

NT 2XP3/3XP3: Philippians: To Live is Christ

McMaster Divinity College
May 24 – June 9
Tuesday, Thursday: 6pm-9pm
(NT 2XP3: 6pm-9:30pm)
Summer 2016

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Course Description

The epistle of Philippians is often considered one of the most positive and joyful letters in the Pauline corpus. This is something of a surprise, since Paul wrote this letter during an imprisonment to encourage a congregation that appears to have been experiencing some discord and division. Instead of issuing stern warnings, Paul urges his readers to experience oneness and joy in Christ for themselves, as they strive to live in a manner worthy of the Gospel. Paul demonstrates by way of his own example that real joy and real unity are only possible in Christ. As modern readers, we can learn from this epistle to pursue a harmony and happiness in Christ that transcends even the most difficult circumstances.

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This course is an exegetical and interpretive study of Paul's epistle to the Philippians. Following a two-step hermeneutical approach, we will look closely at the text and learn to understand and articulate its original historical meanings. We will then reflect on the contemporary relevance of Philippians. Elements to be studied include all passages in the epistles from exegetical and theological perspectives.

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This course is an intermediate course in Greek as well as exegetical study of Philippians. By working closely with the Greek text, students will learn how to better understand the letter to the Philippians. Elements to be studied include all passages in the epistles from exegetical, grammatical, translational and theological perspectives.

Because this course needs to cover both English and Greek exegesis, the Greek component is structured around translation assignments, online discussions and extended class time (**9–9:30pm**). Students are also encouraged to visit the instructor during office hour (or by appointment) to discuss any questions raised in the forum and/or the assignments. An online forum will be set up on Avenue to Learn to facilitate a collaborative learning environment.

Course Objectives

The following goals are set for the student:

Knowing:

- To become familiar with basic outline and the text of Philippians for use in teaching and preaching ministry
- To gain an understanding of exegetical and theological issues involving the letter to the Philippians and to be able to identify the relevant text(s)
- To know more advanced concepts for study of the Greek of the NT and exegetical methods that aid in the interpretation of individual passages

Being:

- To become sensitive to the historical and culture environment of the early church
- To appreciate the value of being able to exegete the text for use in ministry
- To allow Philippians to motivate, form and transform faith, worship and Christian way of life

Doing:

- To explain key topics and major exegetical issues related to Philippians
- To access resources that engage with Philippians in a careful and critical manner
- To develop and practice responsible exegetical methods that draw upon the varied resources available (grammars, commentaries, bible software, etc.)

Course Prerequisites**English Exegesis**

NT 1C03 and NT 1A03, or equivalent.

Greek Exegesis

NT 1G03 and NT 1H03, or equivalent. This course satisfies the Greek exegesis requirement, and should be the first exegesis course for those who have completed one year of Greek. This course may be used to make up admissions deficiencies for M.A. and Ph.D. students.

Textbook and Materials

Students are required to possess the following:

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1. Silva, Moisés. *Philippians*. BECNT. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005.
2. Supplementary Readings: Provided by the instructor on A2L (To be distributed).

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1. A standard edition of the Greek New Testament, such as the Nestle-Aland (26th–28th ed.), UBS (3rd–4th ed.) or Westcott-Hort.
2. Porter, Stanley E. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).
3. A suitable Greek-English lexicon (see bibliography below).
4. O'Brien, Peter T. *The Epistle to the Philippians*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.

Students are recommended to have access to the following:

1. Porter, Reed, and O'Donnell, *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek* (Grand Rapids, MI Eerdmans, 2010).
2. A parsing tool, such as Tyndale house STEP bible (www.stepbible.org), biblewebapp.org, Bibleworks, Logos, Accordance, etc.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore:

Address: 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1

Phone: 416.620.2934; Fax: 416.622.2308; Email: books@readon.ca

Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Requirements

Students are required to complete all of the following assignments. All assignments should be uploaded in PDF format to the designated Avenue to Learn (A2L) course dropbox. No unfinished assignments are permitted. See below for late submission policy.

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1. Reflection Paper (15%). Each student needs to briefly describe how they understand the relevance of Philippians for ministry, theology, and discipleship during the first week of class. This exercise will be repeated at the end of the semester, with emphasis falling on how the student's understanding has been changed and refined. The initial reflection paper should be under 600 words and is due on **May 26**. Students are strongly recommended to finish it before the first day of class. The second paper should be under 1200 words and is due with the final paper (**July 7**). Please note that, while this is an assignment of personal reflection, the idea included in them should be well-organized and clearly presented.

2. Chapter and Teaching Outline (40%). For each class with assigned passages (May 26 - June 7), students are required to familiarize themselves with the biblical text with the help of a commentary (Silva, or other commentary approved by the instructor). This assignment consists of three parts. (1) Students will write a summary of the main idea(s) of the text, including insights from a careful reading of the text with the help of a commentary. (2) Students will also describe the major exegetical issue(s) regarding the passage, and summarize the main interpretive options. Citations of sources are expected and should follow the MDC style guidelines. The descriptions in the first two sections must be well organized and clearly presented in full paragraphs with proper references. (3) Each student will need to come up with either a teaching outline (e.g. for a Sunday School lesson) or a sermon outline based on the assigned text. This last part of the assignment can be in bullet points, provided that they are easy to follow and well organized. Each teaching/sermon outline must include at least one main idea, supportive arguments and discussion of contemporary significance. The entire assignment should be roughly 1000–1500 words. It is due at **4pm on class day** (See the class schedule below).
3. Thematic Paper (15%). Each Student will select, from the following list, a theme that is prominent in Philippians and write a paper roughly 1500-2000 words (with at least 5 non-dictionary sources). The paper must be grounded in passages from Philippians, and it must incorporate the following elements: (1) a discussion of the meaning and significance of the theme in Paul’s historical context; (2) a discussion of how Paul’s message engaged with his (first-century) readers and how this engagement can provide insights for contemporary engagement with modern cultural contexts; and (3) a discussion of the practical applicability of the theme to a specific modern context. The thematic paper is due on **July 7th**. Possible themes: Joy, Suffering, Fellowship, Unity, Humility, Salvation, Christology, Leadership, etc.
4. Sermon or Teaching Plan (30%). Students are asked to write an exegetical sermon (3000-3500 words) based on a passage in Philippians. Paper Break Down: (1000-1500 words exegetical comment; 2000-2500 words sermon).
 - a. The assignment is consisted of two parts. The first part is a 1000-1500 exegetical comment on the selected passage (with at least 10 sources). Students are expected to be able to engage in exegetical analysis of a particular passage. Succinct comment should be made on particular exegetical issues and hermeneutical decisions regarding the selected passage. This part of the assignment has to follow the MDC style guide.
 - b. The second part of the assignment is the teaching/preaching component. It should be equivalent to a 20-30 minute presentation. It should be written in a spoken style, intended to be deliver on the pulpit or in a classroom setting. This part does not have to follow the style guide, but reference to illustrations should be included.

- c. The teaching project may include a teaching session for a Bible/small group study, a Sunday School course. Note that a teaching project also needs to have an application section.
 - d. A short summary of the real/imagined target audience (demographic background and preaching/teaching setting) as well as a brief description of your homiletic decision are needed.
 - e. Since this course is not a homiletics course, the main purpose of this assignment is not to assess each student's ability to write a good sermon. However, students are expected to be able to work under sound homiletic and teaching principles.
 - f. The purpose of this assignment is to assess the student's ability to (1) interpret the text of the NT with a theologically and biblically sound hermeneutical method and, (2) apply the message to discipleship, community and ministry formation and presenting it in the contemporary contexts.
- g. Student Presentations:** Students will give a short presentation of their preliminary ideas for the sermon/teaching ministry project during the last class (June 9th). The presentation should be in the form of a sermonette (10 mins max), summarizing the major exegetical issues of the passage and their intended main application/implication(s) of the sermon. Each presentation is followed by a short discussion, which allow students to gain **constructive** criticism in order to improve their work. The goal of this presentation is to facilitate a collaborative learning environment in which instructor and students are engaged in active learning together.

Due Date: **July 7th** (Late paper will be deducted 2% per day)

Grading Summary:

Reflection Paper	15%
Chapter Outline	40%
Thematic Paper	15%
<u>Sermon or Teaching Plan</u>	<u>30%</u>
Total	100%

NT 2XP31. Chapter and Teaching Outline (28%).

For the requirement of the chapter and teaching outline, see above. Summary of main exegetical issues *must* include discussion regarding the Greek text.

2. Translation and Exegetical Notes (36%).

Students will examine an assigned passage (see schedule below) each week and then prepare both exegetical notes and an English translation. A template for the weekly exegetical assignment will be sent to all students before the first week of class. These assignments are due on or before 10:00am on **the day** of our scheduled meeting day, according to the schedule below.

3. Vocabulary Quizzes (12%).

Students will write three brief vocabulary quizzes on the dates listed in the schedule below on A2L. The “Special Vocabulary” for Philippians from Kubo’s *A Reader’s Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975) will be included on every quiz, but each quiz will also cover a specific section of the Greek vocabulary included in Porter, Reed and O’Donnell. The relevant vocabulary lists will be uploaded to the course page on A2L, with the relevant sections highlighted. Students must complete all three quizzes.

4. Exam (24%).

Students must complete a final examination, which is scheduled for July 7th (time to be determined). This exam will test each student’s familiarity with the Greek language and with Philippians. Students will be asked a variety of grammatical questions and will be required to translate two passages from the epistle. For those students who cannot come to the college on the exam date, a proctor must be appointed (see above regarding the vocabulary quizzes).

Grading Summary:

Chapter Outlines	28%
Translation Assignments	36%
Vocabulary Quizzes	12%
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>24%</u>
Total	100%

Schedule

Date	Assignment Due	Topic	Reading
May 24		Introductory Issues, Setting, Purpose of the Letter	Silva, pp. 1–36 (3XP3) O'Brien, pp. 1–39 (2XP3)
May 26	Outline 1	Phil 1	A2L
May 31	Outline 2	Phil 2	A2L
Jun 2	Outline 3	Phil 3	A2L
Jun 7	Outline 4	Phil 4	A2L
Jun 9	NT 3XP3 Paper Presentation	Main Themes, Theology and Eschatology of Philippians	A2L
Jul 7	NT 3XP3 Exegetical Paper Reflection Paper		

Schedule (NT 2XP3)

Date	Assignment/Quiz	Meeting and Topics	Reading
May 24		Introduction to Greek Syntax	<i>Idioms</i> , Chs. 1, 10
May 26	Outline 1	Greek Clause Components	Chs. 11, 20
May 31	Outline 2	Greek Clause Structure I	Chs. 12, 14–16
Jun 2	Outline 3 Translation 1: Phil 1:12–26 Vocabulary Quiz 1	Greek Clause Structure II	Chs. 3–9
Jun 7	Outline 4	Word Study, NT Lexicography	Chs. 2, 13, 18, 19
Jun 9		Exam Review	Chs. 17, 21
Jun 16	Translation 2: Phil 1:27–2:11 Vocabulary Quiz 2		
Jun 30	Translation 3: Phil 3:1–16 Vocabulary Quiz 3		
Jul 7	Final Exam		

Interaction with the Instructor

The instructor will be available via email, Skype and the Avenue to Learn discussion forum. Students are expected to come to all classes. Extra meetings can be arranged if a student needs to meet outside of office hours (Tuesday, 2-4pm). It is recommended that the student participate regularly in the online discussion forum so as to facilitate the development of a collaborative learning community.

Late Submission Policy

All assignments must be submitted on or before the date due, unless other arrangements are made in advance. A late penalty of 2% per day will be applied to all assignments submitted after the deadline, unless an extension has been obtained from the instructor prior to the deadline. Assignments will not be accepted if more than seven days late.

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <https://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.

Gender Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses https://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdc_styleguide.pdf. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Note Bene

This syllabus is the property of McMaster Divinity College and is prepared with currently available information. MDC reserves the right to make changes and revisions.

References**1. Greek-English Lexicons**

Bauer, Walter, Frederick W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

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Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996. [Available Online @ www.tlg.uci.edu/lsg/]

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Thayer, J.H., *A Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament*. New York: American Book Company, 1897.

2. Commentaries on the Philippians

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- Cousar, Charles B. *Philippians and Philemon: A Commentary*. NTL. Louisville, Kentucky: WJK, 2009.
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- Thielman, Frank S. *Philippians*. NIVAC. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.
- Thurston, Bonnie B. and Judith M. Ryan. *Philippians & Philemon*. Sacra Pagina. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009.
- Witherington, Ben. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011.