

Course Syllabus

Course Number & Title: #215 Christ in the Gospels

Semester: Fall 2026

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Course Description: This course is designed to give you a detailed knowledge of the background and sources for the life of Christ on earth, including extra-biblical sources, the New Testament epistles, especially those of Peter and Paul, and most especially the four canonical Gospels. Most of the course will be dedicated to working through the Gospels and tracing his life itself.

Delivery: In-person, 16-week semester schedule

Course Prerequisite(s): (None)

Student Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to do the following:

1. Read and interpret assigned portions of key works on the life of Christ, including the biblical Gospels, standard works on New Testament introduction, modern scholarship, perspectives on the life of Christ, standard biographies of Christ, and a standard harmony of the Gospels.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the assigned readings and lecture material through active participation in class discussions, articulating insights and critical reflections.
3. Identify and trace the geographical locations where Jesus lived and ministered using maps of the Holy Land and Jerusalem, analyzing how these places relate to the narrative of the Gospels.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of lecture material by answering study questions on tests, showcasing comprehension and application of key concepts.

5. Engage in advanced study on an aspect of Christ and the Gospels by completing one of the following tasks:
 - a. Evaluate a scholarly book concerning some aspect of the course by writing a two-page review and critique, adhering to the standard format for journal articles in the SBL Handbook of Style.
 - b. Translate one chapter from each of the four Gospels, demonstrating linguistic proficiency and comprehension of the original texts.
 - c. Research and write a five-page paper on a controversial question of interpretation in the Gospels, using the standard format posted on the WRS website.
 - d. Create and design a series of at least five sermon or Bible lesson outlines on a part of the life of Jesus, demonstrating the ability to apply theological concepts to practical ministry contexts.

Course outcomes:

The general purposes of this course are to enable those who successfully complete it to do the following:

- To be able to defend the historicity of the person of Jesus Christ and the trustworthiness of the Gospels.
- To know the general outline of Jesus' life
- To be familiar with his teachings and miracles
- To be prepared to teach or preach from the life of Jesus
- For those seeking ordination, to be prepared to pass the section of the English Bible exam dealing with the life of Jesus and the Gospels
- To possess the tools for a lifetime of fruitful study and growth in the knowledge of Christ's life and teachings
- To grow in faithfulness to Christ, in love for him, and in usefulness in Christ's church

Course Requirements

1. Required Reading

The following books are to be read by the dates indicated in the course schedule below:

Reading assignment #1

- The four Gospels, in two different translations
- E. F. Harrison, *Introduction to the New Testament*, ch. 5-9; OR D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2nd ed.), ch. 2-6
- James Stalker, *The Life of Jesus Christ*
- Robert L. Thomas and Stanley N. Gundry, *The NIV Harmony of the Gospels*, Prefaces, Explanation, Essays #1-8

Reading assignment #2

- Robert B. Strimple, *The Modern Search for the Real Jesus*
- E. F. Harrison, *A Short Life of Christ*
- Robert L. Thomas and Stanley N. Gundry, *The NIV Harmony of the Gospels* (rest of book, including Essays #9-12). It is advised that your reading in Thomas and Gundry follow our classroom lectures as closely as possible.

2. Recommended Text – Bible atlas

In addition to the required reading texts, you will need to obtain either the *Satellite Bible Atlas* or the *Holman Quick Source Bible Atlas*. Bring this atlas to class, as we will refer to it frequently during lectures and discussions.

3. Course Schedule

Assignments are due on the dates specified.

Aug.	31	Introduction to the Course
Sept.	7	(Labor Day recess)
	14	
	21	
	28	
Oct.	5	
	12	Reading Assignment #1 due
	19	Midterm Examination
	26	
Nov.	2	
	9	

	16	Special Assignment due
	23	
	30	
Dec.	7	Reading Assignment #2 due
	14	Final Examination

Special Assignment Description:

In addition to the assigned readings and exams, you will be completing a special assignment. Choose one of the following:

- 1) Read a scholarly book concerning some aspect of the course and write a two-page review and critique. Use the standard format for journal articles found on the Seminary's website.
- 2) Translate one chapter from each of the four Gospels.
- 3) Write a five-page research paper on some controversial question of interpretation in the Gospels. Use the standard format for papers found on our Seminary's website.
- 4) Prepare a series of at least five sermon or Bible lesson outlines on a part of the life of Jesus.

Professor approval is required for the special assignment.

Examinations:

There will be two examinations during the semester covering the lecture material. The midterm will cover questions #1-38, and the final will cover #39-63.

Grading:

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| • Attendance and participation | 10% |
| • Reading | 25% |
| • Special assignment | 25% |
| • Midterm examination | 20% |
| • Final examination | 20% |

Courseware and Copyright:

This course syllabus and the accompanying course protocols are intended to accurately reflect all aspects of the course learning experience. However, the professor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as necessary due to events and circumstances that arise during the term.

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