



SHORT SYLLABUS

BI524 Epistles of Paul

Instructor: Michael Morrison, PhD

(Instructor may be contacted through GCS course website)

Course description

Students in this course examine the 13 letters attributed to Paul in the New Testament. Students will learn the circumstances in which each letter was written – the problems Paul was attempting to address and the way he responded to them. Lessons will include questions of date and authorship, theological considerations involved in what Paul wrote, and how students can find modern significance in these letters. Prerequisite: BI501.

To do well in this course, you need to spend approximately 12 hours each week. For details on student learning outcomes, see Appendix C.

Required textbooks

Capes, David B., Rodney Reeves, and E. Randolph Richards. *Rediscovering Paul: An Introduction to His World, Letters and Theology*. 2nd ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017. 414 pages. ISBN [0830851917](#). About \$28 new; less for used. A good overview of the letters. Kindle OK.

Thiselton, Anthony C. *The Living Paul: An Introduction to the Apostle's Life and Thought*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009. 190 pages. ISBN: [0830838813](#). Price for a new book: \$20; used, \$13. Kindle OK.

Please obtain these books before the class begins. To find the lowest prices on these books, you may find it helpful to use www.bookfinder.com.

Requirements and assignments

1. **Lectures.** The lectures are about 40 pages each week (more than for most GCS courses), and you will need about 4 hours each week for them.
2. **Eight forum discussions.** These account for 10 percent of the final grade.
3. **Two textbooks.** They total about 600 pages. We estimate that the average student will read these books in about 40 hours, or about 4 hours per week.
4. **Ten quizzes.** Short quizzes will account for 10 percent of the grade. You may use your books and notes when you take the quizzes.
5. **One exegetical paper:** Write a 10-page paper on a passage in one of Paul's letters. Choose one of four passages – 1 Cor. 2:1-12; Eph. 4:7-16; Phil. 3:17-4:1; or 1 Thess. 2:1-8.

This paper will be written in **three parts**. The first part, discussing historical and literary details, is due at the end of the fourth week. The second part, discussing the original meaning of the passage, is due at the end of the 8th week. The third part is due at the end of the 12th week; it is about theology and application.

Students must interact with at least one book that is more than 100 years old, and at least three modern scholarly books, including at least two major commentaries¹. This paper accounts for 70 percent of the grade.

6. **One book review:** Write a 3-5 page review of the book by Anthony Thiselton. Identify two sections you found helpful. Identify one passage in the book that you found confusing, unpersuasive, or wrong, and support your view. This paper is due at the end of the 11th week and accounts for 15 percent of the grade.

¹ Modern means within the last 25 years. Major means at least 15 pages per biblical chapter; a commentary that covers the entire New Testament in one volume will not have enough detail. See <https://sites.google.com/view/biblestudyresources/paul>.