

Bi816, Exposition of Mark

Fall 2003, Fri., 10:00 AM–12:15 PM

2 credit hours

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Course web site: <<http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/classes/nt811.htm>>

Course Syllabus

Please note! Students are responsible for everything in this syllabus, whether it is specifically mentioned in class or not. Please read all of it very carefully. If you have questions, please ask.

1. Description

A study of Mark's portrayal of Jesus of Nazareth, emphasizing the features of Mark that are unique and distinctive among the Gospels. Critical problems involving authorship and date, historical and cultural setting, the Synoptic Problem, and the ending of the Gospel will be included. The treatment of these issues will be practical and will assist in the preaching and teaching of Mark's Gospel.

2. Objectives

The student will understand the message of and critical issues related to the Gospel of Mark. In particular, the student will (be able to): reach a decision regarding the date, authorship, and setting of the Gospel; explain the Synoptic Problem as it relates to Mark; resolve the question regarding the ending of Mark and decide how he will handle the issue in pastoral ministry; master the content and theological significance of the Gospel.

3. Materials

3.1. Required textbooks

Gundry, Robert H. *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

3.2. Recommended textbooks

Edwards, James R. *The Gospel According to Mark*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Lane, William L. *The Gospel of Mark*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

4. Requirements

4.1. Reading

- Read Mark **12 times** during the semester using **at least 6 different translations**. Each complete reading must be done in one sitting. It will (severely!) hurt your grade if many of these readings occur at the end of the semester. The goal is for you to read through the book consistently and frequently throughout the semester—ideally, once a week. Report your reading on the last day of class using the form provided at the end of this syllabus.
- Gundry, 1–26, 1022–51 {56 pgs.}
- An additional 500 pgs. in Gundry, particularly the large print sections of the commentary proper (you can skip the small print, technical discussions if you so desire; if you do, don't count them in your page total).¹
- An additional 500 pgs. in any sources directly relevant to an exposition of Mark (commentaries, journals, grammars, etc.). This may include additional pages from Gundry. Also recommended are the commentaries by Lane (NICNT), Edwards (Pillar), France (NIGTC), Cranfield (CGT), Guelich (WBC, v. 34a), and Evans (WBC, v. 34b).

4.2. Writing

Unless noted otherwise all written papers/projects should conform to proper thesis form according to the most recent edition of Turabian's style guide. Only third person may be used; first (*I, we*, etc.) and second (*you*) person are to be avoided. All written assignments are to be printed in high quality. Draft-mode printing or handwritten copy is not acceptable. Footnotes, as opposed to end notes, are required for documentation. Greek or Hebrew text, if used, should be printed with an appropriate font, not handwritten or transliterated.² A sample paper that illustrates the form and style desired and a *Style Guide Supplement* is available from the faculty secretary (copies are also in the computer lab and the Seminary reading room).³

¹ The small print section are where Gundry interacts with just about everybody who has said anything about Mark! It can be very helpful if you're working on a particular problem, but it isn't as profitable for "just reading."

² Breathing marks must be included in Greek text; accents may be omitted or neatly added by hand if absolutely necessary (i.e., if the Greek font being used does not include accents). Permission may be requested to transliterate an *occasional* Hebrew word if necessary. Hebrew vowels should generally be included but Masoretic accents may be omitted. See Dr. Stallard if you need information on doing any of these things in the Seminary computer lab.

³ The sample is quite brief (only about 4 pages, 850 words), but illustrates the basics of form and style adequately. (It is not intended as a sample of the *content* of an exegetical or grammatical paper.) Please do not cite

All papers are due at the beginning of the class hour on the day specified in the syllabus. If a student cannot attend class on that day, he should make arrangements with a friend/spouse to deliver the paper on time. In extenuating circumstances the paper may be submitted via e-mail as an attached file; contact the professor for permission before doing so.⁴ An identical printed copy should be submitted as soon afterwards as possible. (See late work policy below.)

□ **Research paper, 2–4,000 words⁵**

The student will select a topic/text from Mark 8:31–12:44 and prepare a careful study of it for presentation in both written form and as a class presentation. (Only one student per passage.) Recommended *minimum* size: one pericope or 10 verses (whichever is larger); recommended *maximum* size, 25 verses. The class presentation should not consist of simply reading the paper, but should incorporate creative methods—*so long as these do not detract from the content*. The use of PowerPoint or similar tools is encouraged. Students who both write a good quality paper and present it well can expect a commensurably higher grade. Papers of exceptional quality may qualify to be posted on the prof's web site.

(For a 2,000-word paper to receive full credit it will have to be exemplary in both research, writing style, and conciseness. In other words, you'd probably be wise to stay towards the heavier end of the scale! Please include the word count from your word processor at the end of the paper.)

Due dates for the paper:

- Passage selection: **second class hour**
- Detailed, annotated outline and bibliography reflecting that the bulk of the research is complete: **Oct. 31** (= first class back from Oct. modules) I will try to get back some comments and suggestions a.s.a.p. so that you can incorporate them in your paper.
- First draft, complete written paper: **Nov. 14** {**Note:** this is only two weeks after the outline, so don't wait to begin writing, even though you only turn in an outline earlier! Also note that the mid-term is the same day. You would be wise to

the content of this paper as an authority. If you are interested in the topic, read the larger article from which this brief section has been adapted: Rodney J. Decker, "Polity and the Elder Issue," *GTJ* 9 (1988): 257–77.

⁴ The attached file should be formatted in Microsoft Word (Mac or Windows, any version) if at all possible. Papers using the original languages may be a problem if submitted this way due to the fonts involved. Check with the professor if this becomes necessary. It is preferred that Greek text be either in the Galilee font or a polytonic Greek Unicode font. (For Galilee, see <<http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/galilee.htm>>; for the Unicode option, see <<http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/unicode.htm>>.)

⁵ Words include only the text and footnotes of the paper, not the title page or bibliography. Translated to pages, a 2,000 word paper is approximately 5 pages *if* printed with a 12 point Times Roman font double-spaced with 1" margins. If you use 12 point Courier (a monospaced font), it is approximately 7 ½ pages.

complete most of the paper in October during the PhD/DMin classes when MDiv classes do not meet.}

- Final copy of paper and class presentation: **December** (date to be assigned based on class size and passage selected). You will probably have 30–45 min. for your presentation (depends on class size and schedule). You should distribute either a copy of the complete paper or a useful handout to your classmates at the time of your presentation.

□ **“Web-liography”**

Compile an annotated bibliography of web resources relevant to the study of Mark, including both expositional and background material. (Do *not* include general Gospel sites or those which relate only to the life of Christ or the historical Jesus/Jesus Seminar.) The web searches/research must be the student’s own work and must include a *minimum* of 10 substantive web pages/sites* that are not already listed on the prof’s Mark page (see URL below). These should be formatted either in an email message or as a web page and should include the title of the page, author, complete URL, and a brief summary and evaluation of the content. Include a classification of the page/site as follows:

Basic (S.S., lay-level material)

Devotional/pietistic/mystical

Serious (good exposition, though for the English reader)

Technical (addresses the Greek text, critical issues, etc.)

Note that only the last two categories count as “substantive.” If you find relevant material that does not fit one of these categories, you may propose another classification.

The composite class bibliography will be posted on the web for others to use in research. Due date: last class hour (12/19).

http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/nt_gospels#Mark

*Should you find an entire site devoted to Mark, that counts as *one* entry, not one for each page on the site.

4.3. Memorization

Mark 8:34–38; 10:42–45 is to be memorized “letter-perfect” by the end of the semester.

This may be done in either ESV, NIV, NASB⁹⁵, or NKJV. This will be quizzed four times during the semester. You should be prepared to *either* recite orally *or* write the cumulative section due as scheduled:

8:34–36 > 9/12

8:34–38 > 9/26

8:34–38 and 10:42–43 > 11/14 (part of mid-term exam; will be written format)

8:34–38 and 10:42–45 > 12/19 (part of final exam; will be written format)

4.4. Quizzes and Exams

There will be two “blue book” exams: a mid-term and a final. The mid-term will be taken in class on Nov. 16* and will include the third memory quiz; the final will be taken in class on Dec. 21 and will cover primarily the material and content from the student papers. *Exams may not be taken late.* Inclement weather does not affect this stipulation unless Seminary classes are canceled. [*The prof will be speaking out of town on Nov. 16; a proctor will be present to administer the exam.]

4.5. Attendance

Classes will be governed by the (very generous) attendance policy as delineated in the Student Handbook (p. 5). Record your attendance on the form provided at the end of the syllabus.

5. Grading

• Reading: textbook	30
• Reading: collateral	30
• Web-liography	20
• Memory quizzes (4 @ 10)	40
• Paper, outline & bibliog.	40
• Paper, final written form	100
• Class presentation	40
• Mid-term exam	100
• Final exam	100
Total points possible:	500

The final grade is calculated by adding the total points earned and dividing by the total points possible to arrive at a percentage grade. One point on any assignment is worth as much as one point on any other item. Grades that average to a decimal figure of .5 or above will be rounded to the next higher grade when the final semester grade is calculated.

The grade scale for this class is as follows:

A = 100–95; A– = 94; B+ = 93; B = 92–88; B– = 87;

C+ = 86; C = 85–78; C– = 77; D+ = 76; D = 75–71; D– = 70; F = ≤ 69

6. Misc. Notes

Taping: Class sessions may not be tape recorded.

Instructor’s books: Please do not ask to borrow books in the instructor’s personal library. The library is available for that purpose. If it is critically important and the library does not have a copy, order your own copy at the bookstore or avail yourself of interlibrary loan.

Audit policy: Students requesting to register for a class on an audit basis must first obtain my approval. I would *prefer* that you jot me a note (e-mail is fine) stating what class you would like to audit and your reasons for auditing rather than taking it for credit. Attendance requirements are the same for audit and credit students. The following course requirements apply to audit students: all reading, memory quizzes, and web-liography.

Contacting the prof.: E-mail is preferred (because then I have a record of your request) and you're most likely to get a prompt reply. Otherwise, I usually plan to be in my study all day (room 123; ext. 9397; direct: 585-9397). You may, if necessary call me at home (587-3297) or stop by the house in the evening (307 Layton Rd.: about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile up the hill from rt. 6 on the left; 3-story, gray house). Unless it is a real emergency,⁶ I'd rather you not do either after 9 P.M. (esp. on days that I have a 6:30 A.M. class the next morning).

7. Tentative Class Schedule

Class will meet the following Fridays (quiz days **marked**):

Aug. 29; Sept. 5, **12**, 19, **26**; [Oct. modules]; Oct. 31; Nov. 7, 14, **21*** [Thanksgiving]; Dec. 5, 12, **19**.

[*Prof at conference; proctor will give exam.]

8. Bibliography

The bibliography for this course is posted at:

<http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/classes/MarkBibliog.htm>.

⁶ *Emergency* does not include parsing Greek verbs!

9. Attendance & Reading Record

Please note the attendance policy in section 4.5 above. The following records are to be kept current throughout the semester. Do *not* wait until the last week and then try to remember if and when you were in class. You will be expected to be able to sign the statement at the end honestly and without reservation or qualification.

Specific instructions: Mark the appropriate box with one of the four following symbols. (Please use restraint—calligraphy and artistic creativity is not as desirable as ready legibility!)

- × = I was present at the beginning of the hour and attended the entire session.
- t = I was present for most of the session, but arrived within 10 minutes *after* the beginning of class.
- o = I made it to part of the session, but was more than 10 minutes late.
- A = I was absent for this session. For all sessions marked “A,” please record the reason for your absence in the right hand column.

Note: The presence of a briefcase, jacket, or other belongings does *not* constitute your being present.

Date	First Hour	Second Hour
Aug. 29		
Sept. 5		
Sept. 12		
Sept. 19		
Sept. 26		
Oct. 31		
Nov. 7		
Nov. 14		
Nov. 21		
Dec. 5		
Dec. 12		
Dec. 19		

The above record is an accurate and honest account of my attendance during the fall 2003 semester in the class Bi816, Exposition of Mark. It contains no guesses or “aspirations” for the information requested.

Name (printed): _____ Signed: _____

Reading Record for Mark

	Date	Version Read		Date	Version Read
1			7		
2			8		
3			9		
4			10		
5			11		
6			12		

