



TYNDALE

• SEMINARY •

Course Syllabus

**SPRING SUMMER 2019
PRISON EPISTLES
NEWT 0722 W1**

**MAY 6 – JULY 26
ONLINE**

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Office Hours: By appointment

Access course material at <http://classes.tyndale.ca/>
Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.
[Learn how to access and forward emails to your personal account.](#)

The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The common thread of Paul's imprisonment ties Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon together as the "Prison Epistles." This course will examine these four epistles and closely explore their historical circumstances, literary composition, rhetorical style and theological framework. Special attention will be paid to the unique contribution that each epistle makes to Christian theology and mission.

Prerequisites: BIBL 0501

Recommended: NEWT 0522

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Describe and differentiate the historical circumstances surrounding the composition of Paul's Prison Epistles with particular attention to their authorship and recipients and comparatively analyze the place of the epistles in the larger cultural world.
2. Analyze the literary context of these letters in terms of epistolary structure and rhetorical features in order to construct text meaning.
3. Identify the theological emphases of these biblical texts in relation to Pauline topics such as Christology, salvation, missiology, eschatology and ecclesiology and assess them in light of current studies.
4. Determine the contemporary relevance of these biblical texts for the support of individual faith development and congregation's corporate witness.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING & VIEWING

Bible (a translation suitable for study, e.g., NIV, NRSV, NASB, ESV)

Hoehner, Harold W., Philip Wesley Comfort, and Peter H. Davids. *Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Philemon*. Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, 16. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008.

Online Course Materials:

- Video messages
- Powerpoint lectures
- Two of four articles
- Supplementary documents
- Rubrics

STEP Bible - www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Gray, Patrick. *Opening Paul's Letters: A Reader's Guide to Genre and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2012.

MacDonald, Margaret Y. *The Pauline Churches: A Socio-historical Study of Institutionalization in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. p.10-158.

Witherington, Ben. *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Letters*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007.

Witherington, Ben. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. **Forum Participation and Responses:** Due weekly from May 13 – July 28; 20% of final grade.

Attendance in this course is demonstrated by regular log-ins and up-to-date participation in forums.

Participation in and contribution to weekly Forums is a mandatory¹ but an encouraging and helpful part of the educative quality of the student experience. Students' responses to and discussion of a weekly forum question should exhibit not only assimilation of the assigned weekly reading and the lecture material but analysis, synthesis and appraisal critical thinking skills. This work will display Learning Outcomes #1, 2.

The following is a suggested participation schedule:

- Monday – read the forum question and begin the assigned readings.
- Tuesday – complete the readings and begin to formulate a response to the forum question.
- Wednesday – post your initial response to the forum question.
- Thursday – respond to the responses of your classmates and start/join discussion threads.
- Friday – do further reading, reflection and response.

Due to the nature of the course, each member is expected to participate fully in online discussions and in the practical dimension of the course. **Students participating in fewer than 7** of the 11 online discussions **will not pass the course**.

2. **Group Collaboration & Group Forum Submission:** 20% of final grade.

¹ "Three or more unexcused absences from a semester-based course, or one day or more from an intensive course, will constitute grounds for failing that course. Excused absences include the following: death in the family, hospitalization of yourself or a member of your immediate family or a prolonged illness for which you require treatment by a physician. Excused absences will not be granted for late registration, ministry responsibilities, mission trips, etc." *Seminary Academic Policies, Procedures and Notices, Classroom Expectations and Guidelines, Attendance Policy*, 1.

This course is divided into study sections of which sections two (2), four (4) and five (5) cover the epistles of Colossians, Ephesians and Philippians respectively. Students will be assigned to a group for one of these three sections. **The group will post a collaborative response to a specific question on the subject of that section.** One member of your group will serve as clerk to perform final collating work for the group's submission (s/he will receive up to 2% toward Group Collaboration as per the group and facilitator's evaluation).

At the start of each section a hermeneutical question will be posted to the group. In the **first week** of your section, complete the readings and formulate your 50-100 word response to the discussion question and post to your group's members. The **next week** read through all the responses of the group members and review and adjust your initial response in light of further study. Then by the end of that section's second week post to the Course Instructor, your Group's clerk and your group members: concisely list the points that you think should be in the Group Submission AND the points that you think should not be in the Group Submission – give fair reasons where necessary. Your list should be to the point, do not be wordy! In the section's **final week** the clerk is responsible for compiling a representative consensus-response, posting it first to the group and pending no serious objections then posting it to the forum by the end of the week (Friday) for the entire class to read. Please follow these instructions carefully, your marks depend on it!

Each group is responsible to interact fairly, critically and thoughtfully. It is expected that all submissions show excellent preparation, offers analysis, synthesis and evaluation of material and contributes significantly to ongoing discussion. This work will display Learning Outcome #4.

- 3. Analysis Papers:** Due dates - May 19, if chosen; June 9, mandatory; June 16, if chosen; July 14, if chosen; 20% of final grade.

The study sections on Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians will also have a respective article as assigned reading. **You will respond to two (2)** of the four articles. **Everyone is required** to respond to the article on Philemon, the second is a response of **your choosing** to one of the remaining three articles. You are not to submit an Analysis Paper when you are working on your Group Forum Submission. For your Analysis Paper provide careful and thorough examinations of the basic theological issues(s) at stake. Evaluate critically the relative strengths and weaknesses of the author's case. Do not merely summarize, but rather seek to express the dominant issues and argument of the work. The review should be 5-6 pages in length, double-spaced. This work will display Learning Outcome #3. **You are responsible for keeping track of when your papers are due.**

- 4. Research Essay:** Due on August 12; 40% of final grade

Students will demonstrate their learning by writing an exegetical research essay 10-15 pages in length, double-spaced. The essay should interpret a passage in one of the

Prison Epistles. The essay should demonstrate a thorough analytic analysis of primary material, an unbiased interaction with secondary sources, and should embody a conceptual argument in which questions emerging from the text are explored in fairness, critically and at length. Papers will be graded on thoroughness, depth of research and organization of the paper. This work will display Learning Outcomes #1-4.

D. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

E. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Forum Participation & Responses	20 %
Group Collaboration & Group Forum Submission	20 % (10%+10%)
Analysis Papers	20 % (10%+10%)
Research Essay	40 %
Total Grade	100 %

F. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Your work should demonstrate the following characteristics:

1. Write in full and grammatically correct sentences.
2. When using secondary sources (and you will for your papers!) be sure to have footnotes and a bibliography. For proper citation style, consult the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.44 to 10.48](#) and [14.238 to 14.241](#).
3. Do not plagiarize. If you borrow ideas or distinctive phrases, you must acknowledge your sources properly. If you are ever in doubt, it is better to acknowledge your source.

4. Thoroughly proofread your papers in order to reduce errors of grammar, spelling or logic. Do not rely on spell check alone.
5. Extensions may be granted only at the discretion of the professor but not “beyond the last day of exams for the semester.” Typically, extensions will only be given for sickness or family emergencies. In addition, students must make their extension request with proper reason no less than three days from before the due date. Late assignments will be penalized according to Tyndale policy, “... papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof ...”
6. All assignments will be graded according to the Academic Grading System listed in the Seminary’s academic calendar.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students are encouraged to consult [writing resources](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Office (Room B302; aa@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

G. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Section	Week	Date	Lesson	Readings	Assignment Due
One	1	6 May	Situating Paul's Prison Epistles & Epistolographic Style	Acts 16:19-40; 18:12-17; 21-28; Cursory Reading of Prison Epistles	
Two	2	13 May	Colossians I	Colossians 1:1-2:5 CBC, 229-268	Forum Response
	3	20 May	Colossians II	Colossians 2:6-3:4 CBC, 268-284	(1) Analysis Paper - if chosen (2) Forum Response
	4	27 May	Colossians III	Colossians 3:5-4:18 CBC, 284-310	(1) Group 1 Forum Submission (2) Forum Response
Three	5	3 June	Philemon	Philemon 1-25 CBC, 417-436	(1) Analysis Paper - Mandatory (2) Forum Response
Four	6	10 June	Ephesians I	Ephesians 1:1-2:22 CBC, 3-63	Forum Response
	7	17 June	Ephesians I	Ephesians 3:1-4:32 CBC, 63-99	(1) Analysis Paper - if chosen (2) Forum Response
	8	24 June	Ephesians III	Ephesians 5:1-6:24 CBC, 99-135	(1) Group 2 Forum Submission

					(2) Forum Response
Five	9	1 July	Philippians I	Philippians 1:1-2:11 CBC, 141-180	Forum Response
	10	8 July	Philippians II	Philippians 2:12-3:21 CBC, 180-211	(1) Analysis Paper - if chosen (2) Forum Response
	11	15 July	Philippians III	Philippians 4:1-23 CBC, 212-223	(1) Group 3 Forum Submission (2) Forum Response
Six	12	22 July	Prison Epistles in Retrospect		Forum Response
	15	12 August			Research Essay

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Tyndale Library supports this course with [e-journals](#), [e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).)

Bockmuehl, Markus. *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians*. Peabody, Ma: Hendrickson, 1998.

Bruce, F.F. [The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, to the Ephesians. NICNT](#). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984.

Caird, G.B. *Paul's Letters from Prison. New Clarendon Bible*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1976.

Dunn, James D.G. *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. NIGTC*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.

Fee, Gordon. [Paul's Letter to the Philippians. NICNT](#). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Gray, Patrick. *Opening Paul's Letters: A Reader's Guide to Genre and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2012.

Hoehner, Harold W., Philip Wesley Comfort, and Peter H. Davids. *Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Philemon*. Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, 16. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008.

Lincoln, A.T. *Ephesians*. 42 of WBC. Dallas: Word, 1990.

MacDonald, Margaret Y. *The Pauline Churches: A Socio-historical Study of Institutionalization in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. p.10-158.

Thompson, Marianne Meye. *Colossians & Philemon*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

Witherington, Ben. *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Letters*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007.

Witherington, Ben. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.