

THEO2216/5316: Pauline Letters

保羅書信

Prof. IP, Hon Ho Alex

2:30pm-5:15pm (Tue) HYS G01

1. Course Overview:

This course aims at preparing students with the foundation and necessary backgrounds to further investigation of Pauline letters. It is not the purpose and possible neither of this course to provide detail exegesis nor interpretation on the whole Pauline corpus. Instead, this course will help students to build up a critical perspective or framework, knowledge including contexts and theological thoughts, and method, through socio-rhetorical interpretation, in analyzing Pauline letters. This course will mainly use Letter to Romans, Philippians and Philemon as the main illustrative texts.

**Important Note to Students:** The course material, PPT and readings, are mainly in English and be delivered in Cantonese during lecture. Chinese translation of PPT will be provided on some key ideas from time to time.

2. Learning outcome:

After the course, students are expected to be equipped with:

Knowledge:

- 2.1 have the overview on the interpretation history of Pauline letters and their emphasis, development and trend.
- 2.2 have an overview on the key concepts and theological motifs of Pauline letters.

Interpretation skills:

- 2.3 be equipped with the necessary interpretation skills, based on the socio-rhetorical interpretation, to develop their own interpretation on Pauline letters

## 3. List of Topics:

| Topic  | Content   |
|--|---|
| Problem in interpreting Pauline Letters                                    | Learning the complication of interpreting Paul from historical and theological perspectives.  |
| Basic concepts in interpreting Pauline Letters                             | Introducing various basic concepts in interpreting Paul including who Paul was, the context of Paul and the language Paul used, etc.        |
| Interpretation History of Pauline Letters                                  | Learning the development and differences in concerns and assumptions of various main stream interpretations beginning from the reformation. |
| Pauline Theological motifs   | Learning the key theological motifs scholars generated from the undisputed Pauline letters.   |
| Socio-rhetorical interpretation (SI)                                       | Learning the methodology of SI and how it could help us to bring the economic “texture” into biblical exegesis.                             |
| Detail analysis of selected passages from Romans, Philemon and Philippians | Selected passages will be analyzed using the method and concepts introduced in the course   |

## 4. Assessment scheme:

| Assessment(% Share):                        | Main Criteria:  |
|---|---|
| 1. Book report (30)                         | Assigned Book: Bassler, Jouette. <i>Navigating Paul</i> . Kentucky: John Knox Press, 2007.<br>OR Selected Topics on<br>盧龍光：筆戰羅馬 – 羅馬書之研究 (天道書樓：2010)  |
| 2. Textual analysis Group presentation (20) | A portfolio of a selected passage:<br>The portfolio should contain all relevant background information and analysis come across in the course related to the selected text. For example, the interpretation problem of the text, interpretation history of the text, contexts of the text as well as different theological motifs related to the text. Students are required to present their portfolio in the class. Summary of their key points with very brief explanation. 20 minutes for each group of 3 |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
|                     | students.  |
| 3. Final paper (50) | You may make use of the information in the portfolio to write a full exegetical paper on the same chosen passage in their portfolio or you can choose to discuss a specific topic concerning any aspect Pauline corpus. Suggested topic will be given later. The paper should reveal students' ability to incorporate all relevant information in the exegetical process based on a clear and solid method. In order to have a good exegesis, a clear and justified question is a must. Deadline: 11/12 (11:59 pm) |

Assessment policy: All works have to be submitted through the Blackboard.

Mark will be deducted unless approval granted before the deadline. 1 mark for each day for the first five days (1,2,3,4,5). 2 Marks will be deducted (7,9,11,13,15) after the fifth day till the tenth day. Deferred work will be accepted only with teacher's approval.

#### 4. Learning schedule

| Date  | Main Topics  | Selected Text analysis   |
|-------|--|--------------------------|
| 4/9   | Course Introduction + Problems in interpreting Paul  |                          |
| 11/9  | Basic concept in interpreting Pauline letters  | Romans 1                 |
| 18/9  | Interpretation history of Pauline letters  | Romans 3                 |
| 25/9  | Context of Paul (1): 2 <sup>nd</sup> temple Judaism and New Perspective of Paul                          | Romans 4                 |
| 2/10  | Context of Paul (2): Social World of Paul including the Political and Economic situation of Roman Empire | Romans 12                |
| 9/10  | Core Pauline theological motif 1 - Theology  | Romans 13                |
| 16/10 | Core Pauline theological motif 2 – Eschatology   | Philippians 1            |
| 23/10 | Core Pauline theological motif 3 - Christology   | Philippians 2            |
| 30/10 | Core Pauline theological motif 4 - Love  | Philemon                 |
| 6/11  | Interpretation Method: Socio-rhetorical Interpretation 2   | Portfolio presentation 1 |
| 13/11 | Letter to Philemon: Demonstration of SRI application   | Portfolio presentation 2 |
| 20/11 | No Lesson _ Prof. IP out of town for SBL annual meeting  |                          |
| 27/11 | Conclusion   | Portfolio                |

## 6. Learning activities

There are various learning activities in this course.

Individual work: A learning portfolio style of assessment to help students to construct their knowledge step by step.

Presentation and discussion: Portfolio presentation can help to stimulate the class knowledge as well as the awareness of the complex layers of Pauline letters.

## 7. Recommended booklist:

Major references of the course:

Bassler, Jouette. *Navigating Paul*. Kentucky: John Knox Press, 2007.

Charles B. Cousar. *The Letters of Paul*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.

Ip, Hon Ho. *A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of the Letter to Philemon in Light of the New Institutional Economics: An Exhortation to Transform from Master-Slave Economic Relationship to Brotherly Loving Relationship* in 2nd series of *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament (WUNT II)*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017.

Wright, N.T. *Paul and His Recent Interpreters*. London: SPCK, 2015.

Wright, N.T. *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*. London: SPCK, 2013.

Schnelle, Udo. *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology*. Michigan: Baker Academic, 2003.

----- . *Theology of the New Testament*. Michigan: Baker Academic, 2009.

Other references:

Charles B. Cousar. *Philippians and Philemon: A Commentary, NTL*. Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2009.

Church, F. F. "Rhetorical Structure and Design in Paul's Letter to Philemon." *Harvard Theological Review* 71 (1978):17-33.

Clarice J. Martin. "The Rhetorical Function of Commercial Language in Paul's Letter to Philemon," in *Persuasive Artistry*, ed. Duane F. Watson Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1991.

Cranfield, C. E. B. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975.

----- . *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979.

Dunn, James. *1 Corinthians*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995.

----- . *The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

- . *The Epistles to Colossians and Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1996.
- . *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 1998.
- . *Romans 9-16*, vol. 38b in *WBC*. Dallas: Word Incorporated, 1998.
- . *New Testament Theology in Dialogue*. London: SPCK, 1987.
- . *Unity and diversity in the New Testament: an Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*. London: SCM, 1990.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *First Corinthians*. Vol. 32 of *The Anchor Yale Bible*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
- . *Paul and his Theology: a Brief Sketch*. Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1989.
- . *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Vol. 33 of *The Anchor Bible*. New York: Doubleday, 1993.
- . *The Letter to Philemon*. Vol. 34C. *The Anchor Bible*. New York: Doubleday, 2000.
- Furnish, Paul. *The Love Command in the New Testament*. Tennessee: Abingdon, 1972.
- . *The Theology of the First Letter to the Corinthians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- . *Theology and Ethics in Paul*. Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.
- Horsley, Richard A. *1 Corinthians*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998.
- , ed. *Paul and the Roman imperial order*. Minneapolis: Trinity Press International, 2004.
- . *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*. Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997.
- Käsemann, Ernst. *Commentary on Romans*. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1980.
- Lo, Lung Kwong. *Paul's Purpose in Writing Paul: The Unbuilding of a Jewish and Gentile Christian Community in Rome, Jian Dao Dissertation Series*. (Hong Kong: Alliance Bible
- Dale, Martin. *New Testament History and Literature*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.
- . *Slavery as Salvation*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1982.
- Meeks, Wayne. *The First Urban Christians : the Social World of the Apostle Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.
- Robbins, Vernon. *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-rhetorical Interpretation*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996.
- . *The Invention of Christian Discourse*. Dorset: Deo, 2009.
- . *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology*. New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Sanders, E. P. *The Historical Figure of Jesus*. Allen Lane: Penguin, 1993.

- . *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*. London : SCM Press, 1985.
- . *Jesus and Judaism*. London: SCM Press, 1985.
- . *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: a Comparison of Patterns of Religion*. London : SCM Press, 1977.
- Wright, N. T. *Colossians and Philemon*, TNTC. Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1986.
- . *The climax of the covenant : Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991.
- . "Putting Paul Together Again," in *Pauline Theology*, vol. 1, ed. Jouette M. Bassler. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994, 203.

#### 8. Contact details:

Email: [dripromans2015@gmail.com](mailto:dripromans2015@gmail.com)

#### 9. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. In the case of group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized contents. For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide. The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submission. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic.

#### 10. Feedback for evaluation

Feedback and recommendation are welcome. Students are advised to either give feedback during lecture or through email. Response will be made promptly based on

the need of students.