

ACTS*Associated Canadian Theological Schools*
*THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST***BIE 722A**

Semester: Fall 2008

Time: Tuesdays, 2:30-5:10

Prerequisite: BIE 505

EXPOSITION OF HEBREWS

Dr. Brian M. Rapske

3 Credit Hours

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The canonical document we know as Hebrews reaches into the first century circumstances of a community of Christians possessing some sort of Jewish heritage who are being harried by outside forces. They feel tempted to collapse into what they might think is an easier faith that makes more of Judaism and less of Jesus the Christ. Hebrews responds with a simple, searching question, “But *why* would you want to do such a thing?” In the tones and cadences of a preacher, he answers the question with breathtaking expositions and electrifying exhortations. Why revert to that which, in all its deepest convictions, broadest practices, most solemn institutions and highest aspirations, longs for its ultimate fulfillment in the coming of Jesus the Christ? Christ is the brilliantly superior against which all else in Judaism is the dark anticipation. The message of Hebrews speaks volumes to a modern Christianity living in a pluralistic world whose mantra is ‘all faiths are equal.’

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course aims to help the student to:

- A. grasp the content of the book of Hebrews and appreciate the witness that it bears to the Lord Jesus Christ;
- B. discuss knowledgeably various introductory issues to Hebrews such as what type of writing it is, its authorship, audience, date, purpose and structure;
- C. delineate the theological themes that run through Hebrews;
- D. move from sound interpretation of Hebrews to its appropriate application to analogous issues and concerns in the church and world today; and
- E. personally respond to the witness of Hebrews for the challenge that it gives to belief in and obedient service to the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

1. *The Bible*, preferably a translation such as the *NIV* or *NRSV*.
2. Guthrie, George H. *The NIV Application Commentary: Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. [452 pages and noted as **G.**]
3. Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Hebrews: A Commentary*. NTL; Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox, 2006. [359 pages and noted as **J.**]
4. Lindars, Barnabas. *The Theology of the Book of Hebrews*. NTT; Cambridge: CUP, 1991. [142 pages]

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Load. Typically, approximately 40 hours are required to complete the work necessary to earn 1 semester hour of credit—hence, 120 hours for a 3 credit course. Assignments must be completed and submitted on or before the deadlines noted in the syllabus in order to receive credit without penalty for this course. Should you experience a *significant* health/family crisis during the course, be sure to notify both the Registrar and the professor. The professor marks to the following standard:

A+ = 97-100	B+= 85-89	C+= 70-74	F = 0-59
A = 93-96	B = 80-84	C = 65-69	
A- = 90-92	B- = 75-79	C- = 60-64	

The following constitute the graded requirements for the course:

A. Reading & Participation Mark (10%)

1. Reading

By the end of the course you should have read the required textbooks—Guthrie, Johnson and Lindars (953 pages). An additional 250 pages must be read for this course. This reading should reflect the objectives of having read commentary and other resources with a view to the fulfillment of the course assignments—especially the expositional paper. ***You will indicate on an attached note to your final examination, what percentage of the assigned reading you have done.*** Calculate thus: (Total of assigned and additional pages read) ÷ 1203 = %. Your reading report will simply indicate, “*I have completed ____% of the assigned reading.*”

Due: Dec 09/08

2. Participation

Punctuality, personal preparation and intelligent participation in informal and organized discussions ensure that you obtain the greatest benefit from

this course. These are course requirements and will be graded by the professor with your assistance. **Self-Evaluation Due: Dec 02/08**

B. Written (60%)

Submission of Assignments. The grades for written and presented work will be determined on the basis of close compliance with the instructions given, organization, content, and style. It is most strongly advised that you *keep duplicate copies of all work submitted*. The professor will accept written work that is provided *hardcopy*, or *electronically posted to the MyCourses website* (see <https://courses.mytwu.ca/>) in the “Workspace” files there noted. Please remember, if you post to the workspace that you “toggle” your work for security. Assistance in using the course website can be had through esupport@twu.ca, or 604-513-2148 (toll free at 1-866-614-4652). **Faxed course work is unacceptable.**

Academic Honesty. Citation or other use of sources must be properly documented using footnote, endnote or citation in context (i.e., between parentheses) format and it must be correctly and consistently employed. This holds whether one has drawn from library or electronic/internet sources. **NOTE: Plagiarism—whether minimal, substantial, or complete—is inappropriate and will be penalized.** Further details about this subject can be found online on the ACTS webpage (www.acts.twu.ca) and in the *Handbook* (www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html).

Paper Formatting. The professor required that you use Turabian format for your assignments. Format with absolute consistency. The following websites give general guidance regarding bibliography and footnote formatting: <http://www.ucc.edu/NR/rdonlyres/A9F0CE7B-C355-4966-9628-D5F2248A355A/0/Turabian.pdf> or www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. If there is any doubt regarding page setup, format, footnoting or bibliography, default to the guidelines in K.L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed.; rev. W.C. Booth, G.G. Colomb and J.M. Williams; Chicago: CUP, 2007.¹

Further Questions. If you have any questions or require further direction, consult the *Important Academic Notes* document attached below. *The professor is also available to advise.* (Campus office: 1st floor SW in the Fosmark Building; Office Phone: (604)888-7511/Local 3868 and (604) 888-7592 voice mail; email: brian.rapske@twu.ca).

1. Book Review and Critique (10%)

Review and critique Barnabas Lindars', *Theology of the Book of Hebrews*. The *review* portion, in which you will summarize the content and argument(s) of the book, should constitute no more than 2/3 of the project. The *critique* portion in which you assess, evaluate and criticize/appreciate the text should comprise 1/3 of the project. For samples and general

¹ Counseling students may use APA style.

format of a book review and critique visit the “Review of Biblical Literature” website.² The book review and critique should be approximately six to seven (6-7) typewritten and double spaced pages total. **Due Date: Sept 30/08**

2. Expository Paper (30%)

Content. Produce a well-researched and appropriately footnoted exegetical paper on a *manageable* passage from Hebrews (no longer than 10-15 verses).

Format. Your paper should have an outline/table of contents (the headings of which appear in the paper’s body as well) and a bibliography of works consulted and cited. As a general rule of thumb, the introduction of your paper should be no longer than about 20% of the paper’s length and cover matters *strictly relevant* to introduce your passage (here you identify your passage and its importance, “fix” the textual boundaries and discuss any text critical issues, lay out the passage structure, and give historical context). The main portion of the paper should constitute approximately 70% of the paper’s length and proceed through the passage in an orderly and complete fashion (utilizing the discovered structure as framework for a thoroughgoing discussion of the entire text). The conclusion should be no longer than about 10% of the paper’s length and will summarize the message content of the text and will suggest its contemporary application. [A downloadable copy of a *Sample Paper* will be posted on the Course Website for you to consult.]

Length and Resources. The paper is to be well researched and properly footnoted, containing a body of not more than 3000 words in length (approx. 12-14 typewritten and double-spaced pages). *Beyond the assigned reading, consult at least fifteen (15) sources, including at least five (5) intermediate to advanced commentaries and five (5) appropriate journal/periodical articles and/or relevant specialist studies. It would also be helpful to consult current reference works (Bible dictionaries, theological dictionaries etc.).*³ **Due Date: Oct 28/08**

3. 4 Session Outline for a Series from Hebrews (20%)

Prepare a plan for a four (4) session sermon, home Bible study or counseling-oriented series on a *manageable portion* of the book of Hebrews. Follow this procedure:

Introduction. First, choose and then indicate what you will cover from Hebrews, providing an explanation for your choice. The passage(s)

² Review of Biblical Literature: <http://www.bookreviews.org/>

³ Search protocol to access TWU online periodicals: 1) www.twu.ca/library/ 2) choose “Article Indexes & Databases” 3) choose “Religious Studies” 4) choose “ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials” 5) Enter your username and password 6) Click “Scriptures” or “Keyword” → etc. [NOTE: Search protocols change from time to time. If you do not have success in your search, please consult a TWU Librarian for assistance.]

should naturally cohere (single section divisible into four parts, naturally progressing or thematically related sequence). Next, create an *engaging* general title based upon your choice of text(s) that captures the essence of the series. Third, describe the physical context (e.g., Home Bible Study) where the series will occur and the audience (e.g., 12 young people mostly non-Christians) to whom it will be delivered. Describe how context and audience will influence your approach, structure and delivery (Introduction = 1-2 pages).

Annotated Sermon/Study Outlines. Following on the introduction, provide sermon/study notes for the four sessions (each no more than 1½ pages in length, single-spaced). Each sermon/study should follow this format:

SERMON/STUDY TITLE: Should be focused to the preaching/teaching point of the individual passage.

TEXT: Indicate the text in Hebrews to be covered.

OBJECTIVE: Give a short description of the “big idea” of the passage, specified in terms of a teaching/preaching objective. The objective should overtly specify how, the Spirit of God blessing your labors, the hearers will think, feel and act differently (i.e., cognitive, behavioral and affective impact) because of the message.

ANNOTATED OUTLINE: Provide an outline with identifiable main points that elaborate the text in service of the “big idea.” (*Note the verses that each main point covers.*) Under each main point, provide brief notes explaining the main point and how you will preach/teach it.

Critical Issue. Each session *must* stick to the chosen Hebrews passage in question. Don’t launch into “topical flights” dealing with other passages of the Bible. Also, the whole project should be a total of no more than 8 pages in length. ***Due Date: Nov 18/08***

C. Examination (30%)

The final examination will be of the “take home” variety. Details concerning its content will be discussed on the last day of classes. ***Due Date: Dec 09/08***

V. SCHEDULE

Date	Lecture Topic/Passage	(Readings & Due Dates)
Sept 09	Syllabus Review & Hebrews Reading	

A. INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS

Addressees, Date, Author, Purpose	<i>G:17-38</i>
Form, Structure, OT Use and Theology	<i>J:1-60</i>

Sept 16	<p>B. THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST</p> <p>God's Definitive Revelation (1:1-4) <i>Christ Superior to Angels as Deity</i> (1:5-14) Call to Faithfulness (2:1-4) <i>Christ Superior to Angels Despite His Humanity</i> (2:5-9)</p>	<p>G:45-123 J:63-104</p>
Sept 23	<p>Benefits of Christ's Humanity (2:10-18) <i>Christ Superior to Moses</i> (3:1-6) Exhortation Inspired by the Exodus (3:7-19) Remaining Promise of Rest (4:1-13) <i>Christ the Great High Priest</i> (4:14-5:10)</p>	<p>G:124-199 J:104-152</p>
Sept 30	<p>Importance of Christian Maturity (5:11-6:3) Seriousness of Apostasy (6:4-12) God's Unchangeable Purpose (6:13-20) Enigma of Melchizedek (7:1-14) <i>Christ is Superior and Legitimate High Priest</i> (7:15-28)</p>	<p>B:200-276 J:152-196</p>
	(BOOK REVIEW & CRITIQUE DUE)	
Oct 07	<p>True High Priest and His Ministry (8:1-6) Promise of a New Covenant (8:7-13) OT Ritual Described (9:1-10) Definitive Nature of Christ's Work (9:11-14) Christ's Sacrifice the New Covenant Foundation (9:15-22) Christ's Work the Final Answer to Sin (9:23-28)</p>	<p>G:277-324 J:196-245</p>
Oct 14	<p>Ineffectiveness of the Law (10:1-4) Old and New in Psalm 40:6-8 (10:5-10) The Perfect Offering and Jer. 31:31-34 (10:11-18)</p>	<p>G:325-370 J:246-274</p>
	C. THE PERSEVERENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN	
	<p>The Grounds for Faithfulness (10:19-25) Apostasy and the Reality of Judgment (10:26-31) Exhortation to Endure (10:32-39)</p>	
Oct 21	<p>Nature and Importance of Faith (11:1-3) The Faith of Abel, Enoch, and Noah (11:4-7) The Faith of Abraham and Sarah (11:8-12) The Transcendent Nature of Hope (11:13-16) The Faith of Abraham and the Patriarchs (11:17-22) The Faith of Moses and the Israelites (11:23-29) The Faith of Rahab and Many Others (11:30-40)</p>	<p>G:371-394 J:274-312</p>
Oct 28	Reading Week & Modular Courses	(EXPOSITION PAPER DUE)

Hagner, D.A. *Hebrews*. NIBC. Peabody: Hendrickson/Carlisle: Paternoster, 1990.

_____. *Encountering the Book of Hebrews: An Exposition*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.

Hughes, P.E. *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.

Lane, W. L. *Hebrews*. WBC. Dallas: Word Books, 1991. 2 volumes.

Long, T.G. *Hebrews*. Interpretation. Louisville: John Knox, 1997.

Montefiore, H.W. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. BNTC. London: A. and C. Black, 1964.

Morris, L. "Hebrews." In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Ed. F.E. Gaebelin. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981. Volume 12. Pages 1-158.

Steadman, R.C. *Hebrews*. IVPNTCS. Downers Grove: IVP, 1992.

Westcott, B.F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. 1892; rpt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

B. Special Studies:

Croy, N.C. *Endurance in Suffering: Hebrews 12.1-13 in its Rhetorical, Religious, and Philosophical Context*. SNTSMS, 98; Cambridge: CUP, 1998.

Dean, W.W. *A Church at Risk: The Encroachment of American Culture Upon the Church*. Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury, 1990.

Galardini, G., ed. *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods—New Insights*. Biblical Interpretation Series, 75; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005.

Gray, P. *Godly Fear: The Epistle to the Hebrews and Greco-Roman Critiques of Superstition*. SBL Academia Biblica, 16; Atlanta: SBL, 2003.

Lane, W.L. *Call to Commitment: Responding to the Message of Hebrews*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985/Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988.

Lincoln, A.T. *Hebrews: A Guide*. New York/London: T. & T. Clark, 2006.

Lindars, Barnabas. *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*. NTT. Cambridge: CUP, 1991.

- Salevao, I. *Legitimation in the Letter to the Hebrews: The Construction and Maintenance of a Symbolic Universe*. JSNTSS, 219; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.
- Trotter, A.H., Jr. *Interpreting the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Guides to NT Exegesis, 6. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.
- Westfall, C.L. *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews: The Relationship Between Form and Meaning*. LNTS, 297; London/New York: T. & T. Clark, 2005.

Supplement: Important Academic Notes from ACTS

Web Support – Student Portal <https://students.twu.ca>

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. Your student email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), MAX (850 AM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:30 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University's switchboard as well as on the website <http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>. The first announcement regarding a closure will cover the period up to 1:00 p.m. only. If classes are to be cancelled beyond 1:00 p.m., this decision will be announced by the same means before 11:00 a.m. that day. Students and faculty should assume that all night classes will continue to operate. If the emergency continues into the evening, students and faculty may check for a closure notice on the University's switchboard and website after 3:00 p.m. that day.

Paper Formatting

Students need to adhere to Turabian format except in counselling courses, for which APA format is used. Students are encouraged strongly to use RefWorks (available through the library home page www.twu.ca/library) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. They will need to be aware of the need to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples: <http://faculty.ucc.edu/egh-damerow/turabian.htm> or www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Note that in RefWorks the available formatting styles are those of Turabian (Notes), 6th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 5th edition.

Counselling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information found at the following website. <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>. CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the “student” side. A hard copy is given to incoming students in the fall.

Please check with your professor to see which one he/she recommends you use!!

Research Ethics

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/research/ethics/Main.asp>. Those needing additional clarification may contact Dr. Bruce Guenther. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

Academic Honesty

A fundamental expectation, grounded in biblical ethics, for anyone involved in academic work at ACTS is that he/she practice academic honesty. Students must become familiar with, and adhere to, the principles and requirements associated with academic honesty. Further details on this subject are contained in the ACTS Student Handbook in section 4.12. The handbook is available online on the ACTS webpage (www.acts.twu.ca) at the following link: www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html.

Equity of Access

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.