

INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT GREEK

Course Syllabus, © 2009 Laurence H. Kant, All Rights Reserved
Spring, 2009: Tu 2:00-5:15 p.m.

Professor: Dr. Laurence H. Kant

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Hours: Tu 12:30-2:00, 5:15-6:15

Th 12:30-2:00, 5:15-6:15

Please feel free to call me anytime at home up until 10:00 p.m. on evenings and on weekends.

A. PREREQUISITES: Greek, Fall Semester

B. DESCRIPTION: This course strives to teach students to learn ancient Greek well enough to read parts of the New Testament on their own with the help of a dictionary and to write a Greek exegesis paper. By the end of the course, students should also have developed a basic knowledge of Greek grammar, the capacity to understand the constitutive elements of a Greek sentence, the capacity to parse words, a working knowledge of fundamental vocabulary, the ability to recite Greek orally, and the basic skills of analyzing a Greek New Testament passage

Purpose: Learning New Testament Greek will make the process of biblical interpretation, theological thinking, and sermon preparation considerably easier, more responsible, and more productive. No translation precisely reproduces the original text. Rather, translations are interpretive approximations that can never fully reveal the richness, nuances, and meaning of the text in its original language. By learning Greek, students will thus gain a much more complete understanding of sacred scripture.

Students will also begin to learn to step outside of themselves and imagine the world from a different perspective. Knowledge of more than one language makes us aware of a range of cultural and philosophical options and helps us to participate in a global context. In fact, languages represent one of the essential components of the world's diversity.

Students will develop their memory skills. Memorization gets a bad rap these days, but it is indispensable for the development of "higher order" thinking. And our identities, after all, are grounded in memory. Memorizing allows us to appropriate new information and make it our own.

Finally, students will learn to begin applying their knowledge of Greek to actual New Testament passages.

- C. **CLASS PROCEDURES:** Class time will consist of both short presentations by the professor and sustained conversations. The format will be that of a graduate seminar, with extensive give-and-take between the professor and students. This will include a **Socratic form of dialogue**, in which the professor directly engages individual students, and groups of students, with questions (often difficult ones) to which the students must respond. Sometimes students will not be able to consult their books or notes, but will have to respond from memory. Students are also expected to read Greek aloud in class, as well as to translate Greek texts (sometimes on sight). Prior to class, students should have read all relevant materials, practiced reading Greek aloud, and memorized the appropriate paradigms and vocabulary.

Since this is a graduate course, the professor does not give lectures that simply reiterate or paraphrase the information found in the books. Instead, the classroom should function as a place for guidance, clarification, experimentation, and practice. At the same time, most learning should optimally take place outside the classroom as students study and converse with one another. We are adults, and the most important thing for adults to learn here is **to learn how to learn**. The professor is ideally your guide and mentor. Information is readily available from encyclopedia articles, books, videos, or even lectures, but not everyone has the opportunity to learn to think, study, do serious research, and make intelligent judgments on his or her own. One of the essential tools that students should expect to acquire at a seminary, if they have not already, is this:

Learn to be independent, self-starting theological thinkers and learners.

The concept of independent learning ties in with another procedure. If students have questions or inquiries, do not understand a reading, find an assignment confusing, or need clarifications on any other matters (dates, grading, etc.), the student should consult the professor. This can take place during class time or outside of class (during a break, in the hallway, in the office, or over the telephone). This is the only way that the professor can know what assistance students might need.

Remember what Paul said: “And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ; I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food.” (1 Cor 3:1-2, NRSV). This course presumes that students are “ready for solid food.”

D. **COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- 1) Acquire the rudiments of basic Greek grammar, syntax, and vocabulary;
- 2) Understand the forms of Greek words and acquire a basic comprehension of paradigms;
- 3) Understand how to parse the words in an English and a Greek sentence;
- 4) Learn how to read Greek aloud;
- 5) Learn how to read parts of the New Testament with a dictionary; and
- 6) Begin to apply knowledge of Greek to biblical exegesis

E. REQUIRED TEXTS AND READINGS

Kurt Aland, *et al.*, *The Greek New Testament: With English Introduction Including Greek/English Dictionary*, 4th ed. (New York: American Bible Society, 1998)

= **Aland**

N. Clayton Croy, *A Primer of Biblical Greek* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1999) = **Primer**

Michael J. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001) = **Gorman**

William G. MacDonald, *Greek Enchiridion: A Concise Handbook of Grammar for Translation and Exegesis* = **Enchiridion**

Primer is available from Cokesbury. Aland will be available for next semester. You will need to purchase **Enchiridion** from a used book seller. The following on-line companies provide this service: amazon.com, alibris.com, and half.com.

REQUIRED FILM FOR VIEWING

Iphigenia (dir. Michael Cacoyannis, 1977)

This will be available in the library. Assignment dates and times for discussion will be arranged.

F. RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND READINGS: TBA

G. ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS (Fall)

- 1) Attendance, participation, and completion of homework assignments (10%)
- 2) Weekly vocabulary and grammar quizzes (20%)
- 3) Mid-Term Examination (25%): format TBA
- 4) Exegesis Paper (35%)
- 5) Oral Reading Skills (10 %)

H. GRADES: Grades follow the standard numerical breakdowns (93-100 = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-; 67-69 = D+; 63-66 = D; 60-62 = D-; 57-59 = F). "A/A-" means work of the highest quality and is a very difficult grade to achieve. A satisfactory grade is somewhere between a "B-" and a "C+." Anything "C+" and below is a below-average grade. "F" indicates that the student did not meet the requirements of the course by not attending a sufficient number of classes, by not submitting passable work, and/or by failing to submit all work. Grades are based on work at a graduate level.

- I. **ABSENCES:** Class attendance is essential. Unexcused absences will result in automatic lowering of the student's grade at the discretion of the professor. Excused absences (which do not include circumstances over which one has personal control) are allowed, but three or more absences may lead to lowering of the grade at the discretion of the professor. **Please do not telephone the professor about an impending class absence or a prior class absence, but send an e-mail describing the situation.**
- J. **OTHER POLICIES:**
- **Assignment Due Dates:** All assignments are due on the dates indicated in class. Late assignments will receive a significant reduction in grade at the discretion of the professor.
 - **Cell Phones:** Cell phones should either be turned OFF or put on silent mode during class.
 - **Inclusive Language:** Students should be aware of the Inclusive Language Policy of LTS and adhere to it in their class discussions and written materials.
 - **Respect:** In classroom discussion, participants should show respect to one another by listening and paying attention before speaking.
 - **Integrity:** Please adhere to the rules of honesty and integrity as outlined in the Student Handbook policies on cheating and plagiarism. Serious breaches of Ethics may result in class failure and/or suspension or expulsion from the seminary. Needless to say, LTS expects students, as potential pastors and religious leaders, to adhere the highest ethical and moral standards.
- K. **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS:** Lexington Theological Seminary complies with the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you believe you have a condition which will require accommodation, please refer to the *Student Handbook* and follow the procedures outlined. Please review this syllabus carefully and make an appointment with the professor to discuss any assignment for which you believe you will need accommodation according to the arrangements made with the dean.

L. **CLASS SCHEDULE** (The professor reserves the right to alter this schedule or assignment, if learning needs or time constraints require it)

February 3

February 10

February 17

February 24

March 3

March 10

March 17: **NO CLASS, READING WEEK**

March 24

March 31

April 7

April 14

April 21

April 28

May 7: **EXEGESIS PAPER DUE**