

Institute for Christian Studies

Course: The Life and Letters of St. Paul
March 17 & April 21, 2012

Instructor: The Rev. David G. Newhart
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Course overview: The purpose of this course will be to thoroughly examine the life and letters of the apostle Paul. The process will be to: read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the sacred scriptures in such a way which allows us to see God's hand at work and alive in the Word.

We will study Saul's pharisaic upbringing and the miraculous nature of his conversion. We will follow his missionary journeys as a way of gaining insight into his theology and experience. This course offers a study of the major themes of St. Paul's writings as a framework for understanding his ministry and thought.

This course will examine:

- A. Journey of Saul to Paul
- B. Paul's major theological themes as set for his New Testament epistles.
- C. Increased understanding of several important passages in Paul's writings.
- D. A deeper personal encounter with God through the Scriptures.

Course format:

For the two days of the course we will explore who St. Paul was before and after his miraculous conversion/transformation in a seminar type format which will consist of lecture and group discussions. We will explore his apostolic leadership, doctrines, and ethical implications of the gospel. Each participant should come prepared to be actively involved in these discussions.

Required pre-class assignment:

In preparation, each participant should have read through the books of Acts and the writings of St. Paul. Although scholars disagree about the true authorship of some of the letters, we will consider all of the following: Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

Additional resources:

Wright, N.T. What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997 **ISBN-13:** 9780802844453

The Holy Bible in a contemporary English language e.g. NIV, RSV, NRSV, ESV

Optional recourses:

Fee, Gordon. Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God, Hendrickson Publishers, 1996, **ISBN-13:** 9781565631700 (optional text for class)

Other Research Resources: The following resources are optional and are **NOT** required for the class. These resources are provided solely as resources that may be helpful for the required post-class assignment. You may be able to locate them in a local or seminary library.

N.T. Wight web-site <http://www.ntwrightpage.com/#>

Hawthorne, Gerald F., Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, eds. Dictionary of Paul and His Letters. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Hayes, Richard B., Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul, Yale University Press, 1989

ISBN-13: 9780300054293

Marrow, Stanley B., Paul His Letters and His Theology. Paulist Press, 1986,

ISBN-13: 9780809127443

Required post-class assignment:

“Themes of Paul” paper: Each participant will be expected to write a 5 page paper (double spaced, 1” margins, New Times Roman) discussing the meaning of one or two major themes of Paul which include: righteousness, reconciliation, grace, justification, sanctification, redemption, cosmos, and the cross, [other themes may be considered with prior approval.] Each theme *must be supported* by scripture **and** other references. Papers should be written using an inductive model approach, i.e. observation, interpretation of the scripture, and application to our daily life. Paper should be written as if you were trying to explain one of Paul’s themes to a parishioner in a Bible study or an un-churched person who is seeking to understand.

Personal Reflection: Use a verse(s) from Paul’s writings or from the Acts of the Apostles that has a special meaning to you **and** references one of Paul’s themes. Draft a meditation (150-200 words) that reflects one of Paul’s themes and the significance of that theme to your daily life and might affect another’s life. You may use the one of the themes used in the paper. (hint: this reflection should resemble a daily devotion that you might read e.g. Forward in Faith, Our Daily Bread, My Upmost for His Highest (Oswald Chambers), Knowing God’s Purpose For Your Life (J.I. Packer), Tozer on the Holy Spirit (A.W. Tozer), The Imitation of Christ (Thomas A Kempis.)

All post-class assignments should be received either by e-mail (word format) or by mail no later than 30 days following the last day of class.