

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

# The Corinthian Letters

NT-633 (1–3 units)  
Spring 2010 @ MBBS: Fresno  
Monday 6:00–9:00 PM  
January 25–May 17, 2010  
No class on Feb. 15 (Presidents Day)  
No class on Mar. 15 (Module Week)

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the structure, background, themes, and theology of First Corinthians. Special attention is given to the significance of Paul's Corinthian correspondence for the life of the church today.

## COURSE ASSUMPTIONS

Few of those acquainted with Paul of Tarsus, the early Christian missionary, are neutral about him. Some see Paul as a male chauvinist and primary corrupter of the simple religion of Jesus. Others, see Paul as a brilliant theologian who took the message of Jesus from its Hebraic context and successfully translated it for a non-Jewish setting. While this element of subjectivity is inescapable and indeed necessary for reading any text, honest interpreters always test their preliminary assumptions against the evidence and correct them as needed. Such will be the context for our reading of Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

First Corinthians is well known to be Paul's most vigorous discussion about ethics and behavior. Some have called it practical ecclesiology at its best. Why? Apparently the various house-churches in Corinth are being pulled in one direction or another based on the teaching of strong and influential leaders. Paul's aim is to unify this hodge-podge of diverse opinions and behavior around a center of what it means to be part of the body of the risen Lord. The genius of Paul's instruction is that rather than be content to address only the behavioral issues, he goes deeper to reshape their *moral vision* of who they are in Christ. While people often turn to Romans or Galatians for Paul's theological reflection, in First Corinthians all of Paul's efforts to address behavior are rooted implicitly in theology. Make no mistake; this is a very theological letter!

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through a variety of activities (close readings of First Corinthians, exegetical briefs, readings from secondary sources, class discussions, presentations, and interpretive assignments), we are invited to engage personally and critically Paul's pastoral instruction to the young church in Corinth. At the completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Outline and discuss the literary, thematic, theological, and rhetorical structure of First Corinthians (*Knowledge Objective*).

2. Appreciate and value this ancient letter addressed to one particular tension-filled first-century Christian community (an appeal for unity) as one that transcends its immediate context and continues to give witness to God's people-gathering activity in the world (*Values Objective*).
3. Explore and articulate imaginative analogies and metaphorical bridges between Paul's symbolic world and the world we inhabit (*Skills Objective*).

## MBBS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

This course contributes to the larger goals of the Seminary program in that it will help the student to:

1. Discern with greater precision the subject matter to which the biblical text gives witness, both its foreignness as well as its power to draw, to claim, and to transform life (MBBS desired outcome #1: *Demonstrate commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus in Christian community*; specifically outcomes 1.1 and 1.2; see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).
2. Engage in the theological task of exploring ways that the symbolic world out of which the biblical text emerged can inform, form, and reform the cultural norms which shape our present faith community (MBBS desired outcome #2: *Articulate commitment to a biblical theological Christian perspective*; specifically outcomes 2.1, 2.2 and 2.4; see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).
3. Nurture interpersonal and personal formation by interacting with those (scholars, instructors, and fellow classmates) who represent viewpoints that differ from one's own, and by integrating those insights that are useful (MBBS desired outcome #3: *Interpret one's own and other cultural contexts of ministry using theological perspectives integrated with social scientific approaches*; specifically outcomes 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5; see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).
4. Develop skills in sound biblical exegesis and theological interpretation for preaching, teaching, social advocacy, personal enrichment, and our life together (MBBS desired outcome #4: *Practice skills in pastoral and educational leadership*; specifically outcomes 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, and 4.5; see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).

## TEXTBOOKS

The number of books published on Paul and on First Corinthians is enormous (see *Appendix A* for a small sampling). I have chosen three "textbooks" to read together for the course. These three will make up the *Required Readings*. You will have an opportunity to work through other commentaries, journal articles, and monographs while working on your assignments. The three "textbooks" are the following:

*The First Letter to the Corinthians* in a contemporary translation of the Bible that aims at

“dynamic equivalence” (e.g., *NRSV* 1989, *NIV* 1984, *TNIV* 2002). For comparison, it is often useful to consult more “formal equivalent” translations (e.g., *NASB* 1977, 1995) as well as the more “functional equivalent” translations or paraphrastic single-translator versions (e.g., Peterson’s *Message* 1993). This kind of comparative study can be facilitated by the use of either a “parallel” Bible (e.g., *The Precise Parallel New Testament* [Oxford, 1995], *The Contemporary Parallel New Testament* [Oxford, 1998]) or a Bible software program (e.g., *Bible Works*, *WordSearch*, *Logos*, *Quick Verse*, *PC Study Bible*, *Accordance*). For students without Greek reading abilities, the next best way to get close to the peculiar nuance of a Greek word or phrase is to analyze how different translators have attempted to render it in English. I have posted a pdf of First Corinthians in several translations to the class page on the web.

Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997) is a commentary that distinguishes itself in several ways. Hays pays close attention to both the literary character of First Corinthians and to its theological significance for the life of the church today. Commentators usually do only one of these well; Hays does both. In addition, Hays’s writing style is remarkably accessible, while at the same time exploring the implications of the most current scholarly work on Paul and Corinthians.

E. P. Sanders, *Paul: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) is a small book that popularizes his watershed book entitled, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977). Sanders is credited with launching the “New Perspective on Paul” which reversed centuries of Pauline theology that was based on the notion that Paul operated out of an antithesis between the Law (Judaism) and the Gospel (Christianity). Sanders successfully demonstrates that the traditional view of Judaism (i.e., as a religion of “works righteousness”) was seriously flawed and owed more to Reformation polemics than to serious study of Jewish texts. Sanders shows that Judaism from the start was based on grace and election. Thus, the law was conceived not as the “way in,” but the “way to maintain” the covenantal relation of those who by God’s grace already were God’s people; the law guided them in the way they should now live. Sanders goes on to show how this pattern of religion was carried forward by Paul, but significantly modified by his encounter with the risen Lord.

## COURSE DESIGN

The course is designed to be an English Bible exegetical course using the exegetical skills developed in BI-505 to do “close readings,” exegetical briefs, research, Bible Study planning, and sermon composition. The format of the course will follow a “seminar style” with a combination of presentations and discussion.

## COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to revision)

**January 25 (Meeting #1)** *Introduction to Paul and the First Letter to the Corinthians*

- introduce course aims, objectives, methods, and expectations
- set out social setting of first-century Corinth
- sketch the occasion, purpose, genre, composition, and content of First Corinthians

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- ❑ First Corinthians (“skim” through in one sitting).
- ❑ First Corinthians 1.1—2.5 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- ❑ Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 1–39.
- ❑ Sanders, *Paul*, chapters 1–2.

**February 1 (Meeting #2)** *Call for unity in the community—Part one (1.1—2.5)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 1.1–3            Salutation
- 1.4–9            Thanksgiving
- 1.10–17        Factions in the community
- 1.18–2.5       Foolishness of the cross excludes boasting

-discuss essay by Nolte in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- ❑ First Corinthians 2.6—3.23 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- ❑ Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 39–64.
- ❑ Sanders, *Paul*, chapters 3–4.

**February 8 (Meeting #3)** *Call for unity in the community—Part two (2.6—3.23)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 2.6–3.4        Wisdom for the mature
- 3.5–23        The community and its leaders belong to God

-discuss essay by Grindheim in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- ❑ First Corinthians 4.1—5.13 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- ❑ Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 64–92.
- ❑ Sanders, *Paul*, chapter 10.

**February 15 (no class) Presidents Day**

**February 22 (Meeting #4)** *Call for unity in the community—Part three (4.1–21) and Call for community discipline—Part one (5.1–13)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 4.1–21        Direct confrontation with Corinthian boasters
- 5.1–13        “Drive out the wicked person from among you”

-discuss essay by Hertig in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- ❑ First Corinthians 6.1–20 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- ❑ Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 92–109.
- ❑ Close reading due Friday (see guidelines below).

## February 26 Close reading due

### March 1 (Meeting #5) *Call for community discipline—Part two (6.1–20)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 6.1–11            Legal disputes should be handled within community
- 6.12–20        “Glorify God in your body”

-discuss essay by Deming in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- First Corinthians 7.1–40 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 110–134.
- Sanders, *Paul*, chapter 5.

### March 8 (Meeting #6) *Contested issue #1: Sex and marriage at the turn of the ages (7.1–40)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 7.1–16            Counsel for various marital statuses
- 7.17–24        General rule: Remain as you were when called
- 7.25–38        Counsel for engaged couples
- 7.39–40        Counsel for wives and widows

-discuss essay by Gundry-Volf in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- First Corinthians 8.1—9.27 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 134–158.
- Sanders, *Paul*, chapter 6.

## March 15 (no class) Module week

### March 22 (Meeting #7) *Contested issue #2: Idol meat—Part one (8.1—9.27)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 8.1–13            Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up
- 9.1–27            Apostolic example of renouncing rights

-discuss essay by \_\_\_\_\_ in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- First Corinthians 10.1—11.1 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 159–181.
- Sanders, *Paul*, chapter 7.

### March 29 (Meeting #8) *Contested issue #2: Idol meat—Part two (10.1—11.1)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 10.1–22        Warning against idolatry
- 10.23—11.1    Conclusion: Use your freedom for the glory of God

-discuss essay by \_\_\_\_\_ in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- ❑ First Corinthians 11.2–34 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- ❑ Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 181–206.
- ❑ Exegetical brief due Friday (see guidelines below).

## April 2 Exegetical brief due

### April 5 (Meeting #9) *Contested issue #3: Community worship—Part one (11.2–34)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 11.2–16            Hairstyles and gender distinction
- 11.17–34        The Lord's Supper: Discerning the body

-discuss essay by \_\_\_\_\_ in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- ❑ First Corinthians 12.1—13.13 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- ❑ Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 206–233.
- ❑ Sanders, Paul, chapter 8.

### April 12 (Meeting #10) *Contested issue #3: Community worship—Part two (12.1–13.13)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 12.1–31a            Varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit
- 12.31b—13.13    The Preeminence of Love

-discuss essay by \_\_\_\_\_ in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- ❑ First Corinthians 14.1–40 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- ❑ Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 233–252.
- ❑ Sanders, Paul, chapter 9.

### April 19 (Meeting #11) *Contested issue #3: Community worship—Part three (14.1–40)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 14.1–25            Prophecy builds up the community
- 14.26–40        Order in the assembly

-discuss essay by \_\_\_\_\_ in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: read and prepare the following texts for next time:

- ❑ First Corinthians 15.1—16.24 in several translations (*Precise Parallel NT*).
- ❑ Hays, *First Corinthians*, pp. 252–296.
- ❑ Sanders, Paul, chapter 11.

### April 26 (Meeting #12) *Contested issue #4: Resurrection body (15.1–58) and Concluding Matters (16.1–24)*

-explore the character (form and function) of the following texts and discuss their significance

- 15.1–34 Resurrection of dead is constitutive of the gospel
- 15.35–58 Resurrection means transformation of the body
- 16.1–12 Collection and travel plans
- 16.13–24 Farewell

-discuss essay by \_\_\_\_\_ in seminar, presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

-post-meeting assignment: complete the following:

- exegetical research paper due May 17 (see guidelines below)
- Bible study/Sermon portfolio due May 17 (see guidelines below)

### **May 3 (Meeting #13) Conclusion**

-meet at 6130 E. Butler to share research findings, course insights, aspirations, etc.

### **May 10 no class**

### **May 17 both Exegetical research paper and Bible Study/Sermon portfolio due**

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EXPECTATIONS

The assignments are designed to promote the course and degree objectives listed above. The assignment expectations are listed below.

I expect that students will:

1. Prepare for, attend, and participate in class discussions. Consult the *Course Schedule* (above) for the texts to be read and the assignments to be completed. I will begin each class by highlighting the key ideas to be processed and developing them as they emerge from the units of text under discussion. Be prepared to contribute with your discoveries, evaluation, and reflection. I expect each one to offer something significant each meeting from your readings and class preparation. After all the written assignments have been graded, your final score will be adjusted down (3%) for each absence that is not made up. The Participation score is 10% of your final grade.

2. Prepare, present, and lead a discussion on two relevant journal articles. You will work in pairs (a few trios may be needed) for this assignment (a different grouping for each presentation). Select dates and sections of First Corinthians that interest you. Sign up on the *Presentation Forum*. For the first Presentation, you choose from one of the essays that I have selected and posted to our class page. The second will be on one of your choosing (send me the pdf version for distribution to the class one week ahead of time). See *Appendix D* for the protocols to access journal articles from the Hiebert Library databases. Your task begins by reading and digesting the article (its thesis, argument, development, merits, short-comings, implications, etc.). Then plan how you will present your findings and the questions you will ask the class to launch a discussion. The time frame will be about 40 minutes (the time after the break). You can assume your classmates have read the article as well. They will be graded on their participation. Your

evaluation will be based on the clarity of presentation, the depth of engagement with argument, the quality of questions asked, and the management of discussion (see grading rubric, *Appendix G*). The journal Presentation score is 10% of your final grade, twice.

3. Write a 600 word Close-Reading interpretive assignment on a passage in First Corinthians. The aim here is to develop and to measure your observation skills and your question-asking skills, both of which are essential for sound interpretation. **This is not a research paper.** The kind of “close-reading” of the text in view here cannot be achieved through interaction with commentaries, journal articles, monographs, and other secondary sources. Choose one of the following texts for your study and complete the close-reading assignment as set out in *Appendix B*. See sample posted to the *Handouts* Folder. The Close-Reading score is 15% of your final grade and is due on Feb. 26 (see *Appendix E* for grading rubric).

6.1–11    6.12–20    7.1–16    7.17–40    8.1–13    9.1–27    10.1–22

4. Write a 2,000 word “exegetical brief” on another passage in First Corinthians. Select from one of the texts listed below. This exegetical assignment follows the FORMAL template and assumes that you will consult several commentaries (see *Appendix A*) after you’ve done your initial close-reading. See *Appendix C* for guidelines to writing a FORMAL. See sample posted to the *Handouts* folder. The Exegetical Brief score is 15% of your final grade and is due on April 2 (see *Appendix F* for grading rubric).

11.2–16    11.17–34    12.1–31a    12.31b—13.13    14.26–40    15.1–34

5. Write a 3,000 word research paper on a text/topic in First Corinthians. This assignment provides an opportunity to expand on your Close-Reading or Exegetical Brief or write on some other topic of interest related to 1 Corinthians. **This is a research paper,** not a sermon or a personal reflection paper. I want to see evidence of research (journal, dictionary, monograph, and commentary citations). In addition, I will be looking for a well-organized, carefully developed, well-documented, argument. The Research paper is 20% of your final grade and is due on May 17 (see *Appendix H* for grading rubric).

6. Write a sermon or Bible Study lesson on a section of First Corinthians *other than* the two addressed in your Close-Reading and Exegetical Brief. Find a venue where you can do the sermon or Bible Study. Prepare and deliver the sermon or Bible Study. After the event, submit a sermon/Bible study portfolio that includes four pieces: (1) a two-page Exegetical Brief (see *Appendix C*), (2) the complete sermon manuscript or lesson plan (see lesson plan template in *Handouts* folder), (3) two evaluations from participants or observers (use Feedback form posted to *Handouts* folder), and (4) your response to the feedback. The Bible Study/Sermon Portfolio is 20% of your final grade and is due on May 17 (see *Appendix I* for grading rubric).

It is only fair and right that you have equally high expectations of me as well. My commitment to you is that I will endeavor to:

1. Join you in our mutual aim of encountering more deeply the disturbing and inspiring presence of Jesus that Paul writes about in First Corinthians. While I function as “supervisor” in guiding your reading and writing, I am committed to participate with you as a “co-journeyer” in our common quest to bring/nourish life and healing in a broken world—which is the mission of God.

2. Foster a learning community atmosphere during our seminar sessions where ideas can be discussed and explored freely without fear of ridicule or attack. Many people have thought deeply on the subject of Paul’s gospel proclamation and what it signifies. While each of these “visions” or “constructions” is not equally valid or defensible, each deserves to be heard and explored before evaluative decisions are made.

3. Provide careful and helpful feedback. I believe that it is pedagogically most helpful to have constructive criticism throughout the learning process. Therefore, I am open to visiting with you about your writing projects so that you can test, clarify, and expand your ideas. Stop by my office and let’s talk. I also aim to give useful feedback on the papers that you turn in and to do so in a timely fashion.

### SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES

Friday February 26	Close-Reading assignment due
Friday April 2	Exegetical Brief assignment due
Monday May 17	Research Paper and Sermon/Bible Study Portfolio due

### SUMMARY OF GRADING SCHEME

Class Participation .....	10%
Close-Reading assignment .....	15%
Exegetical Brief assignment .....	15%
Journal Presentation #1 .....	10%
Journal Presentation #2 .....	10%
Research Paper .....	20%
Bible Study/Sermon Portfolio .....	20%
Absences not made up (3% deduction per absence) .....	
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	100%

### NOTES

1. Academic Policies. MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, accommodations for disabilities, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to me or consult the Registrar.

2. Evaluation. Each of the assignments has specific grading criteria (see descriptions above).

Note also the grading rubric that corresponds to each assignment (*Appendix E, F, G, H, I*) for a sense of what I am looking for in your work.

All assignments must be completed in order to be eligible to earn a passing grade for the course.

Please note that “student work will be evaluated by two standards: a) by what is considered the appropriate level of graduate performance, and b) by comparison with work submitted in a given class” (see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading>).

The letter grade conversions follow the MBBS Grading Template: A (100–94%), A- (93–90%), B+ (89–87%), B (86–83%), B- (82–80%), C+ (79–77%), C (76–73%), C- (72–70%), and F (69–0%) (see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading>).

The performance expectations are as follows: “A ‘B’ grade is the baseline. A ‘B’ grade means the student is doing satisfactory work. The ‘B+’ or higher grade indicates that the student has exceeded the baseline performance standard. The ‘C’ grade indicates that the student has not achieved the baseline level” (see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading>).

Note: Students taking the course for 1 unit of credit are to complete the weekly assignments, to participate in the weekly discussions, and do one of the other assignments. A final grade of “pass” (or CR) will be earned for satisfactory work.

3. Credit/No Credit. Students may petition to take this course for “credit/no credit.” If granted, the student must complete each assignment as described, earning an overall average of  $\geq 70\%$ , and have no “un-made-up” absences (see note below on *Attendance*).

4. Due Dates. Students are expected to submit written assignments on time. Late submissions will be penalized as outlined on the grading rubrics. However, penalties may not apply to students who have a documented emergency that prevents them from submitting the assignment on the due date. Check with me to see if alternative arrangements can be made.

5. Attendance. Students are expected to attend and participate in class. Each class is important. After all the assignments have been graded, your final score will be adjusted down 3% for each “un-made-up” absence. If you anticipate being away or if you would like to “make up” an absence, make a proposal. If approved, the deduction will be removed after successfully completing the “make up” work.

6. Formatting specifications. Parenthetical or footnote citation styles are both acceptable. Choose one and follow it consistently. Consult *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Hendrickson, 1999) which is in the Reference section of the *Hiebert Library* (Ref PN 147.S26) for examples of how to cite dictionary articles, journal articles, monographs, commentaries, books in series, websites, etc. Websites and samples pointing to correct Chicago and APA format are also posted to the *Handouts* folder.

7. Submitting assignments. If you would like to receive handwritten comments on your written

assignments, submit a hard-copy version of your paper. You may send me an electronic version of your paper (i.e., an email attachment); however, I will not print your paper. I will read your work online and email you the completed evaluation rubric.

8. Course evaluations. Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student's evaluation of the course is completed.

## **Appendix A: Selected Bibliography for First Corinthians**

Note: Items marked with an asterisk (\*) are on one day reserve @ Hiebert Library

- \*Barrett, C. K. *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. New York: Harper & Row, 1968.
- \*Bray, Gerald, ed. *1 and 2 Corinthians*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999.
- \*Bruce, F. F. *1 and 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.
- \*Conzelmann, Hans. *1 Corinthians*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975.
- Deming, Will. *Paul on Marriage and Celibacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995.
- \*Fee, Gordon D. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.
- . "Toward a Theology of 1 Corinthians." Pages 37–58 in vol. 2 of *Pauline Theology*. Edited by D. M. Hay. 3 vols. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1993.
- \*Furnish, Victor Paul. *The Theology of the First Letter to the Corinthians*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999.
- Grudem, Wayne A. *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians*. Lanham, MD: UP of America, 1982.
- \*Hays, Richard B. *First Corinthians*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997.
- Kuck, David W. *Judgement & Community Conflict*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992.
- Martin, Dale B. *The Corinthian Body*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1995.
- Mitchell, Margaret M. *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1991.
- Rosner, Brian S. *Paul, Scripture, and Ethics*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.
- \*Sanders, E. P., *Paul: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford UP, 2001.
- Snyder, Graydon. *First Corinthians: A Faith Community Commentary*. Macon, GA: Mercer, 1992.
- Theissen, Gerd. *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982.
- \*Thiselton, Anthony. *The First Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Willis, Wendell L. *Idol Meat in Corinth*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985.
- Wire, Antoinette Clark. *The Corinthian Women Prophets*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1990.
- \*Witherington, Ben. *Conflict and Community in Corinth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

## **Appendix B: Guidelines for doing a “close reading”**

Note: The following guidelines are an adaptation of a document produced by Joel B. Green and they are reproduced here with permission from the author.

1. Introductory comments: Many find a “close reading” assignment one of the most difficult exercises undertaken at seminary. The reason for this is that the kind of “close reading” required

for this assignment cannot be achieved by interacting with commentaries, monographs, dictionaries, journal articles, etc. Instead, a “close reading” assignment aims to measure your observation skills and your question-asking skills. So, what is it?

a) A “close reading” is not:

- *a research paper*—no secondary sources should be consulted as you prepare your paper
- *a finished product*—it should be written using good grammar and spelling, but there is no expectation that you “answer” the questions you raise while interacting with the assigned text; hence, no “introduction” or “conclusion” is required
- *a sermon or application paper*—it is simply too early in the interpretative process to be asserting issues of relevance or appropriation

b) A “close reading” is:

- *a series of observations and questions*—looking at your text from multiple vantage points (see list below), should raise a wide range of interpretive issues; some questions may be more relevant to certain texts than to others
- *a research agenda*—a thoroughgoing “close reading” of the text provides the interpretive questions and hunches that you can then take to the reference materials, the next stage in the interpretive process
- *a community event*—you are encouraged to discuss your preliminary thoughts and questions with others as you prepare to write your observations

2. Questions for a “Close Reading” of the text: The following questions are divided into categories that you might bring with you to the task of “close reading.” Not all questions are equally important to every biblical text, and other questions may emerge as you wrestle with the text. You will need to exercise your judgment in discerning which are relevant. Work through the relevant questions from each of the four main blocks—text, co-text, context, intertext—and then write up your observations in prose form.

a) The Text

- Textual Criticism—*Through the use of the Greek apparatus, have you indicated potentially problematic readings and their significance?*
- Genre and Form—*Have you identified “what this text is” and/or to what larger genre it belongs, and suggested the significance of this identification?*
- Determination of Boundaries—*On what basis do you agree or disagree with the demarcation of the assigned pericope? What textual markers support your analysis?*
- Exploration of the Text’s Internal Development and Argument—*Have you been able to identify the structure and/or other strategies by which the author attempts to communicate with the reader?*
- The “About-ness” of the Text—*Can you summarize what you understand this text to be saying?*

b) The Co-Text (literary context)

- Situation of Text in Larger Presentation—*Given that we read from “left to right,” have you been able to show how your reading of this text is informed by what went on before?*

- Development of Important Words/Themes—*What key words and/or themes are signaled in this text? How have you judged them to be key?*
- Openness to Interpretive Possibilities—*What other readings of this text are possible? What would we miss about the meaning of this text without having read further?*

c) Context (historical situation)

- Socio-Historical Setting—*In what socio-historical setting is this text communicated? How does our knowledge of this setting influence our reading?*
- Appeal to Particular Cultural Conventions/Cues—*In what ways does this text appeal to such cultural concerns or conventions as purity, distribution of power, social roles, household codes, honor and shame, patronage systems, etc. in order to communicate its message?*
- Interface of Contexts—*In what ways does this text appear to stand in tension with the world it addresses? In what ways does your own context intersect with the context of this text?*

d) Intertext

- Sensitivity to OT/LXX/HB Citations and Echoes and their Significance—*What OT passages are explicitly cited in this text? Alluded to? What is their significance in their new setting within this text?*
- Sensitivity to other Inter-Canonical Echoes—*What other biblical passages are brought to mind by a reading of this one? How might these echoes inform a canonical reading of this text?*

3. Concluding remarks: There is no “right” way to do a “close reading” assignment—the essential thing is that somehow you bring to the surface the significance of the themes, motifs, details, etc. in the assigned text. Finally, the key thing is to allow yourself to be playful and imaginative as you engage the text from the four angles (text, co-text, context, and intertext).

## Appendix C: Exegetical Brief

Note: The following guidelines are an adaptation of Prof. Elmer A. Martens’s FORMAL method.

F = find the unit and identify the genre

O = outline the structure with functional labels

R<sup>3</sup> = research key words, relate parts internally, relate parts externally

M = make a summary of the thrust or theme or theology of the text in a sentence

A = articulate a constructive form of the text’s theology for today

L = live the text’s theology in practical ways

F = find the unit and identify the genre

-where does the textual unit begin and end? rationale?

-what is the genre of the text? what questions are reasonable?

O = outline the structure with functional labels

-divide the text into its main building blocks; attach functional labels; number the parts

R<sup>3</sup> = research key words, relate parts internally, relate parts externally

-key words

-which words appear theologically or conceptually significant?

-go to <http://www.biblestudytools.com/Lexicons/> (or another lexicon) and look up the usage of the word in the NT; determine which nuance is in view in this text; explore significance

-internal relations

-make note of any patterns, word plays, repetitions within the text; analyze

-consult Bible dictionaries, journal articles (ATLA), and commentaries

-external relations

-make note of any patterns, echoes, allusions, to other OT texts and NT texts; assess

-what historical, social, anthropological, and/or political issues could clarify the textual message?

-consult Bible dictionaries, journal articles (ATLA), and commentaries

M = make a summary of the thrust or theme or theology of the text in a sentence

A = articulate a constructive form of the text's theology for today

-is this text speaking as a rule, principle, paradigm, or symbolic world?

-who benefits from this text's voice? who does not? why? how?

-and how do we negotiate this textual voice with our experience, reason, and/or tradition?

L = live the text's theology in practical ways

-design a several scenarios that demonstrate ways in which the message of this text (as negotiated through the cultural context) can be embodied or appropriated today

Works cited: list the sources you used in correct bibliographic form

## **Appendix D: Accessing electronic databases remotely**

*Note: This is where you see your tuition dollars at work. The seminary's Hiebert Library pays many dollars each year to subscribe to electronic databases and every year more and more articles in full-text are linked to the entries in the database. Follow these steps.*

- (1) log on to the seminary website
- (2) click on the "Fresno" campus
- (3) click on "Library," under the Fresno menu
- (4) click on "Hiebert Online catalogue" (don't click on "electronic databases" yet)
- (5) now click on "electronic databases" from the "Online library Catalogue" menu
- (6) click on "ez.fresno.edu" this is designed especially for seminary students and remote access
- (7) supply the username "seminary" and password "creation"
- (8) select "EBSCOhost" from the options
- (9) select "EBSCOhost Research Databases" from the options
- (10) unselect "Academic Search Premier" AND select "ATLA Religion databases" from the options (this gives you access to the "Scripture Citation" field); click "Continue"
- (11) in the search box at the top left of the screen, type your text and select the field called "Scripture Citation"; then click "search"; I suggest only the name of the biblical book and the chapter; this way the search is wide at first; you can always narrow the search, if you get too many "hits" (e.g., Romans 14, Genesis 22)

NOTE: for 2 Timothy 2 you'll need to enter "Timothy, 2nd 2" and for 1 Corinthians 13

you'll need to enter "Corinthians, 1st 13"

(12) you should get all the "records" that have your search term in it, Romans 14, 1 Timothy 2, 1 Corinthians 13, or Genesis 22

(13) scroll down and select those articles that seem interesting to you; put them in your folder

(14) try selecting those that have pdf full-text files linked to them and open them—read the first few paragraphs, scroll through them, and read the concluding paragraphs; if it seems you could use it, save it to your hard drive or flash drive; later you can read them in more detail and eliminate those that turn out to be less interesting

### Appendix E: Evaluation rubric for Close-Reading

- |                                      |                  |            |                 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Flow of argument/discussion:      | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 2. Theological engagement:           | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 3. Attention to assignment criteria: | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 4. Formatting skills:                | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 5. Grammatical considerations:       | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |

½ point off for each day late

Score = \_\_\_\_\_ / 15      strong (≥ 13.5/15), average (≥ 12/15), and passable (≥ 10.5/15)

### Appendix F: Evaluation rubric for Exegetical Brief

- |                                      |                  |            |                 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Flow of argument/discussion:      | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 2. Theological engagement:           | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 3. Attention to assignment criteria: | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 4. Formatting skills:                | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 5. Grammatical considerations:       | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 6. Citation conventions:             | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |

½ point off for each day late

Score = \_\_\_\_\_ / 15      strong (≥ 13.5/15), average (≥ 12/15), and passable (≥ 10.5/15)

### Appendix G: Evaluation rubric for journal article Presentation

- |                                       |                  |            |                 |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Clarity of presentation:           | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 2. Depth of engagement with argument: | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 3. Attention to assignment criteria:  | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 4. Quality of questions asked:        | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 5. Management of discussion:          | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |

Score = \_\_\_\_\_ / 10      strong (≥ 9/10), average (≥ 8/10), and passable (≥ 7/10)

## Appendix H: Evaluation rubric for Research paper

- |                                      |                  |            |                 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Flow of argument/discussion:      | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 2. Theological engagement:           | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 3. Attention to assignment criteria: | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 4. Formatting skills:                | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 5. Grammatical considerations:       | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 6. Citation conventions:             | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |

½ point off for each day late

Score = \_\_\_\_\_ / 20                      strong (≥ 18/20), average (≥ 16/20), and passable (≥ 14/20)

## Appendix I: Evaluation rubric for Sermon/Bible Study portfolio

- |                                 |                  |            |                 |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. Flow of argument/discussion: | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 2. Theological engagement:      | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 3. Exegetical Brief:            | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 4. Formatting skills:           | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 5. Grammatical considerations:  | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 6. Feedback from participants:  | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |
| 7. Response to feedback:        | inadequate _____ | good _____ | excellent _____ |

½ point off for each day late

Score = \_\_\_\_\_ / 20                      strong (≥ 18/20), average (≥ 16/20), and passable (≥ 14/20)