

**Corinthian Letters BNT 332 (3hrs) Cincinnati Christian University 2019SP** Dr. J. A. Smith 244-8621  
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**Rationale:** Paul's epistles form a major section of the New Testament corpus and Paul's thought has been one of the most significant factors in the shaping of both good and bad Christian theology/practice. Paul's epistles comprise the most specific, extended treatments of the theological/ethical issues that play themselves out in the Church. Therefore, those who seek to relate the message and authority of the Bible to our culture in a responsible fashion need to be able to understand the content and context of Paul's epistolary efforts. The Corinthian Letters bear a unique set of ideas and differ from Paul's other epistles due to the far ranging set of issues Paul confronts in the course of his correspondence. These letters thus bear a theological framework that is particularly effective in the biblical framing of many issues we encounter in our contemporary Church. Above, all the Corinthians Letters construct the premier New Testament ethic of Love, which establishes the effectiveness of the Church's testimony in our world today and always.

**Description:** A study of 1 & 2 Corinthians that emphasizes their socio-historical situations in the context of Paul's mission, and their potential significance for issues confronting the contemporary church. Due to the amount of material to be covered, the class will not typically deal with every verse in both letters. Different strategies approach the text variously. Thus the class may focus on only one of the letters, or it may focus on themes in both. The class is thus to be viewed as the platform from which to observe and study Paul's interaction with the Corinthians Christians. (Prerequisite: BSNT 230)

**Objectives:** 1. To be able to give an account of the social and historical context in which the issues

found in the letters take place. 2. To be able to rehearse the theological/ethical themes and points of argumentation in

the letters and their significance for Paul's context and for ours. 3. To be able to interrogate contemporary issues and circumstance from the perspective of

the Corinthian Letters. 4. To be able to use effective hermeneutical and exegetical principles and procedures to

assess and commentate upon Pauline epistles.

**Major Learning Experiences and Course requirements** 1. Lecture and discussion

comprise the bulk of the in-class experience. 2. As preparation, each student is required to read through the text of 1 Corinthians

covered that day in class and submit a hand-written copy of the letter as a part of the final assignments.

**Reading Assignments** 3. Loader: Read each chapter, compose a one page summary of each, also include as the

first section of the assignment a 1-2 page summary of the book's contribution to understanding sexuality in the ancient/biblical and contemporary worlds. 4. Gorman: Read the book and *thoughtfully/concisely* write a 3–5 page application of his work (apply to general Christian life, or life within the Church as a leader, etc.).

**Final Research Paper (more details given in class)** 1. This assignment is

your capstone project for the class, so you must use it to

demonstrate your familiarity with the course material and the ideas presented in class.

Specifically, in this class we describe how to approach Paul's letters, the Corinthian

correspondence in particular, and the relationship of the ideas within that correspondence

to the contemporary church. Your paper must demonstrate that you understand the things

one must consider when we read Paul's letters/Corinthians and demonstrate how they are

able to have meaning in our present contexts. 2. The paper must demonstrate clear use of the hermeneutical and exegetical principles

and processes described in class. 3. Must be very well researched, clearly composed,

organized and heavily edited 4. Will conform to conventions of style (MLA, SBL) and

grammar (grammatical license may always be taken in the name of clarity or in the pursuit of a literary agenda). Clarity is more important than anything else. Always try to be

creative. 5. Will be 10–12 pages in length. 6. Will include a judiciously composed

bibliography with a reasonable number of sources that are demonstrably understood, appropriately employed; it will avoid electronic resources.

**Documentary** Task: (1) produce a 5–7 min documentary, (2) upload it to youtube, (3)

tweet a link #CorinthianLetters19. 1. The documentary is to be on the same topic on which you wrote your research paper,

and should be a more popular explanation and application of your research. 2. The

production of the video can be done for free in any number of free online sites, or

on your own personal device. 3. Assessment of the

documentary will be based on the following:

a. Communicative clarity of your ideas (are you making your point?). b.

Relevance of the application (even background research can be considered

“relevant,” but the idea here is that you “connect” your research to a contemporary lay

person). c. How interesting it is (did you just read your notes to a video, or have you tried to engage your audience?)

**How to submit Assignments:** All assignments must be uploaded to the course page on Canvas except for the handwritten copy of 1 Corinthians. Students bear the responsibility of making sure the right assignment is up in the right place on Canvas.

### **Class Policies**

**Grading** I grade two things: your understanding of what you are writing/talking about and the professionalism of the materials submitted. To do well, you must study well and know what you are talking about, but in addition to that you must be able to handle that material professionally. That means submitting material on time and in the manner prescribed (in this case via Canvas), and that submitted items are thoughtfully composed, well-edited and meet the standards learned in College English courses and meet the style guide standards of either MLA, SBL, or APA.

1. Loader 15% (11 Feb) 2. Gorman 15% ( 25 Feb) 3. Final research project 30% (15 April) 4. Documentary 15% (29 April) 5. Final exam 25% (Exam Week) 6. Handwritten copy of 1 Corinthians Pass/Fail Class (18 March)

**Attendance and class participation** (for the policy on this class's attendance, see the student handbook)

**Due Dates** The due date is the last date work is accepted. Since all work may be submitted early, no late work is accepted. All work must be completed in order to pass the course. Work due on dates when students are away representing CCU, is still due on the same day, such students should simply arrange to submit the work earlier.

**Classroom Expectations** 1. Students are expected to demonstrate general professionalism. This would

include proper attendance and being sure to alert the professor prior to expected absences, meaningful contribution to classroom discussion, conduct conducive to class development, being respectful of other students, timeliness of submitted work, ability to follow instructions, respect for the context.

2. No phones are allowed to be visible in the classroom, and thus may not be checked, or used in any way while students are in the classroom, and this includes use of the phone to read biblical text. All phones must be switched to silent and preferably set to DND. Breaching this policy results at least in immediate grade reduction of one letter grade from final grade.
3. It is recommended that you hand write your notes for well-demonstrated, scientific reasons. Nevertheless students may take notes on their computers, but no computer device may be used for any reason other than specifically taking notes or accessing pre-approved resources, such as Accordance. Breaching this policy results at least in immediate grade reduction of one letter grade from final grade.

**Required Texts:** 1. Gorman, M. J. *Becoming the Gospel: Paul, Participation, and Mission* (Eerdmans

2015) 2. William Loader, *Sexuality in the New Testament* (W/JK 2010)

**Recommended Commentaries:** Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* NICNT (Eerdmans, 1987). Anthony Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Eerdmans, 2000) \_\_\_\_\_ **NB: The professor reserves the right to change the course requirements to accommodate needs of students.**