

Life and Teachings of Christ (Winter 2024)



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Course Description

Jesus came to earth to reveal the Father, among other reasons (John 1:14–18). What He did and taught while He was here in a particular historical context revealed the Father's eternal nature and His eternal plan for people. Then, God inspired four records so that people in other places and eras could benefit from this message (e.g., John 20:31). In this class, we will examine these four records, the Gospels, and the historical context into which Jesus came to learn what Jesus has revealed about what we should believe, what we should do, and who we should be.

Course Objectives

- 1) To understand the historical context of the earthly ministry of Jesus and how this context sheds light on His message.
- 2) To learn the historical progression of the earthly ministry of Jesus.
- 3) To conform ourselves to the teachings of Jesus found in the text.

Course Evaluation

QUIZZES (30%)

BOOK REVIEW (15%)

HORIZONTAL COMPARISON PAPER (25%)

REFLECTION PAPER ON TEACHING METHODS (15%)

EXTRABIBLICAL PARALLELS REFLECTION (15%)

Required Readings

- Bible. I typically use the ESV, but you are welcome to use the translation of your choice.
- Credit students will need to procure a book for review. You are welcome to propose a book, or you can ask me for suggestions.

Course Schedule

Week 1	3/7	Syllabus/Expectations; Historical Context of Jesus	
Week 2	3/14	Birth, Childhood, and Early Ministry	
Week 3	3/21	The Middle of the Ministry	<i>Teaching Methods Reflection</i>
Week 4	3/28	The Final Week in Jerusalem	Quiz 1: Background/Life
Week 5	4/4	What Does Jesus Teach about God and His Word?	<i>Book Review</i>
Week 6	4/11	What Does Jesus Teach about Himself?	
Week 7	4/18	What Does Jesus Teach about Salvation?	<i>Horizontal Comparison</i>
Week 8	4/25	What Does Jesus Teach about Discipleship?	Quiz 2: Teachings

Assignments Description

Extrabiblical Parallels Reflections (15%)

Each week I will post a passage of Scripture and a passage from an extrabiblical source, e.g., Josephus, as a discussion thread in Populi. Respond to this thread with a post of at least 100 words regarding how the extrabiblical text throws extra light on the Scripture selected.

Reflection Paper on Teaching Methods (15%)

We need to learn not only from *what* Jesus taught, but *how* He taught. Choose one or more passages in the Gospels that record Jesus' teaching and examine the methods He uses (e.g., parables or questions and answers). In a paper of roughly 1,000 words, reflect on how Jesus uses these techniques in your chosen passage, what makes them effective, and how you could integrate these techniques into your own ministry. No research into the secondary literature is required, but (if you choose to do some) cite your sources according to the *SBL Handbook of Style, 2nd edition*.

Quizzes (30%)

There will be two quizzes in this class. The first one covers the historical context of the Gospels and the life of Jesus, while the second covers His teaching. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice, matching, and essay questions. You should take these by Saturday at 11:59 of the week noted in the table above.

Book Review (15%)

The book review should be typed in Times New Roman 12 pt. font, double-spaced. It should be roughly 1,000 words in length. No references to other sources are required. If you choose to include any, cite them in SBL style. The review should contain each of the following:

- (1) a complete bibliographical entry in SBL style,
- (2) a summary of the book in no more than 300 words,
- (3) a discussion of the book's strengths,
- (4) a discussion of the book's weaknesses
- (5) a final evaluation of the book, including whether you would recommend it and, if so, to whom.

Horizontal Comparison Paper (25%)

Pick an event or discourse that multiple Gospels record. Compare the parallel accounts. How are they similar? How are they different? What light do the accounts cast on each other? What do the details chosen in each account suggest about the themes of the Gospel(s) from which they come? After coming to your own conclusions, compare them with those found in the literature, e.g., commentaries, monographs, and journal articles. (Feel free to ask me for suggestions.) Write up your results in a paper of roughly 2,000 words. The body of the paper should be double-spaced and use Times New Roman 12 pt. font; the footnotes should use 10 pt. Times New Roman with a blank line between notes. The paper should cite at least 7 sources, using the *SBL Handbook of Style, 2nd Edition*. The bibliography should contain everything cited in the footnotes.

Policies and other information

Attendance (From the GLBC Catalogue)

Students are required to attend classes regularly. One unexcused absence for every credit hour in a given course may be permitted, i.e. per one-hour class. Two percent (2%) of the course grade per academic hour for each hour of classroom instruction missed may be deducted for each unexcused absence beyond the above.

Late Work (From the GLBC Catalogue)

Assignments for the term are listed in the syllabus supplied for each course. Every assignment so listed must be completed to pass the course. Late submission of assignments need not be accepted by the instructor. Extenuating circumstances and emergencies will be taken into consideration. If a late assignment is accepted, a grade reduction of 5% per instructional day may be assessed.

Selected Bibliography

Ancient Sources

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Brenton, Lancelot Charles Lee. *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament: English Translation*. London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1870. Logos Bible Software edition.

Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. ABRL. New York: Doubleday, 1983. Logos Bible Software edition.

Embry, Brad, Ronald Herms, & Archie T. Wright, eds. *Early Jewish Literature: An Anthology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. Logos Bible Software edition.

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First-Century Context

Blackwell, Ben C., John K. Goodrich, and Jason Matson, eds. *Reading Mark in Context: Jesus and Second Temple Judaism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. Logos Bible Software edition.

Evans, Craig A., and Stanley E. Porter, eds. *Dictionary of New Testament Background*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000. Logos Bible Software edition.

Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. Logos Bible Software edition.

Freyne, Sean. *The Jesus Movement and Its Expansion: Meaning and Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014. Logos Bible Software edition.

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Lim, Timothy H., and John J. Collins, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Logos Bible Software edition.

Rasmussen, Carl G. *Zondervan Atlas of the Bible*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010. Logos Bible Software edition.

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Barnett, Paul W. *Jesus and the Logic of History*. New Studies in Biblical Theology 3. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1997. Logos Bible Software edition.

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Green, Joel B., and Max Turner, eds. *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994. Logos Bible Software edition.

Jeremias, Joachim. *Jesus and the Message of the New Testament*. Edited by K.C. Hanson. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2002. Logos Bible Software edition.

Keener, Craig S. *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. Logos Bible Software edition.

Porter, Stanley E. *The Criteria for Authenticity in Historical-Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals*. JSNTSup 191. London: T. & T. Clark, 2004. Logos Bible Software edition.

Schlatter, Adolf. *The History of the Christ: The Foundation for New Testament Theology*. Translated by Andreas J. Köstenberger. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997. Logos Bible Software edition.

Van Voorst, Robert E. *Jesus Outside the New Testament: An Introduction to the Ancient Evidence*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. Logos Bible Software edition.

Wright, N.T. *Jesus and the Victory of God*. London: SPCK, 1996. Logos Bible Software edition.

Teachings of Jesus

- Evans, Craig A., and Stanley E. Porter, eds. *The Historical Jesus: A Sheffield Reader*. Biblical Seminar 33. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001. Logos Bible Software edition.
- Elgvin, Torlief. *Warrior, King, Servant, Savior: Messianism in the Hebrew Bible and Early Jewish Texts*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2022. Logos Bible Software edition.
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