

<b>Course ID:</b>	<b>Course Title:</b>	<b>Winter 2021</b>
NT 502-1	Synoptic Gospels	<b>Prerequisite:</b>
		<b>Credits:</b> 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
<b>Delivery:</b>	Blended	<b>Instructor:</b>	Gordon King (B.Ed.; M.Div.; Th.M.; D.Min.)	<b>First day of classes:</b>	Mon, Jan 11
<b>Days:</b>	Wednesday	<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Gordon.King@ambrose.edu">Gordon.King@ambrose.edu</a>	<b>Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:</b>	Sun, Jan 24
<b>Time:</b>	3:15-6:15pm	<b>Phone:</b>	403 970 3391	<b>Last day to request revised final exam:</b>	Mon, Mar 8
<b>Room:</b>	A1085-1	<b>Office:</b>		<b>Last day to withdraw from course:</b>	Fri, Mar 19
<b>Lab/Tutorial:</b>		<b>Office Hours:</b>		<b>Last day to apply for coursework extension:</b>	Mon, Mar 29
<b>Final Exam:</b>	No Final Exam			<b>Last day of classes:</b>	Fri, Apr 16

## Course Description

An introduction to New Testament studies and exegetical skills through the study of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Church members routinely state that Jesus is at the center of their faith. However, some seldom read the synoptic gospels and many have limited understanding of the times and culture in which Jesus lived and proclaimed the coming of God's kingdom.

The goal of this course is to bring the message of the synoptic gospels into the center of the life and faith of the student participants. The course content will assist students to develop skills in working with gospel narratives in order to develop a deeper understanding of Jesus and his message in first century Palestine and in the faith of the church today.

NT 502 will combine online presentations recorded by the professor, live lectures in the class (that can be accessed on Zoom for remote students, and discussion forums (live in the classroom and on Zoom). There will be ten assigned readings over the course of twelve weeks.

This format has been chosen because of the uncertainties caused by COVID-19. It is possible that during some weeks the class will need to pivot so that all students will participate online. The use of recorded presentations will effectively reduce classroom screen time to two hours in one sitting. The flexibility of student participants is greatly appreciated.

## Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Have developed their capacity to describe Jesus as a historical figure of first century Palestine.
2. Understood the distinctive narrative structure of each of the synoptic gospels and developed skills in working with different genres of gospel passages in the task of constructing a personal theology of faith and vocation.
3. Have developed capacity to engage confidently with scholarly literature about the gospels.
4. Have developed basic exegetical skills (as explained in Ambrose Basic Exegetical Skills Document).
5. Be able to define in their own words the meaning of key concepts such as “the kingdom of God,” “discipleship,” and “faith.”

## Textbooks

John T. Carroll. *Jesus and the Gospels. An Introduction.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press. 2016

## Course Schedule

Date	Recorded Presentation	Class Presentation	Discussion	Reading Prior to Class
January 13	Introduction to Course and Syllabus. Introduction to Document on Basic Exegetic Skills for Ambrose Students.	Quests for the Historical Jesus. 7 Approaches to Understanding Jesus as a Person of History.	How has your understanding of Jesus developed & changed? Be prepared to describe two groups that understand Jesus in distinct ways.	Carroll. Chapter 2
20	The Jesus tradition. Oral. Gospels. Non-Canonical Gospels. Genre.	First Century Palestine. The Context of Jesus' mission.	How did purity codes work? Systems of Categorization and Exclusion.	Carroll. Chapter 1
27	Kingdom of God. What did this term mean to the audiences of Jesus?	The Hebrew Scriptures and the Synoptic Gospels. (1) The Jewish Jesus. (2) The theme of fulfillment. (3) Torah. Dr. Beth Stovell	Discussion of Reading and Presentations	Donahue. “Jesus Prophet of God’s Reign.” Posted on Moodle.

February 3	Parables as a Genre within the Synoptic Gospels.	A deeper reading of the Sower and the Mustard Seed.	Class Review. What has been important? Disturbing? Questions?	King. "Stories from Foreign Lands." Posted on Moodle.
10	Unforgiving Slave (Mt 18). The theme of forgiveness in the mission of Jesus.	Jesus and Levi. Table fellowship as enacted forgiveness.	Principles for using parables and stories in the life of the church.	Pennington. "Reading the Gospels as Stories." Posted on Moodle.
24	Miracle Accounts as a Genre within the Synoptic Gospels. A clash of ancient & modern worldviews.	Healing is more than biomedical: Dimensions of Healing	The cleansing of a leper: A deep reading in a time of pandemic?	Wahlen. "Healing." Posted on Moodle.
March 3	Titles and Categories. Son of God. Son of Man. Son of David. Messiah. Prophet. Healer. Teacher.	Nature Miracles and Exorcisms	Stilling the Storm (Mk 4.35-41). A deep reading in a time of ecological crisis.	
10	Introduction to the Gospel of Mark	Discipleship in Mark.	Class Review. How is your understanding of Jesus changing? What has been most fruitful over the past weeks?	Carroll. Chapter 3.
17	The Conclusion of Mark's Gospel	Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew	Love of Enemies. Approaching the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7)	Carroll. Chapter 4.
24	Matthew's Double Love Command and Final Commission	Introduction to the Gospel of Luke	The woman who loves in Luke 7. Understanding what this account meant and means today.	Carroll. Chapter 5.
April 7	Lucan Birth Narratives	The Lazarus parable and Luke's view of wealth and possessions.	The rich ruler (Lk 18.18-30) and Zacchaeus (19.1-10). Similarities and contrasts.	

April 14	Jesus and the temple.	Appearances of the Risen Lord	Final Review of the Course.	Carroll. Chapter 7.
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## Requirements:

**Attendance and Participation in Discussion Forums: 25%:** Students are expected to actively participate in the forums. Active participation requires preparation and entering into discussion with colleagues. It is expected that the participation of students will be respectful of differences in opinion and will positively contribute to the learning of others.

**Review of an Approved Book: 25%:** Students will read a minimum of 100 pages from a book included in the select bibliography (below) or approved by the professor. You are expected to write a six-page report (double spaced) with information on the issues treated by the author and the approach taken in dealing with the mission and ministry of Jesus. Students will summarize their key learnings and any points of disagreement or uncertainty. Please do not write a book summary. I am interested in your response to the author's presentation. See Rubric for Book Reviews.

**Written Responses to Readings: 25%:** The development of competence in handling scholarly literature on the synoptic gospels is a critical part of this course. The ten assigned readings for this course have been carefully selected. Six of them are taken from the textbook by John Carroll. Four other readings are posted on Moodle. Students will write a two-page (double spaced) response to each reading. The response is not a summary of the entire reading. The paper will identify a theme of the reading that a student found particularly helpful, insightful, or troubling. Provide a summary statement of the author's position and write about why this point is important for a deep reading of the synoptic gospels.

**Final Paper: 25%:** This major paper will concentrate on some aspect of the mission and message of Jesus that intrigues you. You have the choice of concentrating on one narrative (such as Jesus and Zacchaeus in Luke 19), a particular theme (such as the nature miracles or the gospels' presentation of compassion), or an aspect of Jesus' mission (such as the priority of the poor). You are expected to consult commentaries and other scholarly sources of information. The paper will conclude with your personal reflections on the importance of this topic for the life of the church in our time. The paper should be 10-12 pages double spaced.

## Attendance:

Students are expected to participate in the lectures either in the classroom at Ambrose or online using Zoom. The recorded lecture posted on Moodle should be reviewed prior to the weekly class.

## Select Bibliography

### General

Bailey, Kenneth E. *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic. 2008.

Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2011.

Beilby, James K. and Eddy, Paul Rhodes. *The Historical Jesus. Five Views*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2009.

Blockmuehl, Markus. Editor. *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2001.

Borg, Marcus J. *Jesus. Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary*. New York. Harper, 2006.

Burridge, Richard. *Four Gospels, One Jesus? A Symbolic Reading. Edition 3*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 2014.

Gaventa, Beverly Roberts and Hays, Richard B. editors. *Seeking the Identity of Jesus. A Pilgrimage*. Grand Rapids. Eerdmans. 2008.

Horsley, Richard A. and Silberman, Neil Asher. *The Message and the Kingdom. How Jesus and Paul Ignited a Revolution and Transformed the Ancient World*. New York: Grosset/Putnam. 1997.

Horsley, Richard A. *Jesus and Empire. The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder*. Minneapolis: Fortress. 2003.

Malina, Bruce J. *The Social Gospel of Jesus. The Kingdom of God in Mediterranean Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress. 2001.

McKnight, Scot. *Kingdom Conspiracy. Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2014.

Moxnes, Halvor. *Putting Jesus in His Place. A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003.

Pennington, Jonathan. *Reading the Gospels Wisely. A Narrative and Theological Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

Witherington III, Ben. *The Jesus Quest. The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth. Edition 2*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1997

Willimon, William H. *Why Jesus?* Nashville: Abingdon Press. 2010.

Wright, N. T., *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.

## **Parables**

Bailey, Kenneth E. *Poet and Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables of Luke*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.

Bloomberg, Craig L. *Interpreting the Parables*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Preaching the Parables*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.

Boucher, Madeleine. *The Mysterious Parable*. Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1977.

Capan, Robert E. *The Parables of Grace*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Parables of Judgment*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Parables of the Kingdom*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985.

Crossan, John Dominic. *The Power of Parable. How Fiction by Jesus Became Fiction About Jesus*. New York: HarperCollins. 2012.

Herzog II, William R. *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994.

Hultgren, Arland J. *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus: Revised Edition*. London: SCM Press, 1975.

King, Gordon W. *Seed Falling on Good Soil. Rooting Our Lives in the Parables of Jesus*. Eugene: Cascade Books. 2016.

Levine, Amy-Jill. *Short Stories by Jesus. The enigmatic parables of a controversial rabbi*. New York: Harper One. 2014.

Longenecker, Richard N. (ed). *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

Pronzato, Alessandro. *Las Parabras de Jesus: Tomo 1*. Salamanca: Ediciones Sigueme, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Las Parabras de Jesus en el Evangelio de Lucas: Tomo 2*. Salamanca: Ediciones Sigueme, 2003.

Ruiz de Galarreta, Jose Enrique. *Para Leer el Reino en Parabras*. Navarra, Spain: Verbo Divino, 2007.

Schottroff, Luise. *The Parables of Jesus*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006.

Scott, Bernard Brandon. *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989.

Snodgrass, Klyne. *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.

Stein, Robert H. *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981.

Van Eck, Ernest. *The Parables of Jesus the Galilean. Stories of a Social Prophet*. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2016.

Wenham, David. *The Parables of Jesus*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1989

## **Miracles**

Barclay, William. *And He Had Compassion*. Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1975

Cotter, Wendy J. *The Christ of the Miracles Stories. Portrait through Encounter*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010.

Dawson, Audrey. *Healing, Weakness, and Power. Perspectives on Healing in the Writings of Mark, Luke, and Paul*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster. 2008.

Hendricksen, Jan-Olav and Sandnes, Karl Olav. *Jesus as Healer. A gospel for the body*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 2016.

John, Jeffrey. *The Meaning in the Miracles*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 2001.

Miquel Pericas, Esther. *Jesus y Los Espiritus. Aproximacion antropologica a la practica exorcista de Jesus*. Salamanca: Ediciones Sigueme. 2006.

Montefiore, Hugh. *The Miracles of Jesus*. London. SPCK, 2005.

Pilch, John J. *Healing in the New Testament. Insights from Medical and Mediterranean Anthropology*. Minneapolis: Fortress. 2000.

Twelftree. Graham H. *Jesus the Miracle Worker*. Downers Grove. IVP. 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. *In the Name of Jesus. Exorcism Among Early Christians*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_(ed.). *The Nature Miracles. Problems, Perspectives, and Prospects*. Eugene: Cascade, 2017.

Warrington, Keith, *Jesus the Healer. Paradigm or Unique Phenomenon*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Miracles in the Gospels. Peabody: Hendrickson. 2015.

## Commentaries

Ambrose library has a wealth of commentaries and books on specific gospels by leading New Testament scholars. It would be virtually impossible to list them in a bibliography. Please speak to the professor should you want any guidance.

## Special Mention

The Roman Catholic scholar Raymond E. Brown wrote three magisterial books on the birth and the death of Jesus. They survey scholarship and establish Brown's position on critical issues.

Brown, Raymond E. The Birth of the Messiah. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1999. (752 pages).

\_\_\_\_\_. The Death of the Messiah. Volumes 1 and 2. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1998. (1,500 + pages).

Another Roman Catholic scholar, John P. Meier, has produced five volumes that carry the title A Marginal Jew. Volume 2 deals with John the Baptist, the Kingdom of God, and the Miracles. Meier uses rigorous historical criteria to establish his portrait of Jesus. As with Raymond Brown, the volumes are large and demand a careful reading.

The British New Testament specialist James D. G. Dunn died in the summer of 2020. His book Jesus Remembered (Eerdmans, 2003) was a judicious summary of decades of research and dialogue with scholars in Europe and North America. The book is over 1,000 pages long. The organization of chapters is helpful and students can consult it without having to read the entire book.

The Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels (IVP Academic, 2013) edited by Joel Green is a very valuable source of information that takes into account the history of gospel interpretation and contemporary scholarship.

## Grade Summary:

Grade	Interpretation	Grade Points
A+	<b>Mastery:</b> Comprehensive understanding of subject matter	4.00
A		4.00
A-		3.70
B+	<b>Proficient:</b> Well-developed understanding of subject matter.	3.30
B		3.00
B-		2.70
C+	<b>Basic:</b> Developing understanding of subject matter	2.30
C		2.00
C-		1.70
D+	<b>Minimal Pass:</b> Limited understanding of subject matter	1.30
D		1.00
F	<b>Failure:</b> Failure to meet course requirements	0.00

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

**Other:**

*Any added features in the syllabus are optional. You may or may not wish to include elements such as a bibliography, reading list, or reporting form.*



## Ambrose University Academic Policies:

### Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

### Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

### Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

### Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a

laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

### Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at [privacy@ambrose.edu](mailto:privacy@ambrose.edu).

### Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

### Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

### Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

## **Mental Health Support**

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

### On Campus:

- Counselling Services: [ambrose.edu/counselling](http://ambrose.edu/counselling)
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at [ambrose.edu/wellness](http://ambrose.edu/wellness).
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See [ambrose.edu/crisissupport](http://ambrose.edu/crisissupport) for a list of staff members.

### Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

## **Sexual Violence Support**

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – [ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness](http://ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness).

### Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888

**Note:** Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.