



**Nipawin Bible College**  
**Course: BT124 – Letters of Paul: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians,**  
**1-2 Thessalonians, Philemon**  
**Instructor: Dr. Peter John Barber**  
**Winter 2019**  
**3 Credit Hours**  
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### ***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

The apostle Paul was the last apostle called by the LORD Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:8), yet he was perhaps the single most influential ambassador for Christ of the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century, and perhaps the single most prolific writer of the New Testament. This course explores a portion of the letters that Paul and his co-workers wrote, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to their congregations. From Corinth, it seems, Paul wrote twice to the young church at Thessalonica, about AD 51-2. And from prison in Rome, it seems, he wrote to the churches at Ephesus, Philippi, and Colossae about AD 58-64. It was also during this time imprisoned at Rome that Paul wrote to Philemon, a brother in Christ, about the slave Onesimus.

This course will engage in a grammatical-historical reading of both the ‘Second Coming’ letters to the Thessalonians as well as the ‘Prison Epistles’ to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and to Philemon. Our study will be contextualized within the larger ministry of Paul, the Biblical canon, and the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century world in which the Church was established.

According to the Scriptures, in the apostle Paul we are provided an exemplary model of the Christian life, so that we are commanded: “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1). And we are to emulate Paul’s submission of heart, mind, body and soul to the ‘way of the Cross’ to which every Christian is called and bound. Through this course, students will be exhorted to similar faith and practice as that which resulted in Paul becoming “a prisoner of Christ Jesus” (Philemon 1).

### ***COURSE TEXTBOOKS***

The Holy Bible (A literal translation of your choosing). **38 pages:**

Selected readings: Please **read the six letters** (1-2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) **three (3) times each**, in at least two different translations:

**Paul and His Letters: AD 5-68:** *Events: Acts 7:51-60, 9:1-30, 11:19-30, 15:1-35, 22:1-29, 26:1-32, 28:11-31; Letters: Romans 1:1-7, 16:22; 1 Corinthians 1:1-3, 16:21; 2 Corinthians 1:1-2; Galatians 1:1-4; Ephesians 1:1-2; Philippians 1:1-2; Colossians 1:1-2, 4:16, 18; 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 5:27; 2 Thessalonians 1:1-2, 2:1-2, 3:17; 1 Timothy 1:1-2; 2 Timothy 1:1-2; Titus 1:1-4; Philemon 1:1-3; 1-2 Thessalonians: AD 51-52: *Events: Acts**

15:36-18:22; Letters: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5:28; 2 Thessalonians 1:1-3:18;  
**The Prison Epistles: AD 58-64: Events: Acts 28:11-31; Letters: Ephesians**  
1:1-6:24; Colossians 1:1-4:18; Philemon 1:1-25; Philippians 1:1-4:23.

Hiebert, D. Edmond. 2003. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Three Volume Collection*. Waynesboro, Ga.: Gabriel Publishing. **151 pages:**

From volume 2, *The Pauline Epistles*, read pages 9-66 on 1-2 Thessalonians, and pages 205-303 on Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. Write a five-page (5) critique.

Carden, Paul, ed. 2006. *The Life of the Apostle Paul*. Peabody, Mass.: Rose Publishing. **14 pages.**

Carden, Paul, ed. 2007. *Then & Now Bible Maps*. Peabody, Mass.: Rose Publishing. **(Reference only)**

Handouts – Required Reading. **47 pages:**

- “II Thessalonians 2:1-12” (Pages 565-568 in Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum. 2004. *Footsteps of the Messiah*. Tustin, Calif.: Ariel Ministries.)
- “The Eight Mysteries of the New Testament” (Pages 651-695 in Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum. 2004. *Footsteps of the Messiah*. Tustin, Calif.: Ariel Ministries.)

### **THE BIG QUESTION**

Like the apostle Paul, are you actively submitting your heart, mind, body and soul to God, as “a prisoner of Christ Jesus”?

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will:

- 1) Familiarize themselves with, and be able to recount broadly, the historical ministry of the apostle Paul in the AD 1<sup>st</sup> century.
- 2) Come to understand, and be able to articulate, the reasons for why Paul wrote most of these letters from prison.
- 3) Come to understand, through application of the grammatical-historical method of interpretation (Scripture interpreting Scripture), the meaning of the LORD’s assertions through Paul in these six letters.
- 4) Explore critical applications of these letters to the Church today, visible and invisible, and to oneself as a Church saint.
- 5) Be encouraged to imitate Christ as did Paul.

## ***COURSE ASSIGNMENTS***

### **Participation – 4%**

- In addition to general attentiveness and note-taking, students are expected to participate in class by reading Scripture aloud in turn and contributing to class discussions of Scripture.
- Grading: /4.

### **Bi-Weekly Scripture Memorization – 16%**

- Every two weeks, students will write out Scripture that they have committed to memory:
  - 1 Thessalonians 4:17 (Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>)
  - Ephesians 1:13 (Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>)
  - Philippians 1:29 (Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>)
  - Colossians 1:16 (Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Grading: /4 per Scripture portion.

***Due: 4 Scriptures total, written and submitted at the beginning of class***

### **Book Critique – 20%**

- From volume 2, *The Pauline Epistles*, of Hiebert's *Introduction*, read pages 9-66 on 1-2 Thessalonians, and pages 205-303 on Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. I recommend underlining and/or highlighting the text as you read, and making notes as desired in the margins. This practice aids in focussing on the text and imbibing its message. Also, your notes will help in writing your critique. Using the guidelines on page 61 of the *Student Handbook*, write a five-page (5) critique. Please address Hiebert's treatment of all six letters in your critique.
- Grading: /20

***Book Critique Due: Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm***

### **Research Paper or Exegetical Paper – 30%**

- Write a six to eight-page (6-8) research or exegetical paper on the life and/or letters of Paul covered in class. The topic or passage is of your own choosing, and must be approved by the professor by Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>. See the *Student Handbook* ('Writing a Research Paper,' p. 60; 'Writing an Exegetical Paper,' p. 57) for further guidelines.
  - Grading: /30

***Paper Due: Friday, March 22<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm***

### **Final Exam – 30%**

- **Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 am**

All written assignments are to be typed in accordance with the NBC Study Guide for papers. Assignments will be graded on the basis of content, clarity, grammar, and spelling. Assignments will be due **no later than 5:00 pm** on the day that they are assigned.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

- Refer to the NBC Handbook [Relevant Academic Year]

**LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY:**

- Refer to the NBC Handbook [Relevant Academic Year]

**Reading: 325 pages**

**Writing: 11-13 pages**

**SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY ON PAUL'S LETTERS**

Cooper, Bill. 2017. *Authenticity of the New Testament: Part 2: Acts, the Epistles and Revelation*. Portsmouth, Eng.: Creation Science Movement.

Hiebert, D. Edmond. 1971. *The Thessalonian Epistles: A Call to Readiness*. Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press.

MacArthur, John F. 2016. *Ephesians: Our Immeasurable Blessings in Christ*. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson.

-----, 2016. *Colossians and Philemon: Completion and Reconciliation in Christ*. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson.

Towns, Elmer L. and Ben Gutierrez. 2012. *The Essence of the New Testament*. Nashville, Tenn.: B&H Academic.

Walvoord, John F. 1971. *Philippians: Triumph in Christ*. Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press.

Walvoord, John F. and Mark Hitchcock. 2012. *1-2 Thessalonians*. Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press.

**Recommended Online Resources**

The searchable Holy Bible in every English translation:

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)

Searchable Bible in English and the original languages with concordances, lexica, and commentaries:

[www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com)

Biblical books and chapters arranged in a chronological order:

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-reading-plan/chronological.html>