

RELI 350

**STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY:
PAUL, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIAN**



El Greco, St. Paul 1608-1614 Oil on canvas 97 x 77 cm Museo del Greco, Toledo

SCHOOL OF ART HISTORY, CLASSICS & RELIGIOUS STUDIES

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Trimester 2, 2007

RELI 350

STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: *PAUL, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIAN*

Course co-ordinator: *Dr Chris Marshall*
St John's Associate Professor of Christian Theology
HU 115, tel: 463 7421

Where and when: *Lectures: HU 220*
Wednesday 04:10 –06:00pm
Tutorials: Times and place to be advised

Course tutor: *Dr Tim McKenzie*

The programme Administrator, Aliko Kalliabetos, is in room HU 318 (ext 5299, email: aliki.kalliabetos@vuw.ac.nz). **Notices regarding the course or any information on changes will be posted on the notice board outside the programme administrator's office.**

Office Hours: The main office is open Monday - Friday, 9.30- 12:00 and 2:30 -4:30. You can arrange to meet with Dr Marshall by appointment.

Course Outline

1. **Course description:** An introduction to the life, thought and writings of Paul, early Christianity's most formative theological thinker. The course will examine Paul's conversion and its impact on his Jewish world view, the hermeneutical challenges associated with making sense of Paul's writings, and key themes in Paul's theological thought. The course will include case studies on Paul's interactions with the church at Rome and, to a lesser extent, the church at Corinth. The course will engage throughout with key debates in contemporary Pauline studies.
2. **Course content:** The course consists of six units, which will be covered in lectures, tutorials, assignments, and in your own background reading:
 1. *Paul: Convert and Apostle*
 - Paul's pre-Christian background and career
 - Paul's encounter with Christ
 - Paul's missionary career
 - Paul's legacy in Christian theology

2. *Reading Paul: The Hermeneutical Challenge*

- Letter-writing and orality in antiquity
- Guidelines for reading Paul's letters
- The sources, shape and character of Paul's theology
- The centre of Paul's theology
- Paul's use of scripture

3. *Case Study: Paul's Interactions with the Roman Church*

- The towering importance of Romans for Christian theology
- Difficulties in reading Romans
- Old and new perspectives on Paul
- Paul and the human condition

4. *Paul's Message of Salvation in Christ*

- The Saving Event: Christ-crucified and risen
- Justice, justification and faith
- New life in the Spirit, and "the Corinthian problem"
- The shape of Pauline spirituality

5. *Paul in Practice*

- Paul: Patron saint of women?
- Eschatological ethics
- The task of Christian moral discernment
- Paul, social radical or social conservative?

6. *Paul and the Future*

- Paul and Israel
- The resurrection of the dead
- New creation
- Universalism in Paul?

3. **Course objectives:** By the end of the course students should be able to:

- explain the nature of Paul's relationship to contemporary Jewish, Hellenistic and Christian contexts
- identify the characteristic features of Paul's theology
- appreciate the special complexities entailed in reading and interpreting Pauline literature
- understand major currents in current Pauline research
- reflect critically on the relevance of Paul's life and thought for religious life and interfaith engagement today.

4. **Assessment:** The course is internally assessed by means of two written assignments, tutorial assignments and a class test, weighted as follows:

- One 2000 word assignment (20%): Due 6 August
- One 2800 word assignment (30%): Due 24 September
- Tutorial assignments (10%)
- Final class test (40%), held in class time on 10 October.

The mandatory course requirements are attendance at 80% of tutorials and attaining at least 50% for course assessment.

5. **Required texts:** Tutorial discussions will be based on material supplied in the course reader and either of the following two short books:

N.T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said* (Oxford: Lion, 1997)

N.T. Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005)

The first book above is available at Manna Books, 185 Willis Street. The second should be available at the university bookshop.

The course Reader is available from Students Notes at a cost of approximately \$30.00.

Students should have access to a copy of the New Testament, preferably the NRSV translation (available online at [www. http://bible.oremus.org/](http://bible.oremus.org/))

6. **Additional Bibliography:** Additional references for assignments and background reading are attached at the end of the course guide. One extremely useful reference work is:

G.F. Hawthorne, R.P. Martin and D.C. Reid (eds), *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters* (Leicester: IVP, 1993).

There are many fine theologies of Paul available. Especially recommended is:

James D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

A very much shorter and clear summary of Paul's thought is:

J. Ziesler, *Pauline Christianity* (Oxford; OUP, 1990).

For a feminist reading of Paul, see:

S. Hack Polaski, *A Feminist Introduction to Paul* (St Louis, Mis: Chalice Press, 2005).

For an excellent survey of Christian theology in general, see:

Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology – An Introduction* (London: Blackwell, 2001).

Students should check out the Trinity Newman Collection in the Religious Studies library, HU 320, and the library in Ramsey House, 8 Kelburn Parade.

7. **Tutorials:** Attendance at 80% of tutorials is mandatory. Tutorials deal with material complementary to the lecture programme, and provide an opportunity to discuss critical issues with others in the class.
8. **Work-load (recommendation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences):** For 300-level 24 points one trimester courses, the working party on workloads and assessments recommends 18 hours per week for preparation, reading and writing in addition to attendance at lectures and tutorials.
9. **Aegrotat regulations** apply to internally assessed courses. Students who are ill, or who have difficult personal circumstances may be having problems completing assessment. The aegrotat provisions apply assessment which falls within the last three weeks of teaching or the final examination period, including preparation time for final tests and examinations.

Aegrotat provisions are detailed in section 4.5 of the Assessment Statute (2007 Calendar, p. 96) and also on p. 23 of the 2006 Assessment Handbook. Students can refer to the University's website for further information:
<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/timetables/aegrotat.aspx>.

Application forms and information pamphlets should be obtained from the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office (MY 411) or the Manager, Student & Academic Services (MY 410).

10. **General University policies and statutes** Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at www.vuw.ac.nz.
11. **Student and staff conduct** The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at:
www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct
 The Policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:
www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct

12 *Academic grievances* If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievance Policy which is published on the VUW website at:
www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances

13 *Students with Impairments* (see Appendix 3 of the Assessment Handbook)
The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the course coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building:
telephone: 463-6070 email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the School Office or DSS.

14 *Student Support* Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contacts are **Dr Allison Kirkman, Murphy Building, room 407** and **Dr Stuart Brock, Murphy Building, room 312**. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Māori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.
Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme This programme offers:

- Academic mentoring for all Māori & Pacific students at all levels of undergraduate study for the faculties of Commerce & Administration and Humanities & Social Sciences. Contact Manaaki-Pihipihinga-Programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 6015 to register for Humanities & Social Science mentoring and 463 8977 to register for mentoring for Commerce and Administration courses
- Postgraduate support network for the above faculties, which links students into all of the post grad activities and workshops on campus and networking opportunities
- Pacific Support Coordinator who can assist Pacific students with transitional issues, disseminate useful information and provide any assistance needed to help students achieve. Contact; Pacific-Support-Coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone 463 5842.

Manaaki Pihipihinga is located at: 14 Kelburn Parade, back court yard, Room 109 D (for Humanities mentoring & some first year Commerce mentoring) or Room 210 level 2 west wing railway station Pipitea (commerce mentoring space). Māori Studies mentoring is done at the marae.

15. **Student Services** In addition, the Student Services Group email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

16. **Taping of lectures:** All students in the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies are welcome to use audio-tapes to record lectures. If you want to do this, please see your lecturer, tutor or the relevant programme administrator and complete a disclaimer form which advises of copyright and other relevant issues.
17. **Class representatives:** Class representatives are elected in the first week or two of term. They are supported by the VUW Students' Association, and have a variety of roles, including assistance with grievances and student feedback to staff and VUWSA. Contact details for your class rep are available from the Religious Studies Administrator.
18. **Student Learning Support Services:** A range of workshops, drop-ins and other assistance is provided by SLSS, covering such things as study techniques, essay writing, exam preparation and note taking skills. They are at Level 0 Kirk Wing, Hunter Courtyard.
19. **Evaluation:** This course will be evaluated by **UTDC**.

Lecture Programme

TOPIC 1: Paul's Background, Life And Legacy

11 July *Paul: convert and apostle*

18 July *Sources of Paul's theology*

TOPIC 2: Reading Paul: The Hermeneutical Challenge

25 July *Paul the letter writer: interpreting Paul's letters*

1 August *Paul the theological thinker: synthesising Paul's theology*

TOPIC 3: Paul's Interactions with the Church in Rome: A Case Study

8 August *Romans: Paul's magnum opus*

15 August *Paul and the human condition*

MID TRIMESTER BREAK (20 AUGUST –2 SEPTEMBER 2007)

TOPIC 4: Paul's Message of Salvation in Christ

5 September *Christ-crucified and the response of faith*

12 September *GUEST LECTURE: Dr TIM McKENZIE*

TOPIC 5: Paul in Practice

19 September *New life in the Spirit*

26 September *Paul: Patron saint of women?*

TOPIC 6: Paul and the Future

3 October *Paul's ethics: living in the overlap*

CLASS TEST:

10 October *Final test*

Tutorial Programme

Week 1:

No tutorials are held this week. Sign up for tutorial groups

Week 2 (16-20 July)

Topic: *Paul and Jesus*

Focus: Paul's new sense of identity after his conversion. Paul's knowledge of, and dependence on, the historical Jesus and his teaching.

Week 3 (23 - 27 July)

Topic: *Interpreting Paul's letters*

Focus: Considerations to bear in mind in interpreting Paul's letters. Methods for exploring the letters.

Week 4 (30 July – 3 August)

Topic: *Interpreting Paul's theology*

Focus: In what sense is Paul a theological thinker? What are the central tenets of his thought?

Week 5 (6 – 10 August)

Topic: *Introduction to Romans*

Focus: Why did Paul write to the Romans? How does his argument unfold?

Week 6 (13 – 17 August)

Topic: *Paul's View of the Human Person*

Focus: Paul's understanding of the various faculties of the human person, and the "plight" of humanity for which a "solution" is needed,

MID TRIMESTER BREAK (20 AUGUST – 2 SEPTEMBER 2006)

Week 7 (3 - 7 September)**Topic:** *Righteousness by faith***Focus:** Paul's understanding of how salvation is achieved by Christ and appropriated by believers. The meaning of God's righteousness and justification by faith.**Week 8 (10 - 14 September)****Topic:** *Pauline spirituality***Focus:** Paul's understanding of the Holy Spirit, both in the church and in the life of the individual.**Week 9 (17 - 21 September) NO TUTORIAL****Week 10 (24 – 28 September)****Topic:** *Paul and women***Focus:** Gender equity and inequity in Paul.**Week 11 (1- 5 October)****Topic:** *Pauline Ethics***Focus:** The framework and concrete application of Paul's ethical instruction**Week 12 (8 - 12 October) *No tutorial***

Essays and Assignments

1. **Essays** must be placed in the locked essay box located near the programme administrator's office (HU 318) and students must date and sign the essay register when submitting an essay. **No responsibility will be taken for work pushed under doors, or for which there is no record.** Students should keep a copy of all their work until it is returned.
2. **Penalties for late essays / assignments:**
 - 2 percent per 24 hours will be deducted for late essays.
 - essays without an extension submitted more than two weeks late will not be accepted for assessment

Essays submitted late due to medical reasons must be given to the programme administrator accompanied by a doctor's certificate.

3. **Academic integrity and plagiarism**
Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning,
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course,
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

4. **Tutorial assignments:** Students must complete SIX tutorial assessments and participate in leading ONE tutorial discussion. The assessments will take the form of weekly quizzes (or equivalent) based on the assigned reading and lecture material.

The marks for all assessments will be averaged out to calculate the overall 10% grade for this component of the course assessment.

5. **ASSIGNMENT TOPICS** (*Learning objectives 1-5*)

ESSAY 1 (2000 words max): Due 6 August, 2007

Choose ONE of the following questions: *Note: You are not expected to do a detailed exegesis of the texts mentioned. Instead try to identify broad themes or principles in the texts that are relevant to answering the question. Always bear in mind the "occasional" or situated nature of Paul's letters: his comments must be viewed in the context of the specific context he is addressing. Also, if you do question 1 or 3, remember that there may be differences between the way Luke views Paul and the way Paul views himself.*

- (1) *Paul's attitude to other religions:* What do we learn from Luke's account of Paul's preaching in Athens (Acts 17:16-34) and Paul's argument in Romans 1:18-32 about his attitude to other religions? Does his perspective have any relevance to interfaith engagement today?
- (2) *Paul, sex and marriage:* What is Paul's teaching on sex, marriage, singleness and divorce in 1 Corinthians 7? To what extent is this chapter an adequate, helpful or relevant guide for relationship counselling today?
- (3) *Paul and politics:* What do we learn from Luke's account of Paul's imprisonment in Philippi (Acts 16:16-40) and Paul's teaching in Romans 13:1-7 about his understanding of Christian political responsibility?
- (4) *Paul and church discipline:* What do we learn from the Corinthian correspondence (1 Cor 5-6; 2 Cor 2, 7) about Paul's attitude to congregational discipline and dispute resolution?
- (5) *Paul and possessions:* What do we learn from Acts 20:17-38 and 2 Cor 8-9 about Paul's attitudes towards material possessions?

ESSAY 2 (2800 words max): Due 24 September, 2007. Choose ONE of the following topics (OR an approved alternative):

1. “Romans is thoroughly determined by a concrete historical situation” (N. Elliott). What do we know about the origins, recent history, and character of the Christian community in Rome to which Paul writes? How does this knowledge help us read Romans appropriately?
 2. Write an essay on the meaning and role of the “principalities and powers” in Paul’s writings.
 3. “When Paul looks at Christ he sees both an obedient man and a gracious God. What sort of unity these two can form is a further question that has troubled theologians from the beginning” (C.K. Barrett). In what ways does Paul affirm both the humanity and the deity of Christ, and what role do each play in his theology?
 4. “The clearest witness to the lordship of Jesus Christ consists in human life in which his image is reproduced” (C.K. Barrett). What role does the example, spirit and teaching of Jesus play in the ethics of Paul?
 5. Write an essay on the intention behind and significance of Paul’s collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem.
 6. Why do several modern scholars construe Paul’s theology as counter-imperial? To what extent is this a departure from traditional ways of understanding Paul’s political orientation?
7. **Criteria for Assessment of Essay Work:** Your essays will be evaluated on the following criteria (in descending order of importance):
- **Coverage of Relevant Content:** your essay should cover the essential content thoroughly, and reflect awareness of the range of key issues relevant to the subject being discussed. The issues most pertinent to answering the essay question must receive adequate depth of treatment.
 - **Integration of Ideas and Development of Main Line of Argument:** an essay should have a beginning, a middle and an end, and sustain a main line of argument throughout. This will require you to assimilate your reading, synthesise the key points, and develop an overall argument that addresses the question asked in a logical and persuasive manner. The essay structure should reflect the particular questions asked in the essay topic.
 - **Critical Reflection:** an essay is essentially an exercise in independent, critical thinking. The essence of critical reflection is the ability to

evaluate, in a reasoned and thoughtful manner, the assumptions, perspectives and arguments of others. It entails moving beyond an immediate subjective reaction to something (e.g., “I really like what Stanton said” or “Jones is too liberal”) to giving objective reasons for why a particular line of argument is to be accepted, rejected or qualified at certain points (e.g., “Wright’s perspective is helpful and illuminating because...”, or “Wright’s argument is open to criticism at the following points...”, or “Jones’s approach is stimulating and helpful, but his underlying assumptions are questionable, for the following reasons”). In short, critical reflection is a matter of having sound reasons for the position you adopt or the evaluation you offer.

- ***Extent and Quality of Reading and Research:*** a 200 level essay should be based on thorough research; the sources used should, where possible, reflect a variety of perspectives on the topic under discussion. The bibliography should include at least 7-10 items.
- ***Style and Presentation:*** your essay should be clearly written, grammatically sound, and well presented. Clarity and accuracy enhance the appeal of any essay. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU FOLLOW CONSISTENT FOOTNOTING AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CONVENTIONS.
- ***Effective Footnoting:*** in essays, subsidiary material should be printed in footnotes (or endnotes). Footnotes should be used (i) to cite the sources from which you have derived key facts, opinions or quotations; (ii) to add comments, explanations, examples, or references that are relevant to your argument but which would interrupt its flow if included in the main text; and (iii) to document the differing views of other authors on the point being made and the sources where these can be followed up.

8. Final Class Test (*Learning objectives 1-5*)

The final test will be held on the last session of the lecture programme. It will consist of both short answer questions and essay questions. The short answer questions will cover the “facts” and terminology covered in the course, and the essay questions will allow the opportunity for in-depth reflection on selected themes and topics.