



Nipawin Bible College
BT114 - The Life of Christ
Instructor: Mr. David J. Smith
Winter 2019
3 Credit Hours
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The four Gospels present the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in four biographical portraits. As such, they are foundational to the development of Christian discipleship and ministry. Furthermore, an in-depth study of Christ's teachings is vital for ongoing studies of the other New Testament books. This course focuses on the life, ministry and teachings of Jesus through a comparative study of those four Gospels with special emphasis being placed on the record written by the apostle John.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

The Bible (KJV, NKJV, ESV, NLT, RSV, NIV, NASB) Please bring this to class.

Strauss, Mark L. *Four Portraits, One Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007. [pp. 19-525]

THE BIG QUESTION

How will the study of the four Gospel narratives help to develop a life of devotion and discipleship?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Identify the historical, religious, social and political milieu in which the Gospel narratives were composed.
2. Develop a greater sense of awe and wonder at the mystery of the incarnation and the miracle of salvation.
3. Comprehend and apply the teachings of Christ in the day-to-day issues of life.
4. Participate, with greater confidence, in the teaching ministry of the local church as opportunities arise.
5. Defend the integrity of the Gospels when undue critical issues are raised concerning them.

REQUIREMENTS

All written assignments are to be word-processed on a computer in accordance with the prescribed requirements in the *NBC Student Handbook*. Assignments will be graded on the basis of content, clarity, grammar, spelling and the student's ability to follow instructions. Optima or Times New Roman (preferred) font is mandatory. Pagination is a must. All assignments are due **no later than 5:00 PM** on the day specified.

1. **Bible Reading (20%).** You are expected to read, in their entirety, the four (4) Gospels in one of the versions listed above. In order to gain the most benefit from your reading experience you are encouraged to read each individual Gospel narrative in one sitting. And, you'll want to begin early, leaving adequate time to fully absorb the material. Avoid "cramming." Choose rather to read reflectively. The reading will be due on the assigned day at the beginning of class (8:30 AM).

Due: Monday, Feb. 11, 2019

2. **Short Research Paper (35%).** This is a scholarly assignment in which you are expected to research data, interpret it and fit it into a coherent and extended discussion. Please be aware that this paper is not simply a report in which you restate someone else's work or opinion; rather, it is a critical work in which you will present a clear thesis (an interpretive truth claim) and then use your sources to support your claim. This paper will be 4 full pages in length (excluding title page, Table of Contents and bibliography) and, in addition to the Bible, supported by a minimum of five (5) sources. The attached select bibliography represents some of the better resources on this subject in our library. Where possible, defer to these in preference to others. Students wishing to use books not listed in this bibliography must first speak with the instructor. As well, your Galaxie journal link will be helpful. Do not consult or use Internet sources other than Galaxie. Because this paper is relatively short, it is imperative that you write concisely and precisely. For this assignment you are required to select a topic from the list provided.

- The significance of John the Baptist in Jesus' ministry.
- Jesus' teaching on prayer from **one** of the Gospel narratives. Do not compare/contrast with other narrative texts.
- The Incarnation (as a theological/doctrinal issue).
- Jesus' teaching regarding the poor.
- Jesus' teaching regarding money.
- Jesus' use of the Law from Deuteronomy.
- Jesus as the "Lamb of God".
- Jesus' resurrection.
- Jesus' ascension.
- Jesus' views on earthly government.
- Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God in **one** of the Gospel narratives. Do not compare/contrast with other narrative texts.
- Jesus' use of the title "Son of Man".

- Jesus' use of parables as a teaching method.

Due: Tuesday, Mar. 5, 2019

3. Textbook Reading (25%). Each student is expected to read the course text, *Four Portraits, One Jesus* by Strauss in its entirety (p. 19-525). Having done so, in 3 full pages identify and discuss components of the text that you found particularly helpful/insightful as well as problematic/troublesome. Be aware that your analysis is not concerned with the author's style, or whether you found it a "difficult read". Rather, you are being asked to recognize, pinpoint and comment on significant details in content. This may focus on, for example, cultural issues, theological concerns, linguistic difficulties, historical matters, or hermeneutical matters. Students are expected to exercise a good measure of Christian **and** academic charity and respect when disagreeing with scholars. How to proceed?

- Begin by providing the basic bibliographic data (in proper format) as well as the total number of pages (not percentage) you have read.
- Identify and discuss 3 helpful/insightful aspects of Strauss' work.
- Identify and discuss 3 problematic/troublesome aspects of Strauss' work.
- Include a proper title page.

Due: Tuesday, Mar. 19, 2019

4. Final Exam (20%). The final exam will consist of 20 vocabulary definitions drawn from the Glossary in the course text *Four Portraits, One Jesus* by Mark L. Strauss. These terms form the basic vocabulary that students should be familiar with when studying the Gospel narratives.

Due: Tuesday, Apr. 9, 2019

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Introduction to the syllabus/course
2. The significance of the Gospel records and the life of Christ
3. Backgrounds and issues relative to the four Gospel narratives
4. The emphasis of each Gospel
5. The birth and childhood of Jesus
6. Jesus' preparation for public ministry
7. Stages in Jesus' ministry
8. Special studies in Jesus' ministry
9. The final week
10. The post-resurrection ministry

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Please refer to the *NBC Student Handbook 2018-2019*

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

- Please refer to the *NBC Student Handbook 2018-2019*

Please note: If you are hindered in any way because of a learning disability please speak with the course instructor as soon as possible. It is their desire to develop strategies that accommodate your need and make your learning experience as rewarding as possible.

Reading: Textbook Reading is approx. 500 pages.
Writing: Approx. 8 pages, Final Exam excluded.

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