

Course ID:	Course Title:	Winter 2020 ONLINE
NT 502	Synoptic Gospels	Prerequisite:
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Dates:	March 8 – May 8, 2020	Instructor:	Dr. Gordon King	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	End of the first week
		Email:	Gwking49@gmail.com	Last day to withdraw from course:	March 20, 2020
Office:		Phone:		Last day to apply for coursework extension:	Monday, March 30, 2020

Course Description

Church members routinely state that Jesus is the center of their faith. However, they may seldom read the synoptic gospels (that are foundational for historical knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth). This creates a significant knowledge gap in developing an “everyday” theology of life and ministry. Within church life, the gospels are sometimes reduced to proof texts for sermons and attention may be concentrated on the death and resurrection of Jesus to the exclusion of his life and teaching.

The course will seek to bring the synoptic gospels into the center of life and faith of the student participants. We will develop skills in working with gospel narratives so that they both (1) speak into our lives and (2) we can communicate confidently their meaning to the people with whom we interact.

NT 502 will combine presentations of the professor, five discussion forums, and the independent work of students. The presentations will take place on Tuesday evenings between 7:00-8:00 pm (Mountain Time). Students that are unable to participate in the synchronous lectures will be expected to watch the video posted on Moodle. The five discussion forums will take place in small groups with times to be arranged.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Over the weeks of the course it is expected that students will:

1. Develop a fascination with Jesus as a historical figure of first century Palestine.
2. Enhance their capacity to “do theology by story.”
3. Use the parable and miracle traditions of the synoptic gospels confidently and competently with concern for their historical context and the needs of people in our modern social settings.

Textbook

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

Requirements:

Assessment	%	Due Date
Discussion forum contributions (5)	25	On-going
Book Review	25	March 31
Weekly Writing Assignments (7)	50	On-going

**Please note that all written assignments should be submitted through the assignment drop-boxes on Moodle.

IT Help

If you need help navigating Moodle or Zoom, please first consult the Moodle Primer Video available at the top of your dashboard. After that, please address any questions to the Ambrose helpdesk. They are more than willing to help you with these technologies (helpdesk@ambrose.edu).

About Me

I bring to the course over forty years of personal fascination with Jesus of Nazareth and the work of New Testament scholarship in examining critical questions about his life, mission, and impact. I have never been intimidated by the questions posed inside and outside the academy. Scholarly research and writing has challenged the church to formulate responses that are both thoughtful and faithful. I have benefited from opportunities to teach courses on Jesus and the Kingdom of God in Canada, Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

My academic studies and writing have been centered in the synoptic gospels. My theological studies were done at Acadia, Princeton, Sheffield and Vancouver (Carey). My books, *Going Global* (co-authored 2011) and *Seed Falling on Good Soil* (2016) dealt with gospel themes, in particular the parables of Jesus. My reading over the years has been diverse including N. T. Wright, John P. Meier, Joseph Fitzmyer, Luise Schottroff, William Herzog, John Dominic Crossan, Richard Horsley, Marcus Borg, Bruce Malina and Sean Freyne. I have been particularly interested in the background, culture, and history of first century Palestine as a key to interpreting the synoptic gospels.

I have a keen desire to share both my passion for the synoptic literature and to assist students to handle gospel stories and teaching with confidence, competence and creativity.

Synchronous drop-in sessions

Each Saturday morning, I will open up a Zoom session which you are welcome to join to discuss the week's activities and requirements with the instructor and your peers. If you have any questions, please bring them to this session. If you plan to join, please email me by Thursday night so I know to expect you.

Course Schedule

Date	Class Themes
10 March	Lecture: Approaches to Understanding Jesus.

	<p>Discussion Forum: What is the Synoptic Problem? Why is it important?</p> <p>Assignment: Two page paper on the documentary “The Search for Jesus (Full)” found on Moodle. Due the first day of class.</p>
17 March	<p>Lecture: First century Palestine: Rome, Temple, Kinship, & Economics.</p> <p>Discussion Forum: What were the purity laws? Why were they important? Did everyone observe them in the same way?</p> <p>Assignment: Two page paper on the purity regulations to be written after the discussion forum.</p>
24 March	<p>Lecture: The Rule of God: God Present in Majesty and Mercy.</p> <p>Assignments: Watch the presentation of John Dominic Crossan. Jesus and Empire posted on Moodle. Write a two page response.</p>
31 March	<p>Lecture: Doing Theology by Story: Working with the Parable of the Mustard Seed.</p> <p>Discussion Forum: Discussion Forum: What did you learn from the reading of King posted on Moodle? What principles should guide our reading of the parables today?</p> <p>Assignment: Book Report Due (See below).</p>
7 April	<p>Lecture: Classifications of Miracles. Understanding the Healing Miracles Today.</p> <p>Assignments: (1) Two page response to the reading of Fox posted on Moodle. (2) 15 minute personal evaluation of course with professor. Times to be arranged.</p>
14 April	<p>Lecture: The Theme of Discipleship in Mark’s Gospel.</p> <p>Discussion Forum: Based on Questions Submitted by Students.</p> <p>Assignment: Prior to 14 April submit to professor three questions that you wish you could ask the evangelist who wrote the gospel of Mark. The professor will choose questions for the discussion forum.</p>
21 April	<p>Lecture: Matthew - The Teacher’s Gospel.</p> <p>Discussion Forum: The Beatitudes (Matthew 5.3-12)</p> <p>Assignment: 4 page paper on Matthew’s presentation of the disciple Peter.</p>
28 April	<p>Lecture: The Lucan Birth Narratives.</p> <p>Assignment: Begin work on major paper. See below.</p>
5 May	<p>Lecture: The Cross and Resurrection in the Synoptic Gospels.</p> <p>Assignment: Submit final paper.</p>

Requirements and Grades:

Participation in Discussion Forums: 25%: Students are expected to actively participate in the five discussion forums. The preparation requires previous reading and research into the theme of the discussion forum and the sharing of ideas and comments with other student 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. Please post your initial response by Wednesday of that week in order to allow time for on-going discussion by the end of the week.

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. They will 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. Due 31 March.

Written Assignments: 50%: There are seven written assignments due over the term. They are listed below along with the percent value of each assignment. Please remember that all written work is double spaced. You can consult the Rubric for Grading Papers in order to familiarize yourself with the standards that will be applied by the instructor.

1. March 10: Two page response the documentary “The Search for Jesus (Full)” found on Moodle. What did you learn? How would you evaluate the video? Value 5%
2. March 24: Two page paper on the purity regulations to be written after the discussion forum. Value 5%
3. March 31: Two page response to the presentation of John Dominic Crossan. Jesus and Empire posted on Moodle. Value 5%
4. April 7: Two page response to reading of Bethany McKinney Fox. Value 5%
5. April 12: Three questions you would like to be able to ask the evangelist that wrote the gospel of Mark. Value 5%
6. April 21: Four page paper on Matthew’s presentation of Peter the apostle. (Value 5%)
7. 5 May: Major Paper (eight pages): The major paper will concentrate on the missiology of Jesus. The specific question is: How does Jesus move toward wounded and marginalized people in order to heal and restore them? You have the choice of concentrating on one narrative (such as Jesus and Zacchaeus in Luke 19), one theme (such as Jesus and lepers), or to treat the question in a general way. You are expected to consult commentaries and other scholarly sources of information. The paper should conclude with your personal reflections on the testimony and witness of followers of Jesus in our day and context. Value 20%.

Assigned Reading Schedule

Students are expected to read the materials assigned for each class. In addition, the instructor has provided a guide for reading the synoptic gospels over the nine weeks of the course.

Date	Reading Assignments
March 10	Carroll. Chapter 2. Mark 1-8.
March 17	Carroll, Chapter 1. Mark 9-16
March 24	Posted reading from Horsley and Silberman. The Message and the Kingdom. Matthew 1-7
March 31	Posted reading from King. Seed Falling on Good Soil. Matthew 8-15
7 April	Posted reading from Fox. Disability and the Way of Jesus. Matthew 16-23
14 April	Carroll, Chapter 3. Matthew 24-28
21 April	Carroll, Chapter 4. Luke 1-8
28 April	Carroll, Chapter 5. Luke 9-16
5 May	Carroll, Chapter 7. Luke 17-24

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.
- Wright, N. T., *Jesus and the Victory of God.* Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.
- Witherington III, Ben. *The Jesus Quest. The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth. Edition 2.* Downers Grove: IVP, 1997

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.
- Prinzato, 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.

Attendance:

Students are expected to participate in the live synchronous lectures or, alternatively, to watch them after they are posted on Moodle.

Grade Summary:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	
A	Excellent
A-	
B+	
B	Good
B-	
C+	
C	Satisfactory
C-	
D+	
D	Minimal Pass
F	Failure

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.

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.

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.

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