

UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BI 658-2 D NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS II

Greek Exegesis of 1 Thessalonians
Spring Semester 2010
Residential Course

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 Office Hours: 8:30 – 9:30 Tue and Thur,
 and by appointment

Course pre-requisites: BI 402/502D and BI404/504D New Testament Greek 1 and II
 BI 450/550D New Testament Introduction
 BI 657D New Testament Exegesis I

3 credits; letter grade only

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course concentrates on Greek translation and exegesis of Paul's letter known as 1 Thessalonians, using several analytical approaches (historical, rhetorical, literary, and social). We will also investigate the letter genre and Paul's literary influences, along with other topics that are significant for interpreting this text for our times: Paul's life and theological background; his adaptation of concepts from Greek-Roman philosophical movements; his use of rhetorical elements; the social world of the first century of the church; early Christian apocalypticism; and the relationship between 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who complete this course will:

- (1) attain a good understanding of the content of 1 Thessalonians, including the teachings, theology, and style that are distinctive to this letter.
- (2) continue to develop their skill at translating from the Greek text.
- (3) learn about exegetical methods and put them into practice.
- (4) examine the most important issues in contemporary interpretation of 1 Thessalonians.
- (5) begin to connect these learnings to opportunities for preaching and teaching.

CURRICULAR GOALS

The course is designed to fulfill the following M.Div. curricular goals:

- (1) To be formed by, live in, and minister out of scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the church.
- (2) To interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful exegesis and in light of the Christian tradition.
- (3) To preach the Word of God with faithfulness and clarity.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Focused reading of the entire English text** of 1 Thessalonians. We will begin the course with this assignment, and then will work through the letter in sections from beginning to end.
2. **Weekly translations** from the Greek of assigned passages from that portion of 1 Thess we are studying this week. We will go over the translations on Tuesdays, review issues with the Greek, and you will turn in your translations, to be graded “75,” “85,” or “95.”
3. **Weekly questions** (turn in on Tuesdays): After you have translated the assigned Greek passage, you will prepare a collection of **three questions** for or about the text that seem important to you in interpreting this particular section. These questions may be theological, historical, literary, linguistic, political, spiritual and/or personal. In fact, a variety of questions is a necessity. One or more of these questions may lead into your exegesis paper.
4. **Secondary sources:** The next task in order is to read your commentary, and the scholarly chapters and/or articles assigned for that week. Some of your questions and reactions to these works will form the substance of our in-class discussion.
5. **Review Essay and Class Discussion:** Once during the semester, on a date of your own choosing, you will write a short (400-500 word) review essay of one of the scholarly chapters or essays assigned for that week’s reading, describing the author’s investigation and arguments, and adding your evaluation of her/his work. I will post on the website an example of how to write this. On that day, you will also make a presentation and/or lead a discussion on the topics raised in the assigned chapters/articles.
6. **Class participation:** You will make every effort to contribute to our combined interpretations of this letter by sharing your insights in class and responding to others with careful listening.
7. **Exegesis Papers:** In 4 shorter papers (3-4 pages each; total of 12-16 pages, not counting bibliography) you will exegete a pericope from 1 Thessalonians. More details about the expectations and organization of the paper will be given as the course progresses.
Your papers will be uploaded to the course website on Moodle.

COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING

Translations	– 10%
“3 questions”	– 10%
Class participation	– 20%
Review and class discussion	– 10%
Exegesis papers	– 50%

Students are expected to complete all assignments.

Grading Scale

A	= 100-95	C+	= 79-77	D-	= 62-60
A-	= 94-90	C	= 76-73	F	= 59 and below
B+	= 89-87	C-	= 72-70		
B	= 86-83	D+	= 69-67		
B-	= 82-80	D	= 66-63		

TEXT BOOKS

Required Books

1. Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum*, 27th ed.
2. A study Bible in English translation, preferably NRSV, such as the *New Oxford Annotated Bible* (3rd ed.), or the *Harper Study Bible*.
3. Witherington, Ben. *1 and 2 Thessalonians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Eerdmans.
4. A commentary of your choice from this list:
 - Malherbe, Abraham J. *The Letters to the Thessalonians*. The Anchor Bible Series. Doubleday.
 - Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. *First and Second Thessalonians*. Interpretation Series. John Knox.
 - Richard, Earl R. *1 and 2 Thessalonians*. Sacra Pagina vol. 11. Liturgical Press.

Other required readings of essays, articles, and chapters will be available as electronic reserve.

Recommended Commentaries and Studies on 1 Thessalonians

On exegesis in general: Schertz, Mary H. and Perry B. Yoder, *Seeing the Text: Exegesis for Students of Greek and Hebrew*. Abingdon.

The texts below are approved sources for your exegesis paper(s). Additional sources will be found in the notes and bibliography of these books.

Romans and Thessalonians: Calvin's New Testament Commentaries. vol. 8. Eerdmans.

Ascough, Richard S. *Paul's Macedonian Associations*. Mohr Siebeck.

Aune, David E. *The Westminster Dictionary of NT and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric*. Westminster/John Knox.

Burke, Trevor. *Family Matters: Socio-historical Study of Kinship Metaphors in 1 Thessalonians*. T&T Clark.

Collins, Raymond F. *Studies on the First Letter to the Thessalonians*. Leuven Univ. Press.

_____. *The Thessalonian Correspondence*. Leuven Univ. Press.

Donfried, Karl P. and Johannes Beutler. *The Thessalonians Debate*. Eerdmans.

Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. *Our Mother Saint Paul*. Westminster/John Knox.

Hooker, Morna D. *Not in the World Alone: the First Epistle to the Thessalonians*. Benedictina.

Hooker, Morna D. and Stephen G. Wilson, eds. *Paul and Paulinism*. SPCK.

Kim, Seyoon and Bruce, F.F. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*. Word.

Malherbe, Abraham J. *Paul and the Thessalonians*. Fortress.

Meeks, Wayne A. *The First Urban Christians*. Yale Univ. Press.

Morris, Leon. *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*. Eerdmans.

Nicholl, Colin R. *From Hope to Despair in Thessalonica*. Cambridge Univ. Press.

Osiek, Carolyn and Margaret Y. MacDonald. *A Woman's Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity*. Fortress.

Paddison, Angus. *Theological Hermeneutics and 1 Thessalonians*. Cambridge Univ. Press.

Stowers, Stanley K. *Letter-Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*. Westminster.

Walton, Steve. *Leadership and Lifestyle: the Portrait of Paul in the Miletus Speech and 1 Thessalonians*. Cambridge Univ. Press.

White, John L. *Light from Ancient Letters*. Fortress.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

1. Late policy: Deadlines for assigned items must be met. Exceptions to this policy may be made for serious unforeseen circumstances with prior permission from the instructor. Exceptions will not be made after the deadline has been missed.

[For Graduating Seniors: All work must be turned in by April 30. No exceptions.]

2. Plagiarism: Please consult the current UDTs Student Handbook (www.udtseminary.net, choose “Current Students,” then “Student Handbook”) for definitions and consequences.

3. Inclusive Language: Every effort will be made to use non-gender-specific language, as this concern influences are interpretation of the Bible. Please refer to the current UDTs Student Handbook (see #2 above) for a more thorough explanation.

4. Academic Support: Academic Support: for tutoring or other academic assistance, please contact the instructor to make arrangements (Jennifer Erickson, jerrickson@dbq.edu, 563-589-3570).

5. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement: Any student with a disability that might affect his/her performance in this course should consult with the instructor and the campus ADA compliance officer (Jennifer Erickson, jgerickson@dbq.edu, 563-589-3570) by the second week of class. All such consultations are confidential.

6. Subject to Change Clause: This syllabus, course calendar, and other attending documents are subject to change during the semester.