Essential Information
Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at http://support.nts.edu.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- Handbook for Inclusive Language

Instructor Information
Professor: Andy Johnson, Ph.D.
Email: ajohnson@nts.edu
Office: (816) 268-5485
Office Hours: By appointment

Catalog Description
Catalogue Description: A study of selected issues in biblical literature.

Seminar Description: This seminar will concentrate on the nature and practice of a missional hermeneutic as a sub-genre of theological interpretation. Most of the seminar will be focused on reading and engaging examples of the use of a missional hermeneutic to interpret particular biblical documents or to explore particular theological foci (i.e., ecclesiology, election, holiness).

Course Narrative & Rationale
Since the 1980's, sparked especially by the writings of Leslie Newbigin and David Bosch, the field of missiology has undergone a seismic shift. Especially in the last 15 years or so, the shockwaves of that shift have been felt in all the other theological disciplines as well, including that of biblical studies. During that time, there has been a concerted effort—one that started slowly but is now beginning to pick up speed—to develop and practice a missional hermeneutic for interpreting biblical texts. There have been a variety of attempts to delineate the nature of such a hermeneutic and there remains a good deal of disagreement over just what an adequate missional hermeneutic might involve. It’s doubtful that there will ever be complete agreement over such methodological issues. Thankfully, this hasn’t stopped biblical scholars and theologians from beginning to produce works that put on display a hermeneutic that most would recognize as being missional in nature. Most of us will learn how to practice biblical interpretation in a missional key by watching others attempt it, even if those attempts don’t quite have all the methodological kinks worked out. We all
have to start somewhere and since you’re attending a seminary that declares itself to be a missional seminary in the service of a missional church, it’s better for you to start sooner rather than later trying to hone your abilities to interpret biblical texts and theological doctrines in a missional key. That’s why I’m teaching this seminar…not just for you to hone your abilities but for me to sharpen mine as well! So I invite you to join me this semester as together we try to learn how to better practice biblical interpretation in the service of God’s life-giving mission in the world.

Degree Objectives Directly Addressed by This Course

MDiv
2. The articulation of the knowledge of this God through prayerful, scholarly study and a deepening understanding of the Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. (all course outcomes)
6. The investigation of human society, thought and culture in order to articulate clear and coherent views of the context of the mission of the Church, and to develop an understanding of the Church as the community of faith with a passion for the gospel engaging in mission to different cultures. (all course outcomes)

MA(TS)
General Academic Track
1. Students will develop a comprehensive knowledge of the major theological disciplines and their interrelationships. (This course primarily addresses the student’s knowledge of biblical studies directly but it will also address a rudimentary knowledge of systematic theology and church history as it relates specifically to the doctrine of God and election (course outcome 2, particularly as it relates to a portion of the assignment for 2/4 and the entire assignment of 3/25.)

Research Track
1. Students will gain specialized knowledge in designated theological disciplines as a basis for further graduate studies. (all course outcomes)
2. Students will develop skill in academic research and writing as a basis for further graduate studies. (all course outcomes)

MACE
1. Appropriate and enhance the student’s ecclesial understanding of the Word of God, the heritage of the faith, the doctrines of the church, and the fellowship of believers, sufficient to enable him or her to deepen a personal commitment to God and His Church and to inform a passionate, vital, and redemptive ministry. (all course outcomes)

MAICS
2. Graduates will demonstrate the integration of theological convictions and cultural sensitivity in order to foster individual and social transformation. (all course outcomes)

Course Outcomes
Upon successful completion of the course you will have (R = Course requirement directed toward achieving objective):

1. Demonstrated a familiarity with, and a critical evaluation of, recent attempts to articulate the nature of missional hermeneutics (R1, 2).
2. Demonstrated a familiarity with, and a critical evaluation of, recent scholarly works that classify themselves, or might be classified by others, as missional interpretations of biblical documents or theological foci (R1, 2).
3. Demonstrated an ability to apply your emerging understanding of missional hermeneutics consistently in the interpretation of a specific biblical document (R3).
Required Texts & Course Materials

Texts to be Purchased


Gombis, Timothy G. The Drama of Ephesians. IVP Academic, 2010.


Material to be Made Available Online, through Moodle, or through the NTS Library


Flemming, Dean. Three Chapters on the Gospels from a forthcoming book (available as 3 PDF’s in Moodle).


Hunsberger, George R. “Starting Points, Trajectories, and Outcomes in Proposals for a Missional Hermeneutic: Mapping the Conversation.” Presented at the AAR (Nov 1) and SBL (Nov 22) Meetings: Fall of 2008 (14 pages) (http://www.gocn.org/resources/articles/proposals-missional-hermeneutic-mapping-conversation).

Johnson, Andy. Three chapters on 1 & 2 Thessalonians from a forthcoming commentary.

________. Holiness and the Missio Dei (chapters from a forthcoming book).


**Recommended Websites**

http://www.gocn.org/
One of the premier sites on the web for all things “missional.”

http://realmmealministries.org/WordPress/?page_id=753
Brian Russell’s numerous helpful short essays/blogs on missional hermeneutics.

**Course Outline**

See Course Calendar below.

**Course Assignments & Requirements:** CO = Course Outcome Related to Assignment

1. **Regular Seminar Attendance, Preparation, and Participation (CO 1, 2):** You must regularly attend and actively participate in the seminar discussion. You will be evaluated based on the quality of your contributions to the discussion. If you have an unexcused absence for the day, you will receive a zero for your participation grade that day. You may earn up to 260 points for your class participation throughout the semester (20 points possible per day times 13 class sessions = 260 total points).

   **Basis for Evaluation:** I will take the following factors into account in evaluating your participation: (1) ability to demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding of the assigned material; (2) ability to engage this material in a critical way; (3) ability to exhibit how the material is related to a larger theological and ecclesial context.

2. **Reactions to Readings (CO 1, 2):** You will write a 500-750 word reaction to each day’s assigned readings (see Class and Reading Schedule below). Usually the purpose of these papers will be to identify key interpretive moves and interpretive results of the writers’ missional engagement with scripture and offer an initial response to them. You should conclude your paper by proposing 2-3 questions designed to help guide seminar discussion. There may, however, be times when I will give you more specific guidance on what the focus of your paper should be. In those cases I will give that guidance in the session before the paper is due or early in the week preceding the session it is due. There are twelve sessions in which these papers will be due. You may earn up to 40 points per paper making all of them worth a total of 480 points. In addition to evaluating these papers based on their correct use of English, I will evaluate them using the Basis for Evaluation given immediately above under Requirement 1. They are due at class time, and you should bring two copies of your paper to each class (one for you and one for me). Given that these papers are intended to enhance seminar discussion, I will not accept them late.

3. **Missional Reading of Colossians (CO 3):** You will write a paper of 3,000-4,000 words offering a missional reading of either Colossians as a whole or a major section of Colossians. This is your opportunity to put into practice what you’ve been observing all semester. While the paper should consult a generous selection of major commentaries, monographs, and journal articles on Colossians, it should not simply be another “exegetical paper” on Colossians where your sources set the interpretive agenda. Rather, it should showcase your own ability to interpret Colossians in a missional key. While the paper should generally follow Turabian style, you may consult the SBL Handbook of Style for proper form for footnotes, abbreviations, etc. You may also use the document entitled “Ripples and Luke 24HBT.doc” located in Moodle in the Additional Course Resources topic area as a general guide as to how this paper should look in terms of footnotes and style. Your paper will be due on **Wednesday, May 1 at 11:55 PM.** Depending on how many students are in the seminar, we will do one of the following three things or something like one of them: (1) You will post your paper...
into a discussion forum in Moodle and your classmates and I will read it and (possibly) pose some questions for you that you will address when we meet together in our last class session on May 6; (2) You will read your paper in its entirety when we meet on May 6 and respond on the spot to queries from those in the seminar; (3) You will summarize your paper when we meet on May 6 and respond on the spot to queries from those in the seminar. I will let you know how we will proceed as the semester moves along. You may earn up to 260 points for this paper.

### Distribution of Student Learning Hours

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face Class Sessions</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Reading</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Writing</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colossians Paper</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>159</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Method for Submitting Assignments

All reaction papers are to be turned in at class time in printed form. I will give you further instructions on how to submit your Colossians paper toward the end of the semester.

### Form and Style Expectations

There are no style requirements for the weekly reaction papers. See requirement 3 above for form and style expectations for your Colossians paper.

### Inclusive Language

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language. I will deduct penalty points when you do not use gender inclusive language when it would be possible without it becoming cumbersome.

### Policy Regarding Attendance and Late Work

You are expected to attend class regularly and participate in the daily discussions. Attendance will be taken daily. An absence will only be excused in accordance with the guidelines established in the NTS catalogue. Given the nature of the course, I cannot accept late work unless there are extreme circumstances involved.

### Course Grading

A Word about Grading: Evaluation in this kind of course, by its very nature, involves an element of subjectivity. It involves someone who is an expert in the field making a judgment on the kind of work you produce. That is a part of what you are paying for in this class. The primary factors I take into account in assessing “good solid graduate work,” the sort of work to which I assign a “B” are (1) ability to demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding of the material engaged; (2) ability to engage this material in a critical way; (3) ability to exhibit how the material is related to a larger theological and ecclesial context. If you demonstrate a consistent ability to do these things in all your coursework, you can expect to receive a B. If you demonstrate consistent ability to do them incisively and with excellence, you can expect to receive an A. If you demonstrate an ability to do these things often, but not consistently, you can expect to receive a C. (Hence, I assume that a C
means “average,” or “satisfactory” work. It does not mean “bad” or “unsatisfactory.”) If you seldom demonstrate an ability to do these things, you can expect to receive a D.

The final grade will be computed using the following point scale. There are 1,000 possible points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>260</td>
<td>Weekly Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>480</td>
<td>Weekly Reaction Papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>260</td>
<td>Colossians Paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following point scale will determine letter grades:

- A: 1,000-900
- B: 899-800
- C: 799-700
- D: 699-600
- F: 599-0

**Documented Learning Disabilities**

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly, NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

**Class Attendance**

Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss the situation. This is especially true for a reading seminar like this one. If a student is absent four or more weeks of the semester, the professor may automatically fail the student.

Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.
**Course Calendar** (Schedule of class topics may be changed at professor’s discretion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due: Read in order of appearance!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>02/04</td>
<td>Introduction to Seminar</td>
<td>Missio Dei, 19-57; 75-106 (71); Hunsberger, Barram, Brownson, Stiff (35 pages); Total Pages: 106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/11</td>
<td>Ecclesiology in a Missional Key</td>
<td>Goheen, 1-119; Total Pages: 119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/18</td>
<td>Ecclesiology in a Missional Key</td>
<td>Goheen, 121-226; Total Pages: 106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/25</td>
<td>The Gospels in a Missional Key</td>
<td>Flemming’s three chapters on the gospels (48), Hahn in Missio Dei, 58-66 (9); Total pages: 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/04</td>
<td>Acts in a Missional Key</td>
<td>Rowe, 3-89; Total Pages: 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/11</td>
<td>Acts in a Missional Key</td>
<td>Rowe, 91-176 (86); Responses to Rowe (approximately 30 additional pages); Total Pages: 116</td>
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<tr>
<td>03/25</td>
<td>Election in a Missional Key (from the side of systematic theology)</td>
<td>McDonald, xii-201; Total Pages: 208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/01</td>
<td>Paul’s Letters in a Missional Key: 1 &amp; 2 Thessalonians</td>
<td>Johnson, 1 Thessalonians 1 (23); 5:12-28 (14); 2 Thessalonians 1 (17); Total Pages: 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/08</td>
<td>Paul’s Letters in a Missional Key: Ephesians</td>
<td>Gombis, 13-106; Total Pages: 94</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/15</td>
<td>Paul’s Letters in a Missional Key: Ephesians</td>
<td>Gombis, 107-184; Total Pages: 78</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/22</td>
<td>Philippians and Revelation in a Missional Key</td>
<td>Johnson in Missio Dei, pp. 67-74; Gorman on Philippians (approximately 25), (8) Flemming on Revelation (17), Mangina on Revelation (20); Total Pages: 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/29</td>
<td>Holiness in a Missional Key</td>
<td>Johnson, Holiness and the Missio Dei; Total Pages: 65</td>
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<tr>
<td>05/01</td>
<td>NOT A CLASS DAY BUT A DUE DATE</td>
<td>Colossians Paper Due by 11:55 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>05/06</td>
<td>Colossians in a Missional Key</td>
<td>Paper Presentations</td>
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