Course Description and Outcomes
This course focuses on the content and context of these writings, and the theological emphases of their writers. In addition to Acts and Revelation, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, James, and 1 John will receive special attention. Students will articulate a theology of scripture.

Students will be able to:
1. Distinguish these genres of biblical literature, and understand the major theological themes in these writings.
2. Faithfully exegete these forms of biblical literature.
3. Apply exegesis to preaching, other pastoral responsibilities, and issues of the present day.
4. Articulate the unity and authority of Scripture as a whole.

Course Requirements

- Class attendance, participation, and completion of assigned readings (10% of total grade)
- Pre-course Writing Assignment: 12 pages double-spaced (30% of total grade)
  - Email to amy.elizabeth.walker@emory.edu by September 12, 2016
- Writing Assignment #2: 9 pages double-spaced (30% of total grade)
  - Email to christopher.t.holmes@gmail.com by 8am on October 15, 2016
- Writing Assignment #3: 8 pages double-spaced (30% of total grade)
  - Email to christopher.t.holmes@gmail.com by 8am on November 5, 2016

*** See overview and components of writing assignments below
**Course Grading**

- Grading of papers follows the Candler Course of Study Grading Policy. Particular attention is paid to the established Grade Grid for papers and class participation. *Keep in mind that most conferences require a letter grade of C or better to pass the course.*

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**Required Textbooks**

2. Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009. **The Powell textbook is required by the for COS 321, but you may use one of the two textbooks below (used in a previous New Testament COS course) in addition to or instead of Powell***

**Recommended Textbooks**

More on Citations and Writing Assignments:
The writing assignments correspond to major sections in the textbooks and are designed to help you reflect on the historical, literary, and theological dimensions of the New Testament. Use your own words when you write, and cite specific page numbers from the textbook when you quote, paraphrase, or allude to one of the books. Avoid extensive quotations.

Within your work you MUST give credit to the sources of your information. However, your pre-course work should NOT be quotation heavy. If you do quote something from your textbook, you must ENGAGE that quotation. Why did you quote the scholar? Do you agree with what they said? If so, why? If not, why is their statement a problem for you? The point of this work is for you to demonstrate your OWN REFLECTION and PERSPECTIVE by engaging the assigned readings and the perspectives and information they offer regarding the New Testament. You do NOT have to reference additional sources such as dictionaries, commentaries, encyclopedias, or other textbooks. Simply use the assigned textbooks, your Bible, and your own thoughts to answer the questions.

When you do quote one of the authors or use an idea you gained from their books, use MLA Style parenthetical citations. This information is included within the body of your paper and includes within parenthesis: (1) Author’s last name; and, (2) page number. Below is an example of how to properly quote and cite from the textbooks:

Example: “The Bible did not just ‘drop out of heaven,’ nor was it written in a special language with unique literary forms by some strange class of humans unaffected by their social and historical situation. No, the Bible was written by and for real people, living in specific historical contexts, to address particular individual and community needs” (Gorman 69).
Provide written answers to the questions below.

- **Answers should be emailed to amy.elizabeth.walker@emory.edu by the stated deadline of September 12, 2016.**
- Answers should be altogether in one email.
- Be sure to make a copy of your work before you send it.
- Please review and follow the Guidelines for Emailing Assignments that are listed at the end of the Pre-Course assignments.


- Read the book of Acts in your study Bible. Then, read Carter and Levine, chapter 5 (“Acts”), and the chapter on Acts in Powell (or Holladay or Johnson). Answer the following questions:
  - Now, focus on the opening of Acts (1:1–11). How does this opening of Acts provide an outline for the rest of the composition? What themes are introduced in these opening verses? Select at least one passage from each of the following sections of Acts to illustrate your point: Acts 1–7; 8–15; 16–23; 24–28.

### Part 2: An Introduction to Paul and His Letters (3 pages double-spaced)

- Read ch. 10 (“New Testament Letters”) and ch. 11 (“Paul”) in Powell (or ch. 9 in Johnson or ch. 11 in Holladay).
  - Summarize the importance of Paul as a historical and theological figure in the New Testament and early Christianity. Consider at least three of the following popular images of Paul: (1) the founder of Christianity; (2) the originator of the mission to the Gentiles; (3) the preacher of egalitarianism (that is, that all people, regardless of race, gender, or social position have equal standing in the church); and, (4) the source of all of Christianity’s problems (role of women, views about sexuality, etc.). To what degree is each based in the letters of Paul? To what degree is each misconstrued or exaggerated?
  - What is the relationship between the portrait of Paul in Acts and the letters of Paul? How are the two accounts similar? How are they different? In your answer, use Acts 15:1–35 and Galatians 2:1–14 as a test case for the relationship between Acts and Paul’s letters.

### Part 3: Focus Text: *Romans* (3 pages double-spaced)

- Read Romans in your study Bible. Then, read ch. 12 in Powell, ch. 6 in Carter and Levine, and chs. 2–3 in Bassler.
  - Discuss the central importance of Romans 1:16–17—what many interpreters call the “thesis” statement of Romans. What are the key ideas, themes, and motifs that are introduced by these verses? Show how elements of Romans 1:16–17 (and its ideas, themes, and motifs) reappear in the following passages: 3:21–31; 5:1–11; 11:25–36; and 15:7–13.
  - Using Bassler and the other chapters listed above, write a statement explaining to your congregation what is meant by the “New Perspective on Paul.” What is the “old”
perspective on Paul? How might each perspective read or interpret Paul’s letter to the Romans differently?

Part 4: Focus Text: 1 Corinthians (3 pages double-spaced)
- Read 1 Corinthians in your study Bible. Then, read ch. 13 in Powell and chapter 7 in Carter and Levine.
  - Who are “Chloe’s people” and how does the reference to them in 1 Corinthians relate to the distinctive features of 1 Corinthians? What are the major problems Paul discusses and how do these provide structure to the letter?
  - Focus on 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1. How does this passage show how Paul thinks about and encourages the Corinthians to think about the problems facing their community? What are least two features of his approach that you found inspiring, troubling, confusing, or useful?
Provide written answers to the questions below.

- **Answers should be emailed to christopher.t.holmes@gmail.com by 8am on October 15, 2016.**
- Answers should be altogether in one email.
- Be sure to make a copy of your work before you send it

Part 1: Focus Text: Hebrews (3 pages double-spaced)

- Read Hebrews in your Study Bible. Then, read ch. 23 in Powell and ch. 16 in Carter and Levine.
  - Hebrews provides a fairly unique understanding of Jesus’s nature (that is to say, it has a distinctive Christology) that balances an emphasis on both Jesus’s humanity and his divinity. Explain how this distinctive understanding emerges in Hebrews, paying particular attention to Hebrews 1:1–4 and Hebrews 2:5–18.
  - Who is Melchizedek? Where else in biblical and extrabiblical literature is this figure discussed? How does Melchizedek function in the argument of Hebrews? How does it relate to the portrait of Jesus in Hebrews?

Part 2: Focus Text: 1 John (3 pages double-spaced)

- Read 1, 2, and 3 John in your Study Bible as well as ch. 27 in Powell and ch. 20 in Carter and Levine.
  - 1 John has been considered a letter, but it does not contain all of the standard elements in a letter. Identify the common structure of ancient letters and explain why 1 John should or should not be viewed as a letter. How do the other letters of John (2 and 3 John) relate to 1 John?
  - Focus on 1 John 2:18–28, considering the language used to describe the opponents, false teachers, and those who have left the community. How does this passage shed light on the conflict and crisis affecting the community addressed by 1 John?

Part 3: Focus Text: Revelation (3 pages double-spaced)

- Read Revelation in your study Bible and then read ch. 29 in Powell and ch. 21 in Carter and Levine.
  - What does “apocalypse” mean and what are some of the characteristics of this type of literature (apocalyptic literature)? How is Revelation similar to this type of literature? How is it different?
  - Revelation 14:12 reads: “Here is the call for endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast the faith of Jesus.” Reflect on the need for endurance as it appears in Revelation. What sorts of things do the “saints” need to endure? How might holding fast the “faith of Jesus” require endurance? How might Revelation encourage or enable the endurance of those who hear or read it?
Provide written answers to the questions below.

- **Answers should be emailed to christopher.t.holmes@gmail.com by 8am on November 5, 2016.**
- Answers should be altogether in one email.
- Be sure to make a copy of your work before you send it

**Part 1: Focus Text: James (3 pages double-spaced)**

- Read James in your study Bible. Then, read ch. 24 in Powell and ch. 17 in Carter and Levine.
  - In one paragraph, explain what James is about. What is its central message? What are its major themes and motifs?
  - A concerned parishioner recently cornered you at coffee hour following worship. She thinks that James has little value for the church today. What is more, she thinks that James might threaten certain core Methodist beliefs. Respond by addressing her concerns and by explaining why James should be read and what it offers the church today.

**Part 2: Theology of Scripture (2 pages double-spaced)**

- Read the UMC’s expressed beliefs about Scripture, as they are explained in the “Scripture” section under “Beliefs” in the Book of Discipline.
  - After summarize the major components of the statement, provide scriptural warrant for at least three [3] of these components.
  - Emerging from your response above, explain how you understand the relationship between the “original context and intention of the text” and the contemporary meaning it has for “our own lives and the life of the world.” How would you describe your theology of Scripture?

**Part 3: Scriptural Interpretation and/as Christian Formation (3 pages double-spaced)**

- Read as much of Green, Seized by the Truth, as you are able to do, but pay particular attention to ch. 1 (“Reading the Bible, Reading Scripture”), ch. 3 (“Resources”), and ch. 4 (“Methods”).
  - According to Green, what are the most important purposes for scriptural reading and interpretation? What resources do Christians have for fulfilling the task(s) of Scripture reading and interpretation?
  - Green discusses three “locations” for meaning in relationship to the text. What are they? What sorts of questions or methods guide each?
  - Reread the section, “A Close Reading of the Text…in Context” (pp. 126–36). Compare the approach to Bible reading/interpretation that Green outlines with your own. What are the areas of similarity? Of difference? What did you find most helpful? Least helpful (or most difficult to understand)?

**Writing Assignment #3 (8 pages double-spaced)***

*** Due November 5, 2016 ***
Guidelines for Written Assignments

- All papers should be typed, double-spaced, on 8 ½” by 11” paper, unless the instructor has asked for a different format specifically within the pre-course work. Font should be Times New Roman or something similar and no larger than size 12. Margins are to be 1” on all four sides of each page.
- All papers must include a page number and the last name of the student in either the header or footer of every page.
- You should note the question you are answering at the beginning of each new section of materials.
- All papers must be properly cited. Please use MLA formatting. This is the best website for learning more about MLA format: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/

Inclusive Language Covenant

The faculty of Emory Course of Study School has adopted a covenant statement encouraging inclusiveness in the use of language, as follows:

The Inclusive Language Covenant is designed to create a linguistic environment in which all students, staff, and faculty can grow in understanding and appreciating the rich diversity of God’s people. The COS faculty commits itself — through continued discussion, reflection, and exploration — to using language in such a way that we respond to the fullness of God’s presence among us as much by our choice of words as by our care for one another. Recognizing that our experience with inclusive language is an integral part of theological formation, we invite students and others to share as partners with us in this learning process.

We understand “covenant” more in terms of its biblical and theological meaning than in a legal or contractual context. Covenant signifies the common commitment of a community of faith in response to God’s revelation and in partnership with one another. The values implied in the covenant have morally persuaded us to try to generate patterns of speech and behavior that bond the members of the community in mutual respect. We expect all members of the community to address issues of diversity constructively. The entire Inclusive Language Covenant can be found on the COS website, and you are encouraged to read the whole covenant.
Directions to Email Pre-Course Assignments

SEND TO – Email your pre-course assignments to: amy.elizabeth.walker@emory.edu

- You are encouraged to email the instructor with questions about the assignments, but do not email your pre-course assignment to them.

DEADLINE – Email must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. EST on September 12, 2016. Pre-course work received after the deadline will be subject to the late penalty schedule below:

- Pre-course work received between September 13-19 will receive a one-letter grade deduction.
- Pre-course work received between September 20-23 will receive a two-letter grade deduction.
- Students who have not turned in pre-course work by September 24 will be dropped from the class.

EMAIL SUBJECT LINE – The subject of your email should be “Pre-Course Work – COS 521”

THE EMAIL – Your full name, phone number, and email address should be included at the beginning of your email. Pre-course work must be sent as an attachment and not in the body of the email.

a. Only Microsoft Word and .pdf documents will be accepted.

b. All assignments for each course must be in one document, multiple documents are not acceptable. You should send only one attachment with all course assignments; emails sent with multiple documents will not be accepted.

PLAGIARISM – The “Plagiarism Policy” and “Plagiarism Defined” paragraphs below (in red) must be included in the body of your email, not within your pre-course work. The inclusion of the policy and definition in the body of the email verifies that you agree to it and your email will represent your signature (which is a requirement). If the email does not include the plagiarism policy and definition it will not be accepted.

Plagiarism Policy - I have read the plagiarism definition below and verify that this assignment represents my own work, except where credit is given.

Plagiarism Defined: “You plagiarize when, intentionally or not, you use someone else’s words or ideas but fail to credit that person, leading your readers to think that those words are yours. In all fields, you plagiarize when you use a source’s words or ideas without citing that source. In most fields, you plagiarize even when you do credit the source but use its exact words without using quotation marks or block indentation” (201-202). Booth, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. The Craft of Research, Second Edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

You will receive a confirmation of receipt within 72 hours of submitting your pre-course work.