



SHORT SYLLABUS

BI522 The Gospels

Instructor: Michael Morrison, Ph.D.

(Instructor may be contacted through GCS course website)

Course description

This course examines the four canonical Gospels to see what each of these four portraits of Jesus tells us. Students will explore the historical background of Jesus, the literary and theological relationships between the Gospels, and the major themes each one presents. Students will describe how the teachings of Jesus can be used in our very different circumstances today.

In order to do well in this course, students are expected to put in at least 12 hours of study each week.

Required textbooks

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Read them in a translation that sticks close to the Greek original, such as the ESV, NIV, NET or NRSV. Do not use a paraphrase.

Strauss, Mark L. *Four Portraits, One Jesus: An Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2020. ISBN: [978-0310528678](https://www.zondervan.com/9780310528678). Price for a new book: \$32. Kindle, \$41. 1st edition OK. The link goes to [bookfinder.com](https://www.bookfinder.com), where you may find lower prices.

Requirements and assignments

1. **The textbook.** Read about 3 hours each week.
2. **Several lessons** will be posted each Monday for the first ten weeks.
3. **Eight forum discussions**
4. **Quizzes** every week

5. One exegetical paper, done in three parts:

- a. First, a 5-page paper on the historical and literary setting of the passage.
- b. Second, a 5-page paper analyzing key words and the original message.
- c. Last, a 4-page paper discussing how the passage is relevant now.

Assignments, estimated hours, and grade weighting

Assignment	Hours	Percentage of grade
Reading lessons and website documents	30	
Reading discussions and making responses	8	20
Studying for and taking quizzes	12	10
Reading the textbook	31	
Writing first two papers	50	50
Writing third paper	8	20
Total – about 12 hours each week	139	100