Syllabus and Outline for 1 Corinthians course Spring 2016

**Professor**  Dr. Paul D Gardner, email paulg@christchurchatlanta.org and phone 404-605-0505

**Purpose of Course: (Course Objectives)**

1) to provide tools for students to perform their own in depth studies of any Pauline epistle with a view to careful interpretation of its content for the modern era.

2) to provide a serious textual and theological analysis of 1 Corinthians

3) to excite the desire to teach and preach this epistle to others

To this end students will:

a) examine critically and evaluate the major approaches to this epistle by a variety of commentators;

b) learn about the religious, social, and cultural situation of 1st century Corinth, and see how this helps amplify our understanding of the issues Paul addressed in the epistle;

c) examine Paul’s theology as it is revealed in this epistle;

   This will include some detailed examination of such matters as Paul’s attention to Christ as (covenant) Lord of all, to the centrality of Christ crucified in all ethics and all church matters, and to Christ’s resurrection and glorious Coming. Other matters investigated in detail will include Paul’s concerns for church divisions, sexual immorality in the church, idolatry, order in public worship, the place of women in public worship, the exercise of spiritual gifts and the meaning of the gifts etc. Considerable attention will be paid to Paul’s teaching that “love” must be the marker of true Christianity.

d) discuss the ramifications of Paul’s teaching, his concerns, and his theology for the modern church.

**Required Texts:**

Students should aim to examine at least one or two serious, good quality modern commentaries, as the epistle is discussed in class. Those thinking of ordination may wish to buy one or two of these as reference books for future preaching. Commentaries by Fee (recently updated) and Garland are among the most accessible scholarly commentaries at present. My recommendation is Garland’s. For preaching Simon Kistemaker is strong theologically and pastorally sensitive, and Blomberg, though brief, has good insights with some reasonable suggestions for modern application. (See list of course books.)

Four books, two of which are quite short, are required reading (they amount to around 800 pages). They mostly provide an increased understanding of theological, social and
historical background and the content of Paul’s theology. These are asterisked**. Grudem’s book is from a Reformed charismatic perspective and may be useful for some who want to examine different views on the Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament. It is not required reading.

These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISBN:</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Edition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9780830839629</td>
<td><strong>A Week in the Life of Corinth</strong></td>
<td>Ben Witherington III</td>
<td>Paperback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9781845506254</td>
<td><strong>Contours of Pauline Theology</strong></td>
<td>Tom Holland</td>
<td>Paperback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9780802844453</td>
<td><strong>What Saint Paul Really Said</strong></td>
<td>NT Wright</td>
<td>Paperback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9780852347331</td>
<td><strong>Gospel Clarity</strong></td>
<td>William. B. Barclay; Ligon Duncan</td>
<td>Paperback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9780801026300</td>
<td>1 Corinthians, Baker Exegetical Commentary</td>
<td>David Garland</td>
<td>Hardcover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978080105260</td>
<td>1 Corinthians (New Testament Commentary)</td>
<td>Simon Kistemaker/Hendricksen</td>
<td>Hardcover</td>
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<tr>
<td>9780802871367</td>
<td>The First Epistle to the Corinthians, Revised edition (NICNT)</td>
<td>Gordon Fee</td>
<td>Hardcover</td>
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<td>9780310484905</td>
<td>1 Corinthians (NIV AC)</td>
<td>Craig Blomberg</td>
<td>Hardcover</td>
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Assignments and Requirements.

**Students should understand that attendance is required** unless excused by the professor, and that they should **come to each class prepared to join in discussion having read through 1 Corinthians and specially studied the section being examined in that class.**

1) **Four quizzes during the course.** These will be on reading and content of 1Corinthians itself. Required reading for these quizzes will be given at the start of the course, but the first book to read will be Ben Witherington’s **“Week in the Life”**, followed by Holland’s **Contours**. There will be no quiz until the third week. Each quiz 5% of final grade. (Total 20% of final grade.)

2) **A Paper** examining a section of text and commenting upon it theologically, its place in the overall movement of the epistle, and its possible relevance to the modern church. This paper should reflect the student’s interaction with commentators of different perspectives whether in larger commentaries or in journal articles. It will be of between 10 and 15 typed pages. Students may choose a section (not to exceed one chapter of the epistle) of their
own preference. That choice and a brief one paragraph summary of ideas should be submitted at or before the class on March 1st. 10% of final grade will be given for this preliminary summary and a further 50% of final grade for the final paper which should be submitted to the Professor not later than midnight one week after the final class on April 26th. (Total 60% of final grade.)

3) An exegetical exercise. Various short passages will be given in the first class of the course with a detailed explanation of what is required for this assignment. In short, each passage listed, from which one will be chosen by the student, will contain certain exegetical difficulties. This short exegetical paper (no more than three typed pages) should state those difficulties clearly and concisely and then outline possible solutions. The student is not required to take a definitive position on the matters addressed but can choose to do so if desired. This exercise must be handed in to the Professor at or before the penultimate class, that is, by April 19th. (Total 20% of final grade.)