

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: **Fall 2010**
Instructor: Doctor Terrence Crowe
Course #: THEO 2200
Sections: 101 & 102
Course Name: **The Bible Through the Ages**

Description:

The history of the Judeo-Christian traditions is deep and involved. The related narrative of the Bible is equally so, never static and always dynamic. Despite the complexities and challenges to our modern understandings, it can certainly be argued that an adequate understanding of Western Culture is impossible if it does not include an examination of the Bible and its influences.

The past truly is another country, a strange one to us who constantly feel launched into the future. One can begin to feel as if the history of thought is of no more substance than the finger stirring the water, that meaning escapes us like tears in rain. Little is really clear. Still, to paraphrase G.K. Chesterton, that which is worth doing is worth doing imperfectly.

Much of the history of Jewish and Christian thought has, and still does, involve fierce and fundamental conflicts over who could claim the interpretative high ground, the true meaning. The point of this part of our study will not be to judge winners and losers, but to tell the story—competing stories—with some orientation to what became the dominant interpretative “truth.”

We will introduce the idea of biblical hermeneutics, the art and skill of understanding and using methods and techniques to interpret texts. This will involve becoming familiar with basic biblical/theological terms essential to intelligently discussing the Bible. We will also look at the emergence of the idea of the scriptural canon, which is used to help serve as a guide to the interpreting community.

Finally, in the latter stages of the course, there will be an intent to focus upon the place of the Bible and its interpretations within the American cultural context. Few cultures have so based themselves on the availability and common usages of the Bible. But what has this meant for our country?