GREEK EXEGESIS
SPRING 2024, RTS-DC

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The goal of this course is to move from *decoding* Greek to *understanding* Greek. Having mastered the paradigms and principles in Greek I and II—the grammatical system and basic lexicon—this course will begin to wrestle with Greek as a literary and dynamic language.

This course will therefore place a heavy emphasis on actual Greek texts, mostly from the New Testament, but also from the wider world of Judaism and Christianity in the 1ˢᵗ century. As we read these texts we will discuss the relationship between grammatical form and semantic function. We will learn intermediate and advanced grammatical categories, assess the merits of various alternative translations, and the relationship between exegesis and theology.

This course will also address how knowledge of the languages can be misused or misappropriated. We will address the types of questions the languages can and cannot answer, what tools are most appropriate for each of these types of questions, and how to integrate those tools into ordinary reading and exegetical study.

B. LEARNING GOALS

Upon conclusion of this course, the student will:

- Possess a working knowledge of Greek Grammar and lexicography—enough to "site read" much of the New Testament with only a Reader's Bible and a concise grammar guide.

- Work directly out of the GNT, from start to finish, for study and preparation in teaching, writing, and exhortation (this includes an understanding of how to write academic papers using Greek, and how a knowledge of the GNT impacts congregational teaching and exhortation).

- Be sufficiently conversant with Greek syntax to use exegetical commentaries effectively and critically on the GNT in study and preparation.

- Develop a distaste for the *misuse* of the original languages, particularly when such misuse is accompanied by over-conclusion and arrogance.

- Utilize the critical apparatus to be appropriately alerted to text-critical issues that impact interpretation.

C. INSTRUCTOR

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D. CLASS TIME AND DUE DATES

Meeting times: Every Monday and Wednesday from March 27th to May 20th from 5:00 – 7:00 pm.

Students will have short weekly assignments (a detailed schedule will be made available at the beginning of the class).

Four assignments will be due one-week after the last day of class (May 25th): (1) an exegetical paper; (2) a finalized and annotated translation of the term's text; (3) a reading-attestation form; (4) a testimonial that you memorized the Lord's Prayer.

E. COURSE WEBSITE

The RTS course website will contain the latest version of this syllabus, selected course readings, and outlines, slides, and notes related to the course. All assignments should be submitted via Canvas.

II. CLASS PROCEDURE

The class will follow a regular procedure, as follows:

A. FIRST HOUR: JUST READING

The first hour of class will be spent going over the assigned GNT reading for that session. Students will be responsible to prepare by translating a chunk of Greek, writing out a polished English translation, with appropriate annotations that justify critical decisions made along the way. We will go over these translations in class.

B. SECOND HOUR

The second hour of class will be focused on specific issues in Greek exegesis. This hour is designed to equip students with the tools and techniques required for robust study of the Greek text. A schedule will be provided on the first day of class detailing the topics covered and any (short) homework assignments that need to be completed. The rhythm will be as follows:

- Wednesdays: New material will be introduced and discussed. We will practice using the material in class using relevant case studies. Students will be given a homework assignment to enable them to practice and appropriate the new material.

- Mondays: We will go over the homework assignment in class and discuss, supplementing the original material as needed and providing further case studies and examples.

III. TEXTBOOKS AND READING

Supplemental readings will be assigned in class. The required and recommended textbooks for this class are below.

A. REQUIRED

Young, R. A. Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach. Nashville, Tenn: Broadman & Holman, 1994.

This will be our main reference grammar. We will read it cover to cover.

Metzger, B. and Bart Ehrman. The Text of the NT: It's Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration. 4th Edition.

The classic introduction to the text of the NT and textual criticism. Students are not required to buy this book as it is very expensive. Copies will be made available in the library.

B. RECOMMENDED

A Reader's Greek New Testament, such as the UBS 5th Edition

Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 1996.

A subscription to BibleArc.com (at least for the duration of this class).

IV. ASSIGNMENTS

A. GREEK READING ASSIGNMENTS (20%)

Students will be required to read and study a manageable "chunk" of Scripture in preparation for each class. In preparing for this, students should:

- Write out a polished English translation of the assigned reading.

- Note any significant lexical or grammatical decisions required by the Greek text with a brief justification of the decision made in your translation (as necessary).

- Additionally (as needed, and relative to the topics covered at this point in the class), provide remarks on (1) significant text-critical issues, (2) significant historical and cultural issues, (3) significant literary issues, (4) significant theological issues.

This preparation will be the subject of class discussion in the first hour. Grades will be based on the quality of that discussion (not on accuracy, per se, but on engagement and depth).

At the end of the class the student will provide a written record of the work they have done above, along with annotations and corrections they have made as a result of that discussion. A "perfected" translation will also be submitted.

B. WEEKLY WORKSHEETS (10%)

Whenever new material is presented (on Wednesdays), students will be given homework assignments to complete. This will be due the following class and will be graded on the basis of quality of engagement and the resulting discussion.

C. READING ATTESTATION (10%)

Students will testify that they have completed all required reading for the class.

D. VOCABULARY QUIZZES (10%)

Students will continue to work on vocabulary memorization and take weekly online quizzes.

E. MEMORIZE THE LORD'S PRAYER (10%)

Over the course of the term we will memorize the Lord's Prayer together in the Greek. By the last day of class students will need to demonstrate that they have memorized the Lord's Prayer.

F. EXEGETICAL PAPER (40%)

You are required to write a 10-15 (double-spaced) page exegetical research paper on a text of your choosing from the Gospels. The paper should be submitted on canvas no later than the last day of the final exam period. Since this is a research paper, you should consult several exegetical commentaries on your chosen passage as well as academic articles and other resources.

While you are not *required* to send me your topic and thesis beforehand, doing so is recommended, particularly if this is one of your first exegetical papers. (If you would prefer to write a Biblical-Theological paper on the Gospels, or some other equivalence, you should talk to me first).

A rubric is provided in Canvas detailing how the paper is graded.

1. GREEK REQUIREMENTS

Since this class is targeted at Greek Exegesis, this paper has particular requirements that might not be present in other exegetical papers you have written. Like other exegetical papers, this paper should make a justifiable claim about a particular GNT passage and seek to justify that claim through rigorous exegetical analysis of that passage. For this paper, you must additionally:

- Work directly out of the Greek text for your passage (and preferably any other NT passages that you cite). This is a "Greek first" analysis; that is, you should not begin with an English translation and bring in the Greek as necessary. Rather, work from the beginning out of the Greek, providing your own English translation, and referencing that translation as necessary to make your argument. You may cite other translations in your work only for discussion purposes.

- Provide substantive and appropriate discussion of Greek lexicography and syntax as it has bearing on your central thesis.

- Engage with historical and cultural factors that have a bearing on the interpretation of your text and your overall thesis.

- Address any text-critical issues involved in the text that might substantively change the way the text is interpreted.

2. HOW TO WRITE AND EXEGETICAL PAPER

A paper writing guide will be provided on the first day of class. You might also be interested in the guide on my blog: http://www.signandshadow.com/2017/11/02/how-to-write-a-seminary-paper-part-1-the-thesis/

3. FORMAT

Your paper should be double spaced with 1-inch margins. Use Times New Roman or equivalent font, 12pt. Cite all your sources following the guidelines laid out in the SBL Handbook. or the Chicago Manual of Style (I'm fine with either the "standard" method or the newer author-date format) You might want to considering using bibliography software, such as the free Zotero plugin for Firefox to make this process easier. Include a bibliography with all the works you cited in your paper as described in the aforementioned guides.

V. GRADING

97-100%: A

90-96%: A-
87-89%: B+
84-86%: B
80-83%: B-
Etc.
>60%: Fail