PREREQUISITES: Bible 210 or Junior Standing

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A study of selected teachings of Jesus with emphasis upon their historical occasion and contemporary relevance.

RATIONALE FOR BIBLE 422

Bible 422 is a study of selected teachings of Jesus from the Synoptic Gospels with emphasis upon their historical occasion and contemporary relevance. It is a foundational senior level course required of students pursuing a major or minor in Christian Studies and is open as a viable upper-level New Testament elective for all Juniors and Seniors who have successfully completed Bible 110 and Bible 120. Christian Studies majors or minors must also have completed Bible 210 prior to taking Bible 422.

The purpose of this course is as follows:

1. To introduce the student to critical historical study of the teachings of Jesus, thereby acquainting the student with both the primary and secondary literature in the subject area.
2. To interpret both the form and content of the teachings of Jesus in the light of their various historical Sitze-im-Leben or “life settings” or “matrices.”
3. To interpret the form and content of the teachings of Jesus in relation to contemporary life and the problems of both church and society.

Thus, the life situation, purpose, and distinctive theological perspectives of the teachings of Jesus will be examined in such a manner as to enable the willing and interested student to develop a knowledge of the complex issues which surround the teachings of Jesus as they are found in the Synoptic Gospels. In addition, the willing and interested student has the opportunity to become familiar with significant New Testament scholars in the area of the teachings of Jesus and Synoptic studies, as well as grasping the relevance of the teachings of Jesus for the present day through the application of sound principles of biblical exegesis.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives for the course are as follow:

Cognitive Objectives

1. To examine the life situation, purpose, and distinctive theological perspectives of the teachings of Jesus through the intensive study of both primary and secondary literature.
2. To grasp the relevance of the teachings of Jesus for the present day through the application of sound principles of biblical exegesis.
3. To become knowledgeable with regard to the complex issues which surround the teachings of Jesus embedded in the Synoptic Gospels through the assigned readings, lecture, and class discussion of both
primary and secondary materials.
4. To become familiar with significant New Testament scholars in the areas of the teachings of Jesus and Synoptic studies through an introductory exposure to their methodology and contributions.

**Behavioral Objectives**

1. When asked to do so, the student will write and discuss from memory the specific matters pertaining to the theme, medium, methodology, and content of the teachings of Jesus.
2. When asked to do so, the student will interpret specific teachings of Jesus in such a way as to reflect a sound historical setting and contemporary relevance.
3. When asked to do so, the student will discuss in writing the contributions of significant New Testament scholars to the study of the teachings of Jesus.
4. When asked to do so, the student will prepare a written research project in accordance with the format supplied by the professor, which will demonstrate the student’s ability to investigate and to evaluate issues regarding the ministry and teachings of Jesus, as well as the work of significant scholars in the area of Gospel studies.

**APPROACH OF THE COURSE**

The approach to be taken in the study of the teachings of Jesus will employ historical-analytical and literary methodologies, which represent an attempt to deal seriously with the complex historical matrix of the ministry and teachings of Jesus found in the Synoptic Gospels in both an adequate and an appropriate way. The word historical” represents acknowledgment of the fact that God has revealed himself to humankind in the events of history. Thus, an historical perspective is crucial to understanding the biblical record of God’s revelation of himself even to approaches which are more literary, topical, doctrinal, or theological in nature. The word “analytical” refers to careful analysis. It involves the art of judging with knowledge, perspective, and propriety the truths, beauties, and basic nature of works of art or literature. An analytical approach, sometimes referred to by the word “critical,” represents a careful and balanced consideration of the value inherent in art or in literature. As the historical-analytical method is applied to the study of the Bible, the desired result is to maximize one’s contextual knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the value of every scripture inspired by God for training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). The desired results of historical-analytical and sound literary understanding may therefore be deemed to have significant value for sound confessional religious expression.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Cheating and plagiarism is not tolerated at Mississippi College. A student who is found cheating on an examination will be given a grade of “F” and reported to the university administration. Plagiarism is the submission of someone else’s work as one’s own. This is not acceptable and will result in a grade of “0” on the work and/or more severe disciplinary action. The student should be thoroughly informed on these matters of academic integrity which may be found in the Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog, student publications, or Policy 2.19 available on the Mississippi College web site.
OUTLINE OF COVERED TOPICS

The following represent the general areas to be covered in this course. Details are reflected in the assignment section.

The Quest: Who Was Jesus?
The Gospels: Gospel and Gospels, the Nature of the Gospel Tradition Sources and Criteria of Authenticity
The Social and Religious Setting of Jesus
The Ministry of Jesus
The Passion of Jesus
The End of the Gospels’ Story: Arrest and Trial
The End of the Gospels’ Story: Death and Resurrection
Jesus the Teacher
Method, Form, and Style of Jesus’ Teaching
The Kingdom of God in Jewish History
The Nature of the Kingdom in the Teachings of Jesus
The Nearness of the Kingdom of God
The King of the Kingdom
The Reality of God in Jesus’ Teachings
Jesus and Judaism: Love, Law, and Ritual
Jesus and Judaism: Faith and Family
Jesus’ Teachings About Himself
The Claim of Jesus–Jesus and Soteriological Questions
Jesus and Discipleship
The Righteousness, Reward, and Relevance of Jesus’ Gospel
The Nature and Problem of Parables
The Matter of Interpretation of Parables
Parables in the Primitive Church
The Parables of Grace
The Parables of Discipleship
The Parables of Growth
The Parables of Crisis
Assessing the Parables

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Primary methods of instruction utilized in this course include dialogical lecture, group class discussion, exegetical interpretation of specific scriptural passages, a term project or critical book reviews, case studies of contemporary relevance.

REQUIRED PRACTICES

Required practices include reading of required texts, discussion and exegetical examination of assigned material and scriptural passages within the classroom setting, research and production of a formal paper project, recall and application of material learned or examined.
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Instructional materials include the following textbooks required for this course.


Reading assignments in the above textbooks are given in the assignment schedule by periods. These readings are to be prepared in advance of the designated class period. Other assignments may be made in class pertaining to classroom activities and library resources. A bibliography of other materials potentially pertinent to the course may be found in the above materials.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Evaluation in this class consists of the following items. Attendance assumes a positive role in the learning process as it pertains to attitudes of learning and class participation.

Evaluation of Student Progress

1. Examinations. There will be three sectional examinations, each worth 100 points, given at the points indicated in the schedule of assignments. These major exams may not be missed without penalty, except for emergency reasons and authorized college activity. Death in the immediate family and illness verified by a doctor’s statement qualify as emergency reasons. It will be to your advantage to be present for all scheduled exams. See the make-up policy of the professor given below. Each exam will be sectional, i.e., it will focus upon material covered since the previous exam. Total: 300 points.

2. Written Assignments. There are written assignments that are listed in the assignment schedule that are given in lieu of “pop quizzes.” These are required assignments that will be handed in at the beginning of the period on the day assigned. No late assignments will be accepted for unexcused absences or absent-mindedness. See further “Late Assignments,” as given below. These written assignments should be done ahead of the class period on a word processor–hand written materials will not be deemed acceptable. Total: 100 points.

3. Written Term Project. The student will write and submit a written research project, the final copy of which must be typed, double-spaced, in correct form according to the form and style suggested by the professor. The research project will be a guided project, in that stated requirements will be met according to the scheduled deadlines. As a general rule, each failure to meet a scheduled deadline will result in a 10% penalty. Final projects submitted after the date due deadline will only be accepted with 20% penalty per day or portion thereof and will not be accepted at all after the close of next class period. Total: 150 points.
4. Final Examination. A final examination, with a value of 150 points, will be given at the end of the semester during the regular examination period on the day and at the time determined by the Registrar’s Office. It will be a maximum of two hours in length and will be comprehensive in nature. Total: 150 points.

The total number of points to be accumulated in the course thus number 700 points.

Class Policy on Make-Up Examinations

If it is necessary for the student to miss an exam for any reason, the professor should be notified prior to the exam period if the student is to avoid penalty. It is the intention of the professor that few or no make-up exams be given. In any event, once a student misses an exam it is the sole discretion of the professor as to whether a make-up exam will be allowed and whether or not a penalty will be assessed. Generally speaking, exams missed without appropriate excuse and/or notification will incur at least a letter grade or 10% penalty. It is to the student’s advantage to be present at all regularly scheduled exam periods. In the event the student misses the final exam, the policies of this paragraph apply as well as the procedures involving incomplete grades. See below.

Criteria of Grade Assignment

There are 700 possible points for this course. Any student who accumulates 91-100% of the total after percentage adjustment is made for attendance (see below) will earn a grade of A, 81-90% a grade of B, 71-80% a grade of C, 61-70% a grade of D, and below 60% an F. Needless to say, quality work and full participation is expected of the student in this course. The grade received will represent an evaluation of the work done in the course and the student’s participation, not the student’s person. One will get out of the course what she/he is both willing and able to put into it.

Final Course Grade

In accordance with the percentages given above as adjusted for attendance, the final grade earned in the course will be representative of the quality of student work accomplished in terms of student participation and mastery of the material assigned. The academic standards of Mississippi College include grades A through F. A grade of A will represent superior work, B above-average work, C average work, D below-average work, and F a failure to meet minimal course and proficiency requirements.

OTHER COURSE INFORMATION

Attendance

Mississippi College has standards regarding attendance of classes. These are printed in the Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog. The student is expected to attend classes regularly and punctually. The student should be fully aware of these policies. All classes missed count as absences, whether excused or unexcused. An automatic F is given if absences exceed 25% of the class meetings. This is the equivalent of 4 class meetings in a night class which meets once a week, 11 class meetings in a MWF class, and 7 class meetings in a TR class. There is an appeal process which may be instituted through the office of the appropriate dean.

In addition to the above, the student should be advised that excessive unexcused absences beyond the allowable limits (three clock hours, which is only 3 unexcused absences in a MWF class) will penalize the student’s final percentage semester grade point average by 1% per unexcused absence. To reiterate,
the student’s final grade point average will be penalized for excessive unexcused absences. Thus, it should be understood that excessive absences can make a difference in the letter grade received in the course. The professor values class attendance and full student participation.

**Incomplete Grades**

An incomplete (grade of I) may be given to a student who has been hindered by circumstances beyond the student’s control from completing work required for the course. The stipulations for awarding and removing an incomplete grade are given in the *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog*. The student should be familiar with the full statement of these stipulations. Briefly, the student should contact the professor to determine a date for completion of the work. An incomplete grade becomes an automatic F if not completed in a timely manner. To remove an I grade, the student must obtain a form from the Registrar’s Office, pay a fee, and give the form to the professor for submission of the new and final grade.

**Late Assignments**

As stipulated above, submission of late work regarding the term project will incur a minimum penalty of 10% per occurrence. Failure to submit the final project on time will incur a 20% or greater penalty. In the event of late completion of outside assignments for reasons other than excused absences, the late work must be submitted by the next class period and will be accepted only with penalty.

**Tardiness**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and punctually. Class attendance will be emphasized by this professor and roll will be checked at the beginning of each class period. In the event of tardiness, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the professor at the close of the particular class period in order to assure that she/he is not marked absent. No recorded absences will be erased after the week in which they are recorded, if the tardy student fails to properly notify the professor.

**Information on Student Appeals**

Information on student appeals of academic matters is given generally in the *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog*. In general, appeals pertaining to a specific course begin with the instructor of the course and proceed in order through the department chair, the dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**Application for Accommodation**

As stated in the *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog*, Mississippi College does not discriminate in admission to its programs or activities. Should students need special accommodations due to learning, physical, psychological, or other disabilities, students should direct their inquiry to the Director of the Counseling and Career Development Center.

**Support Service References**

The student should be advised that Mississippi College is a service oriented institution. Academic concerns may be addressed in appropriate order by the course instructor, the advisor, the department chair, the dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Other support services may be found through the Counseling and Career Development Center, through the Office of Financial Aid, etc., according to the specific area of need. The student is referred to the general catalog and to his/her advisor for referral of specific needs.
**University Calendar**

Important dates pertaining to the current academic session of Mississippi College may be found in *Mississippi College Undergraduate Catalog* or the Mississippi College web. The final examination schedule may also be found on the web site.

**Assignments**

Assignments are listed in the assignment schedule. Any deviation from the schedule or period correlation will be made by the professor in class. A basic outline of course content is incorporated into the assignment schedule. Additional assignments to the readings in the textbooks may be made as appropriate to the material being studied.

It is important that the student read the assigned materials for each class period prior to that class period. Essentially, one assignment will be covered per class period. While it is possible (and maybe even desirable) to spend much more time on each topic listed, time will be a limiting factor. This course is meant to be an introductory rather than an extensive treatment of each topic.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

**Matters of Decorum**

Cell phones and beepers should be turned off while in the classroom. If a student chews gum, it should be done with the mouth closed. No meals are allowed in the classroom. The professor finds it very distracting for the student to be writing notes to or talking with a neighbor during class about matters not pertaining to this class. The professor does not easily tolerate the student making preparation for other classes during the period for this class, nor does he tolerate students sleeping in class. The professor does not wish to embarrass the student, but will publicly insist these matters be properly observed. The professor expects the student to be involved in the classroom proceedings with full freedom to contribute to the classroom learning experience.

**A Final Word**

Participation is expected in this class—it is not a spectator sport. While there is a significant amount of work to be completed in this course, it is meant to be an enjoyable course which offers some rather unique learning opportunities. The course is intended to be experienced as an opportunity for the broadening of both knowledge and faith. It is also intended to develop the student’s thinking and writing skills through inquiry and dialogue with the professor, other students, and relevant class materials and exercises. The course will be, however, what you the student make it to be. The more one is willing to both receive and give, the more one will gain foundationally from the course.
For Your Convenience

The professor would prefer to be called either Big G or Dr. G, whichever makes you comfortable. He would prefer not to be called “Dr. Greene,” although he does answer by that name and title.

Office—Provine Chapel 108, west side center

Office Hours: Although sometimes interrupted by other responsibilities, general office hours and a schedule of appointments are posted on the professor’s door. It is always good to schedule appointments in order to avoid potential time conflicts. The student is encouraged to sign up for appointment time as needed or desired.

Office Telephone: 601-925-3291  Voice mail available
Home Telephone: 601-924-5403  Answer machine available
E-Mail: rgreene@mc.edu

BIBLE 422 ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE Big G, Spring 2012

Topical assignments are listed below. Every attempt will be made to follow the schedule given below, although sometimes assignments are not completed as neatly as may be suggested by the assignment schedule. In general, the student may sequential assignments for each class period as given below. Exceptions or additions, as they may occur, will be given in class.

I. PROLEGOMENA

1. Orientation and Pretest

2. The Quest: Who Was Jesus?
   Required: Read either Matthew or Luke in its entirety from your customary Bible.
   Recommended:
   N. T. Wright, “Quest for the Historical Jesus,” The Anchor Bible Dictionary, 3 (H-J): 796-802. [Hereafter abbreviated “ABD.”]

   Q.—Discern and list 10 significant or major differences between John and the Synoptic Gospel you read in assignment #2. (Make two hard copies—one to keep, one to be handed in.)
   Required Reading: Choose one of the following.

4. Presuppositions, Method, Sources, and Criteria of Authenticity
   Stein, Jesus the Messiah [JM], 10-50
5. The Historical Setting and Birth of Jesus
Stein, JM, 51-80
Gospel Parallels (GP), pages v-viii, 1-10

Monday, January 23– Submission of Topic, Preliminary Outline, Preliminary Bibliography. In one page, you should state your topic or problem you have chosen and indicate why you chose it, how you propose to approach it, and what you hope to accomplish. In addition, a full preliminary outline and bibliography should be submitted in proper form. A topic, once chosen, may not be exchanged for a different topic. It may, however, be refined.

6. Foundational Years and Events
Stein, JM, 81-122
GP, P1-8 (Note: Paragraph numbers are found in headings; page numbers at bottom. Most references henceforth will be to paragraph numbers [e.g., P8, “The Temptation”] and not page numbers.)

7. The Galilean Ministry of Jesus
(This may be read from GP beginning with P9 and following the bolded Markan references through subsequent paragraph numbers, ending with P132.)
Stein, JM, 141-176
Q.–How would you characterize the Galilean ministry? List at least five characteristics. (Make two hard copies—one to keep, one to be handed in.)

Work on project topic for a minimum of two hours.

9. The Judean Section of Jesus’ Ministry
(GP, P-187 to P-222, bolded Markan references)
Stein, JM, 177-213
Q.–How would you characterize the Judean ministry? List at least five characteristics. (Make two hard copies—one to keep, one to be handed in.)

10. The Passion Narratives: Arrest and Trial
(GP, P-231 to P-244, bolded Markan references)
Stein, JM, 214-240
Q.–What are the significant differences and similarities among the accounts? List at least five. (Make two hard copies—one to keep, one to be handed in.)

11. The Passion Narratives: Death and Resurrection
(GP, P-246 to P-253; “Appearances” Section, pp. 206-210)
Stein, JM, 241-277
Q.–What are the significant differences and similarities among the accounts? List at least five. (Make two hard copies—one to keep, one to be handed in.)

12. The Gospel About Jesus
Q.–List at least five elements of the early Christian Kerygma pertaining to Jesus and his ministry. A hint—see the sermons in Acts; reflect on the Gospels. (Make two copies—one to retain, one to be handed in)
   Class/Group discussion and review

14. EXAM 1– Monday, February 10

   Wednesday, February 15– Full Working Bibliography, Revised Outline. Submission of a full, working bibliography should be submitted in proper form. It should be indicative of significant progress already made in development of your research project, both in terms of organization and bibliographic resources.

II. THE CONTENT OF JESUS’ GOSPEL: THE REALITY OF GOD

15. Jesus the Teacher
   Stein, Method and Message of Jesus’ Teachings [MMJT], 1-32
   Stein, JM, 123-125

16. The Central Theme: The Kingdom of God
   Stein, MMJT, 60-81
   Stein, JM, 125-131
   Q.– Utilizing a good concordance, look up 20 passages in Gospel Parallels. List the passages by paragraph numbers and characteristics of the Kingdom found therein.
   (Make two copies—one to retain, one to hand in.)

17. The Reality of God in Jesus’ Teachings
   Stein, MMJT, 76-89
   Stein, JM, 131-134

18. Jesus, God, and the Kingdom–The Man and His Message

19. Jesus and Judaism: Love, Law, and Ritual
   Stein, MMJT, 103-109

20. The Claims of Jesus: Theology, Christology, Soteriology
   Stein, MMJT, 109-124
   Stein, MMJT, 124-151
   (Bring Stein’s book)

21. Discipleship and Some Hard Sayings of Jesus
   Work on project topic for a minimum of two hours.

22. Righteousness, Reward, and Relevance of Jesus’ Gospel
   Stein, MMJT, 90-114

Friday, March 9– A Sample Rough Draft. A sample rough draft should be submitted, complete with revised outline and bibliography. A minimum of 5-8 pages of content should be submitted, although a completed rough draft is also appropriate. It should be in appropriate form, including footnotes and bibliography, such that help may be given in preparation for final copy.

Q.– For each of the three categories of (1) righteousness, (2) reward, and (3) relevance of Jesus’ Gospel, list at least two teachings of Jesus by GP numbers (as well as book, chapter, verse) that address these issues and be prepared to present and discuss them in class. (Make two copies—one to retain, one to hand in.)

24. EXAM 2– Monday, March 5

III. JESUS’ TEACHING BY PARABLES

25. The Nature and Problem of Parables
   Barclay, 9-17, 25-31
   Stein, MMJT, 33-44
   Wenham, 7-25, 239-245

26. The Matter of Interpretation of Parables
   Stein, MMJT, 44-50
   Wenham, 213-238

27. The Matter of Interpretation of Parables–cont.
   Stein, MMJT, 50-59

28. Parables of Grace
   GP, P-10, 64, 65, 54, 52, 53, 190
   Barclay, 162-168,
   Wenham, 26-35, 94-95, 113-117,

29. Parables of Grace–cont.
   GP– P-203, 83, 144
   Barclay, 198-203, 188-192, 79-85
   Wenham, 123-125, 96-99

30. Parables of Grace–cont.
   GP– P-186, 170, 172, 173
   Barclay, 99-105, 151-157, 177-187
   Wenham, 117-122, 99-113

   Work on project topic for a minimum of two hours.

32. Parables of Discipleship
   GP, P-157, 123, 101, 171, 138, 103, 181, 169
   Barclay, 67-78, 204-208, 209-212, 213-216
   Wenham, 205-210, 199-205, 32-35, 190-192

Wednesday, April 4– Final Copy Due. The final copy of the project is due at the beginning of class, exceptions with 20% or greater penalty. Paper must be typed, double-spaced, and submitted in duplicate (two copies). In addition, your sample rough draft previously submitted to the professor should be resubmitted with the two copies of your final paper. One copy, as well as your rough draft, will be returned to you.
33. Parables of Discipleship–cont.
   **GP– P-174, 136, 20, 94, 185, 147, 43, 38, 229**
   Barclay, 146-150, 86-91, 113-119, 217-222, 106-112
   Wenham, 161-171, 151-154, 185-190, 178-185, 201-203, 88-93

34. So-Called Parables of Growth
   **GP– P-90, 93**
   Barclay, 18-24
   Wenham, 41-67

35. So-Called Parables of Growth–cont.
   **GP– P-96, 95, 97, 98, 102**
   Barclay, 38-44, 52-59, 60-66, 45-51
   Wenham, 48-67

36. Parables of Crisis
   **GP, P-176, 183, 65, 88, 132, 156, 158, 161, 162**
   Barclay, 193-197, 120-126, 127-132
   Wenham, 32-40, 171-173, 70-80, 139-142, 197-199

37. Parables of Crisis–cont.
   **GP– P-220, 177, 165, 195, 205, 227, 228, 204**
   Barclay, 92-98, 174-177, 151-157, 158-161, 133-138, 169-173, 139-145
   Wenham, 68-70, 142-150, 193-197, 133-139, 80-83, 83-88, 125-133

38. Assessing the Parables

39. **EXAM 3– Wednesday, April 18**

IV. CRITICAL ISSUES

40. Jesus’ Revolutionary Teachings
   Wenham, 171-177
   **Q.–** List at least five teachings of Jesus by GP numbers (as well as book, chapter, verse) that you find to be (1) most revolutionary, (2) most difficult, (3) most troublesome, and (4) most comforting (a total of 20).
   (Make two copies–one to retain, one to be handed in.)

41. The Quest: Who Was Jesus?
   **Q.–** List five ways in which your understanding of Jesus has been (1) challenged, (2) corrected, (3) confirmed, and (4) enhanced (a total of 20).
   (Make two copies–one to retain, one to be handed in.)

42. Final Lecture: Jesus and His Teachings

   --FINAL EXAM–Friday, April 27, 11:00 AM-1:00 PM