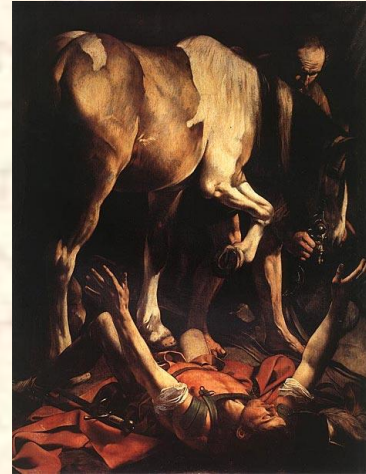




# The Letters of PAUL



RGB2708HF FALL 2016  
THURSDAY 7-9 PM  
SCOTT LEWIS S.J

**T**his course is an introduction to the ministry and theology of Paul the Apostle. We will examine persistent distortions of Paul's theological and pastoral teachings as well as the various images of Paul the man. Beginning with Paul's spiritual and theological roots, we will then focus on various theological and spiritual themes found in his authentic letters (1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans and Philippians) as well as those whose authenticity has been questioned (2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, Colossians). These themes include Paul's calling, the resurrection of Christ, the Parousia, apocalyptic eschatology, salvation, hope, love, justification, the spiritual life, and Israel. The meaning of Paul's teachings on Christian community life in contrast to Greco-Roman culture and Roman imperial ideology will be stressed.

## Goals of the course:

- Thorough understanding of how the letters are shaped by the threefold context of the letters - apocalyptic expectation, the struggle for self-identity of the Christian movement, and opposition to the Roman imperial ideology/theology
- A thorough understanding of the ad hoc and contingent nature of the letters and its implications for interpretation
- Familiarity with the general outline of Paul's life and ministry and the sequence and dating of his letters
- understanding of the new perspective in Pauline scholarship and its theological implications
- ability to exegete selected passages with regard to both context and rhetorical situation
- These goals will be demonstrated in the exegetical assignments and the final paper

## Course requirements:

- assigned texts and readings
- two short exegesis exercises (30% of final grade)
- One short book review of *In Search of Paul* (20% of final grade)

- one longer essay on a particular Pauline theme to be assigned (50% of final grade)

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All assignments and handouts will be posted on Blackboard. You will access it through your own [portal.utoronto.ca](http://portal.utoronto.ca) page with your UTORid. The text-only version of the weekly PowerPoint presentation will also be posted on this website.

**REQUIRED TEXTS: Available at Crux Book Store, Wycliffe College**

Wright, N.T.

Paul: In Fresh Perspective (Fortress, 2005)

Sanders, E.P

Paul: A Very Short Introduction (Oxford University Press, 2001)

Crossan, John Dominic &

Reed, Jonathan L.

In Search of Paul. How Jesus's Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom. A New Vision of Paul's Words & World. (HarperSanFrancisco, 2004)

**Course schedule (subject to minor modifications during the semester):**

**September 15**

Images of Paul through the ages. Augustine – Luther – Stendhal. Approaching Paul's letters in a balanced way. Various issues: How faithful is the theology of Paul to the gospel of Jesus? Does he proclaim Christ or is he the "founder of Christianity?" How consistent is Paul's theology? The conversion of Paul; a general chronology of his life. Read: Wright pp. 3-20; Crossan and Reed, pp. 1-12; 75-86; Sanders 1-18.

Read John Gager's article on [Paul's Contradictions: Can They Be Resolved?](#)

**September 22**

The role Roman imperial ideology in Paul's theology. The Parousia and the coming judgment; the importance of patient endurance. Read: Sanders pp. 33-43; I and II Thessalonians; I Corinthians 15; Wright pp. 40-58; Crossan and Reed, pp. 13-68.

**September 29**

Paul's spirituality: the cross, the Spirit, and the community. The values of Greco-Roman culture. In Christ Jesus there is no Greek or Jew, slave or free, male or female. Read: Crossan and Reed, pp. 69-123; Sanders pp. 26-33; Wright pp. 59-82.

**October 6 - First paper due! No late papers!**

Philippians: the *kenosis* of Christ; Christian humility. Philemon: relationships in the new age. Read: Philippians; Philemon. Read: Crossan and Reed, pp. 124-177.

**October 13**

*Paul's fractious and tumultuous church* – 1 Corinthians; the cross as God's wisdom; the nature of the community ethical life. Read: Sanders pp. 101-116; Wright pp. 21-39; Crossan and Reed, pp. 178-234. I Corinthians 1-6;

**October 20 Book review due!**

1 Corinthians continued: marriage and sexual ethics; love; religious experience and worship. Read: Crossan and Reed, pp. 235-291; Wright pp. 83-107; I Corinthians 7-16.

**November 3**

1 and 2 Corinthians continued. Communal worship and prayer. Paul and women. Read: Crossan and Reed, pp. 292-348 for this week and next.

**November 10**

II Corinthians. Spirituality of imperfection and weakness. Paul's boasting. Ambassadors of Christ. Read: II Corinthians.

**November 17 - Second paper due!**

*The just shall live by faith:* Galatians. The Law and Christian freedom; struggling for the universality of the gospel; primacy of faith. A new order. Is Galatians anti-Jewish? Read: Wright pp. 108-129; Sanders pp. 44-64; Crossan and Reed, pp. 349-403 for this week and next; Galatians.

**November 24**

*To shut every human mouth:* Romans. God's judgment of humanity; the origins of death; the role of Christ as the unifier; the tragedy of human sin and weakness; the inner struggle; the role of the spirit in liberating and reconciling the human person with God; justification by faith; the continuing place of Israel in salvation history; the law of love. Read: Sanders pp. 65-100; Crossan and Reed, pp. 404-414; Romans 1-8.

**December 1**

Romans continued – chapters 9-16.

**December 8**

*The cosmic Christ:* Colossians and Ephesians, witnesses to a Pauline tradition. Christ is the redeemer and reconciler of the cosmos, as well as the head of the church and ruler of the created order; aspects of the Christian life. Letters such as 1 and 2 Timothy; and Titus; are considered deutero-Pauline - they use the apostle's authority and teaching to organize the structures of authority in the communities and to counter heterodox teaching. Read: Wright pp. 158-174; Colossians; Ephesians.

**Final Paper Due Friday December 16, 2016.**