

The Gospel, Letters, and Revelation of John
NT 604 (three credit hours)
Canadian Theological Seminary
Fall 2003

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Kenneth A. Fox, Ph.D.
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Tuesdays/Thursdays 11:15 – 12:30 PM
Office hours: anytime Mondays – Thursday
~~Thursday 11:15 – 12:30 PM~~

Course Description

A reading of and reflection upon the Gospel, Letters, and Revelation of John, noting their literary form, historical context, and theological content. Particular attention is given to those topics and themes that constitute a unique and profound contribution to the New Testament and to the Christian faith.

Course Prerequisites

Prerequisite: ~~For this second year CTS course,~~ *New Testament Foundations* (NT 501)

Recommended: *Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels* (NT 601) ~~is the prerequisite.~~

Prior to the second clas~~start of the course~~, students should re-fresh themselves on matters of introduction/~~prolegomena~~ to the Gospel, Letters, and Revelation of John (authorship, dating, etc.). Little or no time will be devoted to these issues in class. Students might read the following:

David Wenham and Steve Walton. "John." Pages 243-264 in *Exploring the New Testament: A Guide to the Gospel & Acts* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001).

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I. J.-H. Marshall, S. Travis, and I. Paul. "The Letters of John." Pages 289-302 in *Exploring the New Testament: A Guide to the Letters & Revelation* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002).

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I. J.-H. Marshall, S. Travis, and I. Paul. "The Revelation of John." Pages 305-328 in *Exploring the New Testament: A Guide to the Letters & Revelation* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002).

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Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, the professor hopes that students will possess in greater capacity the following values, skills, and knowledge.

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1 Through reflecting on the philosophy of ministry that comes to expression in the Johannine writings, to serve and lead more effectively in the church

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2 Through exegeting the Johannine writings, to interpret the Bible more faithfully and relevantly according to a clearly articulated hermeneutic

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3 Through committing oneself to excellence as students, to nurture a heart that listens respectfully and tolerantly to views not one's own, to fearlessly think critically and self-critically, and to aspire to become effective communicators, for it is not sufficient just to think well, one must also express it well

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4 Through lectures and independent research, to come to an understanding of (1) the reasons why each of the Johannine writings was written, (2) the major theological ideas found in each book, (3) the argumentative structure of each book, and (4) the historical background of each book

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5 Through bridging the world of the New Testament and our world, to appreciate ways in which we can apply the Johannine writings to the church and world today

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Textbooks (required)

Clouse, Robert G. *The Meaning of the Millenium: Four Views*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1977.

Marshall, I. Howard. *The Epistles of John*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.

Smith, D. Moody, *The Theology of the Gospel of John*. New Testament Theology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Textbooks (recommended)

Archer, G. L., et al. *Three Views on the Rapture: Pre-, Mid-, or Post-Tribulational?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Bock, Darrell L. *Three Views on the Millenium and Beyond.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

Brown, Raymond E. *The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times.* New York: Paulist, 1979.

Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation.* Dallas: Word, 1993.

~~I.H.~~ Marshall, I. H., -S. Travis, and I. Paul. *Exploring the New Testament: A Guide to the Letters & Revelation.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002.

~~David~~ Wenham, David, and Steve Walton. *Exploring the New Testament: A Guide to the Gospel & Acts.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001.

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Course Requirements

Class participation	10%
Attendance, participation & integration	10%
Book review	1205%
Theology of Ministry & Leadership Paper	15%
Exegetical Paper (& class presentation/sermon)	30%
Theological Dialogue	4030%

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Class participation (10%)

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This course is designed to be as much student-centered as teacher-centered in its approach to learning. So it is not enough that the teacher come to each class adequately prepared to talk, students also must come prepared to share informatively and participate in the learning process. The success of the course depends on each member contributing vigorously.

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Students can and should read additional material relating to the subject matter of the course, and they are encouraged to share their findings with the class. Keep a record of pages read and submit it at end of course for consideration of bonus grade.

Students wishing to substitute a short written assignment in lieu of this component of the grade may do so.

Attendance, participation, & integration (10%)

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class.

Perfect attendance	10
One absence	9.2
Two absences	8.8
Three absences	8.2
Four absences	7.8
Five absences	7.2
Six absences	6.8

More than six absences: zero

Prior to the second class, **Tuesday September 9**, read through the Gospel of John slowly and thoughtfully, and generate a one page (maximum) list of questions that you would like to see answered in our class time together. Please prioritize the questions in such a way that the question you would want answered most of all in the first position. Please submit this one page assignment on **Tuesday September 9**.

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In the last class, **Tuesday December 9**, we will devote time to a discussion of how our course integrates with other courses you are taking this semester. You should generate a one page (maximum) reflection paper on how it all fits together for you and come to class prepared to share your findings. If this is your only course this semester, you are 'off the hook' for this assignment.

Grading of the one page question and integration assignments. B-quality written work will figure neutrally into the grade. A-quality work will figure into the grade positively and poorer quality work will figure negatively. So for example, if the student misses three classes and has a grade of 8.2 for attendance yet submits A-quality work on these assignments, she or he can expect to see their grade rise to a 9 or 10.

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Book review (15%)

Students are required to read D. Moody Smith, *The Theology of the Gospel of John* and write a book review (maximum seven pages, double-spaced 2000 words). The review should consist of two more-or-less equal parts.

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In part one, *summarize* the book's content objectively. Begin with the over-arching theme(s) that hold the book together. Are there one or more main ideas that hold the entire book together? Secondly, summarize the distinctive theme(s) that hold together each of the four chapters.

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In part two, provide a critical evaluation of aspects of the book's contents. You may write about the following things.

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1 What questions did your reading of *The Theology of the Gospel of John* generate in your thinking? How did the book deal with your questions?

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2 In what ways has the book answered questions that you had at the outset of your study of the Gospel of John (~~recall your one page list of questions~~)?

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3 Evaluate various themes that hold the entire book and chapters together. Why does the author ~~he~~ come to the conclusions that he does?

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4 How do aspects of the book's content compare with what you have thought in the past? Where there is a difference between your thinking and what the author affirms, how has the author gone against what you've thought? ~~How has the author gone against your views?~~ Where were you wrong? How wrong? Where is he wrong? Why?

Come to class on ~~October 16~~September 30 prepared to contribute to a class discussion on the book.

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Due date: ~~October 16~~September 30

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Theology of Ministry & Leadership Paper (15%)

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This assignment should be about seven pages in length, double-spaced, and typed. In this paper students will explore inductively the theology of ministry and leadership that comes to expression in the Johannine writings. In addition, students must work closely with Marshall's *The Epistles of John*, so as to ground their study in the historical context of the Johannine community.

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A number of questions could be asked: What is the basis of authority for ministry and leadership? What do you perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of the various leaders in the Johannine community (after all, none of them were perfect)? How is Jesus Christ a model of ministry and leadership? How does Jesus share his leadership, ministry, and authority with others? What are some valuable lessons that you have learned from your study of ministry and leadership in the Johannine writings?

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Come to class on November 4 prepared to contribute to a class discussion on the findings of your research.

Due date: November 4

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Exegetical paper (and presentation/sermon) (30%)

Students are required to write an exegetical paper of about eight pages based on a passage from 1-3 John. The student will present to the class a summation of their findings in the form of a short lecture or sermon. Guidelines for the researching and writing of the exegetical paper will be distributed in class.

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Due date: October 7 – 30

Theological Dialogue (340%)

Students will be divided into two groups-groups of four. Each team will selectbe assigned one of the four common interpretive systems used to explain the Book of Revelation (you can't select the same position): Historic Premillennialism, Dispensational Premillennialism, Postmillennialism, and Amillennialism.

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Working as a team, each group will study thate system of interpretation thato which they have selectedbeen assigned by examining the strengths of their position, by exposing the weaknesses of the alternative positions, and by defending their position from challenges posed by the other positions.

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Working togetheras a team, each group will write up a report of their findings. This report will be the basis for a theological debate and dialogue. The report should be a collaborate group activity and is due November 27. The actual oral debate may or may not also be equally shared or not. In other words, not everyone has to participate in the debate and dialogue. The report, just like the debate, will consist of three or four parts:

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- 1 Explication of the interpretive system
- 2 Critique of the other positions from the viewpoint of the team's adopted interpretive system
- 3 Defense of the interpretive system
- 4 Practical application or benefits of the interpretive system (this may or may not be included under the system's explication)

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The student's individual grade will be based on three factors:

1 How each individual works on the team. For this aspect of the grade, the students will grade each other.

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2 The quality of the written report. One grade will be shared by all group members.

3 The persuasiveness and delivery of the theological debate. One grade will be shared by all group members.

The responsibilities of the team leader. The team leader will be responsible for carrying his or her equal share of the teamwork. In addition, the team leader will be responsible for providing guidance to the team in the delegating of individual research responsibilities, for making sure the work gets done on schedule, for keeping the team focused on its task, and for keeping the professor apprised on a regular basis of the team's progress.

Remember, this is a classroom exercise and so you are not asked to actually believe the position that your team is tasked to explicate and defend. In fact, it is to be recommended that you work on a position not your own.

Each team should more or less follow the following steps:

1 Generate of a working bibliography

2 Assign individual reading & research responsibilities. As a matter of course, everyone should read Clouse's *The Meaning of the Millenium: Four Views*. The distribution of reading should be fair. Each team should read so as to come to a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each position, so as to be in a position to defend their own position and expose the weaknesses of the other positions

3 Report of the reading & research findings

4 Write the report

5 Prepare the oral debate

The two-hour, oral debate will consist of four parts:

1 10-minute explication of the position (40 minutes)

2 3-minute critique of each of the other positions (36 minutes)

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- 3 5-minute response to the critiques of the other groups (20 minutes)
- 4 20-25 minutes of questions from audience

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Tentative Class Schedule

week 1	Sept 4	Introduction to Course	
week 2	Sept 9 Sept 11	Gospel of John 1-3 Gospel of John 4-6	One-page questions due
week 3	Sept 16 Sept 18	Gospel of John 7-9 Gospel of John 10-12	
week 4	Sept 23 Sept 25	Gospel of John 13-15 Gospel of John 16-18	
week 5	Sept 30 Oct 2	Gospel of John 19-21 No class	Book Review Due
week 6	Oct 7 Oct 9	1-3 John 2-3 John	Read -Marshall, pages 1-55 Read -Marshall, pages 59-95
week 7	Oct 14 Oct 16	1 John 1 1 John 2	Read -Marshall, pages 99-120 Read -Marshall, pages 120-164 Book
			Review Due
week 8	Oct 21 Oct 23	1 John 3 1 John 4	Read -Marshall, pages 164-203 Read -Marshall, pages 203-229
week 9	Oct 28 Oct 30	No class: Community Days/Mission Emphasis 1 John 5	Read -Marshall, pages 230-256
week 10	Nov 4 Nov 6	Revelation: Group work No class: mid-term break	Ministry Paper Due
week 11	Nov 11 Nov 13	Revelation: Group work Revelation: Group work	
week 12	Nov 18 Nov 20	Revelation: Group work Revelation: Group work	
week 13	Nov 25 Nov 27	Revelation: Group work Theological Debate	Group Report Due (precise date TBA)
week 14	Dec 2 Dec 4	Revelation: Lecture Revelation: Lecture	

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week 15 Dec 9 Concluding Lecture ~~Integration discussion~~ — ~~One-~~
~~page evaluation due~~

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