

## NTST 536 Studies in the Gospels: The Parables

Fall 2020

*Robert M. Johnston, Ph.D.*

### SYNOPSIS OF THE COURSE

#### CLASS & CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>Class location:</b>	Zoom --- <a href="https://andrews.zoom.us/j/92134616807">https://andrews.zoom.us/j/92134616807</a>
<b>Class meeting times:</b>	October 11-15, 2020. Sun 2-6 pm, M-Th 8-12 am, 2-6 pm EST
<b>Course Website:</b>	<a href="https://learninghub.andrews.edu">learninghub.andrews.edu</a>
<b>Instructor Telephone:</b>	269-471-1109
<b>Instructor Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:bobjohn@andrews.edu">bobjohn@andrews.edu</a>
<b>Office location:</b>	teaching from home (9368 Park Ridge Trail, Berrien Center, MI 49102)
<b>Office hours:</b>	As needed

#### BULLETIN DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

*Exegesis of selected portions of the New Testament. The same subject cannot be repeated with the other 500-level course number. Does not presuppose Greek proficiency nor count toward MDiv core requirements or emphases, nor the MA major or minor in New Testament.*

#### PROGRAM & COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Your degree program seeks to help you achieve the **Program Learning Outcomes** basic to your chosen profession. Your Program Learning Outcome primarily addressed in this course is:

## MA in Pastoral Ministry (MAPM)

- 1) Deliver effective biblically-based sermons
- 2) Demonstrate proper biblical interpretation skills
- 3) Understand the historical-theological development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- 4) Exhibit capability for training church members for evangelism
- 5) Demonstrate an understanding of how to empower church members for leadership
- 6) Exhibit capability for reaching specific social groups

The following **Course Learning Outcomes** contribute to the overall Program Learning Outcomes by identifying the key learnings to be achieved by diligent work in this course:

1. Know the nature of parables
2. Know the importance of parables in the teaching of Jesus and the theology of the Gospels
3. Know the history of interpretation of the parables
4. Be aware of current scholarship on the parables
5. Understand sound methods of interpretation and be able to apply them
6. Be able to move from exegesis to sermon
7. Be familiar with the parables themselves
8. Be able to apply the teachings of the parables to your own life and the life of the church
9. Appreciate the relationships among the Gospels
10. Understand how the theological and cultural environment has influenced the understanding of the parables
11. Understand how Ellen White's use and application of the parables relate to scholarly exegesis
12. Be able to exploit the parables homiletically

## COURSE OVERVIEW

Course topics and assignments have been selected to contribute to learning and evaluating these Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) as follows:

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	CLOs Addressed
10/2/2020	Bailey videos	Three-page critique	1,4,5,7,8,10
10/8	Reading report #1	Three-page critique of Stein, pp. 15-71*	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9
10/8	Reading report #2	Three-page critique of Blomberg, pp. 13-167*	1,2,3,4,5,10
12/1	Reading report #3	Three-page critique of White	6,11,12
10/11	Introduction	Take notes on lectures and discussion	1,2
10/12	Exam on parables	Look up and study Stein 22-26	7
10/13	Background and	Take notes on lectures and discussion	1,2,3,4,10,11

Date	Topic	Assignment Due	CLOs Addressed
	history of interpretation		
10/14	Principles of interpretation	Take notes on lectures and discussion	4,5,6,8,12
10/15	Case studies	Take notes on lectures and discussion	5,7,12
12/10	Exegesis paper	Turn in paper on chosen parable	5,6
12/10	Sermon	Turn in sermon manuscript on chosen parable	12

\*The remainder of these two books may be read after the class meetings are over, but before the end of the semester.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is required at all classes and other academic appointments. When the total number of absences exceeds 10% of the total course appointments, the teacher may assign 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.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### **Required Course Materials**

Stein, Robert H. *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981.

Blomberg, Craig L. *Interpreting the Parables*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990.

White, Ellen G. *Christ's Object Lessons*. Washington: Review and Herald, 1941 (many other editions)

### **Recommended Course Materials**

Bailey, Kenneth E. *Poet and Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables of Luke*. Combined edition: Two Volumes in One. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984.

Hultgren, Arland J. *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

Longenecker, Richard N., ed. *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

For ISBN and price information, please see the listing at the Bookstore

[www.andrews.edu/bookstore](http://www.andrews.edu/bookstore).

## MORE ABOUT THE COURSE

When God sent His Son to earth He sent Him as a teacher. When Jesus taught, He taught in parables. “All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable” (Matthew 13:34, ESV). We cannot understand the teaching of Jesus without knowing and understanding His parables, and we ourselves can best teach if we teach the way He did. That is why the study of the parables of Jesus will make you a better theologian and a better preacher.

## TIME EXPECTATIONS FOR THE COURSE

### US Credit-Hour Regulations

For every semester credit, the Andrews University credit hour definition requires that:

- **Courses for professional masters’ degrees (e.g. MDiv)** include 15 instructor contact hours and 30 hours of independent learning activities.
- **Courses for academic masters’ (e.g. MA [Religion]) and all doctoral degrees** include 15 instructor contact hours, and 45 hours of independent learning activities.

**The calculation of hours is based on the study skills of the average well-prepared graduate student.** Students weak in these skills: 1) may require more time and should consider taking fewer classes each semester; and 2) can find skill development assistance through the Seminary Study and Research Skills Colloquia, the AU Writing Center, and AU Student Success office.

In order to achieve the outcomes of this course, learning time will be distributed as follows:

		Professional Masters’ Programs
		3 Credits
<b>Instructor Contact Hours</b>	<b>Face to Face Instructional Time</b>	38 hrs
	<b>Other Instructor-Directed Activities (videos and report)</b>	7 hrs
<b>Independent Learning Activities</b>	<b>Reading reports</b>	60 hrs
	<b>Exegesis paper</b>	20 hrs

	<b>Sermon</b>	10 hrs
<b>Total Hours:</b>		<b>135 hrs</b>

## GUIDELINES FOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Grades are based on the independent learning activities below which provide practice toward, and assessment of, the learning outcomes of this course. The grade weighting for each assignment is provided in the right-hand column. Specific due dates are given in the Course Overview above.

The points available for the assignments add up to 110. The number of points earned for each assignment will be added together and then divided by 110, to give the percentage upon which the grade is determined. Thus if the total earned is 86, the grade will be  $86/110=78\%=B-$ .

Assignment Description	Weighting
Watch and critique the four-part lecture by Kenneth Bailey on the Prodigal Son found on YouTube (three-page report): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5d8hF84qMPg&amp;list=PLZk_M4sUVTd_9WEYdR8KcgBBtrYZJ83s9&amp;index=14&amp;t=0s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5d8hF84qMPg&amp;list=PLZk_M4sUVTd_9WEYdR8KcgBBtrYZJ83s9&amp;index=14&amp;t=0s</a> , <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWWU-0c5fv8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWWU-0c5fv8</a> , <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSaw1rBbGA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSaw1rBbGA</a> , <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pj4ZNNs1Lo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pj4ZNNs1Lo</a>	10 pts
Look up and study all the items listed in Stein, 22-26, and be prepared to be examined on them. (GT stands for <i>Gospel of Thomas</i> , which can be found on line in such sites as <a href="http://gnosis.org/naghamm/gthlamb.html">http://gnosis.org/naghamm/gthlamb.html</a> )	20 pts
Three book reports on the required textbooks. Write a three-page report for each book, interacting with Stein, especially pp. 15-81, and with Blomberg, especially pp. 13-167, and with Ellen White's book. From the list of parables in Stein 22-26 select which parable you are going to make the subject of your exegesis paper and sermon. The reports should show evidence of thoughtful reading. Each report is worth 10 pts.	30 pts
Exegesis paper on chosen parable	30 pts
Sermon on chosen parable	20 pts

\* For grading rubrics that specify grading criteria in more detail, see Appendices.

In order to make grading fair for everyone, grades will be assigned on the basis of the above requirements alone. No individual arrangements will be made for those requesting last minute grade adjustment or extra credit.

### **Submission of Assignments**

Assignments are to be turned in on Learning Hub on or before the dates indicated.

### **Late Submission**

Because student assignments are an essential part of class activities, assignments turned in after the time they are due will be worth a seriously reduced score. Any requests for extra time on an assignment must be made in advance with the professor. Such requests should be a rarity and should be accompanied by a valid reason why the work could not be done by the date due.

### **Resubmission of Assignments**

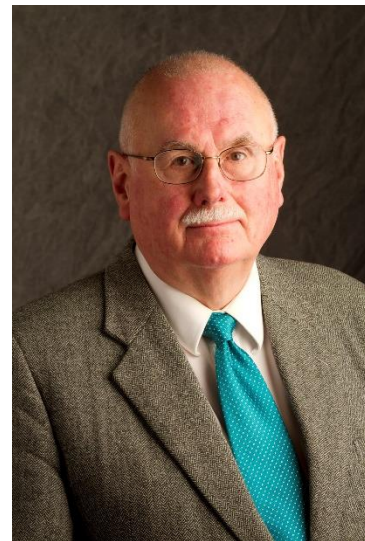
In order to facilitate maximum learning, students who receive a poor grade on the final project (exegesis paper and sermon) may resubmit the assignment on additional time. Resubmissions will be worth up to 80% of the original total possible score.

## **ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR**

Robert M. Johnston is emeritus professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, where he has taught since 1974. Before that he was a missionary for twelve years in South Korea and the Philippines.

He has degrees from Pacific Union College, the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, and the Hartford Seminary. He has also studied at Stanford University, the University of California, and Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He has been awarded the J.N. Andrews medallion and the Charles Weniger Award for excellence in teaching. He has published three books and numerous articles and chapters in books.

He is married to Madeline Steele, and the two of them are members of Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs. They have four children and six grandchildren.



## OTHER COURSE-RELATED POLICIES

### **Academic Integrity**

The Seminary expects its students to exhibit rigorous moral integrity appropriate to ministry leaders representing Jesus Christ. Complete honesty in academic matters is a vital component of such integrity. Any breach of academic integrity in this class is subject to discipline. Consequences may include receipt of a reduced or failing grade, 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. A record of academic integrity violations is maintained by the University Student Academic Integrity Council. Repeated and/or flagrant offenses will be referred to an Academic Integrity Panel for recommendations on further penalties.

Academic Dishonesty includes:

- Plagiarism in which one fails to give credit every time use is made of another person's ideas or exact words, whether in a formal paper or in submitted notes or assignments.  
Credit is to be given by use of:
  - Correctly designed and inserted footnotes each time one makes use of another individual's research and/or ideas; and
  - Quotation marks placed around any exact phrases or sentences (3 or more words) taken from the text or speech of another individual.
- Presenting another's work as one's own (e.g., placement exams, homework assignments);
- Using materials during a quiz or examination other than those explicitly allowed by the teacher or program;
- Stealing, accepting, or studying from stolen quizzes or examination materials;
- Copying from another student during a regular or take-home test or quiz;
- Assisting another in acts of academic dishonesty
- Submitting the same work or major portions thereof, without permission from the instructors, to satisfy the requirements of more than one course.

For additional details see: [https://www.andrews.edu/academics/academic\\_integrity.html](https://www.andrews.edu/academics/academic_integrity.html)

### **Academic Accommodations**

If you qualify for accommodation under the American Disabilities Act, please see contact Student Success in Nethery Hall 100 ([disabilities@andrews.edu](mailto:disabilities@andrews.edu) or 269-471-6096) as soon as possible so that accommodations can be arranged.

### **Use of Electronics**

No recording or streaming is permitted in seminary courses.

Courtesy, respect, and professionalism dictate that laptops and cell phones are to be used only for class-related activities during class time.

### **Communications and Updates**

Email is the official form of communication at Andrews University. Students are responsible for checking their Andrews University e-mail, Moodle, and iVue alerts regularly.

### **LearningHub Access**

Andrews University Learning Hub hosts this course online. Your Learning Hub username and password are the same as your Andrews username and password. Use the following contact information if you need technical assistance at any time during the course, or to report a problem with LearningHub.

Username and password assistance	<a href="mailto:helpdesk@andrews.edu">helpdesk@andrews.edu</a>	(269) 471-6016
Technical assistance with Learning Hub	<a href="mailto:dliit@andrews.edu">dliit@andrews.edu</a>	(269) 471-3960
Technical assistance with your Andrews account	<a href="http://andrews.edu/hdchat/chat.php">http://andrews.edu/hdchat/chat.php</a>	

### **Emergency Protocol**

Andrews University takes the safety of its student seriously. Signs identifying emergency protocol are posted throughout buildings. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting that specific location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during any evacuation or sheltering emergency.

***Please Note: The instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus, with the consensus of the class, at any time during the semester for the benefit of the learning process. The up-to-date Course Description for this course may be found at [www.learninghub.andrews.edu](http://www.learninghub.andrews.edu) .***



## APPENDIX 1: INTERPRETING LETTER GRADES

### Letter Grades and Percentages

95-100% A	80-84% B	65-69% C
90-94% A-	75-79% B-	60-64% C-
85-89% B+	70-74% C+	55-59% D

#### ***THE B GRADE***

The B grade is a sign that you have competently fulfilled all of the requirements stipulated for an assessment or competency evaluation. It is a very good grade and demonstrates a high level of the knowledge, insight, critical competence and professional presentation standards essential for an individual wishing to pursue a career as a professional leader in ministry.

#### ***THE A GRADE***

An A grade is given only when a student not only fulfills the criteria 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 by applying feedback from your lecturer, the academic process can provide opportunity for a student to improve their consistency, and hence, their grade.

#### ***THE D GRADE***

The D grade points to a limited level of knowledge, insight, and critique, as well as to inadequate quality of written work. This may be because of a lack of time management on the part of the student, difficulty grasping the concepts being taught, use of English as a second language, or a personal issue that is affecting one's 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 center, the academic process can provide an opportunity for a student to significantly improve their performance.

#### ***THE F GRADE***

A failing grade is given when very limited or no demonstrable competency has been observed.

## APPENDIX 2: ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC(S)

The rubrics to be covered in the exegesis paper will be provided during the class. The criteria for assessing it and the sermon are as follows.

### Exegesis Paper

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

\*Use computer programs and web sites just as you would use a book: do not copy and paste, but pass the material through the crucible of your own mind and use your own words, unless you are making a direct quotation, in which case you must give credit in the normal way.

### Sermon

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

\*Attach a two or three rank outline to the front of the sermon manuscript and follow it in the body of the sermon.

## APPENDIX #: PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

### MASTERS PROGRAMS

#### 1. MA in Pastoral Ministry (MAPM)

- 1) Deliver effective biblically-based sermons
- 2) Demonstrate proper biblical interpretation skills
- 3) Understand the historical-theological development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- 4) Exhibit capability for training church members for evangelism
- 5) Demonstrate an understanding of how to empower church members for leadership
- 6) Exhibit capability for reaching specific social groups

## APPENDIX #: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RECOMMENDED BOOKS & RESOURCES

- Blomberg, Craig L. *Preaching the Parables: From Responsible Interpretation to Powerful Proclamation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004.
- Crossan, John Dominic. "A Basic Bibliography for Parables Research," *Semeia* 1 (1974): 236-73.
- Hultgren, Arland J. *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000.
- Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1947.
- Kissinger, Warren S. *The Parables of Jesus: A History of Interpretation and Bibliography*. Metuchin, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1979.
- Linnemann, Eta. *Parables of Jesus: Introduction and Exposition*. London: SPCK, 1966.
- Longenecker, Richard N., ed. *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2000.
- McArthur, Harvey K., and Robert M. Johnston. *They Also Taught in Parables: Rabbinic Parables from the First Centuries of the Christian Era*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990. Reprinted by Wipf & Stock, 2014.
- Scott, Bernard Brandon. *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- Stern, David. *Parables in Midrash: Narrative and Exegesis in Rabbinic Literatures*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Stern, Frank. *A Rabbi Looks at Jesus' Parables*. Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield, 2006.
- Trench, Richard C. *Notes on the Parables of Our Lord*. Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revel, 1953. Often reprinted.
- Westermann, Claus. *The Parables of Jesus in the Light of the Old Testament*. Trans. by Friedmann W. Golka and Alastair H. B. Logan. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.

Wright, Stephen I. *Jesus the Storyteller*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015.

Young, Brad H. *Jesus and His Jewish Parables: Rediscovering the Roots of Jesus' Teaching*. New York: Paulist Press, 1989.

Young, Brad H. *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998.

For additional books and articles, see also the Seminary Library Portal at  
<http://libguides.andrews.edu/religion> .