



On-Campus Course Syllabus

OTS610

OT Intensive: Ecclesiastes

Spring 2023

Class Information

Day and Time: Monday 8:00-10:45 am

Room Number: E209

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Kevin Warstler

Instructor Email: kwarstler@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: 214.818.1331

Instructor Office Hours: Monday 1-3 pm; Thursday 2-4 pm

Course Description and Prerequisites

An intensive study of selected books in the English Bible. This course may be repeated for credit when the book differs. The course will emphasize the background, structure, and content of the book of Ecclesiastes with special emphasis on its relationship to biblical theology, ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature, and philosophy. (Prerequisite: OTS101; Prerequisite may be taken concurrently: OTS201)

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, the student should demonstrate the following:

1. Know the background, structure, and argument of the book of Ecclesiastes;
2. Evaluate various interpretations of the book of Ecclesiastes with the purpose of developing your own thinking and interpretation of the book;
3. Discuss the content of the book in relation to philosophical thought, particularly as it relates to a world-and-life view; and
4. Develop principles of application from the book of Ecclesiastes that can be applied to a contemporary audience.

Required Textbooks

1. Bartholomew, Craig G. *Ecclesiastes*. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014. (978-0801097447)
2. Eaton, Michael A. *Ecclesiastes*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009. (978-0830842186)
3. Longman, Tremper III. *Ecclesiastes*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament (NICOT). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. (978-0802823663)

4. Kreeft, Peter *Three Philosophies of Life*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989. (978-0898702620)

Course Requirements and Assignments

1. Bible, Commentary, and Supplemental Reading (10%): You are responsible to read the book of Ecclesiastes twice. It is suggested that you read it through the first time in conjunction with your commentary reading. The second reading should be done at the end of the course after you have thought through the text in more detail. You are also responsible to read the commentaries (Bartholomew, Eaton, and Longman) by the end of the semester. It is best to do your first Bible reading in conjunction with your commentary reading. Supplemental readings will be required periodically and the material will be provided on Canvas at least one week before the reading is due. These readings are not included on the course outline/calendar even though they will be part of your required reading. You will report the reading in your study journal and it will be graded in conjunction with the grading of the journal.
2. Class Attendance and Participation (10%): Attendance will be taken in class and will be part of this grade. You are allowed one absence without penalty but any more absences will affect this grade. If you have a legitimate and approved excused absence, that will not affect the grade. It is best that if you are aware of a possible excused absence before class time, you let me know via email in order to get approval for it. The other component of this requirement is that you demonstrate alertness and engagement in the class and the discussions. Active verbal participation is not necessary (although it is encouraged); instead, you need to show evidence that you are paying attention in class.
3. Kreeft Reflection Paper (20%): You are to read Peter Kreeft, *Three Philosophies of Life* and write a 3-4 page, single-spaced paper reflecting on Kreeft's ideas regarding the three books: Job, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. Pay particular attention to his view of Ecclesiastes and how it relates to the other two books. For this paper, you are not summarizing his views but you are including your own thoughts and evaluation of his ideas based on your own knowledge of these books and your study of Ecclesiastes in this course.
4. Study Journal (30%): You will keep a study journal for the book of Ecclesiastes containing observations, questions, and interactions derived from the reading of the biblical text and commentaries. The journal may be in electronic format or hardcopy. If you choose to use a hardcopy, it is suggested that the pages are detachable so you will be able to turn in the entries for grading without affecting the next entry. Each journal entry needs to be identified as the date due for the required work. The study journal must include the following sections for each journal entry:
 - (1) identification of the required Bible reading
 - (2) a summary of the biblical text
 - (3) observations and questions related to the interpretation of the biblical text
 - (4) identification and percentage completed of the required commentary and supplemental readings
 - (5) observations related to the commentary and supplemental readings
 - (6) a brief discussion of answers to the questions raised in the Bible reading with special attention to the contributions of the commentary and supplemental readings
 - (7) at least two specific and contemporary applications from the biblical text

There will be a preliminary turnin for Ecclesiastes 1 that will not be graded. It is for feedback to make sure you are including everything needed for the entry. For this turnin, please include some indication that you have read the introductory material in the commentaries even though you are not journaling that information (although you may include additional material in your study journal for the introductory readings). For your final journal entry, you will include the report of your second reading of Ecclesiastes according to the reading requirements. You will receive four separate grades for this part of the course based on the due dates for the journal (see Course Outline/Calendar).

5. Research Paper (30%): You will research and write a paper of 12-15 double-spaced pages on a topic related to the interpretation of Ecclesiastes within the larger context of biblical wisdom literature. This may be a topic that is included in Ecclesiastes (such as wealth, wisdom, pleasure, etc.) or a passage in the book but it must be related to the larger context of biblical wisdom (most especially the book of Proverbs) in order to compare and contrast the teachings of Ecclesiastes with the other wisdom texts. You must include at least 10 sources of which 3 are journal articles.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

In the event of any student in danger of not successfully completing the course due to absences (two consecutive absences in which there is no communication with the professor regarding the reason for them) or low grades on the quizzes and the Mid-Term exam, the professor reserves the right to communicate with the Student Success Manager regarding the situation. The Student Success Manager will most likely make contact with the student in order to discuss options available in order to complete the course.

Class Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to attend every class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Instructors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual instructors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades.

Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of

the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus's closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

Grading Scale

| | | | Grade Definitions (optional) |
|----|--------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| A | 93-100 | 4.0 grade points per semester hour | |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.7 grade points per semester hour | |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.3 grade points per semester hour | |
| B | 83-86 | 3.0 grade points per semester hour | |
| B- | 80-82 | 2.7 grade points per semester hour | |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.3 grade points per semester hour | |
| C | 73-76 | 2.0 grade points per semester hour | |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.7 grade points per semester hour | |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.3 grade points per semester hour | |
| D | 63-66 | 1.0 grade point per semester hour | |
| D- | 60-62 | 0.7 grade points per semester hour | |
| F | 0-59 | 0.0 grade points per semester hour | |

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the "I" will become an "F."

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,

- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college's academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student's course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student's work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting

the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu. Offsite login information is available in Canvas in the “Criswell Student Training Course” under “Library Information.”

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence in any subject matter taught at the college. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203, or schedule an appointment by emailing tutoringcenter@criswell.edu or by calling 214.818.1373.

Course Outline/Calendar

| Week | Date | In-Class Topic | Commentary Reading Due | Assignment Due |
|------|-------------|---|--|---|
| 1 | January 23 | Introduction to the Course, Syllabus | | |
| 2 | January 30 | Introduction to Hebrew Wisdom Literature | Bartholomew, 17–59 (Intro., before the section called “Text”) Eaton, 17–46 (Intro., Sections 1-5) | |
| 3 | February 6 | Introduction to Ecclesiastes | Bartholomew, 59–99 Eaton, 46–62 (Intro. before “Commentary”) | |
| 4 | February 13 | Ecclesiastes 1 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 1 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 1 | Preliminary Journal Turnin Ecclesiastes 1 |
| 5 | February 20 | Ecclesiastes 2 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 2 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 2 | |
| 6 | February 27 | Ecclesiastes 3 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 3 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 3 | Journal due for Ecclesiastes 1–3 |
| 7 | March 6 | Ecclesiastes 4 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 4 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 4 | |
| | March 13-17 | NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK | | |
| 8 | March 20 | Ecclesiastes 5 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 5 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 5 | Journal due for Ecclesiastes 4–5 |
| 9 | March 27 | Ecclesiastes 6 Kreeft, <i>Three Philosophies of Life</i> | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 6 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 6 | Kreeft Reflection Paper |
| 11 | April 3 | Ecclesiastes 7 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 7 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 7 | |
| 12 | April 10 | Ecclesiastes 8 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 8 | Journal due for |

| | | | | |
|----|----------|------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | | | Eaton, Ecclesiastes 8 | Ecclesiastes 6–8 |
| 13 | April 17 | Ecclesiastes 9 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 9 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 9 | |
| 14 | April 24 | Ecclesiastes 10 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 10 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 10 | |
| 15 | May 1 | Ecclesiastes 11–12 | Bartholomew, Ecclesiastes 11–12 Eaton, Ecclesiastes 11–12 | Journal due for Ecclesiastes 9–12 |
| 16 | May 8-12 | NO CLASS OR FINAL EXAM | | Research Paper Due May 12 |

Selected Bibliography

- Bartholomew, Craig G. *Ecclesiastes*. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms, edited by Tremper Longman III. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.
- Boda, Mark J., Tremper Longman III, and Cristian G. Rata, eds. *The Words of the Wise Are Like Goads: Engaging Qoheleth in the 21st Century*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013.
- Brown, William P. *Ecclesiastes*. Interpretation Bible Commentary, edited by James Luther Mays. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2000.
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- Farmer, Kathleen A. *Who Knows What Is Good? A Commentary on the Books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.
- Fox, Michael V. *A Time to Tear Down and a Time to Build Up: A Rereading of Ecclesiastes*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
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- Fredericks, Daniel C., and Daniel J. Estes. *Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs*. Apollos Old Testament Commentary, edited by David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2010.
- Garrett, Duane A. *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. New American Commentary, Vol. 14, edited by E. Ray Clendenen. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1993.
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- Hubbard, David A. *Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon*. The Communicator's Commentary, edited by Lloyd J. Ogilvie. Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1991.
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- Krüger, Thomas. *Qoheleth*. Translated by O. C. Dean, Jr. Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, edited by Peter Machinist et al. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.
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- Ogden, Graham S. *Qoheleth*. 2nd ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2007.

Ryken, Philip Graham. *Ecclesiastes: Why Everything Matters*. Preaching the Word Series. R. Kent Hughes, ed. Wheaton: Crossway, 2010.

Seow, Choon-Leong. *Ecclesiastes: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Volume 18C. The Anchor Bible, edited by William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Whybray, R. N. *Ecclesiastes*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.