24:44-49. You must recite these verses (in any translation) to a fellow student in the course. That student must indicate to the course TA in writing that you have successfully completed the assignment (i.e. that you have recited Matt 5:1-20 and Luke 24:44-49, from memory, without error). This assignment is **due on the day of the final exam**. It will be 10% of your final exam grade [i.e. 3.5% of your course grade].

**(3) A final exam** will be taken during final exam week and will be cumulative. The final exam will cover both lectures and assigned readings. The final exam must be taken on the date posted by the seminary. Please arrange your schedule accordingly. **35%** of your final grade.

**(4) Reading** in translation Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts. I will ask you on your final exam how much of this reading you have completed. It will be 5% of your final exam grade [i.e. 1.75% of your course grade].

**(5) Weekly quizzes** on the assigned reading. These quizzes will be administered by the TAs. Each quiz will cover all the assigned reading for that particular week. On each quiz you will be asked to report the extent of your reading for that week. The quizzes are worth **30%** of your final grade. **Please note that the reading quizzes will begin the week of Sept 05.**

**(6) Exegetical working assignment on one (1) of the following:** Mark 1:9-15 or Acts 2:42-47.

See guidelines below. Complete the assignment according to the category in which you fall:

**(a) For those who have had Greek**, the assignment will be to translate the passage (without using an English translation) and to parse all verbs and verbal forms (without using parsing helps of any kind). Then list five (5) exegetical observations per verse based on the Greek text.

**(b) For those non – M.Div. students or M.Div. students who have not had Greek**, the assignment is to outline the passage & list ten (10) exegetical, theological, or practical observations per verse.

Students should consult the commentaries on reserve in the library.

This assignment is worth **10%** of your final grade. It is **due at the beginning of class, November 07, and must be submitted on Canvas**. This assignment will be accepted late, but will be subject to a penalty of one letter grade per day (or fraction thereof) after the due date.

## **Attendance**

Class attendance is required for NT 510. If a student anticipates an unavoidable absence, he should notify the instructor in advance. Each hour of unexcused absence subjects the student reduction of his final grade by one-half of a letter grade. Students missing more than two class meetings (for any reason) may **either** submit an additional compensatory assignment [determined by the instructor] **or** choose to receive a full letter grade reduction in their final grade. **Two tardies (arriving after the beginning of the hour) constitute missing one class meeting.**

## **Course Format**

The primary format of NT 510 is lecture. Students are encouraged to raise questions and comments for purposes of clarification and discussion. In class, students should be prepared to discuss and to answer questions concerning the assigned readings for that week.

## 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

Please review the seminary's policy on plagiarism. Plagiarized work will subject the student to failure in the course and possible disciplinary action.

## In-Class Computer Use

Computers are not permitted in this course. Cell phones must be set to silent and stowed. If for some extraordinary reason you need to take a call, you may either wait until the break or leave the classroom.

## Approximate Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule is approximate and subject to change at any time. The instructor's announced changes in class will be the final word on the nature and date of assignments. They are the student's sole responsibility to note and to implement.

29 August	Course Introductions Introduction to Gospels
05 September	Birth Narratives <b>Asst:</b> B 1-5; CM 2 (=175 pp.)
12 September	Birth Narratives Ministry of John, Baptism & Temptation of Jesus <b>Asst:</b> B 6-7; CM 3, 4 (=95 pp.)
19 September	Ministry of John, Baptism & Temptation of Jesus (ctd.) <b>Asst:</b> B 8; CM 5, 7 (=95 pp.)
26 September	Jesus and the Kingdom (Overview) <b>Asst:</b> B 10-15 (=150 pp.)
03 October	<b>Reading Week – Classes Will Not Meet</b>
10 October	Teaching in the Kingdom – Sermon on the Mount, Parables <b>Asst:</b> B 16-19; R I-II (=185 pp.)
17 October	<b>Mid-term Exam</b>
24 October	The Miracles of the Kingdom <b>Asst:</b> R III-IV (=125 pp.)
31 October	The Kingdom, Israel, and the Church <b>Asst:</b> R V-VII (=150 pp.)
07 November	The Future of the Kingdom

**Asst:** R VIII-IX (=110 pp.)  
**Exegetical Assignment Due**

- 14 November      **No Class - ETS** (to make up these hours, there will be an additional assignment, TBA)  
**Asst:** R X (=100 pp.)
- 21 November      **No Class - Thanksgiving**
- 28 November      Matthew, Mark  
**Asst:** Johnson Preface, 1-6 (=110 pp.)
- 05 December      Luke, Acts  
**Asst:** Johnson 7-12 (=130 pp.)

## Exegetical Assignments

Your exegetical assignment is an opportunity for you to work closely with a particular passage in the Synoptics and Acts

For those who have had Greek, the assignment should follow the following format:

- Typewritten (no handwritten assignments accepted)
- Verse-by-verse translation
- Parsing given, in order, after each verse. Parsing should follow the format you learned in Mounce.
- Exegetical observations in a separate section following your translation and parsing.

What follows are some guidelines to help you prepare a strong exegetical assignment.

- *Avoid* making observations that simply restate the passage in different words; or that are pedestrian.  
*Instead*, make observations that draw out the passage's meaning and significance.
- *Avoid* pointing out obvious grammatical or syntactical facts, i.e., "this noun is a genitive;" "this verb is in the aorist;" "this statement is a conditional clause."  
*Instead*, explain the significance of your grammatical and syntactical observations.
- *Avoid* making arguments based on the aspect of the verb or verbal.  
*Instead*, make arguments that can be supported by other considerations.
- *Avoid* drawing observations without reference to the statements or paragraphs immediately preceding or following the verse in question. This does not mean that every observation should make such references. Rather, make sure that you do not overlook this important element of exegesis.  
*Instead*, try, as much as possible, to incorporate the immediate context of the passage and the context of the letter as a whole into your observations. If a word or concept finds meaningful parallel elsewhere in the letter or the Pauline corpus, reference it.
- *Avoid* making unsubstantiated assertions.  
*Instead*, take time to defend the claims that you make from the text.
- *Avoid* submitting an assignment with incomplete parsing (for those to whom this applies).  
*Instead*, for those of you parsing, be sure to parse ALL verbs and verbals in the way that you were instructed; and to include the verb(al)'s lexical form.