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## IFCA Discipleship Institute

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### **THE LIFE OF CHRIST SELF-PACED COURSE GUIDE**



“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”  
” 2 Timothy 2:15

Welcome to this course! The completion of this course will prove to be a significant blessing to you both academically and spiritually. We recommend that you thoroughly read the entire study guide before you actually begin working on the Course Projects. If you are uncertain or unclear on any matter, contact IFCA Discipleship Institute for clarification (1-216-261-4214 or [ifcabccleveland@gmail.com](mailto:ifcabccleveland@gmail.com)). Above all other things, we encourage you to pray for God's guidance before you begin this course, and each time you work on it.

The instructions in this study guide are related to course formatting and submission. You may also refer to your original Student Orientation Page. **IMPORTANT:** The instructions on the study guide always supersede any other instructions. If there seems to be a conflict between this study guide and other instructions, always follow the instruction of the study guide.

We strongly recommend that you use reliable word processing software and make frequent use of the spell checker and grammar suggestion aspects. Be sure to save your work frequently, and backup copies of course work you have submitted.

If you need to contact the professor for this course (or the academic office), we recommend that you do so first by email. If the professor's email address is not listed on this study guide you may request it by email: [ifcabccleveland@gmail.com](mailto:ifcabccleveland@gmail.com)

The total length of time required to complete this course is different for each person. This is because already acquired knowledge of the subject, previous education, and personal situations all influence study habits and ability.

The time between the submission of your coursework, until it is returned to you (graded) will vary, but generally courses sent by postal mail may require as much as two weeks in transit (to and from), and another two weeks to get through the recording and grading process. Email submissions (preferred) generally require about two weeks. These are only averages. Be absolutely certain that you keep IFCA Discipleship Institute immediately informed if you change your email, postal mailing address or telephone numbers.

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# IFCA-BC Writing Guidelines

The standard for academic papers (to be used in all your courses at IFCA-BC) should reflect the following:

## *Formatting*

1. Use the following guidelines to format all research papers and writing assignments
  - a. Use Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced throughout (see “Hot Tips” below for permissible exception for footnotes)
  - b. Set margins 1” top and bottom, and 1.25” right and left
  - c. The use of subtitles or subheadings is encouraged: (set subheadings in bold on the left margin)
  - d. Do not use a cover page. Rather, enter the following in the upper left corner of the first page of the paper:
    - Your name
    - Course Number, assignment number
    - Date submitted
    - Word count
  - e. Insert page numbers at the bottom center of all pages, including the first page.
  - f. Foreign terms (terms not listed in a common English dictionary) should be italicized the first time they are used, and thereafter should not be italicized.
2. Use of ellipsis dots:
  - a. Leave a space before and after three ellipsis dots.  
EXAMPLE: “For God so loved ... that he gave his only begotten son” (John 3:16a).
  - b. Do not use ellipsis dots at the beginning or ending of a quote.  
INCORRECT EXAMPLE: The scriptural phrase “... God so loved ...” has become an extremely influential formative dynamic for the church.  
CORRECT EXAMPLE: The scriptural phrase “God so loved” has become an extremely influential formative dynamic for the church.

## *Citing Sources*

1. Direct quotes must be footnoted, as should sources used in paraphrased form and major ideas drawn from other authors.
2. Avoid overusing direct quotes. Reword the idea to express your understanding (paraphrase).
3. Use block quotes sparingly.
  - a. Block quotes should be single-spaced, having no quotation marks
4. When adding citations, use the following guidelines:
  - a. A superscript number is used in the text, following the footnote or citation. The footnote is numbered at the beginning, either as a number followed by a period or as a superscript number. Either footnotes or endnotes may be used; ask your professor which they prefer.

- b. The first line of the endnote or footnote is indented 5 spaces.
5. Biblical references may be placed in the text (rather than in the footnotes), following the quote and in parentheses; unless more than three Scripture texts are cited. Use the standard abbreviations (found below) when referencing biblical texts by chapter and verse (e.g., Dan 3:20-21)
- In narrative, spell out the name of the Bible book: e.g., “in Daniel 3:20-22, we read...”
  - However, never write out the chapter and verse references: e.g., “in the third chapter of Daniel, verses twenty to twenty-two, we read...”

**Old Testament**

Genesis	Gen.	Proverbs	Prov.
Exodus	Exod.	Ecclesiastes	Eccles.
Leviticus	Lev.	Song of Solomon	Song of Sol.
Numbers	Num.	Isaiah	Isa.
Deuteronomy	Deut.	Jeremiah	Jer.
Joshua	Josh.	Lamentations	Lam.
Judges	Judg.	Ezekiel	Ezek.
Ruth	Ruth	Daniel	Dan.
1 Samuel	1 Sam.	Hosea	Hos.
2 Samuel	2 Sam.	Joel	Joel
1 Kings	1 Kings	Amos	Amos
2 Kings	2 Kings	Obadiah	Obad.
1 Chronicles	1 Chron.	Jonah	Jon.
2 Chronicles	2 Chron.	Micah	Micah
Ezra	Ezra	Nahum	Nah.
Nehemiah	Neh.	Habakkuk	Hab.
Esther	Esther	Zephaniah	Zeph.
Job	Job	Haggai	Hag.
Psalms	Ps. ( <i>pl.</i> Pss.)	Zechariah	Zech.
Malachi	Mal		

**New Testament**

Matthew	Matt.	1 Timothy	1 Tim.
Mark	Mark	2 Timothy	2 Tim.
Luke	Luke	Titus	Titus
John	John	Philemon	Philem.
Acts	Acts	Hebrews	Heb.
Romans	Rom.	James	James
1 Corinthians	1 Cor.	1 Peter	1 Pet.
2 Corinthians	2 Cor.	2 Peter	2 Pet.
Galatians	Gal.	1 John	1 John
Ephesians	Eph.	2 John	2 John
Philippians	Phil.	3 John	3 John
Colossians	Col.	Jude	Jude
1 Thessalonians	1 Thess.	Revelation	Rev.
2 Thessalonians	2 Thess.	<i>or</i>	Apoc.
		Apocalypse	

***The following are examples of proper citation formatting:***

***Book/One Author***

<sup>1</sup>Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970), 27.

<sup>2</sup>Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, vol. 1 of *The Story of Christianity* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1984), 91.

***Book/Two Authors***

<sup>1</sup>Paul R. House and Eric Mitchell, *Old Testament Survey* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982), 27.

***Anthology: Emphasizing the editor's comments***

<sup>1</sup>Alister E. McGrath, ed., *The Christian Theology Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 27.

***Anthology: Emphasizing the author of a work included in the anthology***

<sup>1</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, "Cyril of Jerusalem on the Role of Creeds," in *The Christian Theology Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Ed. Alister E. McGrath (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 27.

***Article in reference dictionary, encyclopedia, or the like***

<sup>2</sup>*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), s.v. "Septuagint."

***Commentaries***

<sup>2</sup>Raymond Brown and Sandra Schneiders, "Hermeneutics: The Literal Sense of Scripture," in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1990), 1148-1149.

***Electronic media, not including information found on a website (for example, CD media).***

<sup>3</sup>Flavius Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, Book 2, Chapter 17 in the *Works of Josephus*, 1451; available from the *AGES Digital Library* (Albany, OR: AGES Software, 1999).

***Lecture***

<sup>4</sup>David Belles, "Historical Overview: Part One" (lecture, T101, Week 1 Lecture 2, IFCA Bible College, 30 March 2016).

***Website***

<sup>5</sup>Gerald Wilson, "The Poetry of the Psalms," available from <http://home.apu.edu/~geraldwilson/HebrewPoetry.html> (Note: omitting the period at the end helps avoid confusion)





# The Life of Christ (B103)

2018

Instructor: David Belles

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Email: davebelles@gmail.com

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 4pm to 7pm.

## Purpose

This core course is designed to acquaint the student with an overview of the life of Jesus Christ as presented in the four New Testament Gospels.

## Objectives

To provide students with specific information and tools to enhance their reading and studies of the gospels.

## Texts

[Mark L. Strauss, "Four Portraits of Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels," Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2007 ISBN-13: 978-0310226970.](#)

## Assignments

Each student will be required to complete the following:

- The Gospel Reflection assignment: Each student is required to read the four gospels over the course of the class. As you read the gospel narrative you are to select four chapters, one from each gospel, and write a two-page reflection on those chapters.
- Write out the answers to each of the Student Activity questions that you encounter as you work through the course guide. Submit those answers with the rest of your work.

## Grading

Gospel Reflection assignment: 50%

Student Activity Questions: 50%

## **Gospel Reflection assignment**

As you work through this course you are required to read all four of the gospel narratives. If you divide the total number of chapters in all four gospels by the eight course sessions, you can finish the reading and the course at the same time by reading 11 chapters before each session except the last, where you will need to read 12 chapters.

As you read through the gospels you are required to select one chapter from each gospel and write a two-page reflection on each chapter. The parameters for the content of your reflection are broad. It can include your personal thoughts on how the chapter impacted you or someone you know, it can include information that you found interesting in a commentary or other text that addressed the chapter, or a combination of the two. This assignment is to be turned in at the end of the course with your final paper.

### **Scheduling**

#### **Session One:** Historical Background

An historical overview of the period between the closing of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament.

- Reading assignment:
  - Read chapter 4 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.

#### **Session Two:** Religious and Cultural Background

An overview of the religious and cultural environment of the New Testament and how that environment developed out of the period between the Old and New Testaments.

#### **Session Three:** Introduction

This session will be an introduction to the Gospel genre and the various methods used to study it. It will also provide an overview of each of the four Gospels

- Reading assignments:
  - Read chapters 1-3 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.
  - Read chapters 7-10 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.

#### **Sessions Four:** The Gospel's Use of Scripture.

The Old Testament contains the authoritative scriptures for the New Testament. The gospel writers utilize the Old Testament texts to support the theological picture of Jesus that they are painting. We will examine how the gospel of Matthew utilizes the Old Testament text to portray Jesus.

#### **Sessions Five:** The Theology of the Kingdom in the Gospels

The Kingdom as a theological theme is found throughout the scriptures. In this session we will examine this theological theme as it is presented in the gospels.

#### **Sessions Six:** Orthodoxy: Who is Jesus Christ?

This session will examine the classic creeds of the early church and how they are informed by the gospels.

**Sessions Seven:** The Divine Names: Revelation in the Gospels

The use of divine names in the Old Testament through the intertestamental period into the New Testament demonstrates development. In this session we will examine how this development is an example of the concept of progressive revelation.

**Sessions Eight:** Ethics: The Sermon on the Mount

The Sermon of the Mount is Jesus' moral manifesto. In this session we will explore several ethical theories and whether there is support for those theories in the Sermon on the Mount.

**Sessions Nine:** The Crucifixion: Christ and Culture

The Roman's used crucifixion to humiliate and demoralize their enemies. The cross became a symbol of victory and strength for the church. The reversal of the meaning of the cross highlights that the relationship between Christ and culture is complex. In this session we will examine various views on the relationship between Christ and culture.

- Reading assignment:
  - Read chapter 19 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.

**Sessions Ten:** The Resurrection: Eternal Life

In this section we will examine the resurrection of Jesus and how the resurrection life is appropriated by the body of Christ.

- Reading assignment:
  - Read chapter 20 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.



## How to Use this Guide?

**Before you proceed with this course make sure you read the course syllabus in the previous section and the information below.**

The following pages in this Self-Paced study guide provide the summaries, readings, and assignments for each session. You are free to work through the lectures and assignments at your own pace. We do recommend that you do not work too quickly; otherwise you will not have sufficient time to properly reflect on the course material. No more than two sessions a week is recommended.

Each session contains one lecture. After some of the lectures there are reading and writing assignments. If there is a writing assignment, it must be submitted to your professor.

The course syllabus in the previous section lists your professor's email address. Use this address to submit all written assignments. You can also use this email address to submit any questions. The syllabus also lists the professor's office hours and phone number if you wish to speak to the professor in person. If you would desire a regularly scheduled call or video conference, make sure you communicate that to the professor.



## Session One

### *The Historical Background*

- I. Listen to lecture 1 on the historical overview of the period leading up to the closing of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament. In this lecture we will examine how the captivity of Israel led to the establishment of structures that we find in the New Testament.

### *Post-lecture Assignment*

- I. Read chapter 4 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.

## Session Two

### *Religious and Cultural Background*

- I. Listen to lecture 2 on the religious and cultural environment of the New Testament and how that environment developed out of the period between the Old and New Testaments.
- II. **Student Activity:** When faced with the prospect that their religious life was cutoff with the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, the Israelites adapted to the situation and formed an alternative worship expression until the Temple could be rebuilt. How would you react if you were no longer allowed to gather publicly in church to worship?
  - a. Write a few paragraphs describing your reaction and how you might adapt by forming some alternative form.

## Session Three

### *Introduction to the Gospels*

- I. Listen to lecture 3 on the Introduction to the Gospel Texts. This session will be an introduction to the Gospel genre and the various methods used to study it. It will also provide an overview of each of the four Gospels.
- II. **Student Activity:** In our discussion of Matthew and Mark's gospels we discovered that each was written to a different audience. Matthew primarily to Jews, and Mark primarily to Gentiles. If the content and themes that each emphasized were different in order to better speak to differing audiences, how does this inform your understanding of how evangelism should be carried out? Does this support or undermine a "one size fits all" approach to evangelism (like the Roman's Road approach)?
  - a. Write a few paragraphs where you answer this question.

### *Post-lecture Assignments*

- I. Read chapters 1-3 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.
- II. Read chapters 7-10 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*

## Sessions Four

### *The Gospel's Use of Scripture*

- I. Listen to lecture 4 on the Gospel's Use of the Scriptures. The Old Testament contains the authoritative scriptures for the New Testament. The gospel writers utilize the Old Testament texts to support the theological picture of Jesus that they are painting. We will examine how the gospel of Matthew utilizes the Old Testament text to portray Jesus.

## Sessions Five

### *The Theology of the Kingdom in the Gospels*

- I. Listen to lecture 5 on the Theology of the Kingdom in the Gospels. The Kingdom as a theological theme is found throughout the scriptures. In this session we will examine this theological theme as it is presented in the gospels.
- II. **Student Activity:** The specific miracles that Jesus performed served as indicators that the Kingdom of God had come. Each miracle was the Kingdom breaking out into this present reality. How do you think our understanding of miracles in our time would be changed if we viewed them in this way?
  - a. Write a few paragraphs where you answer this question.



## Sessions Six

### *Orthodoxy: Who is Jesus Christ?*

- I. Listen to lecture 6 on Orthodoxy: Who is Jesus?. This session will examine the classic creeds of the early church and how they are informed by the gospels.
- II. **Student Activity:** can you think of examples that you have heard where orthodoxy about the person of Jesus has been compromised (examples, no specific names).
  - a. Write a few paragraphs where you answer this question.

## Sessions Seven

### *The Divine Names: Revelation in the Gospels*

- I. Listen to lecture 7 on the Divine Names: Revelation in the Gospels The use of divine names in the Old Testament through the intertestamental period into the New Testament demonstrates development. In this session we will examine how this development is an example of the concept of progressive revelation.

## Sessions Eight

### *Ethics: The Sermon on the Mount*

- I. Listen to lecture 8 on Ethics: the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon of the Mount is Jesus' moral manifesto. In this session we will explore several ethical theories and whether there is support for those theories in the Sermon on the Mount.
- II. **Student Activity:** What do you believe is the most significant ethical challenge to the church today? Who would you approach this issue using one or more of the ethical theories we discussed?
  - a. Write a few paragraphs where you answer these questions.

## Sessions Nine

### ***The Crucifixion: Christ and Culture***

- I. Listen to lecture 9 on The Crucifixion: Christ and Culture. The Roman's used crucifixion to humiliate and demoralize their enemies. The cross became a symbol of victory and strength for the church. The reversal of the meaning of the cross highlights that the relationship between Christ and culture is complex. In this session we will examine various views on the relationship between Christ and culture.
- II. **Student Activity:** What model of Christ and culture do you identify with?
  - a. Write a few paragraphs where you answer this question.

### ***Post-lecture Assignments***

- I. Read chapter 19 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.

## Sessions Ten

### ***The Resurrection: Eternal Life***

- I. Listen to lecture 10 on The Resurrection: Eternal Life. In this section we will examine the resurrection of Jesus and how the resurrection life is appropriated by the body of Christ.

### ***Post-lecture Assignments***

- I. Read chapter 20 of Strauss, *Four Portraits of Jesus*.

## ***Final Assignments***

- I. **Gospel Reflection Assignment:** If you have not done so already, finish reading the gospels. Complete your eight short reflection papers and turn them in with your final paper.
  
- II. **Student Activity Questions:** Write out the answers to each of the Student Activity questions and submit those answers with the rest of your work.