

NT2210 Pauline Tradition: Romans

Spring Semester 2009

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A Preface to the Course

The purpose of the course is to provide an introduction to Paul in general, Paul in the Book of Acts, and one of Paul's letters in particular. Readings, lectures, and discussion will explore issues in the life and ministry of Paul in light of both his letters and the Acts of the Apostles, his theology, and the place of his letters among ancient letters and in his career. The Letter to the Romans is the letter of specific treatment.

Course Objectives

- To become familiar with major topics and themes in Paul's theology.
- To gain a basic understanding of the life, ministry, and letters of Paul within the context of early Christianity.
- To gain a good grasp of the issues that arise from a careful study of Paul's Letter to the Romans.
- To gain confidence in one's ability to use scholarly tools and materials in the study of Paul's letters and of Scripture generally.
- To improve skills for interpreting the Scriptures.
- To become confident in one's ability to teach a Bible study and/or to preach a sermon, based on Romans.
- To become aware of how one's reading of Paul's letters is influenced by confessional and contemporary concerns and values.

Course Procedures

In addition to the Greek New Testament and/or the English Bible, the following books are required (available through the book store):

Günther Bornkamm, *Paul* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994).

Charles B. Cousar, *The Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966).

Arland J. Hultgren, *Paul's Gospel and Mission* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985).

Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994).

The following books are recommended (for publishing details, see bibliography):

C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*.

Jürgen Becker, *Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles*.

Günther Bornkamm, *Paul*.

C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*.

C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans: A Shorter Commentary*.

James D. G. Dunn, *Romans*.

Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*.

Roy A. Harrisville, *Romans*.

Jacob Jervell, *The Theology of the Acts of the Apostles*.
 Robert Jewett, *Romans*.
 Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*.
 Leander E. Keck, *Paul and His Letters*.
 Anders Nygren, *A Commentary on Romans*.
 Calvin J. Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul*.
The Romans Debate, ed. Karl P. Donfried.

Expectations. The expectations of students, on which evaluation and credit will be based, consist of two kinds. First, there are general expectations of all: (1) regular class attendance; (2) the completion of assigned readings; (3) the completion of a bibliographical exercise; (4) a class presentation; and (5) the submission of an exegetical paper, described below.

Second, there is an additional, specific expectation depending on whether a student has a background in Greek (LG1200 Greek or equivalent). Those who do will be assigned some exercises in Greek translation. Those who do not will be assigned some readings in textual criticism, translation, and the use of tools for persons without Greek. These assignments are on separate pages. They are to be completed by the last day of class, Tuesday, May 12, 2009.

Bibliographical Exercise. Each student is to prepare a bibliography on Romans 5:12-21, based on periodical literature. This is to consist of at least six entries and abstracts from any three of them. The resources for this exercise are any of the following: *New Testament Abstracts* (print [BS410 .N39 Periodicals Room] or electronic), the *ATLA Religion Database* (electronic), *Religious and Theological Abstracts* (print [BL1 .R4 Periodicals Room] or electronic), and/or Watson E. Mills, *Romans. Bibliographies for Biblical Research 6*. Lewiston: Mellen Biblical Press, 1996 (Z7772. L1. B4 v.6 Ref.). This assignment is due Tuesday, February 17, 2009.

Class Presentations. Each student is expected to make an oral presentation at some point in the semester that is based on a written essay (not more than two pages) that is submitted to the instructor. Topics for the presentations are provided in the Course Schedule below. To carry out this assignment one might deal with the "Discussion Questions" posted for the various sessions, but that is not the only possibility. One might discuss what the readings have contributed to one's thinking, or one might bring another perspective from another source. Others in the class not making a presentation are expected to have done the readings in order that they can enter into the conversation in an informed and thoughtful manner.

Exegetical Paper. The exegetical paper may be a study of any passage (approximately five to ten verses) in Romans. It is necessary, however, to consult with the instructor by Tuesday, March 3, 2009, to finalize plans. Otherwise (and no prior conversation is needed for this) it will be expected that each student will do an exegetical study of Romans 5:1-11; 6:1-11; or 8:31-39. The paper should be 12-15 pages in length. A "Guide for Exegesis" will be distributed, and it is expected that the student will follow it in its essentials. The paper is due no later than Tuesday, May 12, 2009.

Use of Resources: For the Exegetical Paper, be sure to use books on reserve, reputable periodical literature, and scholarly books. Resources NOT to be used include many website items, notes from some popular “study” Bibles, Matthew Henry’s commentary (even though it is on BibleWorks, written in the early 1700s), sermon collections, and more. If in doubt about a resource, check with the instructor. Resources used must be documented.

Evaluation/Grading. The course can be taken either for a letter grade (A, B, C, etc.) or on a Pass/Marginal/Fail basis. The student who elects a letter grade should indicate that choice in writing no later than Tuesday, February 24, 2009. The work of each student will be evaluated on the basis of all the above. Most weight, however, will be given to the exegetical paper.

Course Schedule

Week One (February 9-13, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: Organization of the Course. “The Life and Letters of Paul.”

Assignments: Work on the Bibliographical Exercise; do the reading assignments for next two weeks.

Third Hour: Bruce Eldevik, Reference Librarian: “Library Resources for New Testament Study.”

Week Two (February 16-20, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: “Chronology of Paul’s Life” and “Paul’s Letters in Context.”

Reading Assignments prior to Class: C. Cousar, *Letters*, 15-62, 165-180; G. Bornkamm, *Paul*, xi-xxvii, 3-106, 241-243.

Third Hour: Greek Work.

Paper Due: Bibliographical Exercise due Tuesday, February 17, 2009.

Week Three (February 23-27, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: “Introduction to Romans,” “Romans 1:1-17.”

Reading Assignments prior to Class: P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 1-16, and A. Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Mission*, 1-11.

Class Presentation and Discussion: “Paulines and Deutero-Paulines.”

Discussion Questions:

- (1) Do you find the discussions by Bornkamm and Cousar on the distinction between Paulines and Deutero-Paulines convincing? Why or why not?
- (2) What are the consequences (of either position) for one’s understanding of Paul’s theology and early Christianity?

Week Four (March 2-6, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: “Romans 1:18-3:20.”

Reading Assignments prior to Class: P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 29-32; A. Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Mission*, 12-46; and C. Cousar, *Letters*, 108-12.

Class Presentation and Discussion: “The Righteousness of God.”

Discussion Questions:

- (1) What does the “righteousness of God” concept in Paul’s letters signify in its most basic sense?
- (2) How does it relate to justification?
- (3) What difference does it make for one’s understanding of righteousness and justification from the theocentric, rather than anthropocentric, perspective?

*Week Five (March 9-13, 2009)**Lecture Sessions:* “Romans 3:21-4:25.”*Reading Assignments prior to Class:* A. Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Mission*, 47-81;P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 57-65; and C. Cousar, *Letters*, 122-127.*Class Presentation and Discussion:* “The Saving Work of Christ.”*Discussion Questions:*

- (1) It is said by some in the theological tradition that God needs to be reconciled to sinful humanity. It is also said that sinful humanity needs to be reconciled to God. Can both be correct? What would Paul say? What would the confessional tradition say?
- (2) Does any of the four metaphors for atonement discussed by Cousar seem to “work” best in theology and proclamation?

*Week Six (March 16-20, 2009)**Lecture Sessions:* “Romans 5.”*Reading Assignments prior to Class:* A. Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel and Mission*, 82-124; P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 78-88; and George Howard, “Faith of Christ,” *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David N. Freedman, 6 vols., ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 2:758-60 (e-reserve).*Class Presentation and Discussion:* “The ‘*Pistis Christou*’ Debate.”*Discussion Questions:*

- (1) Does everyone in the group understand the grammatical distinction being made?
- (2) Be able to argue for each position.
- (3) What do you think is the right way to go on this issue?

*Week Seven (March 23-27, 2009)**Lecture Sessions:* “Romans 6 and 7.”*Reading Assignments prior to Class:* P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 97-101, 114-16; and Arland J. Hultgren, “Baptism in the New Testament: Origins, Formulas, and Metaphors,” *Word & World* 14 (1994): 6-11(http://www.luthersem.edu/word&world/Archives/14-1_Baptism/14-1_Hultgren.pdf).*Class Presentation and Discussion:* “The New Life in Christ.”*Discussion Questions:*

- (1) What features of baptism in the New Testament do we continue in current baptismal rites?

- (2) Find ways of speaking today about what it means to (a) have died with Christ in baptism and (b) be free from sin.

Week Eight (March 30-April 3, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "Romans 8."

Reading Assignments prior to Class: P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 122-128; and Arland J. Hultgren, "The Church as the Body of Christ: Engaging an Image in the New Testament," *Word & World* 22 (2002): 124-32 (http://www.luthersem.edu/word%26world/Archives/22-2_Body_of_Christ/22-2_Hultgren.pdf).

Class Presentation and Discussion: "Life Together (Church)."

Discussion Questions:

- (1) What issues are at stake in speaking of the church as both local and universal?
- (2) What are some of the enduring values in the concept of the church as the body of Christ?

Week Nine (April 6-10, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "Romans 9-11."

Reading Assignments prior to Class: P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 177-184; and C. Cousar, *Letters*, 145-160; and Brian Rosner, "Paul's Ethics," *Cambridge Companion to Paul*, ed. James D. G. Dunn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 212-23 (e-reserve).

Class Presentation and Discussion: "Paul's Ethics."

- (1) Discuss the meaning and theological significance of the indicative/imperative in Pauline ethics.
- (2) In what ways do the moral teachings of Paul have contemporary application?

Week Ten (April 13-17, 2009)

Easter Break, April 9-14, 2009; no class on Tuesday, April 14, 2009.

Week Eleven (April 20-24, 2007)

Lecture Sessions: "Romans 12:1-13:14."

Reading Assignments prior to Class: P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 205-208; and Arland J. Hultgren, "Reflections on Romans 13:1-7: On Submission to Governing Authorities," *Dialog* 15 (1976): 263-69 (e-reserve).

Class Presentation and Discussion: "Paul and Political Power (Rom. 13:1-7)."

Discussion Questions:

- (1) Since this is a biblical text, what authority does it have for today?
- (2) Can this text be applicable in any particular way today?

Week Twelve (April 27- May 1, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: "Romans 14:1-15:13."

Reading Assignments prior to Class: P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 219-221; and Robert J. Karris, "Romans 14.1-15-13 and the Occasion of Romans," *The Romans Debate*,

2d ed., ed. Karl P. Donfried (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 65-84 (e-reserve).

Class Presentation and Discussion: “The Weak and the Strong.”

Discussion Questions:

- (1) Does Paul speak to actual persons here? Contrast Stuhlmacher and Karris.
- (2) What relevance might this text have for the church of today?

Week Thirteen (May 4-8, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: “Romans 15:14-33 and Romans 16.”

Reading Assignments prior to Class: P. Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 244-258; and Peter Lampe, “The Romans Christians of Romans 16,” *The Romans Debate*, 2d ed., ed. Karl P. Donfried (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 216-230 (e-reserve).

Class Presentation and Discussion: “The People and Churches of Rome (Romans 16).”

Discussion Questions:

- (1) Assuming that Lampe provides a good snapshot of the church at Rome, what do you find interesting about it and/or Paul?
- (2) Is the historical and social information in this article of any relevance for the church through the ages?

Week Fourteen (May 11-15, 2009)

Lecture Sessions: “The Pauline Tradition after Paul” and “Paul and the Reformation.”

Reading Assignment prior to Class: Arland J. Hultgren, “The Pastorals,” *Cambridge Companion to Paul*, ed. James D. G. Dunn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 141-55 (e-reserve); and Arland J. Hultgren, “Flashpoints in Interpreting Paul,” *Dialog* 46 (2007): 166-69 (e-reserve).

Class Presentation and Discussion: “Paul and the Reformation.”

Discussion Questions:

- (1) Summarize issues in the ‘new perspective on Paul.’
- (2) What importance does it have for interpreting the letters of Paul?

Greek Translations or Paper on Texts and Tools for Biblical Study are due on Tuesday, May 12, 2009.

The Exegetical Paper is due on Tuesday, May 12, 2009.