

NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE: ROMANS

Syllabus version 1.5

(1/24/17)

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COURSE GOALS

This course is designed as an advanced seminar for students who have completed at least one introductory course (or the equivalent) in New Testament. Primary objectives include:

- The in-depth study of Romans, its background, its argument(s), its theology, and its theological influence in the Christian tradition.
- The development of more sophisticated exegetical skills; in other words, learning how to engage the biblical text with greater analytical rigor, creativity, and self-reliance.
- Better knowledge of the important and diverse issues and debates that characterize recent scholarship on Romans and Pauline theology generally.

BOOKS

Required for Everyone:

- R. Rodriguez, *If You Call Yourself a Jew: Reappraising Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Cambridge, 2015). Print edition ISBN: 9780227175019 E-book: 9780227903865
- M. Reasoner, *Romans in Full Circle* (WJK: 2005). ISBN 0664228739
- T. Jennings, *Outlaw Justice: The Messianic Politics of Paul* (Stanford, 2013). Print edition: ISBN: 9780804785167 E-book: 9780804785990
- N. T. Wright, *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision* (SPCK, 2009). ISBN 9780830838639; ISBN 0830838635

Required for PhD Students:

- S. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews and Gentiles* (Yale, 1994)

Other books relevant for the course (but not required)

- N. Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations; Romans in the Shadow of Empire* (Fortress, 2008)
- M. Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans* (Fortress, 1996)
- M. Harding and A. Nobbs (eds.), *All Things to All Cultures: Paul Among Jews, Greeks, and Romans* (Eerdmans, 2013)
- M. Zetterholm, *Approaches to Paul: A Student's Guide to Recent Scholarship* (Fortress, 2009)
- J. Marchal, *Studying Paul's Letters: Contemporary Perspectives and Methods* (Fortress, 2012)
- K. Donfried (ed), *The Romans Debate* (Hendrickson, revised edition, 2005)
- Caroline Johnson-Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs: A Study in Kinship and Ethnicity in Paul's Letters* (Oxford, 2007)
- S. Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The "Lutheran" Paul and His Critics* (Eerdmans, 2004)
- S. Westerholm, *Justification Reconsidered: Rethinking a Pauline Theme* (Eerdmans, 2013)
- K. Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* (Fortress, 1976)
- K. Stendahl, *The Final Account: Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Fortress, 1995)
- C. Grenholm and D. Patte, *Reading Israel in Romans: Legitimacy and Plausibility of Divergent Interpretations* (Trinity, 2000)
- D. Hay and E.E. Johnson, *Pauline Theology III: Romans* (Fortress, 1995)
- J.D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of the Apostle Paul* (Eerdmans, 1998)
- P. Eisenbaum, *Paul Was Not a Christian: The Original Message of a Misunderstood Apostle* (HarperOne, 2009)

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Completion of all required reading prior to the day for which it is assigned and participation in the online and class discussion. (10%) Participating in the online discussion means that, minimally, each student will make a post in response to the questions raised by the discussion leaders for that week (see #5 below). You must post by 11:59 on Monday evening. Since this is a seminar, attendance is required. If you are ill or have an emergency and cannot come to class, please let me know ahead of time if at all possible. Should you miss more than one class, you may be required to do make-up work.
2. Masters students only: Two short papers, 1200-1800 words, each worth 30% of your grade. These papers are not intended to be research papers, though you may wish to do the optional reading for the weeks in which you write your paper. They are response papers, in which you choose a particular aspect or issue of the week's reading and respond to it. In these papers you need to articulate the issue in your own words and provide your own critique. Other details:
 - 2.1. One of your papers must be exegetical, and because you will present the paper in class (see 2.2), it must focus on a text from the section of Romans assigned for that day. That is, you must take a particular passage in Romans and take a position on how to interpret it, drawing from, or arguing against, any relevant secondary readings from the class. You must also look at two-three commentaries (beyond the assigned reading) so as to compare other scholars' perspectives. You may choose any commentaries you like.
 - 2.2. You will present the exegetical paper in class, and it must be posted on Canvas on the Sunday before class at 11:59 p.m. On the first day of class, you will sign up for the week you present your paper.
 - 2.3. The second paper must be turned in on the last day of class.
3. Doctoral Students only: Final Research Paper, which includes presenting a draft of the paper to the class on the last day of class. 50% + 10% for the presentation.
4. Leading online discussion. Each week 1-2 students are responsible for initiating the online discussion. (Each student performs this assignment only once.) Discussion leaders should initiate the online discussion by articulating what they understand to be the central issues raised by the week's readings and posing two or three questions for discussion. Leaders' postings should be about 300 words. You will sign up the first day of class for the week in which you fulfill this assignment. It may be any week **except** the weeks when you write a response paper. Leaders must post by 11:59 on the Friday before class. (10%)
5. "Tell a Friend:" Write a short paper (300-500 words, approx. 1.5-2 pages) in which you tell a friend about something you've learned from the week's reading. Alternatively, assume you are writing for the church newsletter, an op-ed piece,

or a blog post. Whatever context you assume, your goal is to communicate one key idea you think is useful for your audience, and explain it to them in your own words. You may focus on one particular reading or an idea that has come up in several readings, but the subject needs to pertain to the issues for that week. Demonstrate in your posting your careful thinking about the biblical material and readings. These papers should be posted in the forum designated for them the evening before class, and uploaded to the assignment designated "Tell a Friend." You may do this assignment any week **except** the week you write a response paper. (20%)

SCHEDULE

JAN 10 INTRODUCTION TO COURSE | SIGN UP FOR PRESENTATIONS

- Read Romans
- Martin Luther,

JAN 17 (RE) ORIENTING OURSELVES TO ROMANS

- Read all of Romans!
- Read Galatians
- Reasoner, Introduction, Locus 1: Rom 1:16-17, pp. 1-11.
- K. Stendahl, "The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West," pp. 78-96 in *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*
- J.D.G. Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul," pp. 299-308 in *The Romans Debate*
- Rodriguez, Introduction, pp. 1-12.
- Martin Luther, *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans*

JAN 24 JEWS, GENTILES, AND THE IMPARTIALITY OF GOD

- Romans, chaps 1-4
- Rodriguez, chaps 1-5: pp. 13-94
- Reasoner, Locus 3: Rom 3:21-28, pp. 23-41
- Sze-Kar Wan, "'To the Jew First and Also the Greek: Reading Romans as Ethnic Construction," pp. 129-155 in *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings: Investigating Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies*, eds. L Nasrallah and E. Schüssler-Fiorenza (Fortress, 2009)
- S. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans*, 1-41, 83-125 (required for PhD students; optional for masters students)

JAN 31 JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

- Romans 3-4
- Wright, Preface, chaps 4, pp. 79-108 & 7+Conclusion, pp. 177-225
- S. Westerholm, "Justification by Faith" pp. 51-74 in *Justification Reconsidered: Rethinking a Pauline Theme* (Eerdmans, 2013).
- Optional: Eisenbaum, "A Remedy for Having Been Born of Woman: Jews, Gentiles, and Genealogy in Romans," *JBL* 123 (204), 671-702.

FEB 7 DIVINE JUSTICE ON EARTH

- Romans, chaps 3-5
- Jennings, 1-98
- Reasoner, Locus 4-5: Rom 5:12, 18-21, pp. 43-66

FEB 14 SIN AND THE DIVIDED SELF

- Romans 6-8
- Rodriguez, chaps 6-9: pp. 95-168
- B. Gaventa, "The Birthing of Creation," and "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans," pp. 51-62 & 125-36 in *Our Mother Saint Paul* (WJK, 2007).
- Reasoner, Locus 6-7: Rom 7:7-8:4, 28-30, pp. 67-94
- Optional: Stowers on Self-Mastery, pp. 227-284

FEB 21 SALVATION FOR ISRAEL? SALVATION FOR ALL?

- Romans 9-11
- Rodriguez, chaps. 10-12: pp. 169-231
- Reasoner, Locus 8: Rom 9:16-18, pp. 95-104; Locus 10-11: Rom 10:4 & 11:25-27, pp. 113-28
- J. Garraway, Chap 6: Romans 9-11, in [Paul's Gentile Jews](#) (Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), pp. 135-161. 
- Optional: J. Sievers, "God's Gifts and Call are Irrevocable," in *Reading Israel in Romans*, 127-73 (?)

FEB 28 THE RULE OF LAW AND THE RULE OF FAITH

- Romans 12-13

- Reasoner, Locus 12 & Conclusion, pp. 129-49
- Elliott, *Arrogance of Nations*, pp. 143-61
- Jennings 176-232
- Optional: W. Campbell, "The Rule of Faith in Romans 12:1-15:13: The Obligation of Humble Obedience as the Only Adequate Response to the Mercies of God," 259-86 in *Pauline Theology III: Romans* (Fortress, 1995)

MAR 7 A PAULINE ETHIC FOR THE STRONG AND THE WEAK

- ROM 14-16
- Rodriguez, chaps 14-15: pp. 257-95
- K. Ehrensberger, "Reading Romans in the Face of the Other: Levinas the Jewish Philosopher Meets Paul the Jewish Apostle," 115-54 in *Reading Romans with Contemporary Philosophers and Theologians*, ed. D. Odell-Scott (T & T Clark, 2007)
- Ehrensberger, "Called to be Saints: The Identity Shaping Dimensions of Paul's Priestly Discourse in Romans" in *Reading Paul in Context: Explorations in Identity Formation*. T & T Clark, 2010, pp. 90-109.
- Optional: Joshua Garraway, "The Circumcision of Christ: Rom 15:7-13" *JSNT* 34.4 (2012) 303-22.

MAR 14 TURN IN SHORT PAPER II | DISCUSSION

- Short presentations and discussion of Final Papers