GREEK 1

INTRO STUFF

PROFESSOR

* Dr. Bob Cara (technically, Dr. Robert J. Cara)

* Class formality will approximate a Presbytery meeting. I will call you “Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. Smith,” and you will call me “Dr. Cara.”

* Office Hours

* No class on final Friday.

* For Greek 2 ...

CLASS PARTICIPATION

* As opposed to my non-language courses, you may ask questions at any time—that have to do with grammar.

STUDY HOURS

* In “theory,” all RTS courses are designed for two hours of work outside of class for every hour in classroom. Many courses do not reach this two-hour criteria; however, language courses usually exceed it.

TEXTBOOKS

* WD Mounce, Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar and Workbook
  * Is new and is taking world by storm.
  * The new “Machen.”
  * Acknowledges that seminary students do not know English grammar.
  * Has made quasi break through on reducing chart memorization.
  * Will be textbook for both Greek I and II.
  * Flash-card computer program matched to textbook.
  * Answers for Workbook are at www.teknia.com.

* UBS Greek NT and Dictionary, 4th rev. ed. OR Nestle-Aland’s Novum Testamentum Graece, 27th ed. which is also found in Biblia Sacra. If one gets NA, must also get Newman’s A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament.
* Greek text of NA 26, NA 27, UBS 3, UBS 4 are all the same.

* Apparatuses are different. Read intros for more info.
* Any Greek text is fine for class except interlinear or Greek-English!
* Note excellent index of OT/NT quotes and allusions for both UBS and NA.

* Greek flash cards
  
  * Put memory clues on back.
  * You can buy blank cards.

* Computer programs

  * Parsons’ “Greek Tutor” is good, clear, and inexpensive.
    * Includes explanations, parsing exercises, audio Greek pronunciations, etc.

  * Hermeneutika’s “Bible Works” is a must for seminary students as you will use it for all classes.
    * One can get by w/out it in Greek 1 and 2, but it is a virtual necessity for Greek Exegesis.

* M. Silva’s *God, Language and Scripture: Reading the Bible in the Light of General Linguistics* (now included in *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*).

  * Silva, Cara’s prof at WTS, is a leading evangelical scholar in NT and a world-known linguistic scholar.
  * This book is included in this course because it is one less thing to cover in Greek Exegesis.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

* Non-Grade

1. Bring Greek NT w/ dictionary and Mounce’s *Grammar* to every class.

2. Read chapters of *Grammar* textbook *after* we cover them in class.

3. Do exercises in *Workbook* *after* we cover appropriate chapters in class.

4. Bring and sing *Trinity Psalter*. Lose points if you don’t.

* Grading
1. Quizzes.

* Quizzes will be given everyday (except for test days) and will cover the same material that is in the appropriate Workbook exercises. One quiz will be dropped.

* Quizzes are cumulative as are any tests in a language.
* “90% rule” — 90% correct on a quiz = 100%.
* 30% of total grade.

2. Tests.

* Three cumulative tests.
  Test 1 = including chap 9
  Test 2 = including chap 14
  Test 3 = including chap 20
* NO 90% rule.
* Each test is 20% of total grade. Hence, tests = 60% of total grade.

3. After reading God, Language, and Scripture, submit a four-page paper (typed, double-spaced) that includes:

* A statement that you read 100% of book, including the appendix (eye on every word).
* Assume you are presenting a short lecture to adult SS teachers. Chose one topic in Silva’s book that you think would be useful for them to know. Present the lecture (four-page paper) in language that they would understand. (Using your own examples will impress me more than using Silva’s.)
* Due on the Wed following the final. Lateness will be severely penalized (32.2f/s/s).
* 10% of total grade.

NOTE

* At RTS-C, the faculty does not follow the catalog where it states that “a grade of C or better is required to continue in the sequence of language courses” (p. 38 of 2001-2003 RTS Catalog). The RTS-C faculty approved that only a D- is required to continue.

WHY STUDY GREEK?

* First, a caution:

  * If the Bible were originally written in English, who would be a better exegete—you or average high-school English teacher who rarely read the Bible? Hence, knowing Greek is not everything.
* For the Glory of God?

  * However, since time is limited, Is it a good use of time compared to other subjects one could study?

* It is the Word of God!

  * Autographa are inerrant and infallible. Translations are the Word of God as they are derivative of the original.

* Studying any language makes one more aware of:

  * how language works; hence, one becomes a better exegete even for English Bible, e.g., etymologizing abuse, genitive use (“of”).
  
  * differences and similarities in cultures as you are forced to get out of your English culture.
  
  * “Nothing so successfully discourages slovenliness in the use of language as the practice of translation....It is a discipline of exactness ... which is now growing as rare as considerate manners. Drill in exact translation is an excellent way of disposing the mind against looseness and exaggeration” (Richard Weaver, Ideas Have Consequences, 167).

* A minister of the Word occasionally needs to make important decisions in Presbytery which relate to original languages.

  * e.g., women deacons, neuter God language

  * Cannot use best commentaries.

  * Cannot do an original word study.

* To a degree, one develops a sensitivity to the text that cannot be conveyed by English translations.

  * e.g., emphasis, parallels, cognates (justification / righteousness, overcomes/victory)
    
  * “Importance of Greek cannot be taught but must be caught.”

* Knowing Greek grammar nails down exegetical options that are not always clear in English translations.
* e.g., Eph 2:8, “this,” Rom 1:17 “Righteousness from/of God,” 1 John 3:6 “cannot sin”

* Cara’s proverb: “Grammar gives the options, context/theology gives the answer.”

* Because Greek participle usage shows subordinate clauses better than English, it is easier to follow the main thrust of complicated sentences (e.g., Eph 1:3-14, Col 2:11-15).

* The LXX is an invaluable tool when evaluating NT quotations of OT and useful for interpreting MT.

* One’s ability to translate and understand why translations differ aides exegesis and gives confidence to teacher that what one is saying is really in text.

* The Reformed tradition has always emphasized knowing the original languages. This is as opposed to the RC tradition with its emphasis on the Vulgate and Church Tradition as authoritative (hence the Reformed slogan—sola Scriptura) AND as opposed to other Protestant traditions with their in practice lower view of the entire Bible (hence the Reformed slogan—“the whole counsel of God”). See WCF 1.8.

* Cara’s bottom line to why study Greek at RTS ...

  * Gives confidence to minister of the Word that what one is teaching / preaching is truly the W of G.

### Brief Overview of Text Criticism and Relationship to Apparatus

* Textual criticism is the science (art) of determining the autographic text. Also called “lower criticism.” The more one knows about the TC background of the NT, the more confidence one has in it. In Greek 2, students will read a book related to these issues.

* From the autographic manuscripts, copies were made and distributed. There were significantly more copies made and preserved of the Bible than any other ancient book.

  * E.g., there are 5487 extant Greek manuscripts (full and partial). For many of Aristotle’s books, there are less than 10.

  * Of course, the copies many times included slight errors. The copies agree ≈ 99%.

  * With all the manuscripts, we do have all the autographic text, but unfortunately we have “101%” of it —i.e., we are not sure which words are not original.
* Most of the errors are obvious copying mistakes, which are easily corrected. In some places, there is uncertainty as to the autographa although there is no place that the difference between the options makes a theological difference.

* Theologically, inerrancy of the Bible concerns the autographa. Translations are the written Word of God as they are accurately derivative of the autographa (WCF 1.8).

* The UBS apparatus only looks at “major” (relatively so) problem texts. In these places, it gives a full counting of Greek and other language readings, and it gives a letter “grade” as to its confidence that the above text is the autographa.

* The N/A apparatus footnotes every place where at least one Greek manuscript does not agree. However, it does not give a full description (i.e., does not include most non-Greek readings), and it does not give a letter grade. The N/A is considered the scholar’s apparatus (“man-Bible”), and the UBS, the “boy-Bible.”

* Concerning the family text debate, the world of scholarship can be put in two camps: (1) The most common view is called “eclectic” text. The Alexandrian text type is best with help of other types except for the Byzantine, which is considered a later mixture of the other types. The UBS/NA, RSV, NASB, NIV, ESV and virtually everything else follow this view. A conservative nuance of this view is to believe that occasionally the Byz has the only correct reading. (2) The minor view is called Byzantine, also called Received Text, Textus Receptus, and Majority Text. The Byzantine text is considered best with no help from others. This is the text used by KJV and NKJV.

* The main arguments for the eclectic text are (1) no Byz text is extant before 300 AD, and (2) the Byz has conflated readings. The main arguments for the Byz text are (1) its uniformity and (2) its numerical superiority post-300 AD.

* Please note that the differences between the four main text types are slight and affects no major or minor doctrine of Scripture, e.g., Rom 9:32, “works (of the law).”

* Cara’s view is similar to the conservative nuance of the eclectic view, although Cara is even more conservative as he does not believe in Q, which affects the synoptics.