

BIBL 260—Life of Christ
Paul Anderson
Fall 2009

Course Description:

This course guides the student through the Gospels with a special emphasis on the life and teachings of Jesus. The perspective and interest of each gospel writer will be explored as they relate to the inclusion and nuance of gospel narratives, and attempts will be made to connect ways the story of Jesus is told with the historical context of each gospel writer. Finally, a key goal of this course is to help the student grow closer to Jesus by applying his teachings and example to contemporary situations today.

Objectives:

1. To become familiar with the story of Jesus in each of the Gospels.
2. To notice literary relationships between the gospels and to make sound judgments for interpretation.
3. To understand more about the words and works of Jesus as they relate to the setting up of the Kingdom of God, making meaningful application of this content to today's situations.

Required Texts:

Kurt Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*. United Bible Societies, 1985.
Mark L. Strauss, *Four Portraits, One Jesus*. Zondervan, 2007.

Evaluation:

0-59, F; 60-69, D; 70-79, C; 80-89, B; 90-100, A.

Assignments:

Reading and Participation. Students will be expected to read all the assignments, to attend class, and to participate meaningfully in class discussions. (10 points)

Exams. The Midterm and Final exams will each have 40 questions on them, and the Final will include two essay questions (each worth 2.5 points). (20 points and 25 points)

Pop Quizzes/Engagement Assignments. Several pop quizzes over the assigned reading for that day (essay, worth 1 point apiece) will be given at random times during the semester. No make-ups will be allowed, but the student's best six will be included for his/her grade. Several take-home projects will be assigned to facilitate the student's engagement with the material; these will be gathered in class, (10 points)

Short Papers. Four 2 page papers exploring the theme for that day in the Gospels will be collected on particular days. Paper # 1 (the formation of the Gospels), Sept. 14-30 (a particular Gospel); Paper #2, Oct. 5-28; Paper #3 (the Gospels and history), Nov. 4-11; Paper #4 (an aspect of the life and teachings of Jesus), Nov. 16-Dec. 7 (20 points)

Term Paper. A 6-7 page paper (typed, double-spaced) will be expected from each student at the end of the semester on the topic, "How Jesus Makes a Difference Today." This paper should build on the skills you have developed in this class. (15 points)

I look forward to an excellent semester together!

Paul Anderson

Calendar of Readings and Assignments

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| Aug. | 31 | Course introduction and welcome! |
| Sept. | 2 | Skim the Four Gospels and look over <i>Synopsis of the Four Gospels</i> (Engagement Assignment # 1) |
| | 7 | Browse internet/library for Jesus-Research info (Engagement Assignment #2); Strauss 526-540 |
| | 9 | Serve Day! |
| | 14 | What are the Gospels? Strauss 24-42 |
| | 16 | Exploring the Origin and Nature of the Gospels; Strauss 43-65 |
| | 21 | Reading and Hearing the Gospel Stories; Strauss 67-89 |
| | 23 | The Historical Setting of the Gospels; Strauss 93-122 |
| | 28 | The Religious Setting; Strauss 123-148 |
| | 30 | The Social and Cultural Setting of the Gospels; Strauss 149-167 |
| Oct. | 5 | Read the Gospel of Mark |
| | 7 | Mark: The Gospel of the Suffering Son of God; Strauss 171-211 |
| | 12 | Read the Gospel of Matthew |
| | 14 | Matthew: The Gospel of the Messiah; Strauss 213-258 |
| | 19 | Read the Gospel of Luke |
| | 21 | Luke: the Gospel of the Savior for All People; Strauss 259-296 |
| | 26 | Read the Gospel of John |
| | 28 | John: the Gospel of the Son Who Reveals the Father; Strauss 297-343 |
| Nov. | 2 | Midterm Exam |
| | 4 | Searching for the Real Jesus; Strauss 347-382 |
| | 9 | The Historical Reliability of the Gospels; Strauss 383-398; (Engagement Assignment #3) |
| | 11 | The Contours and Chronology of Jesus' Ministry; Strauss 399-409; Aland |
| | 16 | Jesus' Birth and Childhood; Strauss 411-424; Aland 1-11 |
| | 18 | The Beginning of Jesus' Ministry; Strauss 425-433; Aland 12-48 |
| | 23 | The Message of Jesus; Strauss 435-454; Aland 49-71; (Engagement Assignment #4) |
| | 25 | The Miracles of Jesus; Strauss 455-468; Aland 72-148 |
| | 30 | The Messianic Words and Actions of Jesus; Strauss 469-491; Aland 149-233 |
| Dec. | 2 | The Death of Jesus; Strauss 493-509; Aland 234-324 |
| | 7 | The Resurrection of Jesus; Strauss 511-535; Aland 325-338 |
| | 9 | Term Papers Due (the Beginning of Class) |
| | 17 | Thursday, 3:00; Final Exam |