



TYNDALE
Seminary

Course Syllabus

1 CORINTHIANS: PAUL'S LETTER TO A COMMUNITY IN CHAOS NEWT 0723

Fall 2011

TUESDAYS, 8:30-11:20 AM

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Office Location: room 2004

Office Hours: Mon. 4-5 pm; Tues. 2-5 pm

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Although we sometimes idealize the first-century church, Paul's first letter to the Corinthians reveals a community in chaos. This course examines the various problems in the Corinthian church and how Paul tried to address those issues, all in the context of the first-century world. Along the way we will ask how Paul's treatment of factionalism, sexuality and marriage, communion, charismatic gifts, and other issues can help us to navigate life and leadership today.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course students receiving a "B" grade should be able to:

- reproduce a detailed outline of 1 Corinthians;
- outline and critically evaluate different models of the Corinthian community and its thought, explaining how these models affect our reading of the letter;
- discuss the course of Paul's relationship with the Corinthian church, drawing on both 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians;
- outline Paul's theological story as it appears in 1 Corinthians and explain (using examples) the implications Paul draws from that story for the Corinthians' lives;
- accurately interpret a passage from first Corinthians, paying attention to:
 - historical, cultural, and social context;
 - the nature of the issues in Corinth;

- the nature and structure of Paul's rhetoric in the passage;
- the place of the passage in Paul's larger argument in the letter;
- the contribution of the letter to Paul's overall message;
- the use of OT quotations, allusions, or motifs;
- the implications of the passage for contemporary church life.
- identify and discuss the hermeneutical issues involved in allowing our contemporary lives to be shaped by Paul's teaching to the ancient Corinthians.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED TEXTS

Witherington, Ben III. *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995. ISBN 0802801447

Kovacs, Judith L. *1 Corinthians: Interpreted by Early Christian Commentators*. The Church's Bible. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005. ISBN 080282577X

B. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

There are four principles of learning that undergird the assignments for this course. *First, we learn best when we put new knowledge to use right away.* Rather than simply feeding information back to an instructor, we learn best when we are engaged in a project or problem that requires us to apply our new skills and information. So, throughout this course we will focus on applying our new knowledge in the interpretation of NT passages.

Second, we learn better when we acquire new knowledge in the context of the same activities we will pursue outside the course. If we learn by pursuing artificial "textbook" problems, then we will not necessarily transfer that knowledge into real-world contexts. On the other hand, if we practice real-world activities from the beginning, then we are likely to use new skills and information beyond the course. Although students will put their Seminary education to use in many different ways, we will all be involved somehow in reading and interpreting Scripture. This activity is, in many ways, the common core of our multi-faceted roles in God's kingdom. It is central to our personal devotional lives, our leading of small groups, our strategizing about community outreach, our preaching, our teaching, our spiritual direction, our counseling, our visiting of prisoners, our creation of music and works of art, etc. So as we learn about the New Testament in its context, we will focus at each stage on how this new knowledge helps us to interpret specific passages in each biblical book.

Third, we learn best when we are pursuing questions we form for ourselves, rather than questions that are set for us by an instructor. When we help to set the direction of our own learning, we are immediately more motivated and more likely to connect what we learn with other areas of knowledge. So students will decide for themselves what questions they want to make the focus of their blog discussions and what passage they want to examine in their final interpretation essay.

Fourth, we learn best when we help one another grapple with questions. Much of the North American educational system is oriented toward isolated, individual learning. This fosters a competitive, status-driven mindset in which I evaluate my learning based on my victory over others (“top-of-the-class”) and based on self-centred external rewards (“grades” and a good transcript). The problem is that both of these tendencies run directly counter to the values of God's kingdom in which we are called to “build up” the community and sacrifice our own status for the sake of others. So most of your learning activities in this course will consist of co-operative, group activities. You will not just be graded on your own contribution. You will also be graded on how further the learning of others in your group. This does not mean being an “expert” and dispensing knowledge. It also means helping your group members to ask good questions. In many cases we build others up best by allowing *them* to teach *us*. So part of your group assignments will also involve inviting your group members to reflect on your own suggestions—what is strong and what is missing or incorrect. This is often a threatening experience for all of us, particularly in such an individualistic society.

Group Discussion	Students will participate in small- and large-group discussions in class. These discussions will be based in part on reading questions set by the instructor. Students are expected to demonstrate in the discussions that they have (a) read and understood the week's sections in 1 Corinthians and in the textbooks; (b) reflected on the set reading questions enough to offer a substantial response; (c) reflected enough on the reading to formulate questions of their own to share with the group. After each class, students will provide the instructor (by email) with a peer evaluation grade out of 4 for each of their fellow group members. Students should use the rubric posted on the class web-page in order formulate these marks. The instructor will also observe the discussions and will reserve the right to balance peer grades that he judges not to reflect a student's actual learning and contribution.	45%
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Essay	Students will each write a research essay 12-16 pages in length. The essay should interpret a passage in 1 Corinthians. Full instructions for the essay (including a marking scheme) are provided on the class web-page. Due April 15th.	45%
Outline Quiz	Students will reproduce a detailed outline of 1 Corinthians provided by the professor.	10%
		100%

C. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

- Students should 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. The Academic Calendar is posted at www.tyndale.ca/registrar/calendar. An excerpt is attached with this syllabus for easy reference.
- 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 10.46 to 10.51 and 14.253 to 14.254.
- All assignments must be submitted on deadline. Late interpretation essays will be penalized according to the policy laid out in the current academic calendar. **Students absent from class will receive 0/4 for their class discussion contributions** unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor or the student can demonstrate that the lateness is the result of a medical emergency.
- The student's **interpretive essay should be submitted by email attachment** to iscott@tyndale.ca. Please DO NOT submit paper copies. Email confirmation that the essay has been received will be provided within 12 hours. Feedback on the interpretive essay will be provided by email **to each student's MyTyndale email account**. These assignments may be submitted in any standard word processing file format (.ODT .DOC .DOCX .WPD or .RTF).

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE

Jan. 15	Introduction: A Community in Chaos The Greco-Roman World of Corinth	
Jan. 22	The Corinthian Community Paul's Life and Context for Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington, Introduction
Jan. 29	1 Cor 1:1-3:4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Feb. 5	1 Cor 3:5-4:21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Feb. 12	1 Cor 5:1-6:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Feb. 19	1 Cor 7:1-40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Feb. 26	1 Cor 8:1-9:27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Mar. 4	1 Cor 10:1-11:1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Mar. 11	READING WEEK (no classes)	
Mar. 18	1 Cor 11:2-34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Mar. 25	1 Cor 12:1-13:13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Apr. 1	1 Cor 14:1-40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Apr. 8	1 Cor 15:1-58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs
Apr. 15	1 Cor 16:1-24 Conclusion: Being the Body of Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witherington • Kovacs

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Commentaries

Barrett, C. K. *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Harper's New Testament Commentaries. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1987.

Collins, Raymond F. *First Corinthians*. Sacra Pagina. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1999.

- Conzelmann, Hans. *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975.
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- Hays, Richard B. *First Corinthians*. Interpretation. Louisville: John Knox, 1997.**
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- Morris, Leon. *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*. 2nd ed., The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Leicester/Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1985.
- Orr, W. F. and J. A. Walther. *1 Corinthians*. Anchor Bible 32. New York: Doubleday, 1976.
- Robertson, Archibald and Alfred Plummer. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*. 2d ed. International Critical Commentary. New York: Scribner, 1967.
- Soards, Marion L. *1 Corinthians*. New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999.**
- Talbert, Charles H. *Reading Corinthians: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament. Macon, Ga.: Smyth & Helwys Pub., 2002.
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- Watson, Nigel. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. 2d ed. Epworth Commentaries. London: Epworth, 2005.

Theology of 1 Corinthians

Furnish, Victor Paul. *The Theology of the First Letter to the Corinthians*. New Testament Theology. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

History and Archaeology of Roman Corinth

Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome. *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and Archaeology*. 3d ed. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press (Michael Glazier), 2002.

Rhetoric in 1 Corinthians

Galloway, L. *Freedom in the Gospel: Paul's Exemplum in 1 Cor 9 in Conversation with the Discourses of Epictetus and Philo*. Leuven: Peeters, 2004.

Marshall, Peter. *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament II/23. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987. (*available free from Google Books*)

Mitchell, Margaret Mary. *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians*. 1st American ed. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.**

Winter, Bruce W. *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002.

Sociology and Cultural Anthropology in 1 Corinthians

Horrell, David G. *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence: Interests and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement*. Edinbrugh: T. & T. Clark, 1996.

Theissen, Gerd. *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2004.

Paul's Use of the Old Testament in 1 Corinthians

Ageson, James W. "Written Also for Our Sake: Paul's Use of Scripture in the Four Major Epistles, with a Study of 1 Corinthians 10," Pages 152-181 in *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament*. Edited by Stanley E.

Porter. *McMaster New Testament Studies*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2006.

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Gender in 1 Corinthians

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Grant, Robert M. *Paul in the Roman World: The Conflict at Corinth*. Louisville, Kent.: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

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Rosner, Brian S. *Paul, Scripture and Ethics: A Study of 1 Corinthians 5–7*. Leiden: Brill, 1994.

Essay Collections

Bieringer, R., *The Corinthian Correspondence*. Leuven: Peeters, 1996.

German and French Commentaries

Artz-Grabner, Peter, *1 Korinther*. Edited by. ed. Vol. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006.

Fascher, Erich. *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*. 4th ed. 2 vols. Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament 7. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1988.

Schrage, Wolfgang. *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*. 4 vols. Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 7. Zürich; Düsseldorf; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger Verlag; Neukirchener Verlag, 1991.**

Senft, C. *La Première Épître de Saint Paul aux Corinthiens*. 2d ed. Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1990.**

Other Tools

Mills, Watson E. *1 Corinthians*. Bibliographies for Biblical Research New Testament Series 7. Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical Press, 1996.

See also the excellent bibliographies in the commentaries by Collins, Thiselton and Witherington.