NTST550
April 14-18 2013
Robert M. Johnston
GENERAL CLASS INFORMATION

Class acronym: NTST550
Semester & year: Spring 2013
Class location: Mid-America Union Conference Office
Lincoln, Nebraska
Class time/day: Sunday, 7-9 pm; Monday through Thursday, 8-12, 2-5.
Credits offered: 3

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT DETAILS

Instructor: Robert M. Johnston, Ph.D., Emeritus professor of New Testament
Telephone: (269) 471-1109
Email: bobjohn@andrews.edu
Office location: Seminary N127
Office hours: By appointment
BULLETIN CLASS DESCRIPTION

“... Does not presuppose Greek proficiency nor count toward MDiv core requirements or emphases, nor the MA major or minor in New Testament. Repeatable with a different subject area.”

CLASS OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of this class are to:

- Knowledge of the nature of parables.
- Knowledge of the importance of parables in the teaching of Jesus and the theology of the Gospels.
- Knowledge of the history of interpretation of the parables.
- Understanding of sound methods of interpretation and ability to apply them.
- Ability to move from exegesis to sermon.
- Familiarity with the parables themselves.
- Ability to apply the teachings of the parables to your own life and the life of the church.
- Appreciation of the relationships among the Gospels.

Secondary objectives include:

- Understanding of how the theological and cultural environment has influenced the understanding of the parables.
- Understanding how Ellen White’s use and application of the parables relate to scholarly exegesis.
- Ability to exploit the parables homiletically.
HOW MUCH TOTAL TIME INVESTMENT FOR THIS CLASS?

Advanced theological education is no ‘cake-walk’, nor is it intended to ‘wear out the saints’. Designed to immerse the learner in deep theological study and introspective reflection, seminary course expectation is to challenge the student by examining his/her own premises against the study, research and inspiration of biblical scholarship.

This will take intentionality and time on your part. Course load is guided by the expectation that students will spend a total of 45 hours of course exposure to earn 1 hour of academic credit. That translates into 90 hours invested for a 2-credit class, and 135 hours for a 3-credit course. Students are advised to spend their time accordingly to meet course requirements and deadlines.

Following is a rule of thumb to help guide your reading, research, and writing for Seminary courses:

- Average reading speed  15-20 pages/hr.
- Average scanning speed  30 pages/hr
- Average writing speed  3 hr./page
- Exam preparation  4-8 hours

Based on these averages, requirements for this class will take the average student the following:

- Required reading (3 books)
  - Stein (read 15-81 = 67 pages; scan 82-147 = 65 pp.)  7 hrs.
  - Bloomberg (read 13-167 = 154 pages; scan 171-327 = 156 pp.)  17 hrs.
  - White (scan 436 pp. It is assumed that you have read this before)  15 hrs
- Book reports  12 hrs
- Looking up the texts on Stein 22-26  10 hrs
- Exam preparation  4 hrs
- Exegesis paper  20 hrs.
- Sermon  20 hrs.
- Hours in class  30 hrs.

Total Hours for class  135 hrs.
Required:


Recommended:


Class Bibliography:


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**GRADING CRITERIA AND COURSE ASSESSMENT ITEMS**

**Criteria for Grades**
The student’s grade will be based on the total number of points won out of a total possible of 140 that he/she accumulates in the course. There will be three book reports worth 10 points each (see below). There will be one written examination worth 60 points. An exegesis paper must be submitted, worth 30 points, and a sermon based on the exegesis paper worth 20 points. For the criteria that will be followed in assessing the various written assignments see the Appendix.

**Passing Grades**
Letter grades will be assigned at the end of the course according to this scale: 95-100% = A. 90-94 = A-. 85-89 = B+. 80-84 = B. 75-79 = B-. 70-74 = C+. 65-69 = C. 60-64 = C-. 55-59 = D. 0-54 = F.

**Assessment Submission**
Please submit all written assignments in hard copy form.

**Late Submission**
Assessment items (written assignments) will be penalized by incurring a 10% penalty for each thirty days following the due date.

**Assessment Items**

1. **Three book reports** on the books by Robert H. Stein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Ellen G. White, are all due at the beginning of the class sessions on **April 14, 2013.** From the list of parables in Stein’s book, pp. 22-26, select which parable you are going to make the subject of your exegesis paper and sermon. Write a four page report for each book, interacting with Stein, especially pp. 15-81, with Blomberg, especially pp. 13-167, and with Ellen White’s book. Each report will earn up to 10 points, totaling 30 points.
2. **Examination.** An objective examination will be sustained on the last day of class, **April 18, 2013.** It will cover lectures, readings, and the parables themselves. In preparation for the examination be sure to read all the Gospel parables, as listed in Stein, 22-26. The questions will consist of short answers, matching, and multiple choice. It will earn up to 60 points.

3. **Exegesis paper.** After the class sessions are over you will produce a paper exegeting the parable that you chose. You will have been doing research about it all during the course. Finally you will write up the results of your research, thought, and prayer. The paper will follow the format of a template that will be given to you the class. The paper will earn up to **30 points.** It will be graded on the basis of criteria that are outlined in the Appendix to this syllabus. It is due by **July 31, 2013.** If you want it to be returned with comments, send a hard copy and include an adequately stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise send it as an email attachment in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Nota Bene, or PDF format. But verify that I have received it, as my Web reception is not always reliable.

4. **Sermon.** You are to write out a sermon based on the same parable that you wrote your exegesis paper about. It should not be just a rehash of the exegesis paper, but it should be informed by the insights that you discovered while doing the exegesis, and it should be in harmony with the exegesis. It should bring home the point of the parable to the practical lives of the audience. It will be graded on the basis of exegetical soundness, clarity of structure, and homiletical power. See the Appendix. A simple outline (two or three rank) should be attached to the front of the sermon manuscript. Full credit will be up to **20 points.** The sermon is due the same time as the exegesis paper, by **July 31, 2013.** If you want the instructor’s comments, the exegesis paper and the sermon should be sent together, and the postage should be enough for both.

**Thus** the assignments fall into three groups: (1) Pre-Intensive: book reports; (2) During the Intensive: lectures and examination; (3) Post-Intensive: exegesis paper and sermon.
## Portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competencies Addressed</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
<th>Portfolio Artifacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Perceptive Student of the Bible</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Demonstrates advanced understanding of Bible contents (Parables)</td>
<td>Exegesis paper Examination</td>
<td>Class notes and handouts Exegesis paper Final Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Understands social and historical backgrounds of the Bible and the influence of culture on interpretation</td>
<td>Sections of the exegesis paper</td>
<td>Exegesis paper Class notes and handouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Demonstrates advanced understanding of Bible history, doctrines, and theology</td>
<td>Examination Exegesis paper Book reports</td>
<td>Examination Exegesis paper Book reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Values regular Bible study and deep reflection upon it</td>
<td>Exegesis paper Expository sermon</td>
<td>Exegesis paper Expository sermon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Practices sound methods of exegesis using original languages, guided by appropriate hermeneutics</td>
<td>Exegesis paper Examination</td>
<td>Exegesis paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Developing Theologian</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>G Engages in biblical and theological reflection as the basis for ministry</td>
<td>Book reports Exegesis paper Sermon</td>
<td>Book reports Exegesis paper Sermon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Inspiring Biblical Preacher and Worship Leader</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Places high value on preaching scriptural truth</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Sermon manuscript</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CLASS POLICIES

Classroom Seating
Sit where you like, but sit in the same place for the rest of the course. The instructor has a hard time remembering names, but this will help.

Disability Accommodations
If you qualify for accommodations under the American Disabilities Act, please see the instructor as soon as possible for referral and assistance in arranging such accommodations.

Late Submission of Assessment
All late assessment will incur a 10% penalty per 30-day period of lateness.

Other Policies
Do not make recordings without the instructor’s permission.

Examinations
“Credit is not granted in courses unless the required examinations are completed by the student. Students are expected to follow the published examination schedule. In cases where the schedule requires a student to complete four exams in one day, arrangements may be made with the dean to complete one of the examinations at another time.”

Andrews University Bulletin 2010, page 29

Class Attendance
“Regular attendance at all classes, laboratories and other academic appointments is required for each student. Faculty members are expected to keep regular attendance records. Whenever the number of absences exceeds 10% of the total course appointments, the teacher may give a failing grade. Merely being absent from campus does not exempt the student from this policy. Absences recorded because of late registration, suspension, and early/late vacation leaves are not excused. The class work missed may be made up only if the teacher allows. Three tardies are equal to one absence.”

Andrews University Bulletin 2010, page 29-30

Excused Absence
“Excuses for absences due to illness are granted by the teacher. Proof of illness is required. Residence hall students are required to see a nurse on the first day of any illness which interferes with class attendance. Non-residence hall students should show written verification of illness obtained from their own physician. Excuses for absences not due to illness are issued directly to
the dean’s office. Excused absences do not remove the student’s responsibility to complete all requirements of a course. Class work is made up by permission of the teacher.”

*Andrews University Bulletin 2010, page 30*

**Teacher Tardiness**
“Teachers have the responsibility of getting to class on time. If a teacher is detained and will be late, the teacher must send a message to the class with directions. If after 10 minutes no message has been received, students may leave without penalty. If teacher tardiness persists, students have the right to notify the department chair, or if the teacher is the department chair, to notify the dean.”

*Andrews University Bulletin 2010, page 30*

**Academic Integrity**
Andrews University takes seriously all acts of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) falsifying official documents; plagiarizing; misusing copyrighted material; violating licensing agreements; using media from any source to mislead, deceive or defraud; presenting another’s work as one’s own; using materials during a quiz or examination other than those specifically allowed; stealing, accepting or studying from stolen examination materials; copying from another student; or falsifying attendance records. For more details see the Andrews University Bulletin 2010, page 30.

“Consequences may include denial of admission, revocation of admission, warning from a teacher with or without formal documentation, warning from a chair or academic dean with formal documentation, receipt of a reduced or failing grade with or without notation of the reason on the transcript, suspension or dismissal from the course, suspension or dismissal from the program, expulsion from the university or degree cancellation. Disciplinary action may be retroactive if academic dishonesty becomes apparent after the student leaves the course, program or university.”

*Andrews University Bulletin 2010, page 30*
### OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 14</td>
<td>Introduction to the class. Importance of subject.</td>
<td>Three book reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General principles of exegesis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>Tropes. Parabling: Definition and history. Rabbinic <em>meshalim</em>. Jesus’ parables: sources, number, authenticity, purpose, nature, characteristics</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>History of interpretation: the allegorizers. The historical exegetes. The literary theorists. Recent trends and issues Ellen White. Related issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>Jesus’ parables: special principles of interpretation. Case studies: sample exegesis and sample sermon (Matthew 20:1-16) Recommended procedures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>Representative expositions. REVIEW. EXAMINATION. Wrap up.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 31, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exegesis paper and sermon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INSTRUCTOR PROFILE

Robert M. Johnston was born in California and is married to Madeline Steele; they have four children. He was educated at Stanford University, Pacific Union College, the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, and the Hartford Seminary. He also took classes at the University of California (Berkeley) and Hebrew University (Jerusalem). He was a missionary in Korea and the Philippines. He has taught at the Seminary since 1974. He has published three books and many articles.
**APPENDIX 1**

**EXAMPLE CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES**

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**THE B GRADE**

We start with the B grade for a very specific reason. It is because a B grade is a sign that you have competently fulfilled all of the requirements stipulated for an assessment or competency evaluation. It is an excellent grade and demonstrates a high level of knowledge, insight, critique competence and professional written presentation standards essential for an individual wishing to pursue a career as a professional pastor.

**THE A GRADE**

An A grade is only given when a student not only fulfils the criteria stipulated above for a B grade, but in doing so demonstrates an advanced academic aptitude for content knowledge, critique, synthesis and independent insight, while exhibiting highly developed communication skills and professional publication standards that would allow them to pursue a highly competitive academic career.

**THE C GRADE**

The C grade differs only from a B grade in that the traits outlined in the B grade above are not consistently applied. However, with diligence and applying feedback from your lecturer, the academic process can provide a perfect opportunity for a student to improve their consistency, and hence, their grade.

**THE D GRADE**

The D grade exhibits a limited level of knowledge, insight and critique and poor written presentation standards. This may be because of a lack of time management on the part of the student, they may have difficulty grasping the concepts being taught, English may be their second language, or they may be experiencing a personal issue that is affecting their concentration and motivation levels. Again, with diligence, applying feedback from your lecturer, and seeking services offered by the University like the writing lab or the counseling...
centre, the academic process can provide an opportunity for a student to significantly improve their performance.

**FAIL**

The Fail grade is given when very limited or no demonstrable competency has been observed.

**EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

- You cannot be graded on the type of paper you could have turned in if you had had more time.
- You cannot be graded or given credit in this class on extra-curricular activities you may be involved in.
- It is unreasonable to expect a better grade because you are a nice person or are friends with the lecturer.
- It is unreasonable to demand a good grade because you believe you have been called by God, and thus, should automatically be given good grades despite poor performance.

Your assessments have been specifically designed to measure and provide evidence of your competency with relation to the subject matter. This is to meet University accreditation standards. Thus, you will only be graded on the content of the assessments you submit. If it is not in your assessments, your lecturer will not have adequate evidence of your competency and will have to grade you accordingly.

**PLAGIARISM**

Replicating writing, cutting and pasting or moderately paraphrasing text from publications, internet sources, books, friends papers or publications, family members papers or publications, ghost writers papers or publications with the intent of passing it off as your own work, is strictly prohibited and unacceptable. Students found to be plagiarizing the work of others will receive an immediate Failing grade. Your actions will be reported to the University and your sponsor (if sponsored). You may even face expulsion from the University. Your lecturer will randomly sample sentences, phrases and paragraphs from your paper and compare them with papers from past students and with content on the internet. Your lecturer is also familiar with a lot of the publications and sources you will be using for your assessment and will also be able to identify any potential plagiarism.
LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR

There is an expectation that a person who holds a Master’s qualification will have advanced written language skills, particularly in the language in which their Masters was taught. Thus, no special consideration will be given to students who speak English as a second language or native-English speakers who struggle with written English. Such students are advised to seek the assistance of the campus writing lab or seek the services of a professional academic editor prior to the submission of their assessment.

Students are encouraged to have someone else read their assessments aloud to them prior to submission. This practice will provide you with immediate feedback as to how your written assessments sounds/reads to another person. You may even want to have a friend or a professional academic editor look over your assessments to identify any typing, spelling or punctuation errors too.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

EXEGETIC PAPER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>6 pts</th>
<th>4 pts</th>
<th>1 pt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covers all bases correctly</td>
<td>Does well what each rubric in the template requires</td>
<td>Omits a rubric or misunderstands a rubric</td>
<td>Clueless about what is being done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses references correctly</td>
<td>Perfectly adheres to AU standards, is evidence based, gives credit where necessary</td>
<td>Mistakes in style and formatting, fails to give credit to all sources</td>
<td>Pays no attention to standards of written work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writes clearly</td>
<td>Good grammar and spelling, interesting and thought provoking</td>
<td>Several mistakes on each page.</td>
<td>Barely literate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originality</td>
<td>New insights and original thinking</td>
<td>Too dependent on secondary sources.</td>
<td>No new thoughts at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good faith effort</td>
<td>Shows fruit of reading and research, uses computer rightly</td>
<td>Improper or incompetent use of computer, little reading and research</td>
<td>No evidence of reading or research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
### Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5 pts</th>
<th>3 pts</th>
<th>1 pt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Based on fruit of the exegesis</td>
<td>Clearly utilizes what was learned in the exegesis</td>
<td>Little relation to the exegesis</td>
<td>Ignores the exegesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brings home the message of the parable</td>
<td>Applies the parable persuasively and instructively</td>
<td>Message not very clear</td>
<td>No homiletic value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes an adequate outline</td>
<td>Clear outline, showing definite structure and purpose</td>
<td>Poor outline</td>
<td>No outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originality</td>
<td>Original insights</td>
<td>Much borrowed</td>
<td>Virtually plagiarized (“scissors and paste”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>