



## **NT 5100 English Bible: Hebrews**

(NOTE: This draft syllabus is subject to change until the first day of class).

Spring, 2019

January 18-19; February 15-16; March 29-30; April 26-27  
Extension Site: Xenos Christian Fellowship/Columbus, Ohio

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### **Course Description:**

#### **Catalog Description**

Demonstration of an inductive Bible study method and treatment of the special teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews based on the English text. May be repeated for credit as book studied changes. Not for credit in the MA. NT or MA. OT programs. Three hours.

#### **Dynamic Description**

The Letter to the Hebrews is a foundational New Testament document that remains relevant to the life of the believer and the church. While clearly built on apostolic doctrine, Hebrews is also one of the New Testament's most theologically creative compositions. This is evident in the way the author uses the Old Testament, in the way he develops his Christology (especially around the priestly ministry of Jesus), and in the writer's powerful exhortations to a struggling first-century church. In this course, we will study the text inductively and examine the letter's theology. We will also explore the epistle's continuing significance for today's church and especially for our life of worship.

### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Exhibit a familiarity with the introductory material on Hebrews.
2. Summarize the literary structure and outline of the epistle;
3. Explain both the theological and hortatory content of Hebrews;
4. Demonstrate an awareness of the rich use Hebrews makes of the Old Testament;
5. Demonstrate an ability to apply the teachings of Hebrews to personal life as well as to the life and mission of the church.

## COURSE TEXTS

### *The following books are required:*

- Guthrie, George H. *Hebrews the NIV Application Commentary from Biblical Text-- to Contemporary Life*. NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998. [ISBN: 0-310-493900].
- A standard translation of the Bible, such as NIV/TNIV, RSV/NRSV, ESV, NAS, KJV, HCSB.

### *The following will also be helpful:*

- Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. Rev. ed. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. [ISBN: 0802825141]
- Hagner, Donald A. *Encountering the Book of Hebrews: An Exposition*. Encountering Biblical Studies. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002. [ISBN: 978-0801025808]
- Lincoln, Andrew. *Hebrews: A Guide*. London: T & T Clark, 2006. [ISBN: 978-0567040329]

## Course Requirements:

1. **Readings (10%).** Students should complete the readings assigned in advance of each weekend session. Students will need to submit a record of their readings on the class Moodle site.
2. **Class Participation (10%).** Each student is expected to engage with course materials and contribute as fully as possible to class discussions and activities.
3. **Exposition Paper (25%).** Students are to select a unit from the course working outline on Hebrews (see below) and write a three- to four-page paper (900–1200 words) using Guthrie and two additional commentaries for the chosen passage. (For acceptable commentaries, see Guthrie, 41–42, or check with the professor). The paper should cover the following:
  - how the passage fits within the context and teaching of Hebrews
  - the main interpretive or theological issues
  - the significance of the OT and/or cultural and background material
  - how the unit informs a life of Christian worship
  - contemporary ethical applications.

Additionally, students are to compare Guthrie's discussion of the passage with the two other chosen commentaries. Students should summarize how each commentator handles the main interpretive or theological issues and assess the merits or shortcomings of each commentary. The paper is due by midnight on March 22 and is to be submitted on the Moodle site.

4. **Sermon/Lesson Outline (25%).** Students are to select a unit from the course working outline on Hebrews (see below) and prepare an outline appropriate for a sermon, Sunday school class, or church Bible study. The outline should indicate the major interpretive and

theological issues in the passage, the significance of the OT in the passage, possible illustrations that would make the passage clearer, possible applications, and potential questions that could spur further discussion and reflection. The outline should be appropriate for the target audience (which should be indicated at the beginning of the paper) and should reflect sensitivity to how the passage could be applied for contemporary listeners. The outline should reflect the student's knowledge of the theology and content of Hebrews and give evidence of adequate commentary use. The sermon outline should be no less than 4 pages and no more than 7 pages. The final outline is due on Moodle by midnight April 19.

- 5. Final Exam (25%).** The example will cover the more important points of the course and will be taken online May 1-3.

**Course Evaluation:** A (95-100%); A- (90-94%); B+ (88-89%); B (82-87%); B- (80-81%); C+ (78-79%); C (72-76%); C- (70-71%); D+ (68-69%); D (62-67%); D- (60-61%); F (0-59%).

#### **Course Policies:**

- *Continuity of Instruction Plan* – In the event of a crisis that prevents this course from meeting in person, students will receive instructions via email for continuing the course online.
- *Cheating and Plagiarism* – These infractions will be taken quite seriously and are open to the full penalty of the university's policies. Endeavour always to work in accordance with the "Academic Integrity" statement and policies in the TEDS Academic Catalog and Academic Handbook.

#### **Course Calendar**

(Subject to revision under the instructor's discretion)

#### **Session 1: Introduction to the Epistle to the Hebrews**

Session Preparation: Read the Epistle to the Hebrews through at least once in a major translation. Read the commentary by George Guthrie, pages 17-65.

Jan 18: Introduction to course, and to Hebrews

Jan 19: Introduction to Hebrews, and Hebrews 1:1-4.

#### **Session 2: Hebrews, Part I. Let Us Respond Well to God's Message in His Son**

Session Preparation: Read Hebrews 1:1-4:16 at least twice. Read the commentary by George Guthrie, pages 66-184.

Feb 15: Hebrews 1:1-2:4

Feb 16: Hebrews 2:5-18; 3:1-4:16

### Session 3: Hebrews, Part II. Let Us Appropriate Jesus as Our Great High Priest

Session Preparation: Read Hebrews 5:1-10:18 at least twice. Read the commentary by George Guthrie, pages 185-339.

March 29: Hebrews 4:14-5:10; 5:11-6:20

March 30: Hebrews 7:1-28; 8:1-13; 9:1-10:18

### Session 4: Hebrews, Part III. Let us Follow Jesus Together in Faithful Worship

Session Preparation: Read Hebrews 10:19-13:25 at least twice. Read the commentary by George Guthrie, pages 340-452.

August 19: Hebrews 10:19-39

August 20: Hebrews 11:1-12:2; 12:3-29; 13:1-25

## Working Outline<sup>i</sup> A Theology of Hebrews: The Call to Worship Dan Ebert

### Overview

Part I The Call to Worship and the Person of Jesus (1:1-4:16)

Part II The Call to Worship through the Better Ministry of Jesus (4:11-10:25)

Part III The Call to Worship in the Way of Jesus (10:19-13:25)

### Detailed Outline

Introduction: God Has Spoken to Us in the Son (1:1-4)

Part I The Call to Worship and the Person of Jesus (1:1-4:16)

- A. Worship and The Deity of the Son /The Son is Superior to the Angels (1:4-14) – note overlap with 1:1-4. Focus of our attention is turned to Heavenly Comparison with Angels and is in the Realm of Worship (e.g. 1:6 and focus on throne, right hand, etc. )
- B. **Warning and Exhortation I** (2:1-4) *Let's Hold on to the Message Jesus Gave Us.*
- C. Transition: In the Incarnation the Superior Son Becomes Lower than the Angels (2:5-9)
- D. Worship and The Humanity of the Son/The Incarnation Enables the Son to Become our High Priest (2:10-18). Note: Jesus leads us to and in worship (e.g. 2:12)
- E. **Warning and Exhortation II** (3:1-4:13) *Let's Respond to Jesus' Voice and Enter the Rest.*
  1. *Jesus, the Supreme Example of a Faithful Son* (3:1-6)
  2. *The Negative Example of Those Who Fell Through Faithlessness* (3:7-19).  
*[context of Psalm 95 as a Call to Worship, see Psalm 95:1-7a, quote begins in v.7b]*
  3. Transition: *From the Negative Example to Our Opportunity of Rest* (4:1-2).
  4. *The Promise of Worship-Rest for Those Who Are Faithful* (4:3-10)
5. **Let's Enter the Rest of Worship Considering the Power of God's Word and Jesus our Priest** (4:11-16) **FIRST THEMATIC HIGHPOINT**

**Part II The Call to Worship through the Better Ministry of Jesus (4:11-10:25) - note overlap, 4:11-16**

***Worship and the Priesthood of Jesus***

- A. Introduction 1 - Incarnate Son Appointed After the Order of Melchizedek (5:1-10)
- B. ***Warning and Exhortation III (5:11-6:20) Let's press on to maturity.***
  - 1. *The Present Problem with the Hearers (5:11-6:3)*
  - 2. *The Serious Danger of Falling Away (6:4-8)*
  - 3. *Mitigation: The Author's Confidence in and Desire for the Hearers (6:9-12)*
  - 4. *God's Promise Our Basis of Hope (6:13-20).*
- C. The Superiority of Jesus our Melchizedekian High Priest (7:1-28)

***Worship and the New Covenant of/through Jesus***

- A. Transition: We Have Such a High Priest Who is a Minister in Heaven (8:1-2)
- B. Introduction 2 - The Superior Ministry of the Heavenly High Priest (8:3-6)
- C. The Superiority of the New Covenant (8:7-13)

***Worship and the Sacrifice of Jesus***

- A. Introduction 3 – Sacrificial Pattern of Old Covenant Worship: Place, Blood, Effect (9:1-10)
- B. Christ's Superior Blood (9:13-22)
- C. A Sacrifice in Heaven (9:23-28)
- D. An Eternal Sacrifice (10:1-18)

**E. Let's Draw Near to God in Worship and Mutual Service Considering Christ's Great Priestly Work (10:19-25) SECOND THEMATIC HIGHPOINT**

**Part III The Call to Worship in the Way of Jesus (10:19-13:25) - note overlap, 10:19-25**

- A. ***Warning and Exhortation IV (10:26-39) Let us persevere in faith.***
  - 1. *The Danger of Rejecting God's Truth and God's Son (10:26-31)*
  - 2. *Remember Your Past Experience (10:32-34)*
  - 3. *Endure to Receive the Promise (10:35-39)*
- B. *The Way of Jesus/ Let's Run the Race (11:1-12:24)*
  - 1. *Considering the Examples of the OT Faithful (11:1-40)*
  - 2. *Rejecting Sin and Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus, the Supreme Example of Faithfulness (12:1-2).*
  - 3. *Enduring Discipline as Children (12:3-17)*
  - 4. *Enjoying the Blessings of the New Covenant (12:18-24)*
- C. ***Warning V (12:25-29) Let's not reject God's Word but thankfully worship & serve him.***
- D. *Exhortations for a Life of Service and Worship (13:1-19)*
- E. *Benediction for Worship (13:20-21)*
- F. *Conclusion (13:22-25)*

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<sup>i</sup> A synthesis of George Guthrie's and Cynthia Westfall's approaches to the structure of Hebrews, with various modifications, helping to focus on the theme of worship.