



ST ANDREW'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE (SATC)

COURSE NAME: ENGLISH BIBLE I - A STUDY OF THE GOSPELS

COURSE CODE: BS201

COURSE CREDIT: 1

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a basic course in understanding the four gospels of the New Testament – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In many other ways, the gospels bear a similarity to one another. In each of them the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are clearly documented and expressed.

However, each of the gospels portrays the life and ministry of Jesus from a slightly different perspective and contains elements not found in the others. *Matthew*, for example, strives to show that Jesus is the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies, the Promised One of God. *Mark* focuses on the active ministry of Jesus as the Son of Man. *Luke* emphasizes that Jesus came to bring salvation to the lost. *John* drives home the divine truth that Jesus is the Word of God, the incarnation himself.

A Pre-requisite is BS100 or equivalent.

AIM:

- To help students understand the content of the Four Gospels of the New Testament
- To help students understand the literary, historical, social, and theological contexts of the Gospels. .
- To enable students to carefully compare the portraits of Jesus, their messages for ancient Christians, and their relevance for modern readers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will be able to:

- Develop a framework of understanding for interpreting and applying the canonical Gospels.
- Become more familiar with the Gospels' description of the earthly ministry and teaching of Jesus Christ,
- Become familiar with the basic structure, themes, message, and terminology of each Gospel.
- Understand the nature and purpose of the Gospels -- what they are, and what they are not.
- Study the Gospels critically in light of their social, historical, literary, and religious contexts.
- Understand and apply the theology of the Gospels in ministry.

COURSE CONTENT:

Students will have the opportunity to study each of the gospels in the following areas:

Date, Authorship and Historical Context

Literary Structure and Contents

Characteristics and Themes

A general survey and critique of historical critical investigation of each Gospel.

An overview of the content and theology of Jesus' actions and teaching.

An examination of the character and special emphases of each canonical Gospel.



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COURSE TEXTS:

Barclay, W. (1980) *The Gospels and Acts, Volume One.*, London: SCM Press Ltd.
Hunter, A.M. (1966). *Introducing the New Testament.* London: SCM Press Ltd.
Nickel, K. F. (1980). *The Synoptic Gospels: An introduction.* Westminster: John Knox Press.
The Bible
The Interpreter's Bible. (1950). Abingdon, Cokesbury: United Methodist Publishing.
The Interpreter's dictionary of the Bible (2006). Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.
Any Biblical commentary (Reformed) on Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Lectures
Discussion
Group work
Student presentations

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

Reading Assignments	10%
Attendance and Class Participation	10%
Group Work	30%
Final Paper	50%
TOTAL	100%

Daily Reading Assignments: All readings should be done before class, so that students can contribute intelligently to the discussions. Students should be prepared daily to summarize the content of all primary (ancient) texts and the highlights of the secondary (modern) readings. **(10%)**

Regular Attendance and Active Participation in Class Lectures and Discussions: On-time daily attendance is required. Preparation and participation by all students is essential. Always be ready to summarize readings, take notes, ask questions, give answers, evaluate presentations, challenge your own and others' assumptions (respectfully!). **(10%)**

Periodic Student Presentations: Small groups of students will carefully study particular biblical passages, to lead the class discussions and/or present their interpretations in some creative way (dramatic skits, film clips, music, art, etc.). **Brief Written Exercises:** There will be a few very short papers (2 pages), due at the beginning of the class. Instructions for each exercise will be available well in advance. **(30%)**

Final Project or Paper: Everyone will choose a topic (subject to the lecturer's approval) to research in depth and to present in some academically appropriate form. There is great flexibility here; students can write an individual research paper (8-10 pages), or work with a small group on a significant creative project. There will be three phases: a one-page proposal, a full rough draft, and the final project/paper. **(50%)**