

# 02NT508 Gospels

RTS – Orlando

Dr. Jonathan T. Pennington

[jpennington@sbts.edu](mailto:jpennington@sbts.edu)

July 9-14, 2018

M-F 8:00am-5:00pm

“So anyone who thinks that he has understood the divine scriptures or any part of them, but cannot by his understanding build up this double love of God and neighbor, has not yet succeeded in understanding them.”

~ Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*

## I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will expose the student to issues concerning how to interpret the Gospels, and provide an historical and theological survey of each of the four Gospels, culminating with discussion of how these four Gospels witness to the one Jesus. (3 hours)

## II. Student Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Outcomes:

By the end of this course the student should be able to:

1. Give a brief description of significant events and writings of the Second Temple period.
2. Summarize the critical and introductory issues concerning studying the four Gospels.
3. Summarize the basic contents and theology of each of the four Gospels.
4. Confidently use a basic methodology for interpreting the Gospel narratives.

Objectives:

- + understands the materials of the New Testament canon concerning the life and teachings of Jesus and the transmission of the gospel in the early Church
- + understands the basic history and doctrines of the early Church as expressed in the New Testament
- + is able to articulate the basic argument and major contribution of each book of the canon

## III. REQUIRED TEXTS

Hill, Charles. *Who Chose the Gospels? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy*. Oxford: OUP, 2010. ISBN: 978-0199551231. **(Hill)**

Strauss, Mark L. *Four Portraits, One Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007. ISBN: 978-0310226970. **(Strauss)**

Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012. ISBN: 978-0801039379 **(Pennington)**

CHOICE BETWEEN:

+ Rice, Anne. *Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt*. Fawcett Publishers, 2006.

OR

+ Maier, Paul. *Pontius Pilate*. Grand Rapids: Kregel.

ALSO, *before class* on July 10, watch my video lecture on the kingdom of God -- <https://www.tvresources.net/resource-library/forums/the-kingdom-of-god>.

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

Aland, K. ed. *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*<sup>14</sup>. New York: UBS, 1990.

or

Aland, K., ed. *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*<sup>10</sup>. New York: UBS, 1987. (Greek-English parallel text, but lacks extra-Biblical parallels and more expensive!!)

Green, Joel, ed., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2d ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013.

### IV. LEARNING ASSESSMENT

1. Exams: 1 @ 100 pts each = 100 points
2. Reading Response (Rice/Maier) = 20 points
3. 'Closer Reading' Passages: 7@20 pts = 140 points  
320 points

[Note also that points will be deducted for not completing reading. See Reading Report.]

#### *Grading Scale*

94% - 100%	A	84% - 87%	B	74% - 77%	C	64% - 67%	D
90% - 93%	A-	80% - 83%	B-	70% - 73%	C-	60% - 63%	D-
88% - 89%	B+	78% - 79%	C+	68% - 69%	D+	0% - 59%	F

#### *Exam*

A note on the final exam: The exam will be multiple choice, short answer, and essay. It will be based on three things: (1) a **close reading** of the textbooks; (2) **knowledge** of notes from the lectures and lecture handouts; and (3) knowledge of the content of the Four Gospels.

#### *Reading Assignments*

■ There are three main textbooks for this course. All assigned readings are found on the class schedule and must be completed by the assigned class period. You are required to keep a record of your reading and turn in the Reading Report (see last page of syllabus) on the last day of class.

■ The third textbook is a choice between two historical novels. They are both very beneficial to read and I recommend both, but only one is required and you can choose. Anne Rice's novel gives a first-person narration of Jesus' life while 7-8 years old. Paul Maier's book situates Pontius Pilate and 1<sup>st</sup> century Christianity squarely in its Roman Imperial context. **For whichever textbook you choose you will need to write a 2-page response paper** (see below for due date).

■ Another important part of the reading requirements for this course is a thoughtful reading of each of the four Gospels in their entirety. While reading textbooks and coming to fabulous lectures are beneficial and essential for your training, they can never substitute for a careful and humble reading of the Gospels themselves. According to the specifications of the class schedule

you will be required to read each of the Gospels in their entirety – preferably within one or two settings.

■ In conjunction with your reading of the Four Gospels in their entirety, you will also be assigned 7 passages for which you will give a “closer look.” For these assigned passages you will use the Closer Reading Study Sheet found on Canvas. This includes doing a narrative analysis of the text (as explained in the lecture) and answering a few additional questions. On the day that the passage is due, you must turn in this assignment *typed out*.

### ***Reading Report***

The purpose of the reading report is to ensure that students have completed the required reading for the course. **You must read the required material by the date noted in the course schedule below.** The reading report is to be handed in on the last day of class. Persons who do not hand in a reading report will receive an “F” for the class. The form to be used for the reading report is found at the end of the syllabus. See that form for how the reading affects your grade.

## **V. COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

- *Class Attendance and Participation:* Class attendance is essential for language learning. Students are expected to be in class and participate regularly.
- *Class Preparation:* For each class period students should spend sufficient time to finish the assigned readings and prepare the assigned passage(s).

## VI. COURSE SCHEDULE

Strauss = Mark Strauss, *Four Portraits, One Jesus*

Pennington = Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely*

Hill = C. E. Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?*

Day	Date	Material Covered / Lecture Title	Reading/Assignments DUE
		<b><i>Learning to Read Wisely</i></b>	
<b>1</b>	July 9	Introduction to the Course  What are the Gospels and Why Do We Need Them?  Hermeneutics 501 for the Gospels	Strauss 23-42  Pennington chapters 1-3  Pennington chapters 6-7 Strauss 67-89 Hill chapters 1-5
	July 9 Afternoon	The Study of the Gospels over the Centuries  The Gospels as History and in their Historical and Redemptive Context, Part One	Strauss 43-65 Strauss 347-382  Hill chapters 6-11  Pennington chapters 4-5 Strauss 383-410 Strauss 93-167  STL Packets
<b>2</b>	July 10 Morning	The Gospels as History and in their Historical and Redemptive Context, Part Two  How to Read the Gospels Wisely	BEFORE CLASS: Watch Pennington video on the Kingdom: <a href="https://www.tvresources.net/resource-library/forums/the-kingdom-of-god">https://www.tvresources.net/resource-library/forums/the-kingdom-of-god</a>  Pennington chapters 8-10 Pennington chapter 11  Doriani chapters 7-8 (pdf)
	July 10 Afternoon	Reading Matthew - Introduction	Strauss 213-258 All of Matthew
		<b><i>The Four Gospels</i></b>	
<b>3</b>	July 11 Morning	Walking through Matthew	“Closer Reading” – Matt 4:1-11
	July 11 Afternoon	Walking through Matthew	“Closer Reading” – Matt 9:1-8
<b>4</b>	July 12 Morning	Walking through Matthew  <i>Lecture Topic: Jesus’ Passion</i>	“Closer Reading” – Matt 17:1-8  Strauss 493-525

	July 12 Afternoon	Reading Mark Walking through Mark  <i>Lecture Topic: Parables</i>	Strauss 171-212 All of Mark  “Closer Reading” – Mk 6:45-52
<b>5</b>	July 13 Morning	Reading Luke Walking through Luke  <i>Lecture Topic: Eschatology in the Gospels</i>	Strauss 259-296 All of Luke  “Closer Reading” – Lk 5:1-11
	July 13 Afternoon	Reading John Walking through John	Strauss 297-343 All of John  “Closer Reading” – Jn 2:13-22
<b>6</b>	July 14 Morning	Walking through John	“Closer Reading” – Jn 20:11-18  Strauss 455-468
		<i>The One Jesus</i>	
	July 14 Afternoon	The One Jesus	Strauss 399-409, 435-454  Strauss 469-491 Pennington chapter 12  Reading Report DUE
<b>Post-Class Exam</b>	July 28, 11:59pm EST	Final Exam DUE (to be taken on Canvas)	Reading Response DUE (Maier or Rice)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**READING REPORT –The Gospels**

Designate below (by checking under the appropriate category) the *percentage* and *manner* in which you fulfilled the reading assignment. Grading Scale: 3 points off your total points for the course for each item skimmed or read late. 5 points off your total points for the course for each item not read. **Assignments that are not read by the assigned class period are to be marked in the “Skimmed/Late” category.**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Read Thoughtfully</b>	<b>Skimmed/Late</b>	<b>Did not Read</b>
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			
Day 4			
Day 5			
Day 6			

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: 2NT508

Professor: Jonathan Pennington

Campus: Orlando

Date: Summer 2018

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b> <i>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.</i> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	For multiple passages of Scripture students will complete a Closer Reading assignment that requires articulation of their analysis of the text.
<b>Scripture</b>	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.)	Strong	Students will gain significant knowledge of the Scriptures and how they are best interpreted through lectures, reading, and written assignments.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	As issues of Reformed theology arise they will be discussed, including epistemological and soteriological matters from a Reformed perspective.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	All written assignments have the stated goal of personal, heart-level application. Lectures and class discussion will regularly engage with personal application of the texts.
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	Focusing on the Gospels provides great opportunity for personal development and application centered in Holy Scripture.
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	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.)	Moderate	This approach of winsomely Reformed is a large part of my overall strategy and goal in teaching. The study of the history of interpretation especially will enable a humble appreciation of multiple views in the Church, while maintaining a Reformed perspective.
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Questions of how to teach and preach the Gospels will be discussed regularly in class. Closer Reading assignments include a discussion of the application of the

			Gospel texts.
<b>Worship</b>	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	There will be some in-class discussion about how the Gospels were used in worship in the ancient church.
<b>Shepherd</b>	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.	Minimal	Some shepherding issues will arise in the course of our biblical study and will be addressed when appropriate.
<b>Church/World</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	At times the discussion of the Gospels will be put into the context of the life of the church today.