



## NT 601 Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels (3) Fall 2013

Professor: Robert S. Snow, PhD

Wednesdays 2:30-5:15 pm

Classroom: A2133

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### 1. Course Description:

This course considers the life of Jesus of Nazareth according to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Key subjects include: the historical context of Jesus and the Gospels; various methods employed in the reading of the Gospels; introduction to the study of the Gospels; the common and the distinctive theological features of Matthew, Mark, and Luke; the life and ministry of Jesus; parables; and the role of the Gospel story of Jesus in the ongoing life and ministry of the Church today.

### 2. Course Objectives:

- a. to consider the historical world of first-century Judaism and its relevance for Gospel interpretation.
- b. to understand the so-called "Synoptic Problem" and the varying attempts to solve it.
- c. to appreciate the unique literary worlds of Matthew, Mark and Luke and their respective contribution to the themes of the NT.
- d. to allow, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the message of the Gospels speak to us individually and corporately.

### 3. Course Requirements:

- a. **Course readings:** Read the synoptic Gospels and the assigned readings from *Exploring the New Testament* (and any others I might assign!). Please submit a statement by email indicating that you have completed all the readings by **December 4, 2013**.
- b. **Book review:** Write a review on the assigned pages from *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (chs. 1-13, 18). **Due November 6, 2013**. This review is to be 2000 words, the guidelines for which are in Appendix 2.
- c. **Two synoptic analyses:** This first one will be on a passage shared by Matthew and Mark (**due Nov 13, 2013 and 1500-1700 words in length**) and the second one will be a passage from the triple tradition (**due Dec 4, 2013 and 1800-2000 words in length**). Guidelines are forthcoming.

#### 4. Evaluation:

a. Assigned readings	10%
b. Book review	25%
c. Synopsis Paper # 1	30%
d. Synopsis Paper # 2	35%

#### 5. Grading:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Equivalents</u>
A+	95-100
A	86-94
A-	80-85
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	55-59
D	50-54
F	0-49

#### 6. Important Notes

**a. Format for papers:** All papers need to be double-spaced, 12 point font, Times New Roman. Number each page. Indicate word count along with your name and student number on the top right corner of the first page. No need for a title page. Upload all papers on the Moodle site. Do not email any papers to the instructor and slide any under my door.

**b. Extensions/Submissions:** Extensions are highly unusual occurrences contingent upon equally highly unusual circumstances (being too busy does not count!). A late penalty of **10%** per day including week-end days will be enforced for those who fail to submit their papers on time.

**c. Electronic etiquette:** Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops can only be used for class-related purposes only. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

**d. Academic policies:** It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar

with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at [privacy@ambrose.edu](mailto:privacy@ambrose.edu).

**e. Academic integrity:** We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

## **7. Textbooks:**

- a. Wenham, David and Steve Walton. *Exploring the New Testament: A Guide to the Gospels and Acts*. Volume 2. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2011.
- b. Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
- c. Throckmorton, Burton H. *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1992.

## Appendix I: Schedule of topics, readings, and due dates

Lecture Date	Topic	Readings
September 4	Introduction and beliefs of first-century Jews	
September 11	Symbols and practices of first-century Jews	<i>ENT</i> : 3–44 (3-44)* <i>JaE</i> : 1-92
September 18	From gospel to Gospel  What is a Gospel?	<i>ENT</i> : 54-59 (52-56); 74-78 (70-74); 121-31 (111-20) <i>ENT</i> : 49-59 (47-56) <i>JaE</i> : 93-154; 319-357
September 25-26	Spiritual Emphasis Days – no class	
October 2	Synoptic Gospels and the Synoptic Problem  Contemporary Gospel interpretation	<i>ENT</i> : 61-74 (57-70); 78-87 (74-80) <i>ENT</i> : 89-109 (81-100) <i>JaE</i> : 240-89
October 9	Historical world of Mark Literary world of Mark: Prologue	<i>ENT</i> : 216-220 (204-07) <i>ENT</i> : 155-57 (145-47); 184-197 (174-85) <i>JaE</i> : 155-201
October 16	Literary world of Mark: Act 1: Galilee and Beyond  Literary world of Mark: Act 2: The Way of Suffering and Death	<i>ENT</i> : 201-16 (191-204); 157-59 (147-49); 170-80 (160-69) <i>ENT</i> : 159-64 (149-53) <i>JaE</i> : 202-39
October 23	Literary world of Mark: Act 3: Jerusalem	<i>ENT</i> : 165-70 (155-60) <i>JaE</i> : 290-318
October 30	Literary world of Matthew: Birth of Israel's Messiah Literary world of Matthew: Sermon on the Mount	<i>ENT</i> : 153-55 (143-45); 221-38 (209-26) <i>ENT</i> : 180-84 (169-74) <i>JaE</i> : 472-508
November 6	Literary world of Matthew: Ministry of the Messiah in Israel Literary world of Matthew: Disciples and the Church	<i>ENT</i> : 109-21 (100-11); 143-51 (133-40)  <b>Book review</b>
November 13	Literary world of Matthew: Final Reckoning and Judgement	<b>Matt-Mark synopsis paper</b>
November 20	Literary world of Luke: Birth of a Prophet Literary world of Luke: Galilean Ministry	<i>ENT</i> : 239-55 (227-41)
November 27	Literary world of Luke: Journey to Jerusalem	
December 4	Literary world of Luke: Jesus in Jerusalem	<b>Triple tradition paper</b>

\* page numbers in parentheses are from 1<sup>st</sup> edition of *ENT*. Either edition is acceptable for class.

## Appendix 2: Book review guidelines

1. The purpose of a book review is twofold:
  - a. to *summarize* the contents of the book, including a discussion of how the author has organized his/her material. Also, the reviewer needs to indicate

the author's purpose for writing. This part should take up 70% of the review.

- b. to *critically evaluate* the book's strengths and weaknesses. The reviewer seeks to determine how well the author has fulfilled his/her purpose in writing? Where are the arguments weak and why, or vice versa, where are they strong and why? If writing for a particular audience, has s/he accomplished this goal, in your opinion? This part should take up 30% of the review.
2. Some helpful questions to ask yourself when writing the review:
    - am I aware of author's aims and perspective?
    - have I adequately described the content and structure?
    - have I focused on significant issues?
    - have I critically evaluated the book's strengths?
    - have I critically evaluated the book's weaknesses?
    - is my review organized clearly?
    - are my statements accurate?
    - is the review free of spelling and grammatical errors?
    - have I left this assignment until the very last minute?