

**Syllabus for
1 CORINTHIANS
NTL672**

Instructor: Dr. Andy Johnson

Summer, 2008

I. Catalogue Description and Course Objectives

Catalogue Description: An intensive exegetical study of 1 Corinthians in light of introductory issues and the distinctive themes of the Epistle (*Prerequisite: BIB550 or equivalent.*)

Enlarged Description: This course will consist of a careful study of major passages in the epistle in their socio-historical, literary/rhetorical, and theological dimensions. Special attention will be paid to the way Paul attempts to persuade the epistle's audience to share his theological and ecclesiological vision.

Objectives: Upon successful completion of the course you will have:

1. Demonstrated a basic grasp of the content and theology of 1 Corinthians.
2. Demonstrated a rudimentary understanding of the historical, socio-political, and literary background against which it is best understood.
3. Demonstrated an ability to exercise creative theological imagination by evaluating one contemporary ecclesiological proposal and constructing your own in light of Paul's vision of Christian community in 1 Corinthians.

II. Required Textbooks and Journal Articles

Gorman, Michael J. *Reading Paul*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007. **(If you've never read the Longenecker book below and written a paper for me on it, buy Longenecker instead of this book).**

Hays, Richard. *First Corinthians*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1997.

Johnson, Andy. "Firstfruits and Death's Defeat: Metaphor in Paul's Rhetorical Strategy in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28," *Word and World*, 16, 1996 (library).

_____. "Turning the World Upside Down in 1 Corinthians 15: Apocalyptic Epistemology, the Resurrected Body, and the New Creation," *Evangelical Quarterly*, 75, 2003 (library).

_____. "On Removing a Trump Card: Flesh and Blood and the Reign of God," *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, 13, 2003 (library).

Longenecker, Bruce. *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2003 **(If you have already read this book and written a paper based on it for one of my classes, buy the Gorman book above instead of this book).**

Pagitt, Doug. *Church Re-Imagined: The Spiritual Formation of People in Communities of Faith*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.

Thiselton, Anthony. *1 Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical and Pastoral Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.

Winter, Bruce. *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Recommended Critical Commentaries:

Fee, Gordon. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

Thiselton, Anthony. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

III. Helpful Websites

<http://www.ntgateway.com/paul/>

This is the Paul section of the NT Gateway site. It is one of the best sites on the Web for generally reliable information on Paul and the rest of NT studies. (The following websites are also available as hyperlinks from this website.)

<http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/corinthians>

Conflict and Community in the Corinthian Church. Edited by J. Shannon Clarkson: excellent and extensive materials from The Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church. This well designed web-site is both scholarly and devotional. Current features include Corinth at the Time of Paul's Arrival, Maps Related to the Life of Paul and an Annotated Bibliography.

<http://www.luthersem.edu/ckoester/Paul/journey2/CorinthStreet.htm>

Journeys of Paul. By Craig Koester. Clearly presented and nicely illustrated pictures of Corinth.

IV. Requirements

1. Reading 1 Corinthians. You must read 1 Corinthians through (preferably in one sitting but **in no more than two** sittings) at least ten times during this course. The due dates for each reading are listed in the Schedule of Assignments below. (**Note carefully: One of these readings is due on Friday, May 9.**) By the due date of the reading, you must have posted a statement in the Reading 1 Corinthians Forum in Blackboard saying that you have completed that due date's reading of the epistle. Each reading counts 10 points, making all ten readings count 100 points toward your final grade. **You cannot "make up" any of this reading. You can only get credit for what you actually read by the due date listed on the Schedule of Assignments below. Because these are basically "give away" points, this is an all or nothing assignment. You do not get credit for partial reading.**

****Note Carefully**** **To save time**, as you read 1 Corinthians, you should keep a running master list of *critical* questions and insights of comprehensive or theological significance that arise from a careful reading of the text. These

questions and comments should not only note the scriptural context of the concern, but what matter of importance is at stake. These questions will later become a part of requirement 4 described below.

- 2. Longenecker/Gorman Assignment: If you have not done so before in one of my classes**, read Bruce Longenecker's novel, *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*. Then read 1 Corinthians carefully (this will count as your **second** reading of 1 Corinthians). Assume for now that Longenecker's historical novel accurately captures the socio-historical, cultural, and especially the **political** feel of the first century setting in which 1 Corinthians would have been first heard. Write a 1,000-1,250 word paper, typed, and double-spaced, answering the following question: How does understanding 1 Corinthians in light of this background change the way I read it? Give **specific examples from the text of 1 Corinthians** which sound different to you after reading Longenecker and **explain why they now sound different**.

If you have already read Longenecker for one of my classes, read Gorman instead. After carefully reading this book, briefly describe 25 insights you gained from the book that you consider to be significant. The book has 12 chapters (not counting the first and last "Why Paul" chapters). Make sure you draw at least 2 insights from each chapter **noting the chapter and page number from which you are drawing the insight**. The remaining insight may come from anywhere in the book. If you choose to disagree or question an aspect of the author's treatment as one of your "insights," **you must state the basis for your disagreement/question**. This assignment should be 1,000-1,250 words and will be evaluated on the basis of: (1) how well you appear to have understood the significance of the biblical/theological issues raised by Gorman; (3) your use of correct English; (3) your adherence to length requirements. An example of an "A" quality "Insights" assignment from another course will be available for you in Blackboard under the under the Course Documents tab. It will be called "Model Insights Assignment." **If you do this assignment, make sure you also post your second reading of 1 Corinthians by its due date.**

You may earn up to 150 points for this Longenecker/Gorman assignment. To submit your paper, go into the Assignments Tab in Blackboard to the Longenecker/Gorman Paper assignment. Click on View/Complete Assignment at the bottom of the description. Then upload your assignment as an MS Word file by 11:00 PM, Friday, May 16.

- 3. Fishbowl Discussion of Pagitt's, *Church Reimagined*.** You may earn up to 100 points by actively participating in a "fishbowl" discussion of specific chapters in this book. There will be four fishbowls making each of them worth up to 25 points each. The "fishbowl" will consist of a class discussion/critical analysis of the reading in Pagitt assigned for that day. **I will not simply give these points away because you show up in class.** You must make regular contributions during this discussion period in a way that demonstrates an understanding of, **and a critical engagement with**, the assigned reading. Each day I will split the class into two groups with one group discussing one part of the assigned reading and the other group(s) discussing the other part(s) of the reading. You will not know in advance which part of the assigned reading your group will discuss. **In any case, you are responsible for all of the assigned reading.** Hence, you should carefully read all of the assigned reading and take careful notes on it (in some form or fashion) or even bring a summary of it to refer to during the discussion. The

content of the reading and the dates of the fishbowls are listed below in the Schedule of Assignments.

I will attempt to focus the discussions by asking at least a couple of the following questions: (1) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the particular ecclesiological affirmations in the chapter(s) you read in Pagitt? (2) How does his proposal relate to Paul's vision of Christian community expressed/implied in 1 Corinthians? (3) What are the pastoral ramifications of this discussion for how we might engage in shaping Christian communities in North America?

- 4. Critical Reading Responses (CRR) to 1 Corinthians, Hays, Thiselton, Winter, (and Johnson in CRR2).** You will prepare two critical reading responses of **1250-1750 words** each in which you critically engage a portion of 1 Corinthians and the textbook reading associated with it. For the specific content and due dates of these CRR's, see the Schedule of Assignments below.

These responses should have three sections: (1) *Critical* questions and insights of comprehensive or theological significance that arise from a careful reading of 1 Corinthians itself **prior to** reading the selections from the textbooks. These questions and comments should not only note the scriptural context of the concern, but what matter of importance is at stake. These questions should be an **edited version** of your running master list of *critical* questions and insights that you generated during your prior readings of 1 Corinthians. (2) *Critical* questions and observations that your reading of Hays, Thiselton, and Winter (and Johnson in CRR 2) raises in your mind about the biblical text and/or vice-versa, critical questions and observations that reading the biblical text raises in your mind about your reading of Hays, Thiselton, and Winter (and Johnson in CRR 2). (3) A comparative section noting any significant disagreements or inconsistencies between Hays, Thiselton, Winter (and Johnson in CRR 2) **as to how they address specific critical issues**. An example of an "A" quality CRR will be available in Blackboard under the Course Documents tab in the Guidelines Folder. It will be called "Model CRR."

To submit your assignments, go into the Assignments Tab in Blackboard to the CRR1 or CRR2 assignment. Click on View/Complete Assignment at the bottom of the description. Then upload your assignment as an MS Word file. Submit your first CRR by no later than 11:00 PM on Monday, June 2 and your second by 11:00 PM on Friday, August 8. You may earn up to 100 points for each CRR making them worth a total of 200 points. My teaching assistant will be grading your CRRs.

- 5. Synthetic Essay Exam.** There will be one exam during the semester. It will be a take-home essay exam, synthetic in nature. On it, you will be responsible for the material we've covered in class as well as all the assigned reading. I will give you the exam on the last day of class. You may earn up to 450 points on this exam. To submit your exam, go into the Assignments Tab in Blackboard to the Essay Exam assignment. Click on View/Complete Assignment at the bottom of the description. Then upload your assignment as an MS Word file by 11:00 PM on Friday, August 8.

V. Summary of Grading Policy

A Word about Grading: Evaluation in this kind of course, by its very nature, involves an element of subjectivity. It involves someone who is an expert in the field making a judgment on the kind of work you produce. That is a part of what you are paying for in this class. The primary factors I take into account in assessing “good solid graduate work,” the sort of work to which I assign a “B” are (1) ability to demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding of the material engaged; (2) ability to engage this material **in a critical way**; (3) ability to exhibit how the material is related to a larger theological and ecclesial context. If you demonstrate a **consistent** ability to do these things in all your coursework, you can expect to receive a B. If you demonstrate consistent ability to do them **incisively and with excellence**, you can expect to receive an A. If you demonstrate an ability to do these things **often, but not consistently**, you can expect to receive a C. (Hence, I assume that a C means “average,” or “satisfactory” work. It does **not** mean “bad” or “unsatisfactory.”) If you **seldom** demonstrate an ability to do these things, you can expect to receive a D.

The final grade will be computed using the following point scale. There are 1,000 possible points.

100 Points	Reading 1 Corinthians
150 Points	Longenecker/Gorman Assignment
100 Points	Pagitt Fishbowls
200 Points	Critical Reading Responses
450 Points	Synthetic Essay Exam

The following point scale will determine letter grades:

A	1,000-900
B	899-800
C	799-700
D	699-600
F	599-0

VI. Policy on Attendance and Tardiness

Attendance will be taken daily. I will abide by any attendance policy set by the NTS catalogue. An absence will only be excused in accordance with the guidelines established in the NTS catalogue.

VII. Schedule of Assignments: Unless otherwise noted, each reading of 1 Corinthians is due to be posted into Blackboard by class time on the date listed below. (Note: Due dates are subject to change at my discretion.)

Date	Assignment Due
05/09	1 Corinthians Reading
05/16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1 Corinthians Reading 2. Longenecker/Gorman Assignment due to be posted into Blackboard by 11:00 PM CST
05/19	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1 Corinthians Reading
05/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1 Corinthians Reading 2. Pagitt FB 1 (Pages 6-57)
05/21	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1 Corinthians Reading 2. Pagitt FB 2 (Chapters 3-4)
05/22	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1 Corinthians Reading 2. Pagitt FB 3 (Chapters 5-7)
05/23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1 Corinthians Reading 2. Pagitt FB 4 (Chapters 8-10)
05/26	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1 Corinthians Reading
06/02	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CRR 1 (Includes 1 Cor 1:1-11:1 and comments thereon in Hays and Thiselton; Winter 1-120) due by 11:00 PM CST
08/08	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 Readings of 1 Corinthians due by 11:00 PM CST 2. CRR 2 (Includes 1 Cor 11:2-16:24 and comments thereon in Hays and Thiselton; Winter 121-301; Johnson, all three articles) due by 11:00 PM CST 3. Synthetic Essay Exam due by 11:00 PM CST