GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: Summer 2011
Instructor: Dr. Julian Hills
Course #: THEO 6120
Course Title: New Testament Method

Content:
In 1973, a young Walter Wink wrote, "Historical biblical criticism is bankrupt" (The Bible in Human Transformation, p. 1). Now a new young firebrand, Hector Avalos, has published a book announcing The End of Biblical Studies (2007). Avalos suggests that scholars employ "a variety of flawed and specious techniques that are aimed at maintaining the illusion that the Bible is still relevant in today's world" (cover blurb).

This course will be, I hope, a vigorous re-affirmation of the necessity and fruitfulness of appropriate methods in the study of the Bible. Of course, we shall want to hear what Wink and Avalos have to say; but not in a purely defensive posture. Instead, we shall examine a host of first-rate examples of biblical criticism well employed, and each student will write several exegetical papers that correspond to the best canons of scholarly research and writing. In addition, we shall discuss the role of biblical studies in the academy (say, in a religious or secular university setting) and in the service of the Church.

Language Prerequisites:
All students will be expected, minimally, to learn the Greek alphabet, so as to "follow along" in a Greek NT (or an interlinear Greek-English NT) and use a lexicon. I shall be glad to help you get started in this, if you wish. French and / or German can of course be used with profit, but are not required of master's level students.

Required Texts:
TBA

Format:
Extensive reading, online discussion, various online projects.

Assignments and/or Examinations:
Brief exegetical projects, book reports, several short papers (1000 words max. each), a final paper (3000 words max.).

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