

JESUS IN HISTORY & TRADITION

CC 348 (32695)
RS 335 (44565)

Fall, 2009
TTh 2-3:30, WAG 10

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Office Hours: Tues 3:30-5pm & Wed. 2-3:30 or by appointment



COURSE GOALS: This course will address two basic questions of historical inquiry: What can we know about the historical figure of Jesus? and How did the gospels tradition develop in the first centuries of the Christian movement? The course is designed to acquaint students with the major critical issues, scholarly debates, and historical methods in studying the development of the Christian tradition regarding the figure of Jesus. Historical backgrounds regarding prevailing religious beliefs and expectations within first century Jewish and Graeco-Roman religious cultures will establish the context for understanding the stories about Jesus. The course will focus on literary- and historical-critical methods of analyzing the Christian gospels and related materials. Special attention will be paid to pathways of literary and theological development from the earliest oral transmission to more elaborated forms of expression in various early Christian communities and traditions in order to understand how they came to present the story of Jesus of Nazareth.

The main focus of the course will be on the canonical gospels found in the New Testament. The course will also introduce students to some of the non-canonical writings -- including the apocryphal gospels -- and their historical implications. Critical and historical analysis relating both to the environment and to the growth of Christian movement will provide context for understanding the developing images of Jesus. Students who wish to incorporate work in the Greek New Testament may consult with the instructor.

COURSE READINGS: The primary text for the course will be the Gospels themselves. Each student, therefore, should have access to a good, modern version of the New Testament (and preferably the entire Bible with Apocrypha). The recommended text is the **New Revised Standard Version** (NRSV), but other reliable versions (such as, the Revised Standard Version or the New English Bible) are also acceptable. A basic study tool (which is required) to be used for critical analysis of the gospels is *Gospel Parallels*. By the time the course is finished you should have read all four of the canonical Gospels.

Readings in secondary studies for each unit of the course will provide a wide range of methods and approaches to the problems being addressed in the study of the Gospels and their development.

Reading assignments are listed on the accompanying syllabus; students should prepare each assignment prior to the class period on the day for which it is listed.



WRITING REQUIREMENTS: This is a Substantial Writing Component course. There are no prerequisites; however, CC/RS 318: *The Rise of Christianity* or CC/RS 304c: *Introduction to the New Testament* are recommended. All work will be based on the English text of the New Testament.

The course will combine lecture and discussion format and students will be expected to participate actively. There will be three short (5 pages each) analytical essays. Each essay will analyze selected passages from the gospels and related literature using critical tools learned in the course. The topic and approach for each essay assignment will be distributed and discussed in class (as noted on the syllabus).

Each student will also write a final research paper (10-12 pages), using standard conventions of style and referencing. The topic and research design will be developed by each student in consultation with the instructor based on individual topics of interest related to the course materials and methods. Use of incremental drafts in the writing is encouraged.

Percent of course grade determined by writing assignments: 90%.

GRADING: Students will be evaluated on the basis of (a) regular attendance and preparedness in class meetings (10%), and completion of three short (5-6 pages) essays (20% each) and a final paper (30%). There is *no* Final Exam in this class. Grading will be by letter grade only (not on a plus/minus basis). **Due dates for all written assignments are listed on the syllabus and must be observed, unless changed by the instructor.**

PLEASE NOTE: Students *must* complete and submit for a grade *all* written assignments in order to receive credit for the course.

COURSEBOOKS

- BIBLE** recommended: *Harper Collins Study Bible* (NRSV)
- GP** required: *Gospel Parallels*, ed. by B. Throckmorton, 4th edition (NRSV)
- DOCUMENTS** required: Cartlidge & Dungan, *Documents for the Study of the Gospels*, rev. ed.
- JIH** required: H.C. Kee, *Jesus in History*, 2nd ed.
- TSG** required: K.F. Nickel, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2nd ed.
- SJ** required: L.M. White, *Scripting Jesus* (CD version)

- FJTC** recommended: L.M. White, *From Jesus to Christianity* (pb; Harper, 2004).

- *ABD** on reserve/reference section: *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*



SYLLABUS OF UNITS AND READINGS

UNIT I. JESUS IN HISTORY AND TRADITION

A. ENTERING THE WORLD OF JESUS

- 8/27 1. Course Introduction: *Jesus is the Question*
 Kee, JIH, 11-40
 White, FJTC 11-39 + 67-92 (recommended)

- 9/1 2. The Nature of the Sources
 Kee, JIH, 41-75
 White, SJ, chapter 1 (+ Appendix A&B)
 Nickle, TSG 1-18 (optional)

B. MESSIAH & SON OF GOD: Images in Culture and Tradition

- 9/3 &
9/8 1. Messianic Expectations in Early Judaism
 White, SJ, chapters 2-3
 DOCUMENTS, 169-179
- 9/10 &
9/15 2. Divine Wisdom and Savior: Hellenistic Images
 White, SJ, chapter 4-5
 DOCUMENTS, 1-16, 185-239, 247-290

9/17 FIRST ASSIGNMENT DISCUSSION — Essay Due at Class time on 9/29

UNIT II. THE FORMATION OF GOSPEL STORIES

A. COMPONENTS OF THE JESUS-TRADITION 1: THE PASSION

- 9/17 1. Historical Background
 White, SJ chapter 6
- 9/22 2. The Earliest Oral Traditions
 NT: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34; 15:3-11
 Nickle, TSG, 18-39
 White, SJ chapter 7
- 9/24 3. The Formation of the Passion Narrative
 GP §§ 231-253 + pp. 188-190 **[NB below]**
 White, SJ chapter 8 (+ Appendix C)

NB: For all GP listings, instead of page numbers the assignment is given according to standard designations of passages or pericope numbering using the symbol § or §§ (for multiple passages).

B. COMPONENTS OF THE JESUS-TRADITION 2: MIRACLES & SAYINGS

- 9/29 &
10/1 1. The Miracle Worker
 DOCUMENTS, 151-164
 GP §§ 45-48, 52, 70-71, 105-107, 112, 118

10/6 DISCUSSION OF ASSIGNMENT 2 — Essay due at Class time on 10/15

- 10/8 -
10/13 2. Teacher, Sage, and Prophet
 DOCUMENTS, 137-150
 GP §§ 90-103, 129-136, 172-174, 204-205

10/15	DISCUSSION OF ASSIGNMENT 3 — Essay due at Class time on 10/27
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C. THE BIRTH NARRATIVES

10/ 15 & 10/20

DOCUMENTS, 129-136
 GP §§1-8 + pp. 1-7
 White, SJ chapters 11-12

UNIT III. THE GOSPELS AND THEIR IMAGES OF JESUS**A. GOSPEL OF MARK: The Misunderstood Messiah**

10/22 – 10/29

NT: Gospel of Mark
 Kee, JIH, 121-165
 Nickle, TSG, 63-92
 White, SJ chapter 13
 *ABD IV:541-559

B. THE Q TRADITION: The Prophet, Sophia's Child

11/3

Text: White, SJ Appendix D
 White, SJ chapter 14
 Kee, JIH 74-115

C. GOSPEL OF MATTHEW: The Righteousness Teacher of Torah

11/5 - 11/10

NT: Gospel of Matthew
 Kee, JIH, 166-185
 Nickle, TSG, 103-133
 White, SJ chapter 15
 *ABD IV:618-643

D. GOSPEL OF LUKE (& ACTS): The Martyred Sage

11/12 - 11/17

NT: Luke + Acts 1-7
 Kee, JIH, 186-212
 Nickle, TSG, 135-163
 White, SJ chapter 16
 *ABD IV:397-420

E. THE GOSPELS OF JOHN & THOMAS: The Man from Heaven

11/19-11/24 NT: Gospel of John + 1 John (Epistle)
DOCUMENTS 19-29 (The Gospel of Thomas)
Kee, JIH, 213-257 + 260-265
White, SJ chapter 17
*ABD III:883-886 + 912-931 (on 1 John see also ABD III:900-912)
*ABD VI:535-540

UNIT IV. THE OTHER GOSPELS & THE QUEST FOR "ORTHODOXY"

12/1-3 DOCUMENTS 86-90; 101-110
White, SJ chapter 18
Kee, JIH 246-275

12/9 Final Papers Due at noon (turn in at WAG 212)



OTHER UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS AND RESOURCES
pertinent to Course Work for CC 348 / RS 335 -W

1. Scholastic dishonesty:

Scholastic dishonesty on any graded assignment will result in an F.
Scholastic dishonesty includes any kind of cheating, including plagiarism; if you are
unsure about the exact definition you should consult the General information catalogue,
Appendix, Section 11-802, online at:
http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi01-02/app/appc11.html.

2. Students with special needs:

The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic
accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the
Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 or 471-4641, or the information is available online
at:
http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/ssd/index.html.

3. The Writing Center:

This is a substantial writing component course, and we will take special interest in
improving students' writing skills through the various written assignments. You should
consult the syllabus for the due dates and the relative values of each writing assignment. If
you wish, you may take advantage of the University's Writing Center, which provides peer
counselors and assistance in writing. For more information on the Writing Center online:
http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu/index.php

4. Religious holidays:

Students can make up work missed for a religious holiday if they bring a request and
documentation of the holiday fourteen days ahead of time.