



The Prison Epistles (BIB 117)

Reach Bible Institute

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BIB 117 -The PRISON EPISTLES: Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians

Saturdays: 10AM – 11:30AM – *Multipurpose Room, Reach Church, 294 Old Mamaroneck Rd., White Plains NY 10605*

I. RBI MISSION

RBI strives to empower students with the knowledge, skills, and passion to effectively serve in ministry, promote spiritual growth, and spread the transformative message of the Gospel to the world.

II. COURSE PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on letters written by Paul the Apostle to believers while he was imprisoned by Rome. Students will gain an understanding of the historical and literary backgrounds of each Prison Epistle and be able to distinguish their major theological themes. Paul's teachings will be examined to equip students to apply them to contemporary life and to identify heresy. Students also will learn traditional Pentecostal views on passages that address such issues as election and the security of the believer.

III. CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES:

This course addresses the following competencies directly:

1. *Biblical Exposition*: by preparing students to understand, interpret, and communicate the Bible accurately.
2. *Christian and Theological Heritage*: by reminding students of the heritage of interpretation of the Old and New Testament
3. *Discipleship Making*: by modeling the principles of discipleship through classroom department.
4. *Interpersonal Skills*: through interaction among students in the class and in small group activities.
5. *Servant Leadership*: by modeling and reflecting the attitude of Christ in the life of a disciple.
6. *Spiritual and Character Formation*: through discussion and modeling of spiritual disciplines as a normal part of class discussion and activity.

IV. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The “Prison Epistles” is a term given to the following four letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Together they represent the work of the Holy Spirit while Paul was serving the Lord in prison. This course will examine these four epistles and explore their historical circumstances and literary composition. Special attention will be paid to the unique contribution that each epistle makes to Christian theology and mission.

V. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Knowledge (Cognitive)

Students who complete this course successfully should be able to:

- Describe and differentiate the historical circumstances surrounding the composition of Paul's Prison Epistles with particular attention to their authorship and recipients.
- Determine the contemporary relevance of these biblical texts to better support the student's individual faith development and the church's corporate witness.
- Analyze the literary context of these letters in terms of their structure and linguistic features in order to rightly determine meaning.
- Identify the theological emphases of these biblical texts in relation to Pauline topics such as Christology, salvation, eschatology and ecclesiology and assess them in light of the current times.

VI. TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

Class sessions will consist of presentations overviewing units of study followed by general discussion. Readings and lectures are central to covering the knowledge base needed for the course. **Students are REQUIRED to read their weekly chapter assignments to prepare them for participation in the classroom.** Small group discussions allow for student interaction with the material presented. Multimedia technology will be incorporated into classroom activity to enhance the learning process. Biblical texts are used as examples to illustrate hermeneutical principles discussed in class. The combination of reading, lectures, multimedia, class discussions, and small groups should help build appreciation for sound exegesis of the Bible.

Class preparation will consist of student manual readings according to the syllabus schedule, execution of assignments, etc. **ATTENDANCE is a major focus** of the class so that interaction as a body of believing students can be capitalized on.

VII. REQUIRED TEXTS:

- The Bible: any modern committee translation, such as RSV, NRSV, NIV, NASB, ESV
- Prison Epistles: Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians "An Independent-Study Textbook" by LeRoy Bartel Third Edition

VIII. Recommended/Suggested Texts (NOT REQUIRED):

- The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians, F.F. Bruce

IX. Schedule: All classes will begin promptly at 10 am

Saturday, September 7th, 2024: Introducing Colossians

Paul's letter to the Colossians: Reason & Prayer

Christ: Creator, Sustainer and Reconciler

Paul's Ministry and Message

***FRIDAY, September 13th, 2024: How Should Christians Live?**

Living the Christ-life inter-personally

Loving within the Christian household

Closing Challenges, Observations and Greetings

Saturday, September 14th, 2024: Church Picnic—NO CLASS

Saturday, September 21st, 2024: Introducing Philemon

Understanding Philemon

Appreciation of Philemon by Paul

Paul's Appeal on behalf of Onesimus

Saturday, September 28th, 2024: Introducing Ephesians

Introductory Matters

Praise as a Practice

Paul's Apostolic Prayer

Saturday, October 5th, 2024: Accomplished by God in Christ

Before & After of the Saints

Revelation of the Mystery of Christ

Prayer & Doxology

Saturday, October 12th, 2024: Christ Fully Expressed

Christ expressed through the Church

Christ Expressed in our Personal Lives

Interpreting Figures of Speech: Complex Comparisons

Interpreting Figures of Speech: Contrasts, Overstatements, and Relations

Saturday, October 19th, 2024: Christ Fully Expressed at Home/Work

Christ expressed between husband/wife

Christ expressed between parents/children

Christ expressed at work: Masters/Servants

Saturday, October 26th, 2024: Final Charge: Introducing Philippians

Fully Outfitted Christian Soldier

Praying Christian Soldier

Introductory Matters: Philippians

Feelings & Prayers for Fellow Followers

Saturday, November 2nd, 2024: Example and Responsibilities

Positive perspective in problematic situations

Living as Saints in a Sinful World

Make my joy complete

Living as the children of Christ

Saturday, November 9th, 2024: Encouragement, Exhortation, & Evaluation

The two beloved saints

Appeal and Warning

Appeal Supported by Testimony

Saturday, November 16th, 2024: Concluding Exhortations, thanks and greetings

Exhortations: Unity, reconciliation, rejoicing, and generosity

Exhortations: Prayer, Positive Participation in Culture

Thanksgiving and greetings

Saturday, November 23rd, 2024: TBA

Saturday, November 30th, 2024: NO CLASS/THANKSGIVING BREAK

Saturday, December 7th, 2024: REVIEW

Saturday, December 14th, 2023: FINAL EXAM

Basic Standards of Academic Integrity

Registration at Global University requires adherence to the university's standards of academic integrity. Many of these standards may be intuitively understood and cannot in any case be listed exhaustively; the following examples represent some basic types of behavior that are unacceptable: 1. Cheating: (a) using unauthorized notes, aids, or information when taking an examination; (b) submitting work done by someone else as your own; (c) copying or paraphrasing someone else's essays, projects, or other work and submitting it as your own. 2. Plagiarizing: submitting someone else's work and claiming it as your own or neglecting to give appropriate documentation when using any kind of reference materials. Plagiarism, whether purposeful or unintentional, includes copying or paraphrasing materials from the study guide, textbook, someone else's writing, or any other source (published or unpublished). Any words, thoughts, or ideas taken from any other source must be properly documented according to the Global University Undergraduate Form and Style Guide. 3. Fabricating: falsifying or inventing any information, data, or citation. 4. Obtaining an unfair advantage: (a) stealing, reproducing, circulating, or otherwise gaining access to examination materials prior to the time authorized by the instructor or examination supervisor; (b) unauthorized collaborating on an academic assignment; (c) retaining, possessing, using, or circulating previously given examination materials where those materials clearly indicate they are to be returned to the examination supervisor or to the Global University offices at the conclusion of the examination.

Disciplinary action for not maintaining basic standards of academic integrity may range from lowering a grade for a paper to dismissal from the program, depending on the severity of the offense.

Code of Conduct: Global University is a Christian educational institution aiming to, among other things, equip students to fulfill God's calling on their lives. Christian conduct is therefore an expected norm. While Global University reaches many cultures around the world, it is understood that some practices acceptable in one culture may not be acceptable in another. As Christians we look to the Scripture to guide our conduct. Therefore, students are expected to conduct themselves according to biblical principles of behavior. Examples of such principles are found in Romans 12:9–21; Galatians 5:22–23; and Ephesians 4:1–3, 25–32. The Code of Conduct also applies to verbal and written communication with Global University representatives, faculty, staff, and students. Furthermore, it extends to all electronic communication, including threaded discussions and e-mail with faculty and students. Violation of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.