

Number & Title of Course: (REL 351) The Geography of Faith: Paul, and the Emergence of Christianity in the Aegean

Semester or Session/ Year and Location(s): Summer 2023

Course Instructor(s): Cameron Afzal

Course Description

The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the work and thinking of Paul as well as the social impact the emergence of Christianity had on the Greco-Roman world. This will be accomplished with a combination of lectures and discussions on both the life and teaching of Paul of Tarsus as well as a general overview of Greco-Roman religion and society.

Course Approach

Students will be introduced to Paul's letters and the social world implied therein. The introductory classroom experience in Athens will equip the students to explore the ancient streets and byways of some of the major urban sites of the ancient Greek world. We will begin our study in a classroom in Athens and then move on to visit both the major classical sites in Athens and some of the key cities where Paul worked and taught: Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth. Students will also be introduced to life in the Greek city including visits to Eleusis and Delphi, which were major centers of Greek religious life in the First Century. We will be aided in our study with visits to museums like the Archeological Museum in Athens. In addition to our focus on the life and work of Paul, we will also have occasion, in the course of our studies, to explore the impact that Paul's work ultimately had in the region with visits to various Byzantine sites, including the New Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessalonica, and a trip to the Monastic site of Meteora, among others, from Late Antiquity.

Learning Objectives

Students will participate in seminars with assigned readings and discussion of primary texts, as well as on-site discussion and conversation.

Course Requirements

The course will conclude with a take-home open book final exam consisting of short essay tasks.

Evaluation and Grading

Students will be evaluated on attendance, participation, and discussion (60%), and on the final exam (40%) which will review the assigned readings and the lectures.

Attendance Policy

CYA regards attendance in class and on-site (in Athens or during field study trips) as essential. Absences are recorded and have consequences. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately to the Student Affairs Office.

Academic Accommodations

If you are a registered (with your home institution) student with a disability and you are entitled to learning accommodation, please inform the Office of Academic Affairs and make sure that your school forwards the necessary documentation.

Policy on Original Work

Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own original work. Any ideas taken from the work of others must be clearly identified as quotations, paraphrases, summaries, figures etc., and accurate internal citations and/or captions (for visuals) as well as an accompanying bibliography must be provided (Check the Student Handbook, pg. 7).

Use of Laptops

In-class or onsite use of laptops and other devices is permitted if this facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop or other device privileges will be suspended if devices are not used for class-related work.

Class Schedule

Class Day	Day/Date/Place (if applicable)	Topic / Readings / Assignments Due
1		<p>The Origins of Christianity in the Resurrection Experience and the Jesus Movement <i>Description</i></p> <p>The Book of Acts (if you haven't read the NT, perhaps also Luke or Matthew) Newsome, <i>Greeks Romans and Jews</i>, "The Spread of Hellenism" Esler, <i>The Early Christian World</i>, "Mediterranean Context of Early Christianity"</p> <p>Barrett, <i>NT Background: Selected Documents</i> "Rabbinic Literature and Rabbinic Judaism" (For in class discussion)</p>
2		<p>Greek Religion</p> <p><i>Homeric Hymn to Demeter</i> <i>Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo</i> Martin, <i>The Early Christian World</i>, "Greco-Roman Philosophy and Religion" Barrett, <i>NT Background: Selected Documents</i> "Mystery Religions" Rice & Stambaugh, <i>Sources for the Study of Greek Religion</i> on Delphi, Eleusinian Mysteries, Dionysian Mysteries and the Kabeiroi at Samothrace Burkert, <i>Greek Religion</i>, "Individual Gods," "Mystery Sanctuaries: The Kabeiroi and Samothrace, Eleusis, and Bacchica"</p>
3		<p>Women and the Greco-Roman World</p> <p>Kramer, <i>Maenads, Martyrs, Matrons and Monastics</i> (excerpts) Portefaix, <i>Sisters Rejoice</i> "Part 1" pp. 9-58</p>
4		<p>The Life of Paul</p> <p>Paul, a Pharisee, Conversion and Questions of Chronology Galatians 1 (Acts 9) Martin, <i>The Early Christian World</i>, "Paul and the Development of Gentile Christianity"</p>

5	The Birth of a Mixed Jewish and Gentile Community “The Antioch Incident” Galatians 1-2 (Acts 13-15) Meeks, <i>The First Urban Christians</i> , “The Urban Environment of Paul” Meeks, <i>The First Urban Christians</i> , “The Social level of Pauline Christians”
6	Paul’s Missionary Journeys in Asia Minor and Greece Ephesus: Mission to the Gentiles Galatians 3-5, Philemon (Acts 16:1-10) Murphy O’Connor, <i>St. Paul’s Ephesus</i> Meeks, <i>The First Urban Christians</i> , “The Formation of the Ekklesia”
7	Thessaloniki: The Church and Persecution 1 Thessalonians, (Acts 17) Malherbe, <i>Paul and the Thessalonians</i> , “Founding the Christian Community” Jewett, <i>The Thessalonian Correspondence: Pauline Rhetoric and Mediterranean Piety</i> , “The Setting in Thessalonica” H. Koester, “Archeology and Paul in Thessalonike” in <i>Paul and His World</i>
8	Philippi: Christian Identity and The Role of Women in Paul’s Churches Philippians (Acts 16:11-40) Portefaix, <i>Sisters Rejoice</i> pp. 59-128 H. Koester, “Paul and Philippi” in <i>Paul and His World</i>
9	Corinth: Christians among Gentiles (Acts 18) The Corinthian Correspondence Balch, <i>Paul and the Greco-Roman World</i> , “Paul, Households, and Families” Murphy O’Conner, <i>St. Paul’s Corinth</i>
10	Back to Athens: Conclusions

Course Bibliography

Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion*. Cambridge: Harvard, 1995.

Hans-Josef Klauck, *Magic and Paganism in early Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of early Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

Helmut Koester, *Paul and His World* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007

Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. Yale, 2nd ed. 2003.

Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul a Critical Life*. Oxford University Press, 1996.

Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: His Story*. Oxford University Press, 2006.

Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and Archeology*. 3rd ed. Liturgical Press, 2002.

Calvin Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul: Conversations in Context*

E. P. Sanders, *Paul: A Very Short Introduction* Oxford, 2001

N. T. Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* Fortress Press, 2009

Paul A Biography Harper One 2018

A new, very readable yet at times almost novelistic biography of Paul. It incorporates Wright's decades-long work on Paul's theology and sets it in the context of a chronology that sometimes contradicts a long term consensus on the order of Paul's letters. The dominant position among NT scholars has been to try to keep Paul's own writings and the Book of Acts at arm's length, yet Wright does as good a job as any in attempting to harmonize any discrepancies in chronology.

N.B.: The course schedule, in terms of subjects and readings, may be subject to change to benefit student learning and to keep up to date with current research.