RE 215 (IA) Christian Scriptures

Spring 2020, Birmingham-Southern College

Location: Humanities Center 227

Time: 3:30 – 4:50 M/W

Adjunct Professor: Rev. Sally Allocca

Office Location: Humanities Center

Contact Information: I can be reached by e-mail (sallocca@bsc.edu). Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns about the course.

## Course Description

This class serves as an introduction to that collection of texts, the Christian Scriptures (CS). The Christian Scriptures, or the New Testament (NT), has become, over time, a primary lens through which Christian communities view and then articulate their own sense of God, community life, and religious identity. In this course, we will study the Christian Scriptures as a product of its historical, social, and religious context in the first century Mediterranean world. Moreover, we will explore the different ways the writings of the Christian Scriptures have been interpreted in our own diverse modern world.

The approaches to the study of the Bible that we will explore are wide-ranging. Several approaches to the study of the Christian Scriptures ask historical or contextual questions, attempting to get *behind the texts into the “world” in which they were written*. When we become familiar with this world, we will be better able to understand these texts on the terms of the historical periods in which they were composed and circulated. Other approaches emphasize our place as readers: that we always come to the text with our own contemporary social and political questions and concerns. For this reason, it becomes important also to consider *the “world”* *into which the Christian Scriptures are received and applied*. With this awareness, we will see how we as readers deem these texts (or parts of these texts or certain interpretations of these texts) significant and/or insignificant in ways that may have seemed quite foreign to ancient readers.

The Place of RE 215 in Explorations (BSC General Education Curriculum)

This course is tagged as an Interpretation/Analysis course. What does that mean?

Criteria for an IA (Interpretation/Analysis) problem solving courses include the use of a formal method of interpretation/analysis that can be applied to discrete problems/goals and that require students to apply that method in specific ways.

* This class employs historical, theological, and literary methods of analysis.
* A primary problem that is addressed in this class is the ability to recognize and analyze the diversity of theological, historical, and political voices that are included in this ancient, sacred text. Though the New Testament looks much like a modern book by a single author, it is actually a collection of texts collected over time, containing many genres and theological/ideological perspectives.
* Learning to read this text according to the particular literary conventions and genre expectations, and against the original historical context (to the extent that that is possible) are all necessary in order to recognize the multivocal nature of the New Testament and to be able to differentiate the “voices” of the texts from modern voices of biblical interpretation.

Course objectives:

1. Students will become familiar with the contents of the CS/NT and the variety of theologies, perspectives, and ideologies embedded in this sacred text.
2. Students will have achieved a working knowledge of the historical and cultural context that shaped the CS/NT.
3. Students will have been exposed to a variety of interpretive practices that characterize the academic study of the CS/NT, especially historical, literary, and ideological criticisms.
4. Students will begin to understand how ancient texts inform modern individuals and modern cultures.

Course Philosophy

One preliminary note before we begin: Many of you are familiar with the Christian Scriptures either from previous study (personal or academic) or from the dominantly Christian culture of the U.S. Many students, however, are familiar with only one *version* of modern Christianity and thus they can be surprised when they learn about the variety of ancient Christian communities, as well as the variety of views held by their contemporary classmates. I will ask, therefore, that you pay careful attention to your preexisting ideas and that you attempt to read assigned texts with an open mind. Your success in this course will require you to be willing and able to understand that others (in the present and the past) read these texts with different perspectives than you. There might be times in the course when you do not agree with the various positions advanced in readings, lecture, and/or class discussions. Although you will never be required to accept any of these points of view as your own, you will be expected to understand them and to demonstrate your mastery of them. The Bible is a powerful and controversial text. I expect that students come to this course with diverse knowledge of and connection to the text, as well as with differing interpretive strategies. One of the ground rules for this course is respect for other students, both as people and as co-learners/teachers. A second ground rule is respect for the texts. Take them seriously enough to engage them in lively debate even as you recognize that the biblical texts are fundamental to many people’s faith. The texts themselves are not fragile, however. They have withstood vigorous questioning and continue to invite dialogue. You will not agree with all of the viewpoints presented in the class, but it is important to read and listen carefully enough to develop well-reasoned and compassionate responses.

Web Resources

I hope the contents of this course inspire you to poke around the web and do some investigating on your own. The following are some good, trustworthy sites that I recommend:

[New Testament Gateway](http://ntgateway.com/) Maintained by Mark Goodacre, this site has a number of

interesting links to different Bible translations. www.ntgateway.com/

The Society of Biblical Literature, <http://www.sbl-site.org/>, the website for the most

important professional organization in Biblical Studies.

ATLA, the most important Religion database, available to you through the BSC library

website.

www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk/Tyndale/links\_Biblical.htm

## Required Texts (Available in bookstore)

*The Oxford Annotated Bible*

Luke Timothy Johnson, *The New Testament, A Very Short Introduction*

David Rhoads, *From Every People and Nation: The Book of Revelation in Intercultural*

*Perspective*

\*\* Additional readings will either be handed out in class or will be made available to students on Moodle. Please budget for photocopies.

**\*\* Please bring the Bible and all other relevant readings to class for every meeting.**

## **Course Expectations**

Reading Questions and Participation: One goal in this class is to establish a “reading community,” in which each person takes responsibility for their participation as well as the progress of the class as a whole. This class will involve a mixture of lecture and discussion, both with the class as a whole and in smaller groups. A major element of this grade has to do with the student’s willing, respectful, and engaged presence as a member of the class. Behavior that detracts from the class, such as sleeping, whispering, answering phone calls, etc., or negative participation, will negatively influencethe final grade.

Participation is not only verbal; the ability to listen carefully and help to clarify the ideas of one’s peers is also part of discussion. However, coming to class with ideas to contribute and discuss is clearly an important aspect of a college classroom. In order to help you prepare to contribute your thoughts and observations in discussion, Reading Questions have been provided throughout the syllabus. This assignment is designed as a tool to help students refine reading practices and be prepared for discussion. Please type 1-2 pages of responses that address the Reading Questions, or pose other questions of your own.

Each set of RQs will be evaluated according to a “check” system. A “check-plus” indicates excellent, thoughtful consideration of and response to the question. A “check” indicates adequate response to the question. A “check-minus” indicates less than adequate response to the question.

*Every student should submit reading questions 7 times during the semester*. (Some are mandatory.) The RQs cannot be turned in late, as the intent of the questions is to prepare you for class discussion. In addition, the RQs will not be accepted if the student is not present in class. *There is flexibility built into this assignment, so please do not request to turn in RQs late!*

Note: Every student should keep track for him/herself the number of RQs turned in. In other words, please do not request frequent updates on the number of RQs turned in.

Assignments

Approaches to the Study of the Christian Scriptures (3-5 pages): The paper should be based on analysis of excerpts from the work of Marcus Borg, *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time*. See handout for details.

Analysis of Social Location and Interpretive Practices through Interview (4-6 pages): In the final unit of the class, we will examine how a reader’s socio-cultural background interacts with the words in the text *to create meaning*, meaning not shared by all readers of the text. In this paper, students will explore how this interaction of reader and text relates to meaning by interviewing 3 readers and analyzing their interpretations of the same passage. (Details about this assignment will follow.)

Midterm Exam. The exam will cover the material from the first half of the class and will consist mostly of short answer and essay questions.

Final Exam: There final exam will be comprehensive, though it will focus more heavily on the material from the second half of the class.

Attendance: Attendance should be a special priority for all students. More than four absences (two weeks of class) is grounds for failure of the course. Each student should be sure to sign an attendance sheet, which the instructor will make available at the start of every class. Absences are not excused unless they are related to required college commitments.

**REMEMBER**: To be successful in this course, the student must attend class, complete the readings, and turn in assignments on time. Commit to developing these habits early in the course!

Grade Distribution:

The breakdown of the final grade by percentage is as follows:

Reading Questions, Participation 15%

Paper #1 (Borg) 15%

Paper #2 (Interview Paper) 20%

Midterm Exam 25%

Final Exam 25%

Grade Definitions:

The following are the standards that I apply when grading.

*A: Exceptional*. Engages course material critically, engages its wider implications, and applies it creatively. Submitted work is superior in content and presentation.

*B: Very good*. Demonstrates interest in and comprehension of the material and the underlying scholarship. Submitted work is neat and free of errors.

*C: Satisfactory.* Meets the course requirements and shows adequate knowledge and understanding of the material. Submitted work is presented according to expectations.

*D: Poor*. Completes course requirements, but submitted work does not show understanding of the material.

*F: Failing*. Course requirements are not met and submitted work indicates a lack of understanding.

Special Note about Late Work:

All work, including reading for each class, should be completed according to the due date indicated in the course schedule. If a student fails to submit completed assignments on the due date, a letter grade will be subtracted for each day the assignment is late. (Electronic submissions will be accepted for late work only, but will also be docked a letter grade.) For example, if a student turns in a paper that might normally earn a “B” but was sadly turned in two days late, the paper will earn a “D.”

# Make-up Exams

If a student must miss an exam, he or she should contact the instructor before the exam to obtain permission to miss the exam. If contact is not made before the time of the exam, the student will earn a “0” as a grade for the test. Make-up exams will be given at the discretion of the instructor, but will not be an option for any student who has not made contact with the instructor prior to the absence.

Conduct in Class:

Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, alarms, or communication devices before class begins

put them away. Use of such devices in class is not permitted. This is a serious request. Failure

to honor this request will result in negative consequences for the student’s final grade. If there

are emergency situations that require a student to be available by phone during class hours,

please consult with the instructor before class. In addition, use of lap-top computers is strongly discouraged, as they often distract the student from active engagement.

Masks

Masks deserve their own section in the syllabus. Masks make it possible for us to have class in person. Therefore, I expect you will wear your mask as a matter of habit, without fail. It is so important that we have a shared understanding of the importance of masks that I want to be very clear about the expectations that will guide our behavior if we want to be able to have class in person.

* Masks must be worn whenever you are inside, not just during class.
* Gators are not effective coverings against the coronavirus. Please do not wear gators to class.
* Please do not wear a face shield as a substitute for a mask. If you would like to wear a face shield in addition to a mask, that is fine.
* In order to be effective, your mask must cover your nose and mouth.
* Your mask must cover your nose and mouth even when you sneeze and cough. Especially when you sneeze and cough.
* Because it is important for our faces to be covered, I ask that you eat before or after class, but not during.
* Finally, thank you!

**Academic Accessibility and Accommodations**

Students with a disability that qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and require accommodations should be registered with BSC’s Accessibility Office. If you are registered for academic accommodations, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any accommodations that may be necessary. During this discussion you are not expected to disclose any details concerning your disability though you may do so at your discretion. If you have a disability but have not yet registered, please contact Dr. Sandra Foster, Assistant Director of Accessibility Services and Resources, at 205-226-7909 or [smfoster@bsc.edu](mailto:smfoster@bsc.edu), or visit Olin 210. Keep in mind that no accommodation will be made unless and until the instructor receives official notification from the College.

**Title IX**

Birmingham-Southern College is committed to the creation and maintenance of a safe learning environment for students and the campus community. The College forbids any type of sexual or gender-based misconduct among its students, faculty, and staff. The College encourages all members of the academic community to report suspected sexual and gender-based misconduct to the appropriate authorities so that it can be investigated, remedied, and eliminated. BSC forbids retaliation against any person who has opposed, reported, or participated in an investigation concerning sexual or gender-based misconduct. See the BSC Title IX website (www.bsc.edu/titleix) for more information, including an [online report form](https://bsc.guardianconduct.com/incident-reporting). If you or a peer have experienced such misconduct, there are faculty and staff members who are trained in supporting students by answering questions and helping them navigate this process. The list of advocates can be found along with other [helpful resources](https://www.bsc.edu/titleix/Resources.html) on the Title IX website.

**BSC Resources for Writers and Readers**

Located in Humanities 102, the BSC Writing Center offers in-person and virtual peer-to-peer tutoring and quiet, supportive lab space to work on writing assignments. The Center’s tutors are students from a wide variety of majors on campus and have the range to address student writing needs with discipline specificity. Supervised and assisted by BSC Writing Center directors, the tutors provide one-on-one consultations for any student at any point in the writing process. The BSC Writing Center is open Sunday-Thursday 4pm-8pm. To ensure a full 30-minute tutorial time slot, students are encouraged to be mindful of assignment-heavy weeks, keep track of due dates, and visit the Writing Center at their earliest availability during open hours. Please contact Dr. MK Foster or Professor Laura Tolbert ([writingcenter@bsc.edu](mailto:writingcenter@bsc.edu)) with any questions or requests for virtual appointments.

Academic Misconduct:

Definition of Plagiarism as presented in the Birmingham-Southern Student Handbook (p. 2): “When you use someone else’s words, ideas, or data derived through experimentation or investigation without giving that person credit, you are plagiarizing. This is contrary to academic integrity and to the BSC Honor Code.”

Transformative learning occurs in a context of trust and respect, established not only between the teacher and the learner, but also between all the learners in a class. Academic misconduct is not only behavior that has serious ramifications institutionally, but also violates the spirit of trust that is the foundation for a positive learning experience for every individual in the course. In addition, it erodes one’s personal sense of integrity. *Therefore, any instance of academic misconduct will result in failure of the course.* Birmingham-Southern has a long-standing honor code. Please consult your student handbook for a description of the honor code. Please discuss any concerns you have about your academic progress with the instructor.

## **Course Schedule**

Note: This schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. It is the *student’s* responsibility to keep up with changes, which will be announced in class.

Aug. 25 Wed. Discussion of Syllabus and Introduction to Course

Contexts of Interpretation: Ancient and Modern

Aug. 30 Mon. The World of the Christian Scriptures I

Read: Ehrman, “The World of Early Christian Traditions” (Moodle)

Read: Ehrman, “The Jewish Context of Jesus and His Followers”

(Moodle)

Reading Questions: Discuss two or three items of new information

about the historical context of the Christian Scriptures that you think are especially important to remember in the context of this class.

**Due:** Student Survey

Sept. 1 Wed. The World of the Christian Scriptures II

View in Class: *From Jesus to Christ* (PBS), Part 1

**Recommended:** There is no reading due for class today. You

may use this time to read ahead in the Borg text.

**Sept. 6 Mon Labor Day NO CLASS!**

Sept. 8 Wed. The Modern Context of Interpretation

Read: Marcus Borg, *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time*,

pp. 3-53 (Moodle)

Read: Steve Moyise *Introduction to Biblical Studies pp 1-13*

*(Moodle)*

Due: Approaches to the Study of the Christian Scriptures

(Paper#1)

Where Did the Bible Come From?

Sept. 13 Mon. Oral and Scribal Transmission

Translation and Text Criticism

Read: Ehrman, “Do We Have the Original New Testament?”

(Moodle)

Sept. 15 Wed. Collection and Canonization

Read: Harry Gamble, “Bible and Book” (Moodle)

Read: Johnson, *The New Testament,* 114-121

Reading Questions: How does text criticism and knowledge of the

historical process of canonization affect your perception of what the Bible *is* and the possibilities for its interpretation?

Sept. 20 Mon. The Gospel of Mark

Read: Mark (all)

Read: Johnson, *The New Testament*, pp. 36-42

Reading Questions: Compare and contrast the three different

endings to the book of Mark, as delineated in the Study Bible. Which do you think is the original ending? Which do you think is the *best* ending? Why?

Sept. 22 Wed. The Gospel of Matthew

Read: Matthew 1-10; 26-28

Read: Johnson, *The New Testament*, pp. 42-48

Reading Questions: Choose one passage in today’s reading and

discuss it in terms of what you have learned from the Ehrman reading about the historical location of the Matthew community.

Sept. 27 Mon. Read: Luke 1-10; 22-24

Read: Johnson, *The New Testament*, pp. 48-59

Reading Questions: Compare the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1-11

and Luke 6:20-26. What are the similarities and differences between these versions and what implications do you draw from your comparison about the representation of Jesus in these gospels?

**Sept. 29 Wed. Mid-term exam**

Oct. 4 Mon. The Gospel of John

Read: John 1-13; 18-21

Read: Johnson, *The New Testament*, 95-113

Reading Questions: What is distinctive about John’s portrayal of

Jesus?

Oct. 6 Wed. Using John to Construct History of Early Church

Read: John 7:19; 8:39-44; 5:39-40; 10:31-39; 11:46-53; 18:3, 12,

19ff

Read: Robert Kysar, “Anti-Semitism and the Gospel of John,” in

*Anti-Semitism and Early Christianity* (Moodle)

Reading Questions: What does Kysar argue about the origin of

anti-Jewish language in the gospel of John? How do you respond to his recommendations for interpretation of it?

Oct. 11 Mon. Redaction Criticism Exercises

Reading Questions: Choose one of the options below and analyze

the differences between the gospel accounts. To what do you attribute the differences you discover?

1. Compare the death and resurrection passages in John with those in the other three gospels.

B. Compare Matthew 15:21-28 and Mark 7:24-30 (The Canaanite/Syro-Phoenician Woman)

Oct. 13 Wed. Reading Parables: The Good Samaritan

Read: Amy-Jill Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, pp. 77-115

Reading Question: After reading the NT passage and the article,

type one page of your observations to turn in.

Oct. 18 Mon. Parables:The Laborers in the Vineyard

Read: Amy-Jill Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*, pp. 213-237

Reading Question: After reading the NT passage and the article

carefully, type one page of your observations to turn in.

Oct. 20 Wed. Jesus Outside the Gospels: Extra-Canonical Gospels

Read: The Coptic Gospel of Thomas

The Gospel of Mary

The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary

The Infancy Gospel of Thomas

Read: Ehrman, “Jesus from Different Perspectives: Other Gospels

in Early Christianity”

Reading Questions: What is most remarkable to you about the

versions of Jesus’s life that were not included in the canonical scripture? Why do you think they were excluded?

Oct. 25 Mon. The Life and Ministry of the Apostle Paul: Will the Real Paul

Please Stand Up?

Read: Acts of Paul and Thecla (Moodle)

Galatians 1-2; 1 Corinthians 1-4, 7; 2 Corinthians 11-13

1 and 2 Timothy and Titus

Acts 9, 13-19

Reading Questions: Do the texts give a description of what Paul

looks like? If so, describe. To what places does Paul travel? What types of things does Paul do? What types of people does he meet? What does Paul seem to talk about the most? What type of responses does Paul seem to inspire from his audience? What does Paul think about himself? What does he say about what he is doing and why he is doing it?

Oct. 27 Wed. Strategies for Reading Other People’s Mail: 1 Thessalonians and

Galatians as Test Cases

Read: 1 Thessalonians (all); Galatians (all)

Reading Questions: Are there any clues in 1 Thess. about who

Paul was writing to? How did Paul convert people to Christianity? What does 1 Thess. offer in terms of a picture of Paul’s operating procedure on his mission trips? What does Paul say to a new or potential group of converts to persuade them? What is his approach? What did he do with the new converts once they were converted? What happens next? How does the tone of 1 Thessalonians differ from that of Galatians?

Nov. 1 Mon. Critiquing the Bible on its own Terms

Read: Acts 10-11:18, 15:35

God Shows No Partiality – pp. 19-66 (Moodle)

Reading Questions: TBD

Nov. 3 Wed, Romans

Read: Romans (all)

Read: Johnson, *The New Testament,* 73-83

Reading Questions: What are the main themes of this letter? How

does the tone of this letter differ from Thessalonians and Galatians? What do you think Paul’s goal was in composing this letter?

Nov. 8 Mon. Disputed Letters and the Household Codes

Read: The Household Codes:

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

Colossians 3:18-4:1

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

1 Timothy 2:8-15

1 Peter 2:18-3:8

Read: Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, “Christian Mission and the

Patriarchal Order of the Household” in *In Memory of Her* (Moodle)

Read: Karen Jo Torjesen, “A Woman’s Honor Is Her Shame,” in

*When Women Were Priests* (Moodle)

Reading Questions: What are the assumptions about

household/gender roles reflected in these texts? What are the challenges of reading these texts in the modern world?

The Book of Revelation and Social Location

Nov. 10 Wed. The Apocalyptic Imagination

Read: The Book of Revelation (all)

Reading Questions: What does Revelation *look* like? If you are

artistic, draw, paint, or sketch a portion of Revelation that you think is representative of something important about the book. If you do not have artistic skills, write a page about what you would draw if you did have such talent. Describe in words what you think a picture of this text would look like.

Nov. 15 Mon. Reading and Social Location

Read: Gale A. Yee, “The Author/Text/Reader and Power:

Suggestions for a Critical Framework for Biblical Studies”

Read: David Rhoads, “Introduction,” *From Every People*

*and Nation*, pp. 1-18

Reading Questions: What is *your* social location? Describe

yourself as a reader. In what ways does your particular social location affect your reading of a text, especially the biblical text? **Required RQ!**

Nov. 17 Wed. Ethnic/National Concerns

Read: Brian Blount, “The Witness of Active Resistance: The

Ethics of Revelation in African American Perspective” in *From Every People and Nation*

Read: Justo Gonzalez, “Revelation: Clarity and Ambivalence: A Hispanic/Cuban American Perspective” in *From Every People and Nation*

Nov. 22 Mon. Gender Concerns

Read: Tina Pippin, “The Heroine and the Whore: The Apocalypse

of John in Feminist Perspective” in *From Every People and Nation*

Read: TBD

Reading Questions: What are the commitments of each author that shape their interpretations? What are the benefits and limitations of reading with their lenses?

**Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Break NO CLASS**

Nov. 29 Mon. Integration and Synthesis

Dec. 1 Wed. Final Questions and Exam Prep

**Due: Interview Paper**

**Dec. 7 (TUES.) 6:00pm – 9:00pm Final Exam**

Approaches to the Study of the Christian Scriptures

Response Paper #1

This paper assignment intends to help students examine different assumptions that may shape their approach to the study of these texts. The paper will be based on an excerpt from *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time*, by Marcus Borg (pp. 3-53). The paper should be 4-6 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, have one inch margins on all sides, and be in font size 12. The organization of the paper is flexible. You may simply answer the following questions directly (there is no need to retype the questions in your paper), or you may take these questions as a starting point for developing another kind of paper.

1. A central thesis of the Marcus Borg excerpt is that the Bible is a *human* product of religious experience. Why does Borg think this perspective is important and what do you think of it?
2. What does Borg mean by the concepts of *precritical naivete* and *postcritical naivete*?
3. Choose one point from the Borg excerpt that you found helpful and explain why. Also choose one point that you found difficult or problematic and explain why.
4. What aspects of Borg’s discussion provoked a shift in your thinking or caused you to think about some aspect of the challenge of reading the Bible in 2021 in a new way?

Interview Paper

In this unit on biblical interpretation, we have seen how a reader’s socio-cultural background interacts with the words in the text *to create meaning*, meaning not shared by all readers of the text. In this paper, students will explore how this interaction of reader and text relates to meaning by interviewing 3 readers and analyzing their interpretations of the same passage.

PREPARE TO WRITE THE PAPER:

1. Set up three 20-minute meetings with your friends, family, colleagues. (Attempt to interview as diverse a range of people as possible.) At each of these meetings you will:

a) Give the reader the attached passage from Mark’s gospel and ask them to read the text *carefully*. (Give them as much time as they need.)

b) Then direct the reader to follow the directionson the handout:

• Please underline the one or two sentences from this passage that are most important.

• Please explain why these sentences are significant. How do they relate to the overall meaning of the passage? (Use the space below and please be as explicit as possible.)

c) Once the reader has ***written*** their response, you are to have a conversation with the reader, attempting to discern what aspects of her/his social background have influenced her/his interpretation. Take notes on this conversation at the bottom of the handout.

NOTE: In your conversation, you might ask the reader about her/his view of the NT text (e.g., authority of the NT? NT useful for what? What did s/he know about this passage prior to reading it at this sitting?). You might also ask the reader to consider how her/his involvement in social groups, the present historical moment, and/or his/her knowledge of the text’s subject/topic influences her/his interpretation of this passage. In other words, what is most important to the reader about the passage and why is that the issue that is most important to them?

WRITE THE PAPER:

2. You can’t include in your paper all of the observations you have made in these interviews, so choose approx. 3-4 of your most interesting findings to:

⮚ describe in your paper &

⮚ then explain in detail how your findings illustrate the influence of one’s social background on interpretation/the meaning of the text.

3. Finally, answer the question we’ve pondered in our discussion of ideological criticism: *Is there ever a time when you can say another's reading is just plain wrong*? If so, according to what criteria? What boundaries or constraints are there to “proper interpretation”? What constitutes a “good” interpretation of a biblical passage?

Writing conventions:

✪ Do NOT consult outside sources.

• 3-5 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt. font (Times New Roman), 1-inch margins

• Name on first page

Attach the handouts from your interviews to the paper

Student Survey

Note: This survey is for the instructor’s use only. Please be assured that all information is completely confidential. The student should feel free to withhold any information that he or she does not feel comfortable sharing, however.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Year at BSC:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Major (if known):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any challenges or concerns related to classroom learning of which you would like the instructor to be aware?

If you answered “yes” to the above, do you have a plan and/or assistance in dealing with your particular challenges? Would you like to consult with the instructor about developing a learning strategy that might assist you in successful completion of the course?

What pronouns do you prefer?

What do you feel are your strengths and limitations as a student? What are the particular academic skills you would like to develop over the course of this class?

Is there anything else you would like the instructor to know about you as a student?

What is your experience of Christian scriptures? What, in your opinion, is most important to consider in the study of Christian scriptures?

Do you have any particular area of interests and/or concern about the topic of this class?