

Teachings of Jesus  
in Comparative Perspective  
RS 24  
Winter Quarter 2009

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## BOOKS

Required:

- Marcus J. Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (San Francisco: Harper, 1995).  
Robert J. Miller, ed., *The Complete Gospels* (3d ed.; San Francisco: Polebridge, 1995).  
Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus Through the Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University, 1999).  
Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).  
E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London and New York: Penguin, 1993).  
Thich Nhat Hanh, *Living Buddha, Living Christ* (New York: Riverhead, 2007).

Other materials are posted on Electronic Reserves (e-reserves). They can be found under the course reserves heading on the library website ([www.library.ucsb.edu](http://www.library.ucsb.edu) > library services > course reserves > [electronic reservations](#)). You need a password to access it, which will be distributed in class for legal reasons. The readings can be read online, saved for on-screen display as a PDF, or printed.

You can access the site outside of UCSB webspace by setting up a proxy server on your home browser. See <http://www.library.ucsb.edu/help/proxy/index.html>

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Readings should be completed BEFORE the lecture.

ER= Electronic Reserves, with author indicated in SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS.

### Part One: Two Views of Jesus: Jewish Prophet, Wisdom Revealer

#### 5 January: Introduction

📖 Sanders, 1-32.

7 January: Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke

📖 Sanders, 49-77. Introduction in *Gospels*, 1-8; The Gospel of Mark chaps. 1-7 in *Gospels*, 9-30.

9 January: Jesus in the Gospel of John

📖 The Gospel of John, entire, in *Gospels*, 194-246.

12 January: The Sunday School Jesus and the Gospel of John

📖 Borg, 1-45; Sanders, 169-88.

14 January: Jesus and Judaism: Departure or Continuity?

📖 Borg, 46-68; Sanders, 33-48; 205-36.

16 January: no class

19 January: Holiday

21 January: Lecture by Wyatt Rounds: Jesus in the Gospel of Mark

📖 The Gospel of Mark chaps. 8-16 in *Gospels*, 31-52.

23 January: Gospel Sources: the Sayings Source Q

📖 The Sayings Gospel Q in *Gospels*, 247-300.

**First analysis paper due**

26 January: Why Isn't the *Gospel of Thomas* in the New Testament? and Other Questions About the Canon of the New Testament

📖 The *Gospel of Peter*, the *Secret Gospel of Mark*, the *Egerton Gospel*, and Paps. Oxy. 840 and 1224 in *Gospels*, 397-424; the *Infancy Gospel of James* in *Gospels*, 380-96.

**Midterm study guide circulated.**

28 January: The Teacher of Divine Wisdom: Jesus in the *Gospel of Thomas*

📖 Borg, 69-95; the *Gospel of Thomas* in *Gospels*, 301-29.

30 January: The Gnostic Revealer: Jesus in the Gnostic Apocrypha

📖 Borg, 96-118; the *Gospel of Mary* in *Gospels*, 357-66; THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS.

**2 February: midterm**

Part Two: Matthew, Luke and the Story of Jesus

4 February: "Blessed are the Cheesemakers": Jesus Meets Hollywood

📖 Sanders, 98-131.

6 February: The Greatest Story Never Told and the Gospel of Luke

📖 Gospel of Luke chaps. 1-4, 15-16, 24 in *Gospels*, 115-127, 152-56, 172-74.

9 February: Pasolini and the Gospel of Matthew

📖 The Gospel of Matthew chaps. 1-7, 23-35 in *Gospels*, 53-71, 100-106.

Part Three: The Sermon on the Mount and Non-Violence

11 February: The Teachings of Jesus: The Kingdom of God

📖 Sanders, 189-204; Pelikan, "The Prince of Peace," 168-81.

13 February: The Sermon on the Mount through history

📖 ER: TOLSTOY, "LETTER TO GANDHI"; ER: GANDHI, "A LETTER TO A HINDU"; Stanford King Encyclopedia, "Non-Violence," at

[www.stanford.edu/group/King/about\\_king/encyclopedia/nonviolent.resist.html](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/about_king/encyclopedia/nonviolent.resist.html);

Martin Luther King, "My Pilgrimage to Non-Violence" at

[www.stanford.edu/group/King/publications/papers/vol4/580901-002-](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/publications/papers/vol4/580901-002-My_Pilgrimage_to_Nonviolence.htm)

[My\\_Pilgrimage\\_to\\_Nonviolence.htm](http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/publications/papers/vol4/580901-002-My_Pilgrimage_to_Nonviolence.htm)

**16 February: Holiday**

18 March: Non-violence and violent ends: Oscar Romero and liberation theology

📖 Pelikan, "The Liberator," 206-19; ROMERO, "OPTION FOR THE POOR."

## Part Four: The Historical Quest

20 February: The Enlightenment and the Modern Quest for the Historical Jesus

📖 Sanders, 132-68; Pelikan, “The Teacher of Common Sense,” 182-93.

**Second analysis paper due.**

23 February: Jesus in the Twentieth Century: the New Quest, and the Third Quest

📖 ER: BERNARD BRANDON SCOTT, “NEW OPTIONS IN AN OLD QUEST,” in *The Historical Jesus Through Catholic and Jewish Eyes* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity, 2000).

25 February: Jesus and His Mission in E. P. Sanders

📖 Sanders, 238-81.

27 February: In Search of a Prodigal Son: The Modern Jewish Jesus

📖 Prothero, 229-66.

2 March: Jesus in America

📖 Prothero, 124-57; 161-99.

## Part Five: Jesus and Religion(s)

4 March: Jesus Meets the East

📖 Thich, xiii-59; ER: GANDHI, “TALK ON BOARD S. S. PILSNA”; ER: *WHAT JESUS MEANS TO ME*.

6 March: The Oriental Jesus in America

📖 Prothero, 267-90.

**Third analysis paper due.**

9 March: The Teachings of Jesus and Religious Discourse

📖 Thich, 60-130.

11 March: Mysticism and the Monastic Tradition

📖 Thich, 131-198; Pelikan, “The Monk Who Rules the World,” 109-21; “The Divine and Human Model,” 133-44.

13 March: Course Review

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

If you are a student with a disability, and would like to discuss special academic accommodations, please contact me during my office hours, by phone or e-mail, or before or after class.

- 1. Section attendance and participation: 10%.** The sections are essential to this course and are not duplications of the lectures. Class discussion is also an integral part of this course. Minimal preparation represented by either asking questions or making comments of value to your section in comprehending the course content will be recorded and evaluated. Section attendance and participation will constitute 10% of the final grade. **Please note that sections will not meet during the first week of classes.**
- 2. Three short analysis papers: 30%.** Each of these will be an exploration of the argument(s) in one of the readings from secondary literature assigned for that week. Secondary literature means modern literature, not the ancient primary sources such as the gospels. Each analysis should be evenly divided between a summary and clarification of the author's position; and a critique or assessment of this position. The commentary should also suggest issues for further investigation. Each analysis will be 1.5 pages, double-spaced in 12 pt. Times Roman font. You are expected to hand them to your section leader during the lecture period on the following dates: **23 January, 20 February, and 6 March.**
- 3. A midterm exam: 30%.** This will consist of essays and short identifications and will take place on **2 February**. A study guide will be circulated one week before the exam. Please bring blue books to the exam.
- 4. A final exam: 30%.** This will consist of essays and short identifications. The study guide will be handed out on the Monday of the final week of the course. The exam will take place in the lecture hall at 4:00 pm on **Thursday 19 March**. The exam should take about 1.5 hours to complete. Please bring blue books to the exam.

## LATE POLICY

Timely submission of student work assures fair conditions of evaluation, since an essential condition is that all students have a comparable amount of time to complete their assignments. Late submissions will lose a grade increment (e.g. A+ to A) for each two days of tardiness.

## POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Student Code of Conduct clearly sets out a standard of academic honesty and responsibility by which a student's work must be his or her own work. The faculty in Religious Studies believes that plagiarism is one of the most serious infractions of student conduct and of the intellectual environment of the university. All faculty members have agreed that we will pursue disciplinary actions in all cases of plagiarism and that we will ask the Dean of Students and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies not only to suspend the offending student from the university but also prohibit the student from taking any further courses in Religious Studies. Make certain in your research paper that you attribute to the proper source all materials cited directly or indirectly, whether verbatim or paraphrased.