

SYLLABUS: SYNOPTIC GOSPELS - MARK (online)

This syllabus is subject to revision until the first day of class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the nature of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke; and their witness to Jesus. The bulk part of the course will examine one of the three gospels in part or as a whole. This offering will cover the Gospel of Mark.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will gain and demonstrate some understanding of the history and methods of source criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism, and narrative criticism.

Students will gain and demonstrate familiarity with the individuality and individual purpose of the three Synoptic Gospels, particularly the Gospel of Mark.

Students will gain and demonstrate an understanding of how to read and interpret the stores and teachings of the Synoptic Gospels, as illustrated by lectures and assignments concerning the Gospel of Mark.

Students will begin to understand the centrality of the life and teachings of Jesus for Christianity, and students will themselves meet Jesus again in their study of these writings.

COURSE TEXTS: REQUIRED

Note: these texts are available at the Providence Bookstore, 204-433-7488 or 1-800-668-7768; email bookstore@prov.ca

Blomberg, Craig. *Jesus and the Gospels*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1997, 2009.

Hooker, Morna. *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*. Black's New Testament Commentaries. Hendrickson, 1991.

COURFSE TEXT: RECOMMENDED

Moloney, Francis. *Mark: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*. Hendrickson, 2004.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

General Guidelines: Due dates are on the Course Schedule below. Late assignments lose a mark a week, beginning midnight of the due date. Most explanations receive sympathy, but the assignment still loses a mark.

All submissions should follow Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*, 7th ed, 2007, the standard guide for Providence Theological Seminary. Students can mail paper copy or send papers as email attachments, or submit them through the online course website.

Papers sent electronically should be set up so that if printed out, they would result in a perfectly formatted paper. That is, electronic papers (as hard copy) should have a title page, page numbers, left margin only justified, Times New Roman #12 font, and so on.

If an assignment includes several entries, as a reading journal of some kind, do not send them as separate file documents. Rather send them all as one document, having one title page covering the entire assignment.

Please do not send the title page as a separate document file when submitting a paper electronically. If the problem is not having a page number on the title page, solve it this way with MS Word: open the "insert page numbers" window, click on "format," and set page numbering to "start at" 0 (zero). Then hide the page number on the first page, which will be your title page, and the first page of text will be page 1.

Weekly Discussion. There are ten weekly audio lectures. Each unit includes a discussion question, based on the content of that unit's lecture. Weekly responses to these questions, and also to the responses of other students, will count toward the final grade. Longer is not necessarily better, but thoughtful is always better. The lectures are released at midnight on Sunday. Response to the discussion question will usually be evaluated on Friday mornings. 10%

Mark Reading Journal Read Mark through ten times in the translation of your choice. As much as possible read it through in one sitting, or at least all in one day. Do not read it through more than once in a single day, and not more than twice a week. After each reading, type a one page (double-spaced) response to your reading. Simply write out the impression you gained from that reading. If possible, respond to the whole writing rather than one sentence that caught your attention. Look for recurring themes, transitions from one kind of story to another kind, characterization of Jesus or disciples or others, and so on. Date each response.

I would like five of these in by October 31st (as a single document, not five documents), and the other five by end of the course. 10% of course grade each.

Blomberg Review Carefully read Blomberg's book, chapters 1-9 and chapters 18-19. [Blomberg's first edition (1997) will do for this as well as the second edition (2009).] For each chapter, write about one page. Write a summary of that chapter's content (2/3 or 3/4 of the page), and at the end of each page, note what you found most striking or noteworthy or interesting in that chapter. The total review should be ten to twelve pages. 20%

Hooker's "Additional (or "Introductory) Notes" Hooker's commentary has seven Additional Notes, in one case an 'Introductory' Note. These can be located in the table of contents, pp 27-29. Write a one page summary and response to each of these seven. The careful summary should be about 3/4 of a page, and in the last 1/4 respond to that particular Note, evaluating its validity and usefulness.

Conclude with a 2 page summary and response to Hooker's "Theology of Mark," pp 19-26 of the commentary. The paper should have eight to ten pages of text. 15%

Sermon-Background Studies Write seven one-page outlines from Mark's Gospel. Make sure you get each outline on one page! Picture yourself preparing either to preach to a church, or to sit in a living room in the evening, leading a group that's hungry to understand Mark's Gospel.

These seven background studies are not sermon outlines, but the background work from which you would write an outline. Your seven texts should be spaced more or less evenly through Mark, and the total of the seven should give your audience a helpful view of the structure and message of Mark as a whole.

Each one-page study should have the chapter and verse of the passage you have chosen, and a title, at the top. Then it should have 4 paragraphs: (i) a *short* one-sentence paragraph stating the *main idea* of this sermon; (ii) a lengthier paragraph *describing* in some detail the passage, not interpreting it too much, just *observing* its tone and how it is written; (iii) a paragraph indicating what Mark was saying to his *original audience*, and how they would have perceived this passage (i.e. *interpretation*); and (iv) your *application*, describing the call you hear for yourself, and your call to the people who listen to you, or at least what you hope they hear.

Work on this throughout the semester. Make notes from classes and from your reading of Mark, and other readings, so that these take shape as you go through the semester. 15%

Exegetical Research Paper Pick a text from Mark, research enough to find out what commentators agree on in your text, and what the problems are. This is a good paper in which to explore some debated aspect of Mark, or a section you have grappled with for some reason. Explain the passage as you understand it. It is

appropriate to suggest an application of your text, but not before the last paragraph or two. Write ten to twelve pages of double-spaced text, in Turabian 7th edition format (which permits both the notes-bibliographic style of citation, and parenthetical-reference list style citations). Do not take more than one page to get to the core of your text or issue. Imagine that you are writing to a fellow student, one who is taking the course with you, but knows little about the matter you are researching.

Use three or four commentaries besides Hooker. The course bibliography below has asterisks before commentaries that I think would serve you well (which does not mean I agree with them). Plan ahead - if you are not near a library, get the commentary by interlibrary loan, which means you will need to order the book some time before you need it. You should also be able to get an online article or two through the Providence library website. Due after the 10th unit. 20%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Sept 19	Lecture 1	Synoptic Gospels and Historical Reliability of Mark
Sept 26	Lecture 2	Mark 1:1-20
Oct 3	Lecture 3	Mark 1:21 - 3:6 <i>Blomberg Review due Oct 7</i>
Oct 10	<i>No lecture - October Intrasession week</i>	
Oct 17	Lecture 4	Mark 3:7 - 6:6a
Oct 24	Lecture 5	Mark 6:6b - 8:21
Oct 31	Lecture 6	Mark 8:22 - 9:50 <i>Mark Rdg Journal Part 1 due Oct 31</i>
Nov 7	Lecture 7	Mark 10 - 11 <i>Hooker's Notes essay due Nov 12</i>
Nov 14	<i>No lecture - November Intrasession week</i>	
Nov 21	Lecture 8	Mark 12-13
Nov 28	Lecture 9	Mark 14
Dec 5	Lecture 10	Mark 15:1 - 16:8 <i>Sermon Background Studies and Research Paper due Dec 10th.</i>

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beasley-Murray, George R. *Jesus and the Last Days*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993.
- Blomberg, Craig L. *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*. Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 1997.
- Brown, Raymond E. *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1994.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*. German edition: 1931. Trans. J. Marsh. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968.
- *Cranfield, C. E. B. *The Gospel According to St. Mark*. Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary. Cambridge: University Press, 1959, 1977.
- *Edwards, James. *The Gospel According to Mark*. Pillar New Testament Commentaries. Eerdmans, 2002.
- *France, R. T. *The Gospel of Mark*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Eerdmans, 2002.
- Green, Joel B., Scot McKnight, I. Howard Marshall, eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1992.
- *Gould, Ezra P. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark*. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. 1896.
- *Hooker, Morna D. *The Gospel According to St Mark*. Black's New Testament Commentaries. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991.
- Kelber, Werner H. *Mark's Story of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.
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- Rhoads, David and Donald Michie. *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982.
- *Schweizer, Eduard. *The Good News According to Mark*. Trans. D. Madvig. Atlanta: Kohn Knox, 1970.
- *Swete, H. B. *The Gospel According to Mark*. London: Macmillan, 1913.
- *Taylor, Vincent. *The Gospel According to St. Mark*. London: Macmillan, 1959.
- Throckmorton, Burton H. Jr. *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels*, 5th ed. New Revised Standard Version. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1992.
- Weeden, Theodore J., Sr. *Mark: Traditions in Conflict*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971.