



HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

## SYLLABUS

HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

5210 • New Testament World

FALL Semester 2017, Aug. 24-Dec. 07 (Thursdays, 1:00-3:45)

Prof. Richard E. Oster, Jr.

**NB You ought not enroll in this course during your first year in the MDiv. program. Ideally, you should wait until your second or third year in the program before enrolling. In doubt, please call me @ 901-335-4296.**

### Accessibility

Please use my [HST email](mailto:roster@hst.edu) to make appointments with me (or in person)

Email: [roster@hst.edu](mailto:roster@hst.edu)

Phone: 901-432-7718

Graduate Assistant: Jiwoo Ryu – [jryu@harding.edu](mailto:jryu@harding.edu) – 914-471-0257

### Credit Hour Workload

For every course credit hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least three clock hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work, including but not limited to time attending class, as well as out-of-class time spent reading, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/exams, problem solving, developing and completing projects, and other activities that enhance learning. Thus, for a three-hour course, a typical student should expect to spend at least nine hours per week dedicated to the course.

### Textbooks

Textbooks can now be ordered through a link on the [HST website](#). The Textbooks tab can be viewed on the navigation bar on any page of the website. Check the book list provided under the Textbooks tab (<http://hst.edu/students/textbook-services/>) for correct ISBN's and editions to insure correct ordering. A link provided there will take you to Amazon where you will only need to enter the ISBN to order your books. By going through our website, HST will receive some credit from the order. Thanks for your support.

### Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact Steve McLeod, the Associate Dean, at 901-761-1353.

## **Library Resources**

If you have not taken 5990 (Advanced Theological Research) or 5770 (Research in Counseling), or took either class more than a year ago, go to the HST Web site ([www.hst.edu](http://www.hst.edu)) for information concerning library services to students. Under the "library" tab you will find a link to and instructions for searching the HST online catalog. There are also instructions for using the following databases available through the library: OCLC FirstSearch, EBSCOhost, Infotrac, PsycINFO, and Religious and Theological Abstracts. Contact the library for passwords to these databases. Also available are the research guides distributed in 5990 and 5770. These annotated bibliographies list basic tools you will find helpful in your research.

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty in all its forms is inconsistent with Christian faith and practice, and will result in penalties which could include a failing grade for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, dismissal from the course, and even dismissal from the school.

*If I need to contact you outside of Canvas, I will use your Harding University/HST email address, so please make sure you check it regularly; or, have your mail from it forwarded to another email address of your choice that you check regularly. It is the student's responsibility to regularly check their HST email site.*

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to assist students in acquiring both knowledge and perspective in the use of ancient historical materials in the task of interpreting the New Testament. The narrative and drama of Scripture is acted out on the stage of culture and history. The ancient primary sources that provide windows into the historical setting of the writers and readers of the New Testament include both literary texts and artifacts of material culture (e.g., inscriptions, graffiti, coins, architecture, mosaics, frescoes, jewelry, and papyri). When these materials are explored, it becomes clearer how they help illustrate Scripture, how they help interpret Scripture, and how they fit into the larger question of Scripture and culture.

### NT World and Outcomes for the M.Div. and MACM

1. Demonstrate exegetical skills in the interpretation of scripture. This will equip ministers to understand God and his will at the highest level both for personal spiritual formation and for teaching others.
2. Be able to communicate effectively in written and oral forms. Such public communication serves as a primary way a minister contributes to the spiritual formation of the congregation and to the cross-cultural proclamation of the gospel.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

***Unless told otherwise, you are responsible for all the content in each required textbook.***

Please read the books in this order: Ferguson; Aldrete; Klauck. Daniélou. Please do not start reading from Josephus until you receive the reading list from me. You will not be required to read all of Josephus.

1. Ferguson, Everett, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; 3 edition, 2003.

*This book is important because of the breadth of material it covers and the perspectives from which it presents the interaction between NT teachings and outlook and the larger cultural context. It will give an overview of many important issues that cannot be covered in one semester's classroom presentations.*

2. Klauck, Hans. J. *The Religious Context of Early Christianity--A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions.*

*This book is important because of the good job it does in presenting the diverse materials in the Graeco-Roman world. Graeco-Roman religion includes a very large cast of religions. Rapidly the Christian movement and the apostles addressing potential converts were focused more and more upon "Graeco-Roman" issues and potential converts from that setting.*

3. Aldrete, Gregory S. *Daily Life in the Roman City: Rome, Pompeii, and Ostia.*

*Using mainly the literature and archaeological evidence from the city of Rome, the author strives to create a sense of what it was like to experience the largest city in the ancient Mediterranean world (12 chapters). Lesser, but clearly helpful, attention is given to Ostia and Pompeii (one chapter each).*

4. Daniélou, Jean. *Philo of Alexandria.* Cascade Books, 2014.

*This is a classic, but brief, treatment of Philo.*

5. Josephus. *Jewish War.* (Oxford World's Classics). Editor Martin Goodman. Oxford Press, 2017.

## REQUIRED READINGS & CLASS SCHEDULE

***The articles listed with each week should be read prior to that class meeting.***

**Aug. 24<sup>th</sup>**

Sadly I will not be present for the first class period. I have an important opportunity to teach at a Christian ministry program in St. Petersburg, Russia during the first week of classes. It was Prof. Black's judgment that I could be gone if I had adequate material for you this first week of class.

You will see some recorded video from me as well as look at some instructive videos (plus small news report). You are responsible for the content from my video and the professional videos.

*ATTENDANCE WILL BE TAKEN AND YOU ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN THE CLASSROOM THE FIRST WEEK TO LOOK AT **MY** VIDEO.*

## MY VIDEO

1. Introduction to course, its objectives and requirements: Midterm exam; Research paper; Multi-media project; Final Exam.
2. How We Know About the Ancient World: Methods; Misconceptions; neglect and misuse of sources? Resources [e.g., archaeological monuments, literature, numismatics, epigraphy, graffiti, papyri].

## OTHER VIDEOS

3. Visualizing the Roman Empire, its technology and culture

*One of the purposes of viewing these videos is to acquire appreciation for the fact that the “Ancient World” was not so “primitive” and unscientific as some moderns have falsely imagined and affirmed. You, of course, are responsible for their general content.*

This first video, using an artifact discovered last century, reveals new information and perspectives on astronomical information, time reckoning, and analogue computing power from ancient Graeco-Roman cultures.

“The Antikythera Mechanism,” on NOVA, PBS Science Series, “The Ancient Computer,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5\\_29GTY-Is](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5_29GTY-Is), 50 minutes

{after watching, please read this news report,  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/speaking-of-science/wp/2016/06/14/the-worlds-oldest-computer-is-still-revealing-its-secrets/?utm\\_term=.38e61fa0f029](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/speaking-of-science/wp/2016/06/14/the-worlds-oldest-computer-is-still-revealing-its-secrets/?utm_term=.38e61fa0f029) }

This video focuses on some of the technological wonders from the city of Rome and its Empire, 45 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LaOVn3VtA0I>

This video is about some of the technical and cultural facets of the Roman Colosseum, 50 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEh6W-luMKQ>

This is a Stop-Motion production about the construction of the Column of Trajan, 5 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFUgaPIhDdM>

## THE JEWISH WORLD

### Aug. 31<sup>st</sup>

How We Know About “First Century” Judaisms: Methods and Resources [the term is normally best translated Jews or Judaism, rather than Judeans].

Noy D. "Inscriptions and Papyri: Jewish," in *Dictionary of New Testament*

Begin reading Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed., pp. 396-582. These pages will be on the midterm.

Collins, John J. “Early Judaism in Modern Scholarship,” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*. Eds. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow. Eerdmans [2012], pp. 1-23.

### Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>

#### Nature and History of synagogues,

Corbett, Joey. "New Synagogue Excavations in Israel and Beyond." *Biblical Archaeology Review* July-Aug. 2011, pp. 52-59.

Gruen, Erich, “Judaism in the Diaspora,” in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*. Eds. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow. Eerdmans [2012], pp. 77-96.

Johnson, Luke Timothy, "Ways of Being Jewish in the Greco-Roman World," *Among the Gentiles. Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity*. pp. 111-129.

Kee, Howard. “The Transformation of the Synagogue after 70 CE.: Its Import for Early Christianity.” *New Testament Studies* 36 (1990) 1-24. [optional — Kee, Howard. “The Changing Meaning of Synagogue: A Response to Richard Oster.” *New Testament Studies* 40 (1994):281-83.]

Oster, Richard E. “Supposed Anachronism in Luke-Acts’ Use of SUNAGWGH: A Rejoinder to H. C. Kee.” *New Testament Studies* 39 (1993) 178-208.

Rocca, Samuel. *Herod's Judea, A Mediterranean State in the Classical World*. (A Synagogue in Judaea: A Civic Center; Herod and the Pagan Cults; Conclusions), pp. 306-21.

Rousseau & Arav, *Jesus and His World*: “Ritual Baths.”

**Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>**Herod's Temple

Bickerman, Elias J. "The Warning Inscriptions of Herod's Temple." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 37 [1947]: 387-405.

Ritmeyer, Kathleen and Leen. "Reconstructing Herod's Temple Mount in Jerusalem." *Biblical Archaeology Review* 15 [Nov/Dec 1989]: 23-53

Netzer, Ehud. *The Architecture of Herod, the Great Builder*, Introduction, chapters 1, 5, 16.

Kleiner, Diana E. E. "The Arch of Titus," in *Roman Sculpture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992, pp. 183-191 [*This is the famous Arch of Titus that depicts the spoils from the Jerusalem Temple following its destruction by the Romans during the First Revolt in AD 70*].

**Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>**God-fearers, proselytes, Jewish "missions," etc.

Josephus, *Antiquities*, Book 20, paragraphs 17-53 [conversion of the royal family of Adiabene].

Bernat, D. A. "Adiabene," *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*. Eds. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow. Eerdmans, pp. 306-308.

Feldmann, L. "The Omnipresence of the God-Fearers." *Biblical Archaeology Review* 12(1986):58-63.

Levinskaya, Levin. "God-fearers: The Literary Evidence," in *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*. Vol. 5, *The Book of Acts in its Diaspora Setting*, chap. 7, pp. 117-26.

MacLennan, R. S. and Kraabel, A. T. "The God-Fearers—A Literary and Theological Invention." *Biblical Archaeology Review* 12 (1986) :46-53.

Notley, R. Steven and Jeffrey P. García, "Queen Helena's Jerusalem Palace— In a Parking Lot?" *Biblical Archaeology Review*, May-June, 2014.



**Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>**Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 01

We will read and discuss the Thanksgiving Psalms from the DSS and other significant documents from the Dead Sea.

**Oct. 05<sup>th</sup>**

We will discuss 4QMMT in class and the debate about it.

Abegg, Martin G. "4QMMT, Paul, and the 'Works of the Law'". In *The Bible at Qumran. Text, Shape, and Interpretation*. Ed. P. W. Flint, 2001, pp. 203-16.

Collins, John J. *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Chapter 5 [Messianic Expectation], pp. 71-90

Ulrich, Eugene. "The Qumran Scrolls and the Biblical Text." In *The Dead Sea Scrolls Fifty Years After Their Discovery*. Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20-25, 1997. Eds. L. H. Schiffman, Emanuel Tov, etc. 2000. pp. 51-59.

**Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>**Diaspora Judaism

Diaspora Judaism/anti-semitism/pagan benefactors of Judaism.

Gruen, Erich, "Judaism in the Diaspora," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*. Eds. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow. Eerdmans [2012], pp. 77-96.

We will discuss Philo and his significance.

**Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>**

Discussion of the historical debt of early Christianity to Second Temple Judaism. In what ways was it the *sine qua non* for the success of the nascent church.

Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>

**MIDTERM EXAM**

***THE PAGAN WORLD***

Nov. 02<sup>nd</sup> & 09<sup>th</sup>

**Viewing 1 Corinthians in its Cultural Context**

1 Corinthians, Part 01      1 Corinthians 5-6

Hubbard, Thomas K. *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome. A Sourcebook of Basic Documents*. University of California Press, 2003, Preface (xv-xvii); Introduction (1-20); Greek Historical Texts (55-58); Greek Philosophy (163-166); Visual testimony to various forms of homosexual acts (on pages between pages 267 and 268); Republican Rome (308-311); Augustan Rome (344-346); Early Imperial Rome (383-386); Later Greco-Roman Antiquity (443-447).

Smith, Mark D. "Ancient Bisexuality and the Interpretation of Romans 1:26-27." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 64 [1996] 223-56.

Yegül, Fikret, *Bathing in the Roman World*, chapter 4, "Critics of Roman Bathing: Ethical and Moral Concerns." pp. 22-39.

1 Corinthians, Part 02      1 Corinthians 7:17-24 (Slavery or not; also epispasm)

Dubois, Page. "Slavery." in *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*, 2009, pp. 316-327.

Glancy, Jennifer. *Slavery in Early Christianity*. Oxford [2002], pp. 46-59; 63-70.

1 Corinthians, Part 03      1 Corinthians 8-11:1

*Important context of Roman Corinth is polytheism/idolatry/paganism*

Borgen, Peder. "'Yes,' 'No,' 'How Far?'" The Participation of Jews and Christians in Pagan Clubs." In *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*. Ed. T. Engberg-Pedersen. Fortress Press, 1995, pp. 30-59.

Hurtado, L. *Destroyer of the Gods. Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World*. Baylor University Press: Waco, TX, 2016, pp. 1-36.

Hahn, F. H., "Performing the Sacred: Prayers and Hymns," in *A Companion to Roman Religion*. Ed. Jörg Rüpke. Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World. Blackwell Pub., 2011, pp. 235-248.

Meyer, Marvin (ed.). "Isis Aretalogy from Cyme," in *The Ancient Mysteries, A Sourcebook. Sacred Texts of the Mystery Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean World*. Harper & Row, Pub.: San Francisco, 1987, pp. 172-74.

Scheid, J. "Sacrifices for Gods and Ancestors," in *A Companion to Roman Religion*. Ed. Jörg Rüpke. Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World. Blackwell Pub., 2011, pp. 263-271.

1 Corinthians, Part 04      1 Corinthians 11:2-34

**A.    11:2-16**

Caldelli, Maria L. "Women in the Roman World," in *Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy*. eds. C. Bruun & J. Edmondson. Oxford Univ. Press: Oxford, 2015, pp. 582-604. **Only skim this article.**

Connelly, Joan B. *Portrait of a Priestess, Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ., 2007. chapter 09, pp. 259-273.

Fantham, E. H. P. Foley, N. B. Kampen, S. B. Pomeroy and H.A. Shapiro. "Excursus: The Women of Pompeii." *Women in the Classical World. Image and Text*, pp. 330-44. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Oster, Richard E. "When Men Wore Veils to Worship: Historical Context of I Cor. 11:4." *New Testament Studies* 34 (1988):481-505

**B.    11:17-34**

Artz-Grabner, Peter. "Why Did Early Christ Groups Still Attend Idol Meals? Answers from Papyrus Invitations." *Early Christianity* Vol. 7, 2016, pp. 508-529.

Lampe, Peter. "The Corinthian Eucharistic Dinner Party: Exegesis of a Cultural Context (1 Cor. 11:17-34)." *Affirmation* 4, 1991, 1-15.

Meyer, Marvin (ed.). "Rule of the Iobacchoi," in *The Ancient Mysteries, A Sourcebook. Sacred Texts of the Mystery Religions of the Ancient*

*Mediterranean World*. Harper & Row, Pub.: San Francisco, 1987, pp. 94-99.

Smith, Dennis E. *From Symposia to Eucharist. The Banquet in the early Christian World*. [2003] chapter 2, only pages on "The Custom of Reclining + line drawings," pp. 13-18 and chapter 5, "The Club Banquet," pp. 87-131.

## Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>

### Introduction to the Emperor Cult

<http://www.yorku.ca/pswarney/Texts/p-lond-1912c.htm> [only columns 2 and 3]

<https://romanvoices.wikispaces.com/Oath+of+allegiance> [translation + analysis]

<https://romanvoices.wikispaces.com/Praise+for+Nero> [translation + analysis]

<http://www.archive.org/details/Podcast4.6HonouringTheEmperorsAsGods>

Friesen, Steven. "Ephesus. Key to a Vision in Revelation." *Biblical Archaeology Review* 19 [1993] 24-37.

Harland, Philip. "Honours and worship: Emperors, imperial cults and associations at Ephesus (first to third centuries CE)." *Studies in Religion* 25 1996, 319-34.

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<http://www.archive.org/details/Podcast4.6HonouringTheEmperorsAsGods>

Johnson, Luke Timothy, "After Constantine: Christianity as Imperial Religion." *Among the Gentiles. Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity*, pp. 255-74.

Oster, Richard E. "Christianity and Emperor Veneration in Ephesus: Iconography of a Conflict [Trajan Fountain at Ephesus]." *Restoration Quarterly* 25 (1982):143-49.

### Pagan persecution and suppression of Jews, fellow-pagans, and Christians

Suppression of the Bacchanalia (*Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus*) *English translation at*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senatus\\_consultum\\_de\\_Bacchanalibus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senatus_consultum_de_Bacchanalibus); also Livy 39.8-39.18.

Pliny the Younger to Trajan and Trajan's reply

<http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/pliny.html>

**Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS: NO CLASS MEETING**

**Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Pagan popular eschatology.** What did pagans often believe about the afterlife and how was that different than the Christian view of the afterlife? I will distribute primary sources before this class meeting.

**Dec. 07<sup>th</sup> FINAL EXAMINATION**

### **Grades for Coursework**

The student's grade for the course will be calculated on the following basis:

midterm examination	30%	A=93-100 (7 points)
final examination	30%	B=82-92 (10 points)
multi-media project	15%	C=72-81 (9 points)
course research paper	25%	D=65-71 (6 points)

Naturally, your grade will be lowered for absenteeism.

***Free bonus meetings on the day of class.*** Attendance at these meetings is optional and in no way impacts your grade. We would meet to discuss ancient primary sources related to the subject matter of the course. The meetings would occur either following chapel before class (say 11:45-1:00) or following class (say 4:15-5:30).

## KEY DATES

Sept. 07	Deadline for Research Paper Prospectus
Sept. 14	Deadline for Multi-media Prospectus
Oct. 26	Midterm Exam
Nov. 16	Multi-media Due
Nov. 30	Research Paper Due
Dec. 07	Final Exam

The **midterm exam** will cover all the beginning lectures, readings, and textbooks and those that relate to the Jewish backgrounds of the NT. The midterm exam will be given on **Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017**.

The **final exam** will cover all the lectures, readings, and textbooks that relate to the Graeco-Roman & pagan backgrounds of the NT. The exam will be administered during the regular exam week on **Dec. 07<sup>th</sup>, 2017**.

The **multi-media** project must relate to some theme, issue, or topic that arises out of your understanding of the course material from NT World. The final presentation should last no longer than 3-5 minutes. A prospectus of this multi-media project must be submitted to me no later than the fourth class meeting, **Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017**. The credit students will meet 3 times as a class over pizzas to discuss the nature and expectations about the multi-media projects. I will provide the pizzas, typically from Little Caesars. Often students have unwarranted anxieties and concerns about this part of the course and the impact that this project will have upon their final course grade (Remember, it is only 15% of the grade). Usually students have initial displeasure at the thought of doing this, but when it is completed they have really enjoyed the experience. This project is due at the beginning of class on **Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017**. Please turn in your project on a flashdrive, which I will keep for all eternity.

The **research paper** [15-17 pages] is a crucial part of the learning experience of this course. Even though it counts for 25% of your course grade, you must make at least a grade of "D" upon it to pass the course. A prospectus of this paper

must be submitted to me no later than the third class meeting, **Sept. 07<sup>th</sup>, 2017**. This is for your protection; it would be a shame if you wrote a research paper that was inappropriate or ill-conceived for this course! Your prospectus needs only indicate the paper title, the paper's focus, and how you plan to proceed with your research. This prospectus should not include any bibliography. Your typed research paper is due no later than the beginning of the class meeting on **Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017**. In addition to the paper copy submitted at the beginning of class, I want an electronic copy sent to my university email address ([roster@harding.edu](mailto:roster@harding.edu)) at this same time. Late papers receive penalties. The format of this paper must follow the Turabian Style Manual+ supplement, using only footnotes and not endnotes or APA citation.