

RGB 5511  
Methods for the Study of Early Christian Institutions  
Regis College  
Toronto School of Theology  
Winter 2019  
Fridays, 9:00-11:00  
Classroom A

Instructor: Jonathan Bernier  
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*Course Description*

Christian thought and practice cannot be understood apart from Christian institutions. This course will consider a range of methodological and empirical matters related to Christianity's earliest institutional forms, and how such considerations are to be situated in relation to both theology and the social sciences. Special attention will be directed towards the Jewish origins of Christian institutions, especially the foundational role of the synagogue.

*Required Course Texts/Bibliography*

There are no required texts for this course. Readings from various works will be used. These will be on reserve at the Regis library.

*Evaluation*

Advanced Degree Students:

- (1) *Participation* (20%) – Participation in the regular activity of the class, including the reading of the required texts, is requisite for success in the course.
- (2) *Seminar Leadership* (20%) – Every student will be asked to read an additional monograph for one class, and be prepared to help lead discussion that day. As normally only student will be permitted to lead per week and per monograph, students are encouraged to consult with the professor as soon as possible regarding this aspect of the course. The required reading for each week is listed on the class schedule, under “Seminar Leadership.”
- (3) *Book Review* (20%) – Every student will be asked to write a review of the book that they read in preparation for helping to lead seminar. This review should focus upon its relevance for the course.
- (4) *Research Paper* (30%) – A substantial scholarly paper (15-20 pages) that addresses either an empirical or a methodological matter related to the subject matter of the course. Papers that aim to relate the subject matter of the course to the students’ area of concentration are particularly welcome. This can include thinking about how to work with some of the methodological matters discussed in the course to study situations other than that of ancient Judaism and Christianity.
- (5) *Research Presentation* (10%) – On the last day of class, students will ask to present upon their research paper.

*Late Policy*

Students are expected to hand in assignments on time. However, life happens and sometimes tardiness is unavoidable. As such, if a student must submit material late, she or he is asked to speak with the instructor with the aim of negotiating an agreement for late submission. Depending upon the particular situation, this could include a number of penalties. Failure to arrive at such an agreement will result in the assignment being marked out of half its course weight, thus effectively halving the marks received.

Course Schedule

Week	Reading	Class Leadership
Jan. 11	N/A	
Jan. 18	<p>Institution Criticism</p> <p>Anders Runesson, "Placing Paul: Institutional Structures and Theological Strategy in the World of Early Christ-Believers," <i>Svenska Exegetiska Årsbok</i> 80 (2015): 43-67.</p> <p>Neil Ormerod, <i>Re-Visioning the Church: An Experiment in Systematic-Historical Ecclesiology</i> (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 31-59.</p>	N/A
Jan. 25	<p>What was a Synagogue?</p> <p>Chris Keith, <i>Jesus Against the Scribal Elite: The Origins of the Conflict</i> (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2014), 17-37.</p> <p>Jordan Ryan, <i>The Role of the Synagogue in the Aims of Jesus</i> (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), 23-93.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read the entirety of Ryan, <i>Role of the Synagogue</i>.</p> <p>(N.B.: Prof. Ryan will be coming to Regis on March 15, to present at a Lonergan Graduate Seminar).</p>
Feb. 1	<p>Class and Status</p> <p>Roland Boer and Christina Petterson, <i>Time of Troubles: A New Economic Framework for Early Christianity</i> (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), 1-47.</p> <p>Ian Morris, foreword to Moses I. Finley, <i>The Ancient Economy</i> (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999 [1973]), ix-xxxvi.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read the entirety of Boer and Petterson, <i>Time of Troubles</i>, as well as Roland Boer, <i>The Sacred Economy of Ancient Israel</i> (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2015), 1-52.</p>
Feb. 8	<p>The Matter of Media</p> <p>James D.G. Dunn, "Altering the Default Setting: Re-envisioning the Early Transmission of the Jesus Tradition," <i>New Testament Studies</i> 49/2 (2003): 139-175.</p> <p>Birger Gerhardsson, "The Secret of the Transmission of the Unwritten Jesus Tradition," <i>New Testament Studies</i> 51/1 (2005): 1-18.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read Loveday Alexander, <i>Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Convention and Social Context in Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1993).</p>
Feb. 15	<p>The School of St. Matthew</p> <p>Birger Gerhardsson, <i>Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity</i> (Lund: Gleerup, 1961), 208-262.</p> <p>Krister Stendahl. <i>The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament</i>, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968 [1954]), 11-35.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read the entirety of Gerhardsson, <i>Memory and Manuscript</i>.</p>
Feb. 22	<p>Reading Week</p> <p>I am sure you will weep as you do not go to class this Friday</p>	

Mar. 1	<p>Hellenism and Education  Loveday Alexander, "Memory and Tradition in the Hellenistic Schools," in <i>Jesus in Memory: Traditions in Oral and Scribal Perspectives</i>, ed. Werner Kelber and Samuel Byrskog (Waco, TX: Baylor, 2009), 113-155.  Martin Hengel, <i>Hellenism and Judaism</i>, trans. John Bowden, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974 [1973]), 1:58-83.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read the entirety of Kelber and Byrskog, eds., <i>Jesus in Memory</i>.</p>
Mar. 8	<p>Charlotte Fonrobert, "The <i>Didascalia Apostolorum</i>: A Mishnah for the Disciples of Jesus," <i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i> 9/4 (2001): 483-509.  Lee I. Levine, <i>The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years</i>, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 476-478.  Annewies Van de Hoek, "The 'Catechetical' School of Early Alexandria and its Philonic Heritage," <i>Harvard Theological Review</i> 90/1 (1997): 59-87.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read the entirety of the <i>Didache</i> and the <i>Didascalia Apostolorum</i>.</p>
Mar. 15	<p>From Synagogue to Church  James Tunstead Burtchaell, <i>From Synagogue to Church: Public Services and Offices in the Earliest Christian Communities</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 272-338.  Ben F. Meyer, <i>The Early Christians: Their World Mission and Self-Discovery</i> (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1986), 53-83.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read the entirety of Meyer, <i>Early Christians</i>.</p>
Mar. 22	<p>The <i>Longue Durée</i>  Fernard Braudel, <i>On History</i>, trans. Sarah Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1980 [1969]), 25-54.  Neil Ormerod, <i>Re-Visioning the Church</i>, 175-208.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read Ormerod, <i>Re-Visioning the Church</i>, 1-241.</p>
Mar. 29	<p><i>Histoire événementielle</i>  Richard Bauckham, <i>Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony</i>, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017 [2006]), 290-318.  Bernard Lonergan, <i>Method in Theology</i>, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Didosky, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 14 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2017 [1972]), 121-138.  Eusebius, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i>, 2.16.</p>	<p>A student who intends to help lead this week should read the entirety of Eusebius, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i>, Books I-III.</p>
Apr. 5	<p style="text-align: center;">Research Presentation Day  Students are expected to present upon their paper topics.</p>	