

“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.”

Semester, Year	SPRING/SUMMER, 2026
Course Title	PRISON EPISTLES
Course Code	NEWT 0722 1S
Date	From June 22, 2026 to June 26, 2026 Monday to Friday
Time	From 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Delivery Format	SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Class information	The classes will be LIVESTREAMED every day
Instructor	JOHN MOON, PhD Email: johnmoon@tyndale.ca (Email correspondence: a response can be expected within 1-3 business days.)
Office Hours	By appointment only.
Course Materials	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

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.

Prerequisite: BIBL 0501. Recommended: NEWT 0522.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. interpret the Prison Epistles in their literary and historical contexts;
2. evaluate major theological themes in the Prison Epistles;
3. critically engage and assess scholarly interpretations;
4. apply the message of the Prison Epistles to contemporary contexts;
5. construct and communicate a coherent exegetical and theological argument.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Brown, Jeannine K. [*Philippians*](#). Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2022.

Campbell, Constantine R. [*The Letter to the Ephesians*](#). Pillar New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2023.

Thompson, Alan J. [*Colossians and Philemon*](#). Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2022.

Various readings posted on Moodle (classes.tyndale.ca; listed in Section IV below)

An English translation of the Bible (e.g., NRSV, NIV, ESV), not a paraphrase. To maximize the benefit from the readings and lectures, students are encouraged to read the Prison Epistles beforehand.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

McKnight, Scot, Lynn H. Cohick, and Nijay K. Gupta, eds. [*Dictionary of Paul and His Letters: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*](#). Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2023.

Tyndale recommends [STEPBible](#) – 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](#).

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Class participation (10%)

Class discussions are related to all the Learning Outcomes. Class discussion will be a regular part of the course, and its purpose is to foster our ability to think critically about issues, engage charitably with others, and stretch our thinking. Discussions will arise from the lecture material and some of the required readings. These **required readings** are **marked with an asterisk (*)**, and students are expected to come to class able to summarize the argument (e.g., in a paragraph), with one point of appreciation and one point of critical evaluation. This summary and evaluation will not be submitted but is intended as an aid for class discussion. Students will get the most out of this course—and from one another—if they participate. Students will thus be graded on attendance, as well as the frequency and relevance of their contributions. See the course website for the grading rubric.

2. Reading Journal: due July 31 (20%)

This assignment is related to Learning Outcomes #1, #2, #3, and #4. This Reading Journal is designed to help you engage carefully and critically with the three required commentaries for this course (by Thompson, Campbell, and Brown). **For each commentary**, students will complete **three journal entries (250-350 words per entry)**, with each entry based on a major section in the commentary (see table below; e.g., Col. 2:6-23). For each commentary, students must write one of their entries on the major section marked with an asterisk (*) (Col. 1:1-2:5; Eph. 1:1-2:3; Phil. 1:27 – 2:11), as these contain a key passage for the letter (Col. 1:15-20; Eph. 1:3-14; Phil. 2:5-11). Students may then choose their other two journal entries for that commentary from the remaining options. **In total**, students will write **nine journal entries** for the three commentaries (**2,250-3,150 words**).

Commentary	Major Sections
Colossians/Philemon (Thompson)	*Col. 1:1-2:5 / 2:6-23 / 3:1-4:6 / Phlm. 1-25
Ephesians (Campbell)	*1:1-2:3 / 2:1-2:22 / 3:1-2:21 / 4:1-3:32 / 5:1-2:20 + 6:10-2:24 / 5:21-6:9
Philippians (Brown)	1:1-2:6 / *1:27-2:11 / 2:12-3:0 / 3:1-4:1 / 4:2-2:3

For each entry, (1) explain the *context and content* of the major section. What is the section about? How does it fit into the overall message of the letter? Spend no more than 2-3 sentences on this. (2) Explain what you found *significant or interesting* in the commentary, and why. Here you might explain how the commentary illuminates either Paul's letter (e.g., a difficult passage or a debated issue) or a pastoral issue (e.g., something that is relevant to you,

the church, or the church's engagement with the world). (3) Explain what you found *lacking or unpersuasive*, and why. Does the commentary leave you with any lingering questions?

In explaining the above, *students must cite the relevant commentary (page number only)*. Include a word count at the end of each journal entry. Use 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, and double-space. Submit as a single pdf document through the course website (classes.tyndale.ca) (cf. section D. General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work, esp. on Turnitin). See the course website for the grading rubric.

3. Cultural Engagement Paper: due July 10 (30%)

This assignment is related to Learning Outcomes #2, #4, and #5. In no more than **1,200 words**, students will engage with a cultural text through the lens of a theme or passage from the Prison Epistles. The purpose of this assignment is to grow in our ability to communicate the gospel in a pluralistic world—to Christian and non-Christian alike. First, choose a cultural text that addresses a human problem. This text may be a theme from another worldview (e.g., “peace” in ancient Stoicism, “happiness” in modern psychology), a book (whether fiction or non-fiction; e.g., Byung-Chul Han’s, *The Burnout Society*), an influencer on social media, a song, a film, etc. Second, spend the first 500 words explaining this cultural text. In this text, what is the problem and solution? As you explain your text, give a sympathetic description of how it “works” before evaluating it; in other words, respect its integrity and inner logic. For example, explain how “peace” fits in the logic of Stoic thought; or explain how a song uses lyrics, images, tone, etc. to lead a listener to a destination; or explain how a film solves a problem through its plot, character development, and themes. As you examine your text, you might ask what your text assumes about what it means to be human; about the world; about god/God and the nature of salvation. And then third, spend the remaining 500-700 words evaluating your cultural text through the lens of a related theme or passage in the Prison Epistles. How would Paul agree and disagree with your cultural text? In addition, are there any challenges to applying Paul’s message today? How might you overcome these challenges to communicate his message to a modern audience?

Include a word count at the end. Use 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, and double-space. Submit as a pdf through the course website (classes.tyndale.ca) (cf. section D. General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work, esp. on Turnitin). See the course website for a grading rubric.

4. Research Essay: due August 17 (40%)

This assignment is related to potentially all the Learning Outcomes. Students will have an opportunity to critically investigate a question of interest related to the Prison Epistles, thereby developing their skills in research and exegesis. Students may choose the same theme or passage from the Prison Epistles as their Cultural Engagement Paper above.

See the course website for a grading rubric and “Tips for Writing a Research Paper” (under “General Course Information”)—these tips include advice on how to find a research topic, narrow down to a research question, structure your essay, etc. For this course, *The Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (see “B. Supplementary/Recommended Reading”) may be especially helpful for finding a research topic. Papers should be **9-11 pages** in length (excluding bibliography and title page). Use 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, and double-space. Submit as a pdf through Moodle (classes.tyndale.ca) (cf. section H. General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work, esp. on Turnitin).

Late Policy:

Late assignments will incur a penalty of **1% per business day**.

Extensions will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, the hospitalization of yourself or a member of your immediate family, or an illness for which you require treatment by a physician. Reference to heavy workload, other assignments, professional or ministry obligations or holidays do not constitute legitimate grounds for an extension.

All assignments must be handed in by August 28, 2026. No assignments will be accepted after that date, unless the student has a valid reason for an extension. In that case, the student must apply for an extension to the Registrar and not to the professor.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	%
1. Class Participation		10%
2. Reading Journal	Jul. 31	20%
3. Cultural Engagement Paper	Jul. 10	30%
4. Research Essay	Aug. 17	40%
Total Grade		100%

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

PRIOR TO START OF CLASS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Readings below marked with an asterisk (*): read and take notes (short paragraph summary, one point in agreement/disagreement) prior to the start of class. ○ Thompson (Colossians and Philemon), Campbell (Ephesians), Brown (Philippians): as much as possible, read these prior to the start of class. Any unfinished readings may be completed after the one-week intensive. • Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For your research essay, narrow down from a research topic to a research question, and build a preliminary bibliography. • Late registrants are responsible for the consequences of partial preparation. 		
DAY ONE		
Session	Lecture	Assigned Readings (on Moodle)
#1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Introduction • Introduction to Colossians • Colossians 1:1-23 	Recommended/optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew T. Lincoln and A. J. M. Wedderburn, <i>The Theology of the Later Pauline Letters</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 12-20 (“The Background of Colossians”).
#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colossians 1:24–3:17 	
DAY TWO		
#1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colossians 3:18–4:18 • Conclusion to Colossians • Introduction to Ephesians 	
#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ephesians 1:1–2:10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Markus Barth, <i>Ephesians</i> (AB34; New York: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 105-9 (“Election in Christ vs. Determinism”) • *Harold Hoehner, <i>Ephesians</i> (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), pp. 188-93 (“A Discussion of the Doctrine of Election”) • *Bible: compare Rom. 8:29-30 with Eph. 1:3-14. How are they similar and different?

DAY THREE		
#1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ephesians 2:11–4:16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Bible: Compare Gal. 3:15–4:7; Rom. 9:1-33; 11:1-36; and Eph. 2:11-22. How do God’s people in Christ relate to Israel in each? <p>Recommended/optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew T. Lincoln, “The Church and Israel in Ephesians 2” <i>CBQ</i> 49 (1987): 605-24. Lionel J. Windsor, <i>Reading Ephesians and Colossians after Supersessionism: Christ’s Mission through Israel to the Nations</i> (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2017), pp. 111-158 (“Christ’s Reconciliation of Israel and the Nations (Ephesians 2)”)
#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ephesians 4:17–6:24 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Lynn H. Cohick, “Loving and Submitting to One Another in Marriage: Ephesians 5:21-33 and Colossians 3:18-19,” in <i>Discovering Biblical Equality: Biblical, Theological, Cultural & Practical Perspectives</i> (3d ed.; ed. Ronald W. Pierce, Cynthia Long Westfall, and Christa L. McKirkland; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2021), 185-204. *George W. Knight III, “Husbands and Wives as Analogues of Christ and the Church: Ephesians 5:21-33 and Colossians 3:18-19,” in <i>Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism</i> (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Wheaton: Crossway, 2021), pp. 215-232. Be ready to compare Cohick and Knight on Eph. 5:21-33. <p>Recommended/optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carolyn Osiek and Margaret Y. MacDonald, <i>A Woman’s Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity</i> (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), pp. 118-43 (“Ephesians 5 and the Politics of Marriage”)

DAY FOUR		
#1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion to Ephesians • Philemon • Introduction to Philippians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *John M. G. Barclay, “Paul, Philemon and the Dilemma of Christian Slave-Ownership,” <i>NTS</i> 37 (1991): 161-86. <p>Recommended/optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wayne A. Meeks, “The ‘Haustafeln’ and American Slavery: A Hermeneutical Challenge,” in <i>Theology and Ethics in Paul and His Interpreters: Essays in Honor of Victor Paul Furnish</i> (ed. Eugene H. Lovering Jr. and Jerry L. Sumney; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), pp. 232-53.
#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippians 1:1–2:11 	
DAY FIVE		
#1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippians 2:12–4:23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *N. T. Wright, “Paul’s Gospel and Caesar’s Empire,” in <i>Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation</i> (ed. Richard A. Horsley; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000), 160-83. • *Lynn H. Cohick, “Philippians and Empire: Paul’s Engagement with Imperialism and the Imperial Cult,” in <i>Jesus is Lord, Caesar is Not: Evaluating Empire in New Testament Studies</i> (ed. Scot McKnight and Joseph B. Modica; Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2013), pp. 166-82. • Based on the readings by Wright and Cohick, how does Philippians relate to the Roman imperial cult?
#2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion to Philippians • Course Conclusion 	
POST-CLASS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment due July 10: Cultural Engagement Paper (30%) • Assignment due July 31: Reading Journal (20%) • Assignment due August 17 (Research Essay (40%)) 		

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Commentaries on Colossians and Philemon:

- Barclay, John M. G. *Colossians and Philemon*. T&T Clark Study Guides. New York: T&T Clark, 2004.
- Bird, Michael F. *Colossians and Philemon*. NCCS. Eugene: Cascade, 2009.
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- Dunn, James D. G. *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014.
- Garland, David E. *Colossians and Philemon*. NIVAC. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.
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VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. 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.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTREAM INTERACTION (*SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE ONLY*)

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

**exceptions with permission from professor*

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each assignment on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

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 (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details.

For proper citation style, consult [Citation Guides](#) for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#).

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.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (seminaryoffice@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy

All papers and course assignments must be submitted by the due dates indicated in the course syllabus. Unless the instructor already has a policy on grading late papers in the course syllabus, grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from "A+" to "A-," from "B" to "C+"). Please note that some programs, such as cohort-based or intensive courses, may follow a different policy due to the nature of the program.

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the [Extension Request Form](#). The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete ("I") may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of "F" will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. 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.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

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

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course's grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or classes.tyndale.ca. For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary [Grading System & Scale](#).