

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

Course Description

This study of the Fourth Gospel highlights its main theme: the person of Jesus and the nature of his mission. This course gives special attention to this Gospel as work of theology, of literature, and of history. It also investigates the implications of John for the Church and its mission.

Course Objectives

Students will demonstrate familiarity with the Gospel of John.

Students will demonstrate some of the different scholarly questions scholarship has raised regarding the Gospel of John.

Students will demonstrate ability to study sections of John in depth, paying attention to both the text itself as well as other research, and to present their findings in a clear orderly fashion.

Students will begin to hear the voice of the Living God in this Scripture, as he calls and leads by it.

Course Texts: Required

Note: these texts are available at the Providence Bookstore, 1-204-433-7110 or 1-800-668-7768; email: bookstore@prov.ca.

Blomberg, Craig L. *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001.

NOTE: Blomberg is required by all, but only one of either Culpepper or Stibbe below is required. Culpepper and Stibbe will be ordered on request, so place your order as soon as possible.

Culpepper, R. Alan. *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.

Stibbe, Mark W. G. *John as Storyteller*. Cambridge: University Press, 1992.

Course Text: Recommended

Maloney, Francis J. *The Gospel of John*. Sacra Pagina. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1998.

Course Requirements

Weekly Discussion. There will be ten weekly audio lectures. The lecture each week will include a few discussion questions, based on lecture content. Weekly responses to these lectures will count toward the final grade. I am not looking for long response, but for thoughtful response. 15%

Review either Stibbe, *John as Storyteller*, or Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*. Read this book, and write an 8-10 page review. In the review, summarize the approach that Stibbe/Culpepper take to the fourth Gospel, and what your author teaches about the Gospel. How does he view it? Offer also a good amount of evaluation of all these elements, including *why* you agree or not: do you agree with this overall approach? Do you agree with the overall conclusions? Point out a few of his observations that you found helpful or misleading. 15%

Blomberg Review. There are very few scholars who believe the Fourth Gospel is historically reliable concerning the life and teachings of Jesus. Few feel any need to support their position of historical unreliability, since so many now assume it. Maloney, a good commentator and a devout man, is one of these. Blomberg's book argues that the writer of the Fourth Gospel is John the son of Zebedee, and that this Gospel is historically reliable. I (Ed Neufeld) am not trying to persuade anyone who doubts these things, but I do want to make clear that an intelligent and reasonable case can be made for the "traditional" view. In the course bibliography below, the works by Hengel, Robinson, and Westcott also present careful and coherent arguments for this. They are included in this course so that students will know that such a case can be made, and that the matter is not as clear against historical reliability as one would guess from a survey of scholars.

Understand that Blomberg goes directly after the kind of arguments that have been used to show that John is not historically reliable. If his arguments seem strange or unpersuasive, it may be that one is not familiar with how people have argued for John's unreliability.

Summarize carefully what exactly Blomberg wants to establish, and describe his method carefully as well. Evaluate his method, and respond personally to the whole matter, including whether or not you think Blomberg's agenda even matters. 15%

Exegetical Paper. Write an 8-12 pages (of text) paper on section of John's gospel, not longer than 20 verses. Use commentaries or journal articles to find out what the questions and challenges are to understanding the passage. Explain the text, and comment on how it fits into the overall plan of John's Gospel, as well as how it speaks to the world you live in. 20%

Purpose of John. Write 8-12 pages answering: For whom was John written, and why was it written? A good starting point can be found in Beasley-Murray's introduction.

There are good sections also in R. Brown and D. Carson (all listed in the course bibliography below). Based on your own reading of the Gospel, which of the views presented in these three commentaries best represents the Fourth Gospel. Support your answer thoroughly. 20%

John Reading Journal. Read the entire Gospel of John through eight times, in the language and version of your choice. Each of these readings should be as much as possible in one sitting. That is, get up for short breaks if necessary, but do it in one block of time. After each reading, write a ½ to 1 page response to that reading: what did you learn, how did the Gospel strike you during that reading, what impressed you? *Date each entry.* Do at most of the readings during the course, one a week is best. Do not do two the same day, or more than two per week. 15%

Due Dates: Specific dates will be assigned when the course starts (early to mid September). The two Reviews will be due first, perhaps 1/3 and 2/3 of the way through the course respectively. The John Reading Journal will be due at the end of the course. The Exegetical Paper and Purpose Paper will likewise be due at the end.

Paper Style. All submissions should be double-spaced, #12 Times New Roman font. When in doubt, check Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*, 7th edition, 2007. If you are still using the 6th edition, that is fine. Students can mail hard copy, or send papers as email attachments, in which case they should be in MS Word format.

Course Outline

There will be ten audio lectures offered online, one a week, beginning early-mid September. Other material will be presented online at that time. A more detailed syllabus will be presented later in the summer.

Course Bibliography

Barrett, C. K. *The Gospel According to St. John*, 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978.

Beasley-Murray, G. R. *John*. 2nd ed. WBC. Waco, Tex.: Word, 1999.

Blomberg, Craig L. *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel: Issues and Commentary*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001.

Brown, Raymond E. *The Gospel According to John*, 2 vols, AB. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966-70.

- _____. *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*. New York: Paulist Press, 1979.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *The Gospel of John*. 1964; English trans: Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971.
- Carson, D. A. *The Gospel According to John*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans: 1971.
- Culpepper, R. Alan. *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.
- Dodd, C. H. *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*. Cambridge: University Press, 1963.
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- Hoskyns, E. C., ed F. N. Davey. *The Fourth Gospel*. London: Faber And Faber, 1947.
- Kysar, Robert. *Voyages with John: Charting the Fourth Gospel*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2005.
- Lightfoot, R. H. *St John's Gospel: A Commentary*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1956.
- Lindars, Barnabas. *The Gospel of John*. NCB. London: Oliphants, 1972.
- MacGregor, G. H. C. *The Gospel of John*, MNTC. N.Y.: Harper, 1928.
- Marsh, John. *The Gospel of John*, PNTC. Middlesex, Eng.: Penguin, 1968.
- Martyn, J. Louis. *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, 2nd ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 1979.
- Michaels, J. Ramsey. *John*, NIBCNT. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrikson, 1984.
- Moloney, Francis J., S.B.D. *The Gospel of John*, SP. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1998.
- Morris, Leon. *The Gospel According to John*, NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.
- _____. *Studies in the Fourth Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969,

Robinson, John A.T. *The Priority of John*. London: SCM, 1985.

Sanders, J. N. and B. A. Mastin, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to John*,
BNTC. London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968.

Schnackenburg, Rudolf. *The Gospel According to St. John*. Vol 1. English edition: New
York: Herder and Herder, 1968,

_____. *The Gospel According to St. John*. Vol 2 (Chapters 5-12): 1971. English
edition: New York, Seabury Press, 1980.

_____. *The Gospel According to St. John*. Vol 3: 1975. English edition: Search
Press, 1982.

Stibbe, Mark W. G. *John as Storyteller*. Cambridge: University Press, 1992.

Westcott, B. F. *The Gospel According to St. John*. 1881; reprint Grand Rapids, Mich.:
Eerdmans, 1978.

Whitacre, Rodney A. *John*, IVPNTC. Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999.

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Providence Seminary > Faculty > E. Neufeld > Contact Information (there's an email
form on that page).