James and Cross-cultural Wisdoms (12-621)

3 weekends (Fri 1-9pm; Sat 9am-3pm): Oct 17-18, Nov 7-8, Dec 5-6

Instructor: Yeo Khiok-khing (K.K.), PhD
Tel: 224-678-8065 (cell)
E-mail: kkyeo@garrett.edu

A. Course Description
A selected study of the book of James, focusing on its literary and theological readings, exploring various reception and hermeneutical theories of rhetoric and intertextuality on cross-cultural wisdoms (such as ancient Jewish, Greco-Roman, Chinese, Islamic, African-American, etc.) of various communities. Attention will be given to the history of scholarly discussion as well as issues in modern hermeneutics through both traditional historical-critical and modern methodologies. The course encourages social and pastoral readings with wholistic, aesthetic and practical goals.

The main teachings and especially the theological themes found in James will be explored. They will then be interpreted to address modern issues (such as rich and poor, justice and piety, healing and reconciliation, sin and salvation, anthropology and ethics, etc).

B. Assignments and Textbooks
The course will be conducted mainly in seminars, beginning with short lecture and proceed with class discussion on assigned reading material re. wisdom traditions in various cultures. Besides reading the material, each student is asked to lead one class session of their choice.

The second assignment is to encourage the development of a major exegetical and hermeneutical skills with the biblical material, the paper is due Nov 8, 2014. The paper is limited to 10 single-spaced pages, with the following two sections: exegetical or theological interpretation of a text/motif, and intertextual reading of such text/theme with an extra-biblical wisdom tradition/text/theme or with a modern issue.

A. Required/Main Texts:
   http://www.amazon.com/Wisdom-Israel-Herhard-Von-Rad/dp/0687457572/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1399899102&sr=1-3&keywords=rad+wisdom+in+israel


B. Supplemental Texts:

   http://www.amazon.com/Brother-Jesus-Friend-God-Studies/dp/0802809863/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1399899317&sr=1-1&keywords=johnson+brother+of+jesus


C. Class Schedule and Assignments
Sept 12: Syllabi and Assignments; James the Writer, the Community
Reading: Johnson, 89-120

Textbooks:
James and Wisdom Traditions

**Sept 12: James the Text and its Reception**
- Reading: Johnson, 1-25, 124-164

**Sept 13: Library research**

**Oct 17: James the Text and its Intertextuality (1): Jewish: Old Testament**

**Oct 17: James the Text and its Intertextuality (2): Jewish: Hellenistic**

**Oct 18: James the Text and its Intertextuality (3): Greco-Romans and Metaphorical Reading**
- Reading: Johnson, 27-28, 66-88; Yeo, *Rhetorical Interaction*, Chapter Three (pp. 15-49).

- Reading: Johnson, 48-63; 167-216.

**Nov 7: James 2:1-26 (Genuine Faith: Impartiality and Works) and James 3:1-12 (Person and Word: Tongue)**

**Nov 7: James 3:13-4:10 (Genuine Wisdom: and Drawing Near to God) and James 4:11-5:6 (Eschatology and Wealth)**
- Reading: Johnson, 267-310

**Nov 8: James 5:7-20 (Suffering, Healing, Spirituality)**
- Reading: Johnson, 311-347

**James and Wisdom Traditions**
Nov 8: James and Copenhagen (Kierkegaard) and Confucian Moralists
Reading: Bauckham, James, Wisdom of James, Disciple of Jesus the Sage.

D. Grade Summary (based on 400 points and 4-point scale)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading class session</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>400</td>
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Expectations:
1. Attendance is expected. Absence or tardiness will result in drop of one full letter grade.
2. All assignments submitted in order to get a passing grade.
3. Papers will be graded based on the following criteria: (a) consistent and proper style/documentation; (b) clear and succinct writing/expression; (c) ability to do research and use scholarly material; (d) coherent and convincing content as well as argumentation and exegetical steps; (e) relevant and creative hermeneutics.

E. Bibliography


James and Wisdom Traditions


Lenski, R.C.H. *The Interpretation Of The Epistle To The Hebrews And The Epistle Of James.* Columbus: Wartburg. 1946.


Pettingill, William L. *Simple Studies in the Epistles of James, 1,2 Peter;1,2,3 John.* Findlay: Fundamental Truth. [n.d.].


