

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE
BIBLE 120
INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT
CREDIT, 3 SEMESTER HOURS
Summer, 2012
DR. G. ROGER GREENE (“BIG G”), PROFESSOR

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A general overview of the background, development, and content of the New Testament.

RATIONALE FOR BIBLE 120

Because Mississippi College is a Christian institution founded upon a strong background of liberal arts studies, Bible 120 is foundationally vital to the mission and purpose of the college. The essence of faith truly Christian cannot be either established or maintained apart from biblical literacy. The Bible of the earliest Church was the Old Testament, while the New Testament represents writings produced by the earliest Christians. The Church for almost 2000 years has affirmed the New Testament as Christian scripture pertaining to divine revelation in Jesus Christ. As Bible 120 addresses the matters of history and faith in an appropriate hermeneutical context, comprehension of geographical, historical, and literary aspects of the New Testament create a biblical literacy which contributes in meaningful ways to the personal values, attitudes, social, and cultural understanding of the student.

Bible 120 thus seeks to make a significant contribution toward the integration of faith and learning through the exploration and understanding of the religious, social, and cultural values inherent in the faith and story of people known as Christians in a first century Greco-Roman world. Their faith and story remain distinctly relevant to contemporary Christianity. Bible 120 seeks to enhance knowledge, develop skills of interpretation, and advance attitudes necessary for making responsible and reasoned moral choices in response to a changing world.

Comprehensive understanding of biblical principles advanced by the core content of Bible 120 offers not only an environment in which the personal and spiritual development of the student may be stimulated, but one in which insight into the integration of learning with faith is to be stressed as application is made in the living of a more satisfying life in the service of God and humanity.

In addition, Bible 110 and Bible 120 provide the foundational introduction for other courses in the area of Bible and Christian Heritage.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: The following learning objectives apply to this course.

1. *To cultivate in students an understanding of the historical setting of the New Testament.* In BIB 120 students are presented an historical account of Judaism and early Christianity in the context of the Greco-Roman world. Such an historical survey provides a contextual setting for the New Testament literature. To demonstrate that this objective has been met, students should be able to show in writing that they know about key people, events, and dates, and understand their significance, as these items provide a meaningful context for proper interpretation of the New Testament.

2. *To cultivate in students an understanding of the geographical setting of the New Testament.* This objective has been met when students can demonstrate their knowledge of the major geographical features and locations of the Roman world of the Mediterranean, as these contribute to a fuller understanding of the New Testament literature.

3. *To cultivate in students a characteristic best described as “biblical literacy.”* Students are required to read the New Testament with a view toward coming to understand the basic literary features of the text such as plot, setting, theme development, and literary genre. Major characters in the New Testament materials are treated. Questions relating to the historical setting, authorship, audience, date of writing, and literary genre are addressed as these items contribute to a more complete understanding of the individual books of the New Testament. Students are encouraged to see the New Testament literature in relation to its historical and cultural environment. Tests designed to measure the student’s “biblical literacy” can demonstrate that this objective is being met. Basic literacy provides a steady foundation for subsequent study of the New Testament by the student.

4. *To cultivate in students the ability to make application of the New Testament texts in personal formation and growth.* Bible 120 can help students develop a foundation for subsequent study and appropriate utilization of the New Testament. To come to appreciate the New Testament faith and story is to provide a rich foundation for the living of life today through contemporary application. The student will grapple with contemporary issues raised in the classroom setting and make application from the biblical text to those issues.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Cheating and plagiarism is not tolerated at Mississippi College. A student who is found cheating on an examination will be given a grade of “F” and reported to the university administration. Plagiarism is the submission of someone else’s work as one’s own. This is not acceptable and will result in a grade of “0” on the work and/or more severe disciplinary action. The student should be thoroughly informed on these matters of academic integrity which may be found in the *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog* or **Policy 2.19** available on the Mississippi College web site.

OUTLINE OF COVERED TOPICS

The following represents a significant listing of broad topics to be covered in detail in this course.

The World of the New Testament
The Nature and Canon of the New Testament
The Legacy of the English Bible
The Beginnings of the Church
The Ministry of Paul
The Correspondence of Paul
The Person and Ministry of Jesus
The Nature of the Gospels
The Content of the Gospels
The Life of the Early Church
Times of Challenge and Persecution

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Primary methods of instruction utilized in this course include dialogical lecture, class discussion, interpretation of specific scriptural passages, map-work, and occasional audio-visual materials.

REQUIRED PRACTICES

Required practices include reading of required texts, discussion of assigned material within the classroom setting, recall and application of material learned.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Instructional materials include the following textbook required for the course.

The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha. Ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. Revised Standard Version. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

The New Testament itself is the primary required reading for this course. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings for each class. Assignments will thus involve work outside of class and preparation made in advance of the designated class period.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

The primary method of evaluation utilized in this course consists of sectional examinations. Attendance assumes a positive role in the learning process as it pertains to attitudes of learning and class participation. It also carries associative bonus points.

Evaluation of Student Progress

1. Examinations. There will be three sectional examinations, each worth 100 points, given at the points indicated in the schedule of assignments. These major exams may not be missed without penalty, except for emergency reasons and authorized college activity. Death in the immediate family and illness verified by a doctor's statement qualify as emergency reasons. See the make-up policy of the professor given below. Each exam will be sectional, i.e., it will focus upon material covered since the previous exam. Total: 300 points.

2. Final Examination. A final examination, with a value of 150 points, will be given at the end of the semester during the regular examination period on the day and at the time determined by the Registrar's Office. It will be a maximum of two hours in length and will be comprehensive in nature. Total: 150 points.

Class Policy on Make-Up Examinations

If it is necessary to miss a major exam, the professor should be notified **prior to** the exam period if the student is to avoid penalty. It is the intention of the professor that few or no make-up exams be given. In any event, **whether or not a make-up exam is allowed and whether or not a penalty is assessed is at the sole discretion of the professor.** Generally speaking, exams missed without appropriate excuse incur at least a letter grade or 10% penalty. It is to your advantage to be present at all regularly scheduled exam periods. In the event the student misses the final exam, the policies of this paragraph apply as well as the procedures involving incomplete grades. See below.

Criteria of Grade Assignment

There are 450 possible points for this course. Any student who accumulates 91-100% of the total will earn a grade of **A**, 81-90% a grade of **B**, 71-80% a grade of **C**, 61-70% a grade of **D**, and below 60% an **F**.

No provision is made in this course for "extra credit" to make up for deficiencies on required examinations. The focus of student performance is upon the mastery of the assigned materials. However, there will be an attendance bonus of 15 points given to students who have no absences in the course. A student with one absence will receive a bonus of 9 points. No points will be given for more than one absence. The first class period counts toward attendance. Whether the absences are excused or not does not matter with regard to the attendance bonus.

Final Course Grade

In accordance with the percentages given above, the final grade earned in the course will be representative of the quality of student work accomplished in terms of mastery of the material assigned. A grade of **A** will represent superior work, **B** above-average work, **C** average work, **D** below-average work, and **F** a failure to meet minimal course and proficiency requirements.

OTHER COURSE INFORMATION

Attendance

Mississippi College has standards regarding attendance of classes. These are given in the *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog*. The student is expected to attend classes regularly and punctually. The student should be fully aware of these policies. All classes missed count as absences, whether excused or unexcused. An automatic **F** is given if absences exceed 25% of the class meetings. This is the equivalent of 6 class meetings in a 22 period summer session class. There is an appeal process which may be instituted through the office of the appropriate dean.

In addition to the above, the student should be advised that excessive *unexcused* absences beyond the allowable limits (three clock hours, which is only **2 unexcused absences** in a 1 hour 40 minute summer class) **will penalize** the student's final percentage semester grade point average by **1% per unexcused absence**. To reiterate, **the student's final grade point average will be penalized for excessive unexcused absences**. The professor values class attendance. The days when one is *least* prepared are the days when one *most* needs to be in class. Habitual tardiness reflects either a poor attitude or poor self-discipline. In the event of tardiness, it is the student's responsibility to remind the professor of his/her attendance to insure that he/she is not marked absent. See below.

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete (grade of **I**) may be given to a student who has been hindered by circumstances beyond the student's control from completing work required for the course. The stipulations for awarding and removing an incomplete grade are given in the *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog*. The student should be familiar with the full statement of these stipulations. Briefly, the student should contact the professor to determine a date for completion of the work. An incomplete grade becomes an automatic **F** if not completed in a timely manner.

To remove an **I** grade, the student must obtain a form from the Registrar's Office, pay a fee, and give the form to the professor for submission of the new and final grade.

Tardiness

Students are expected to attend class regularly and punctually. Class attendance will be emphasized by this professor and roll will be checked at the beginning of each class period. **In the event of tardiness, it is the student's responsibility to notify the professor at the close of the particular class period in order to assure that she/he is not marked absent.** No recorded absences will be erased after the week in which they are recorded, if the tardy student fails to properly notify the professor.

Information on Student Appeals

Information on student appeals of academic matters is given generally in the *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog*. In general, appeals pertaining to a specific course begin with the instructor of the course and proceed in order through the department chair, the dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Application for Accommodation

As stated in the *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog*, Mississippi College does not discriminate in admission to its programs or activities. Should students need special accommodations due to learning, physical, psychological, or other disabilities, students should direct their inquiry to the Director of the Counseling and Career Development Center. For more information, the student is referred to the Mississippi College *The Tomahawk*, Students with Disabilities section.

Support Service References

The student should be advised that Mississippi College is a service oriented institution. Academic concerns may be addressed in appropriate order by the course instructor, the advisor, the department chair, the dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Other support services may be found through the Counseling and Career Development Center, through the Office of Financial Aid, etc., according to the specific area of need. The student is referred to the general catalog and to his/her advisor for referral of specific needs.

University Calendar

Important dates pertaining to the current academic session of Mississippi College are perhaps most easily consulted on the college website.

Other Considerations

Generally speaking, because they provide distraction and inhibit classroom dialogue, the professor does not allow the use of tape recorders in the classroom without permission. The exception is use needed because of medical disabilities as certified by a physician or use by international students where language difficulties may exist. Cell phones and beepers should be turned off while in the classroom. If a student chews gum, it should be done with the mouth closed. No meals are allowed in the classroom. The professor finds it very distracting for the student to be writing notes to, laughing, or talking with a neighbor during class about matters not pertaining to this class. The professor does not tolerate preparation being made for other classes while present in this class. The professor expects the student to be involved in the classroom proceedings with full freedom to contribute to the classroom learning experience.

A Final Word

Participation is expected in this class—it is not a spectator sport. Hence, class preparation and attendance assume some importance. While there may be a significant amount of reading to be completed in this course, it is meant to be an enjoyable course which offers some rather unique learning opportunities for the broadening of both knowledge and faith. It is also intended to develop the student's thinking and writing skills through inquiry and dialogue with the biblical text, the professor, and other students. The course will be, however, what **you the student** make it to be. The more one is willing to both receive and give, the more one will gain foundationally from the course.

For Your Convenience

The professor prefers to be called either **Big G** or **Dr. G**, whichever makes the student more comfortable.

Office--Provine Chapel, west side center

Office Telephone: 601-925-3291 Voice mail available
Home Telephone: 601-924-5403 Answer machine available
E-Mail: rgreene@mc.edu

Office Hours: The professor does not keep regular office hours in the summer time. The professor is available for student appointments either immediately following or prior to the regular class period *by prior appointment only*. The professor may be reached by telephone as indicated above.

BIBLE 120 READING ASSIGNMENTS

Big G, Summer, 2012

A Thought: An “A” student will likely read all of the assignments, a “B” student most of them, a “C” student some of them, a “D” student perhaps a few of them, and an “F” student probably none of them. Just a thought to contemplate.

I. THE BOOK WE CALL THE NEW TESTAMENT

Initial course orientation
Introductory matters of content and terminology
NOAB, “Preface to the Revised Standard Version,” xi-xvii
NOAB, “Introduction to the New Testament,” 1167-1170
NOAB, “How to Read the Bible with Understanding: The Diversity and Unity of the Scriptures,” 1515-1518
NOAB, “English Versions of the Bible: The Tyndale-King James Tradition,” 1551-1557
NOAB, “Survey: Post-Exilic Palestine,” 1542-1545
NOAB, “Survey: The Lands,” 1533-1535
NOAB, Maps 11, 12, 13, 14
NOAB, “Measures and Weights,” 1546-1547 [for reference]
NOAB, “Rulers During New Testament Times,” 1550 [for reference]

II. THE LAST DAYS OF JESUS

The Last Days of Jesus’ Ministry
Mark 11-15 (NOAB, 1229-1238)

The Resurrection Accounts
Mark 16 (NOAB, 1238-1239)
Matthew 28 (NOAB, 1212)
Luke 24 (NOAB, 1283-1285)
John 20-21 (NOAB, 1316-1318)

III. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHURCH

The Beginnings of the Church
Acts 1-15 (NOAB, 1319-1341)
Romans 1 (NOAB, 1361-1362)

The Developing Church and the Ministry of Paul
Galatians 1-2 (NOAB, 1410-1416)
Acts 15-28 (NOAB, 1341-1360)

The Value of Acts

IV. THE MINISTRY OF PAUL

An Apostolic Call
Galatians 1-2
Acts 9 (cf. Acts 22, 26)

“Three Missionary Journeys”
Acts 13-14
Acts 15.36-18.22
Acts 18.23-21.17

The Jerusalem Conference
Acts 15.1-35

A New Model: Two Campaigns
A Foundational Campaign
A Collection Campaign
Galatians 1-2
Romans 15
1 Corinthians 16
2 Corinthians 8-9

V. THE LETTERS OF PAUL

Paul’s Early Letters: The Thessalonian Correspondence
2 Thessalonians (NOAB, 1437-1439)
1 Thessalonians (NOAB, 1433-1436)

Paul’s Central Letters: The Corinthian Correspondence
1 Corinthians (NOAB, 1380-1397)
2 Corinthians (NOAB, 1398-1409)

Paul’s Central Letters: Galatians and Romans
Galatians (NOAB, 1410-1416)
Romans (NOAB, 1361-1379)

Paul’s Prison Letters: Philippians and Colossians; Philemon and Ephesians
Philippians (NOAB, 1423-1427)
Colossians (NOAB, 1428-1432)
Philemon (NOAB, 1453-1454)
Ephesians (NOAB, 1417-1422)

VI. UNDERSTANDING THE PERSON AND MINISTRY OF JESUS

The Gospels
NOAB, “Literary Forms in the Gospels,” 1530-1532
Methodological Considerations in Gospel Study

The Synoptic Problem
The Basic Contours of Jesus' Ministry

The Gospel of Mark and Mighty Works
Mark 1-8 (NOAB, 1213-1225)
Mark 9-16 (NOAB, 1225-1239)
Jesus' Mighty Works

The Gospel of Matthew and Jesus' Teachings
Matthew 1-13 (NOAB, 1171-1189)
Matthew 14-28 (NOAB, 1189-1212)
Jesus' Teachings

The Gospel of Luke; Parables
Luke 1-9, 19-24 (NOAB, 1240-1259; 1273-1285)
Selected parables of Jesus

The Gospel of John
John 1-12—The Book of Signs (NOAB, 1286-1307)
John 13-21—The Book of Jesus' Passion (NOAB, 1307-1318)

VII. UNDERSTANDING THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Development of the Church

Some Pastoral Concerns
1 Timothy—Pastoral Concerns (NOAB, 1440-1445)
Titus (NOAB, 1450-1452)

Refuting Errors in Teaching
2 Peter—Promise of Christ's Return (NOAB, 1482-1483)
Jude—Contention for the Faith (NOAB, 1491-1492)
1, 2, 3 John—Concerns for Spiritual Well-Being (NOAB, 1484-1490)

The Practice of Faith
James (Jacob): Faith in Action (NOAB, 1469-1473)

Responding to Persecution
Hebrews—Preeminence of Christian Faith (NOAB, 1455-1468)
1 Peter—Epistle of Hope (NOAB, 1474-1479)
Revelation—Judgment and the Victory of God (NOAB, 1493-1514)

Exam 1—Tuesday, July 10 (last part of period)

Exam 2, Wednesday, July 18 (last part of period)

Exam 3, Thursday, July 26 (last part of period)

FINAL EXAM—Thursday, August 2, 8-9:40 A.M.