

NTST 536 – Studies in the Gospels: Mark

Fall 2026

Thomas R. Shepherd, PhD, DrPH

SYNOPSIS OF THE COURSE

CLASS & CONTACT INFORMATION

Class location:	Forest Lake SDA Church, Apopka, Florida
Class meeting times:	September 21–24, 2026 Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m., 1:00–4:30 p.m.
Course Website:	learninghub.andrews.edu
Instructor Telephone:	Office: 269-471-6574 Cell: (269) 277-9488 – 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
Instructor Email:	trs@andrews.edu
Office location:	10871 Rangeline Road, Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Office hours:	By appointment via Zoom

BULLETIN DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

NTST 536 – Study of a selected book or books of the Gospels. Greek not required. Not applicable to MDiv credit

PROGRAM & COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Your degree program seeks to help you achieve the **Program Learning Outcomes** basic to your chosen profession.

MA in Pastoral Ministry (MAPM) English & Spanish Program Outcomes

1. Delivers effective biblically based sermons.
2. Demonstrates proper biblical interpretation skills.
3. Understands the historical–theological development of the Adventist Church.
4. Capable of training church members for evangelism.
5. Demonstrates an understanding of how to empower church members for leadership.
6. Capable of 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. Repeat key exegetical and theological concepts and themes of Mark.
2. Repeat key definitions of narrative analysis.
3. Utilize Accordance or Logos in research.

4. Demonstrate the ability to do a basic narrative analysis and exegesis of one passage from the Gospel of Mark by writing an exegesis paper according to the class requirements.

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
9/21/26 Mon	Exegesis & Narrative Analysis		2
9/22/26 Tue	Mark 1–8 Highlights		1, 3, 4
9/23/26 Wed	Mark 9–13 Highlights		1, 3, 4
9/24/26 Thur	Mark 14–16 Highlights		1, 3, 4

PRE-INTENSIVE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE TURNED IN ON LEARNING HUB IN DROPBOXES PROVIDED THERE.**
2. **Reading** the book *Gospel of Mark* by Thomas Shepherd and making a one-page single-spaced reading report using the form for this book available on Learning Hub and attached to the end of this syllabus. **Due 9/18/26.**
3. **Reading** pages 17–174 in *Mark* in the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary and making a two-page single-spaced reading report using the form for this available on Learning Hub and attached to this syllabus. **Due 9/18/26.**

INTENSIVE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance** at lectures is expected. **The professor records your attendance on Learning Hub for each class period.** Each 50-minute period counts for one class period. **More than 3 unexcused absences will result in a decrease in the final grade by one full letter, 4 tardies = 1 absence.** Excused absences are for illness or family emergency. For an absence to be excused send an e-mail to the professor with an explanation to trs@andrews.edu. If the number of unexcused absences exceeds 5, the student may be asked to drop the class.
2. **In Class Exercises** – During the class we will break out at times for training in narrative analysis and discussion of questions the professor raises. You get points for these exercises by being present. The professor will explain how this works.

POST-INTENSIVE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Two-Week Asynchronous Forums.** In the two weeks **October 4–17** following the intensive class we will have two asynchronous forums for you to participate in. Here is what you have to do: 1. **Ask at least one question** related to the narrative analysis of your passage or a question about writing your paper. 2. At the end of the second week **submit a one-page, single-spaced report** indicating what you have learned from the forums for writing your paper. There is a drop box for the assignment on Learning Hub. Use the report form for this assignment posted on Learning Hub and also attached to the end of this syllabus. **Due 10/19/26.**
2. **Reading** pages 175–747 in *Mark* by Mark Strauss in the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary and making a two-page single-spaced reading report using the form for this available on Learning Hub and attached to the end of this syllabus. **Due 11/29/24**
3. **Producing a 7–10 page exegesis paper utilizing narrative analysis.** There is a form for this posted on Learning Hub. We will discuss this in detail in class. You must get approval for the passage you will use for your exegesis paper. DO NOT choose a long passage, it will be too much work – 5 to 10 or at maximum 15 verses is my recommendation. **It must be a complete story in Mark.** I will pass around a sign-up sheet during our intensive. Be thinking of the passage you want to work on. If someone else chose the same passage, no problem, but no collaboration in writing your paper and no use of AI. **Due 11/27/26**

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.

Class Absences

“Whenever the number of absences exceeds 20% (10% for graduate classes) 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.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Course Materials

1. A Bible of your choice. KJV, NKJV not recommended, Clear Word not allowed. Suggested versions: NASB, ESV, RSV. These last are modern versions based on the best scholarship for the textual basis and are more word-for-word translations, getting you closer to the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek text of the Bible.
2. Bible Software – Accordance or Logos.
3. Thomas R. Shepherd, *Gospel of Mark*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2024. ISBN 978-0-8163-6998-0
4. Mark L. Strauss, *Mark*. ZECNT. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014. ISBN 978-0-310-24358-8

MORE ABOUT THE COURSE

This course is a study of the Gospel of Mark, the shortest of the canonical Gospels, and considered by many scholars to be the first one written. My goal is for you to become great preachers of Mark and of any of the narrative sections of the Bible. We will spend the first day focusing attention on how to do basic exegesis and how to analyze stories using a method called Narrative Analysis. The last three days of the course we will delve into three parts of Mark (chapters 1–8; 9–13; and 14–16). After the intensive we will have two weeks of forums where you will ask questions about the passages you will use for your exegesis paper.

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 per credit 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		
Instructor Contact Hours	Face to Face Instructional Time	30 hours
	Professor Directed Learning Experiences	15 hours
Independent Learning Activities	Reading Textbooks and Reports	50 hours
	Narrative Analysis Exegesis Paper	40 hours
Total Hours:		135 hours

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.

Assignment Description	Weighting
1. Reading Reports	30%
2. Exegesis Paper	50%
3. In Class Exercises	10%
4. Forums	10%
Total	100%

* 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.

Late Submission

Assignments are due on the due date listed above at the beginning of class. No late submissions are accepted except for illness or serious family emergency.

SDATS GUIDELINES FOR CALCULATING ASSIGNMENT LOADS

Average reading speed: 15-20 pages/hour for light reading not to be tested on
10-15 pages/hour for heavy reading for exams
Writing time: 2.5 – 3 hours/double spaced page, from start to finished product
Reflective Writing Assignment: 0.5 hour per page

ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Thomas R. Shepherd, PhD, DrPH, is Senior Research Professor of New Testament at the Seminary and is the former pastor of the Eau Claire and Dowagiac SDA Churches in Michigan. He has taught at the Theological Seminary since 2008. From 2011–2019 he was the Director of the PhD in Religion and ThD Programs. He officially retired in 2020 but continues teaching for the seminary on contract. He pastored for the Michigan Conference from 2021–2026. Before coming to the Seminary he taught at Union College in Lincoln, NE for 13 years as a professor in the Religion Division (1994–2007). He and his family were missionaries in Brazil in South America (1992–1994) and in Malawi in Africa (1979–1985).



Dr. Shepherd has been active in leadership within the national Society of Biblical Literature, writing proposals establishing the Mark and Methodology Consultation, the Mark Group, the Sabbath in Text, Tradition and Theology Consultation, and the Mark Passion Narrative Seminar of which he was co-chair. He has also presented scholarly papers at the annual meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature, the Evangelical Theological Society and the Adventist Theological Society. He was co-convenor of the international conference *Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue* held in Louvain-la-Neuve in Belgium, April 2010. The papers of that conference were published in 2012 by the academic publisher, Peeters, in Belgium with Geert van Oyen and Dr. Shepherd as co-editors. Dr. Shepherd is the editor of *The Genesis Creation Account and Its Repercussions in the New Testament* published by

Andrews University Press and is the author of the forth-coming new SDA Bible commentary on the Gospel of Mark and, along with Dr. Ross Winkle, on 1 Peter. A list of Dr. Shepherd's publications is attached to this syllabus. Dr. Shepherd is a Past President of the Adventist Theological Society.

Dr. Shepherd was married for 51 years to his best friend, Sherry Shepherd, M.D. (50th anniversary September 8, 2024). His dear wife passed to her rest in Jesus in July 2026 and Dr. Shepherd is looking forward to the resurrection day. Dr. Shepherd has two grown children (Amy and Jonathan), and six grandchildren (Malachi, Nadia, Isaiah and Nathaniel, Samantha and Alexandra). Dr. Shepherd enjoys walking, cycling and weightlifting. He is a cellist in a string quartet and for 10 years organized the twice-yearly Classical Seminary Concert. He is an avid amateur astronomer with an observatory housing his 11-inch Celestron telescope in his backyard.

Academic Publications by Thomas R. Shepherd, PhD, DrPH

Academic Professional Books Published (refereed)

Markan Sandwich Stories: Narration, Definition, and Function, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 18, (Andrews University Press: Berrien Springs, 1993).

Book/Volume Edited

The Genesis Creation Account and Its Reverberations in the New Testament, ed. Thomas R. Shepherd (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2022).

Biblical Parables: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Johnston, eds. Thomas R. Shepherd and Ranko Stefanovic (Berrien Springs, Mich.: New Testament Department, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, 2016).

Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue, eds. Geert Van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, *Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium*, vol. CCIL (Leuven: Peeters, 2012).

Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers, Associate Editor. Ed. Gerhard Pfandl, Biblical Research Institute 2. Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010.

The Trial and Death of Jesus: Essays on the Passion Narrative in Mark, eds. Geert Van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, *Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology*, vol. 45 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006).

Refereed Journal Articles

Thomas R. Shepherd, "The Textual History and Translation of Revelation 21.3b," *The Bible Translator* 74.1 (2023): 110–125.

Joel E. Lisboa and Thomas R. Shepherd, "Comparative Narrative Analysis as a Tool in Determining the *Lectio Difficilior* in Mark 1:40-45: A Narrative Analysis of Codices Bezae, Vaticanus, and Washingtonianus," *Neotestamentica* 49.1 (2015): 75-89.

"'We Thank God for You' How Thanksgiving Transforms Our Walk: A Study in the Theology of Colossians," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 25/2 (2014): 29-42.

“The Scholar and the Word of God: Reflections on 2 Peter 1:16-21,” in *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 24/2 (2013): 3-17.

“Narrative Analysis as a Text Critical Tool: Mark 16 in Codex W as a Test Case,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32.1 (2009): 77-98.

“The Narrative Function of Markan Intercalation,” *New Testament Studies* 41 (1995): 522-540.

Chapters Contributed to Book/Volume (refereed)

“The Sabbath in the Gospel of Mark” in *The Sabbath in the New Testament and in Theology: Implications for Christians in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Ekkehardt Mueller and Eike Mueller (Biblical Research Institute: Silver Spring, MD, 2023), 89–106.

“Creation in the Gospel of Mark” in *The Genesis Creation Account and Its Reverberations in the New Testament*, ed. Thomas R. Shepherd (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2022), 183–201.

“Creation in the General Epistles” in *The Genesis Creation Account and Its Reverberations in the New Testament*, ed. Thomas R. Shepherd (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2022), 373–403.

“Eschatology and Everyday Life: How Paul Brings Home the Last-Day Message to Our Daily Life,” in *Eschatology from an Adventist Perspective: Proceedings of the Fourth International Bible Conference, Rome, June 11–20, 2018*, eds. Elias Brasil de Souza, A. Rahel Wells, Laszlo Gallusz and Denis Kaiser (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2021), 161–179.

“Welcoming Sinners: Redeeming the Past and Future in the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)” in *Biblical Parables: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Johnston*, eds. Thomas R. Shepherd and Ranko Stefanovic (Berrien Springs, Mich.: New Testament Department, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, 2016), 168-184.

“Facing Evil and Finding Atonement: The Crossroad of Jesus’ Passion in 1 Peter 2,” in *The Great Controversy and the End of Evil: Biblical and Theological Studies in Honor of Ángel Manuel Rodríguez in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday*. Edited by Gerhard Pfandl (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute; Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2015), 173-182.

“Resurrection, Rebirth, and the Human Being in 1 and 2 Peter,” in “*What Are Human Beings that You Remember Them?*” *Proceedings of the Third International Bible Conference, Nof GInosar and Jerusalem, June 11–21, 2012*. Edited by Clinton Wahlen (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2015), 165-182.

“The General Epistles” in *Servants and Friends: A Biblical Theology of Leadership*, ed. Skip Bell (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 2014), 211-226.

“Promise and Power: A Narrative Analysis of the Resurrection Story in Mark 16 in Codex Vaticanus and Codex Washingtonianus,” in *Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue*, eds. Geert Van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, vol. CCIL (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 159-182.

“Do the wicked burn forever in hell? Matthew 25:46.” In *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions*

and Answers, ed. Gerhard Pfandl. Biblical Research Institute 2 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 293-296.

“Does 1 John 3:9 teach that converted Christians do not sin?” In *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers*, ed. Gerhard Pfandl. Biblical Research Institute 2 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 422-424.

“Does Paul teach that all things are lawful for the Christian? 1 Corinthians 6:12.” In *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers*, ed. Gerhard Pfandl. Biblical Research Institute 2 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 360-362.

“Does the Parable of the rich man and Lazarus teach the immortality of the soul? Luke 16:22, 23.” In *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers*, ed. Gerhard Pfandl. Biblical Research Institute 2 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 309-312.

“Has the law of Moses been replaced by the grace of Jesus? John 1:17.” In *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers*, ed. Gerhard Pfandl. Biblical Research Institute 2 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 316-320.

“Is Peter the rock on which Jesus built the church? Mathew 16:18.” In *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers*, ed. Gerhard Pfandl. Biblical Research Institute 2 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 273-276.

“What does Jesus mean when he says we are to be ‘perfect’? Matthew 5:48.” In *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers*, ed. Gerhard Pfandl. Biblical Research Institute 2 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2010), 265-266.

“The Irony of Power in the Trial of Jesus and the Denial by Peter – Mark 14:53-72,” in *The Trial and Death of Jesus: Essays on the Passion Narrative in Mark*, eds. Geert Van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology, vol. 45 (Peeters: Leuven, 2006), 229-245.

“The Narrative Role of John and Jesus in Mark 1.1-15,” in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels, Vol 1: The Gospel of Mark*, ed. Thomas Hatina, Library of New Testament Studies, no. 304 (formerly *The Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series*) (T & T Clark: London, 2006), 151-168.

“The Interpretation of Types, Allegories, and Parables” in *Understanding Scripture: An Adventist Approach*, ed. George Reid, Biblical Research Institute Studies, vol. 1 (Review and Herald Publishing Association: Hagerstown, MD, 2005), 223-244.

“Give the Poor Wretch a Drink,” in *Creation, Life, and Hope: Essays in Honor of Jacques B. Doukhan*, ed. Jiri Moskala (Old Testament Department, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University: Berrien Springs, MI, 2000), 139-145.

Popular Books

Unmistakably Christian: Surprising Lessons from 1 & 2 Peter. Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association. 2021.

Gospel of Mark. Sabbath School Quarterly Companion Book. Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association. 2024.

Gospel of Mark. Sabbath School Quarterly for July–September, 2024.

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.
- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create, modify or supplement assignments or tests.

For additional details see: 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 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	helpdesk@andrews.edu	(269) 471-6016
Technical assistance with Learning Hub	dlit@andrews.edu	(269) 471-3960
Technical assistance with your Andrews account	http://andrews.edu/hdchat/chat.php	

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.

Covid-19 Guidelines and Accommodations

The COVID-19 situation remains fluid and therefore necessitates flexibility on the part of the instructor and the students. Communication is key for a successful semester. Students, please be in contact with your instructor if any situation arises that interferes with your learning. Your instructor will do the same.

Additionally, we ask the following from students:

1. If you are exhibiting symptoms or believe you may have been exposed to COVID-19, please do not physically attend class. Reach out to your instructor immediately to work out the details on how you can continue learning.

2. If this course has a remote learning element, please follow your teachers' instructions and policies for camera, microphone, and software use.
3. Students in this course commit to creating a safe classroom environment which precludes posting class materials (including links to unlisted videos or clips of videos removed from context) to social media or other forums. Likewise, Christian ethics rule out disparaging faculty and classmates on social media or in virtual spaces.
4. Note that your instructor or a family member may be affected by the ongoing COVID-19 challenges. We are asking for your understanding and flexibility if classes need to be disrupted, adapted, or modified.

Incomplete Policy

Please see the following guidelines from Academic Records:

- Grades are expected to be submitted at the end of the semester.
 - An incomplete can be submitted only when the majority of the work has been completed and the student has had an extenuating circumstance that did not allow completion of the work (usually medical/severe illness).
 - Given this policy, the student should be able to complete the outstanding work well within the one semester extension period.
- Remember, these students have already been allowed at least one semester beyond the end of semester grade deadline to complete the work (and more time than their peers were allowed.)
- We want to encourage completion, therefore, ***incomplete extensions should be extremely rare.***
- If a student has not completed the work by the extension deadline, the earned grade should be entered and the student can re-register for the course in a subsequent semester.

Below is the Incomplete (I) policy from the AU Bulletin:

I—Incomplete. An Incomplete (I) can be assigned only if the following stipulations are met (*Note: Students will be charged an incomplete fee for each incomplete grade issued*):

- when the major portion of the work for the course has been completed
- student's work is incomplete because of illness or unavoidable circumstances
- incompletes cannot be assigned because of negligence or inferior performance.

Faculty must submit an incomplete contract which states:

1. the remaining work to be completed
2. a plan with timelines for completion of the work
3. the time limit
4. the grade the student will receive if the work is not completed by the agreed-upon time.

Ordinarily, an I shall be removed during the following semester. However, an I contracted in the spring semester may be extended to the autumn semester. Any request for an extension of time beyond the contracted time shall be made in writing before the end of the contracted date and approved by the dean of the college in which the course is offered. The number of I's on a student's record affects the student's class and workload.

Undergraduate restrictions: Students with 8 credits of incompletes may not register for more than 12 credits of new courses; for those with 12 or more credits of incompletes the number of new credits is limited by the dean of the respective college. Incompletes must be removed before graduation.

APPENDIX 1: INTERPRETING LETTER GRADES

Letter Grades and Percentages

95-100%	A	83-86%	B	73-76%	C	0-59%	F
90-94%	A-	80-82%	B-	70-72%	C-		
87-89%	B+	77-79%	C+	60-69%	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: FORMS AND RUBRICS

Reading Report Form for Shepherd Book NTST 536 Gospel of Mark

Name _____ Score _____/50

Type your data in the spaces after each heading. Be succinct. The report should be **1 page single-spaced**, not more.

Pages assigned: 9–124

Pages you read:

Helpful information for preaching you found in the book in bullet points with page number:

-

List in bullet points how you would use the above information in your sermon or sermons:

-

NTST 536 Gospel of Mark – Grading Rubric Shepherd book

Name _____ Total _____/50

To get the full points on pages read you must read all the assigned pages. Less than total pages read loses proportionate points. The bullet points helpful information should fill about half the page and be reasonable points as helpful for sermons. The application to the sermon should reasonably and logically flow from the data.

Pages Read _____/20

Bullet points half page _____/15

Application to sermon reasonable/logical _____/15

Reading Report Form Strauss Commentary pp. 17–174
NTST 536 Gospel of Mark

Name _____ Score _____/50

Type your data in the spaces after each heading. Be succinct. The report should be **2 pages single-spaced**, not more.

Pages assigned: 17–174 **Pages you read:**

Choose two chapters of the commentary to report on. A chapter in the commentary discusses a passage of Mark's Gospel and is titled with a chapter number.

Chapters in commentary: **Passages of Mark these cover:**

Helpful background information listed in bullet points:

-

Helpful exegetical or theological points you gathered from the commentary listed in bullet points:

-

How you will use this data in a sermon or sermons:

-

Reading Report Grading Rubric for Strauss pp. 17–174
NTST 536 Gospel of Mark

Name _____ Total _____/50

To get the full points on pages read you must read all the assigned pages. Less than total pages read loses proportionate points. The background information from the two chapters in the book should have logical/reasonable application or usefulness in a sermon. The same is true of the exegetical/theological information. In the “how you will use the information in a sermon” section you indicate how the data will enrich your sermon presentation. Remember, that background information should be interesting, help interest your congregation in the subject and the exegetical/theological information should help explain the passage to your listeners.

Pages read _____/20

Background information _____/10

Exegetical/Theological information _____/10

How you will use in sermon _____/10

Report Form for Forums
NTST 536 Gospel of Mark

Your Name:

What question(s) did you ask and what did you learn from Dr. Shepherd's response(s)?

What were some other questions that other students asked and what did you learn from Dr. Shepherd's responses?

Grading Rubric for Forums

Student asks meaningful question(s) and in the report

reflects meaningfully on the answer(s) given _____/50

Student lists other questions and answers from other students on

the forum and reflects meaningfully on the answers given _____/50

Final Reading Report Form for Strauss pp. 175–747
NTST 536 Gospel of Mark

Name _____ Score _____/100

Type your data in the spaces after each heading. Be succinct. The report should be **2 pages single-spaced**, not more.

Pages assigned: 175–747 Pages you read:

Choose two chapters of the commentary to report on. A chapter in the commentary discusses a passage of Mark's Gospel and is titled with a chapter number.

Chapters in commentary: Passages of Mark these cover:

Helpful background information listed in bullet points:

-

Helpful exegetical or theological points you gathered from the commentary listed in bullet points:

-

How you will use this data in a sermon or sermons:

-

Reading Report Grading Rubric for Strauss pp. 175–747
NTST 536 Gospel of Mark

To get the full points on pages read you must read all the assigned pages. Less than total pages read loses proportionate points. As in the first report, choose two chapters to report on. The background information from the two chapters in the book should have logical/reasonable application or usefulness in a sermon. The same is true of the exegetical/theological information. In the how you will use the information in a sermon section you indicate how the data will enrich your sermon presentation. Remember, that background information should be interesting, help interest you congregation in the subject and the exegetical/theological information should help explain the passage to your listeners.

Pages read _____/50

Background information _____/15

Exegetical/Theological information _____/15

How you will use in sermon _____/20

Narrative Analysis Exegesis Paper Grading Rubric – Gospel of Mark

	Descriptions	A	B	C	D	F	Grade
Analysis of Text	Analysis of Text (Comparison of versions and commentaries)	Exceeds the basic standards (9–10)	Meets basic standards: knows how to identify difficulties in the translation of the text; no more than 3 errors in each type of analysis used. (8)	Does not meet the basic standards in some areas (7)	Does not meet the basic standards in many areas (6)	Does not meet the basic standards at all. (0–5)	Score: ____
	Analysis of Literary Structure and Context (pericope, narrative, rhetorical, structural, intertextual, etc.)	Exceeds the basic standards (23–25)	Meets basic standards: the suggested structures correspond to the intent of the text; no more than 3 errors in each type of analysis used. (18–22)	Does not meet the basic standards in some areas (14–17)	Does not meet the basic standards in many areas (10–13)	Does not meet the basic standards at all. (0–9)	Score: ____
	Analysis of Backgrounds (history, primary literature: Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Patristic, etc.)	Exceeds the basic standards (9–10)	Meets basic standards: Knows how to apply the information in primary and secondary historical sources to the text; no more than 3 errors in each type of analysis used. (8)	Does not meet the basic standards in some areas (7)	Does not meet the basic standards in many areas (6)	Does not meet the basic standards at all. (0–5)	Score: ____
Expertise in Field	Interaction with secondary literature (journals, books, dissertations, Internet, etc.)	Exceeds the basic standards (9–10)	Meets basic standards: cites at least 5 source in discussion; engages in argumentation with authors at least 2 times, examining the evidence presented in the literature. (8)	Does not meet the basic standards in some areas (7)	Does not meet the basic standards in many areas (6)	Does not meet the basic standards at all. (0–5)	Score: ____
Coherence of the Paper	Construction of Argument (identification of exegetical problems, goals, and thesis, flow, conclusion, etc.)	Exceeds the basic standards (18–20)	Meets basic standards: has a thesis statement; evidence is presented to support the thesis; appropriate conclusions are drawn from the evidence (14–17)	Does not meet the basic standards in some areas (10–13)	Does not meet the basic standards in many areas (6–9)	Does not meet the basic standards at all. (0–5)	Score: ____
	Style (clarity & style of writing, spelling, correct style for notes, etc.)	Exceeds the basic standards (9–10)	Meets basic standards: no more than 3 spelling or grammatical errors; no more than 3 errors in the footnote and bibliographical entries; correctly follows the Andrews Style (8)	Does not meet the basic standards in some areas (7)	Does not meet the basic standards in many areas (6)	Does not meet the basic standards at all. (0–5)	Score: ____
Relevance	Implications (personal, relating to church, further research, sermons, etc.)	Exceeds the basic standards (9–10)	Meets basic standards: Inferences are drawn from the study; the ideas are coherent (8)	Does not meet the basic standards in some areas (7)	Does not meet the basic standards in many areas (6)	Does not meet the basic standards at all. (0–5)	Score: ____
Overall Quality	Creativity, originality, sincerity, and quality of reflection	Very Satisfactory (5)	Satisfactory (4)	Somewhat Satisfactory (3)	Barely Satisfactory (2)	Not Satisfactory (0–1)	Score: ____

Student Name _____

TOTAL _____/

Simple Rapid Narrative Analysis Form (RNA) – Passage _____

Plot

	Details	Ref
Problem		
Development		
Crisis		
Complication		
Resolution		

Key Settings

[illegible]

Props

Prop	Linkage	Ref

Central Characters

[illegible]

Final Thesis:

Actions

[illegible]

Key Gaps

Central Anachronies

[illegible]

Narrator & Implied Reader Notes

Key Word Study and Historical Background Worksheet

Key Words You Identified in the Passage (3–5)

What Makes Them Key Words (Evidence from Bible Version Comparison and Commentaries)

Historical Background Information You Found Pertinent to Your Study

Sources of the Data