

THE TEXT AND CANON OF SCRIPTURE

Spring 2010

C. E. Hill

Office hours: TBA

Course Description

A study of the text and canon of scripture, focusing critically on seminal writings from antiquity and on contemporary research. The course will consist of readings, discussions, some lectures, and student presentations of research.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None 	
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Students will prepare and orally deliver a paper on an aspect of the textual criticism or the canon of the New Testament.
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	Some of the content of Scripture is studied in detail in terms of its text and the manuscripts which represent it. The whole subject of canon is concerned with Scripture.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Stress on the doctrine of Scripture as expressed in the WCF and other Reformed confessional documents.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	Although one could be a complete louse and be an expert on technical matters of canon and textual criticism, a proper approach and appropriation of this material will of great advantage to the ongoing process of the believer's sanctification.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Understanding the origins of the text and the formation of the Biblical canon is foundational to an informed Christian world and life view.

Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Moderate	What could be more winsomely Reformed than the study of textual criticism?
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	No preaching techniques are offered here, only part of the essential knowledge on which sound preaching is based.
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	No study of worship forms or construction of a worship service – only some foundational knowledge for the preacher of God’s Word.
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Minimal	The shepherd should be better equipped to guard and feed the sheep through successful completion of this course.
Church/ World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	This course should help to keep denominational and wider ecumenical activity on the right foundation.

Required Texts

Aland, K. and B. Aland, *The Text of the New Testament. An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*

Metzger, Bruce, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance*

Parker, David C., *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and their Texts*

Ridderbos, Herman, *Redemptive History and the New Testament Scriptures* (Biblical and Theological Studies)

Recommended Texts

Beckwith, Roger, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church: And Its Background in Early Judaism*

Elliott, J. K., *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation*

Evans, Craig, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to The Background Literature*

_____, and Emmanuel Tov, eds, *Exploring the Origins of the Bible: Canon Formation in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective* (Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology)

Holmes, Michael, ed., *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*

McDonald, Lee M., *The Biblical Canon*

_____, and J. A. Sanders, eds., *The Canon Debate*

Classroom Procedure

Generally, at least half of the semester's meetings will consist of the discussion of readings, with the occasional lecture/soliloquy by the instructor. The last several classes will consist of seminar presentations by the students, presenting papers, approximately 40 minutes in length, and discussion of those papers.

Assignments and Grading

COMPONENT	% OF GRADE
Statement of reading	10
Classroom participation	10
Text Criticism quiz	20
Canon quiz	20
Research paper	
Classroom presentation	20
Final paper	<u>20</u>
	100

The Research Paper is to be on some aspect of the textual criticism of the Bible or the canon of the Bible. The particular topic must be approved by the instructor. This could be the study of a selected text critical problem, the study of a particular manuscript or group of manuscripts, the study of the witness of a Father or a text, a synthetic study of a theme or topic in the history of the canon, focusing on Scripture or on post-canonical history. Alternatively, it may be a critical interaction with a modern author on the text or canon of Scripture. Students will be assigned a one-hour slot in class in which to present and then defend their papers. All other students will submit a grade for this presentation (to be considered by the instructor). The papers may then be rewritten and will be submitted at the end of the semester.

The Text Criticism and Canon Quizzes will be over the readings.