



Syllabus:

SCS 105 Christian Scriptures

Overview

Dates

June 28-July 3, 2026

Monday – Friday, 10 am – 12 pm

Place

Via Zoom – link will be sent out from Jane McCarthy LUT

Sponsor

Unity of Gaithersburg

111 Central Ave

Gaithersburg, MD

Course Instructor

Name Jane McCarthy LUT

Course Description

This course explores the Gospels, letters, history (Book of Acts), and apocalyptic literature (Book of Revelation) that comprises what is more commonly known as the “New Testament” of the Judeo-Christian Bible. The student will develop a basic understanding of the Christian Scriptures’ meaning for the people to whom they were written. The Christian Scriptures are the response of early Christian writers to both the person and the message of Jesus Christ. In this course the Christian Scriptures will be examined as a testament about Jesus by early Christian communities.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Describe and explain the four major divisions of the Christian Scriptures
 - Gospels
 - Letters
 - History
 - Apocalyptic literature
- Explain the criteria process of canonization as it applies to the Christian Scriptures.
- Describe the view of Jesus that the writer of each of the four Gospels presents.
- Examine the emergence of the Christian church as an organization separate from Judaism.
- Describe the essential elements of the Apostle Paul’s theology.
- Describe the significance of the Book of Revelation.

Required Text/Readings

- Bible (New Revised Standard Version)
- Borg, Marcus J. *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time*. New York: HarperCollins, 1989

Recommended Text/Readings

- Chopra, Deepak, *The Third Jesus*, New York: Harmony Books, 2008
- Ehrman, Bart D., *How Jesus Became God*. New York: Harper One, 2014.
- Ehrman, Bart D., *Misquoting Jesus -The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why*, San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005.
- Pagels, Elaine, *The Gnostic Gospels*, New York: Random House, 1979
- Aslan, Reza, *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*, New York: Random House, 2013
- Willis, B and Meyer, M, *The Gnostic Bible*, Boston: Shambala, 2003.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Students will be expected to:

- Participate actively in each class session's activities.
- Complete reading assignments.
- Present a Christian Scripture reading with maieutic interpretation in class.
- Submit a reflection paper after the completion of the course of 200-500 words sharing your thoughts and feeling on what you have learned and how it may apply to your life. Discuss how, if at all, your view of the Christian Scriptures has evolved as a result of your study in this course.

Student Evaluation

- S (Satisfactory) met all requirements.
- I (Incomplete) waiting for final assignment.
- AU (Audit) not seeking credentialing (no assignments required)
- NC (No Credit) did not complete final assignment within three months of end of course and/or did not meet attendance requirements.

Ten credits will be granted when the student has successfully completed the class. Unless special permission is requested and granted, students are expected to attend all five two-hour classes.

Course Schedule and Assignments

The course is divided into ten units and will be covered in five two-hour sessions. Below are the topics for each unit along with assignments which are listed in the second hour for the next class. Students will complete a maieutic presentation and a reflection paper.

Unit	Topics	Assignments
Class 1 Hour 1	Introductions – Your New Testament background - What do the Christian Scriptures mean to you now? Pretest – go over during last class Go over syllabus and assignments	Watch first hour of PBS documentary <i>From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians</i> : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JN8FM1NCOS
Hour 2	Slides – Overview of New Testament Handouts: Source Theory of Gospels	Read Borg: Chapter 1(for class 2). Watch Bart Ehrman, <i>Jesus and the Historian</i> : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qd7Lanms-qY
Class 2 Hour 1	Your thoughts about PBS video and Ehrman video Slides - Borg Chapters 1; Ehrman; Jesus Seminar	Read: The Quest for the Historical Jesus
Hour 2	Handouts: Source Theory of the Gospels	Read Borg: Chapter 2 and 3 (for class 3)

	Group Discussions	Read for Group Discussion: <i>Jesus Never Healed Anybody</i> by J Jennings, <u>Science of Mind</u> , Jan 2019
Class 3 Hour 1	Your thoughts Borg and Jennings Slides – chapter 2 and 3, Borg	
Hour 2	Group Discussions	Read Borg: Chapter 9 - Paul (for class 4) Read; https://www.bartehrman.com/who-wrote-1-thessalonians/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=The%20World%20Jesus%20Lived%20In&utm_campaign=PBS%20Weekly%20Newsletter%202%2F8%2F2026%20%28Copy%29 Listen to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHFTJIMtOik Read: https://ehrmanblog.org/christmas-reflection-2018/
Class 4 Hour 1	Your thoughts about Peter, Paul and Mary Magdalene video Slides – Borg Chap 9 - Paul – <i>Reflections on Christmas 2018</i>	
Hour 2	Group Discussions	Read Borg: Chapter 10 (for class 5) Read: Gospel of Mary Read: Dead Sea Scrolls handout Read: New Findings on Dead Sea Scrolls https://apnews.com/article/new-dead-sea-scrolls-israel-19844d3eb208190914182e78d9d79aac
Class 5 Hour 1	Slides – Borg, Chapter 10 – Revelation Non-canonical texts - Dead Sea Scrolls and Nag Hammadi Library Gospel of Mary	
Hour 2	Group Discussions Go over Pre-test	Reflection paper due date