

Syllabus

TITLE OF THE COURSE: Radical Jesus in the Cotton Patch

COURSE NUMBER

Summer, 2012

Pacific School of Religion

Monday-Friday, July 23-27, 9:00 Am-1:00 PM

Dorsey O. Blake, Instructor

Office location – Starr King School for the Ministry

Monday-Friday, July 23-27, 1:00-2:00 PM

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Brief course description:

The course will engage the life and works of Clarence Jordan, scientific farmer and New Testament Greek scholar. Jordan is the author of the Cotton Patch Series of Versions of New Testament texts. We will focus on his parables of liberation. Jordan felt that it was imperative to contextualize the parables of Jesus as narratives speaking directly to conditions in the United States: Jerusalem became Atlanta; crucifixion became lynching. His texts audaciously and brilliantly address racism, militarism, economic justice, sustainability, the nonviolent revolution beckoning to be born and the spirituality underlying all of this. The course will also examine his work: *Sermon on the Mount*. This marvelous book presents many contemporary issues -- militarism, racism, economic exploitation, anxiety, insecurity, confusion – hypocrisy – that the Kingdom (reign, sovereignty) of God idea addresses. Clarence Jordan spoke directly with great humor and earthiness. In 1942 he co-founded the interracial farming community “Koinonia” in Americus, Georgia. It was an example of his commitment to seeing the Word made flesh.

Learning objectives:

1. Comprehend the motivation behind the founding of Koinonia Farm
2. Analyze historical and contemporary use of the liberation parables of Jesus
3. Explore various contexts for Biblical Hermeneutics as exemplified in the liberation parables.
4. Discover the power of parables and why Jesus used them.
5. Facilitate confidence in creating new versions of parables for today’s usage.
6. Demonstrate an ability to relate parables to current personal, societal, and systemic issues.
7. Develop an appreciation of the revolutionary nature of the Sermon on the Mount
8. Understand the context and players for which and whom the Sermon was addressed

Learning Activities:

1. lecture, discussion
2. working in teams
3. audio presentations
4. writing
5. oral presentations

Requirements:

1. Pre-class paper (5 pages) responding to either text, *Cotton Patch Parables of Liberation* or *Sermon on the Mount* to be turned in either prior to the beginning of the class or the first day of class.
2. Full participation in the class including discussion, writing assignments, oral presentations, and team work
3. Post-class paper, approximately 10 pages. The topic will be agreed upon as a result of our work during the week.

Grading Policy:

The pre-class and post-class papers will each count as 25% of the grade for a total of 50%. Full classroom participation counts for 50% of the grade. Full classroom participation includes discussion, writing assignments, and team work.

Attendance at each class session is mandatory. There will be no unexcused absences.

For grading policy visit <http://www.psr.edu/grades>

Calendar of Assignments

July 23 – Introduction of each other and Clarence Jordan
Audio Interview with Clarence Jordan
Cotton Patch Parables of Liberation, pp. 11-70
Writing assignment

July 24 – Audio Disk 1 The Cotton Patch Parables
Cotton Patch Parables of Liberation, pp. 71-125
Writing Assignment

July 25 – Audio Disk 2 The Cotton Patch Parables
Cotton Patch Parables of Liberation, pp.126- 147
Sermon on the Mount, pp.1-21
Writing Assignment

July 26 – Audio Disk 3 & 4 The Cotton Patch Parables
Sermon on the Mount, pp. 23-57

Writing Assignment
July 27 – Sermon of the Mount, pp. 59-87
Writing Assignment

Textbooks:

Required:

Jordan, Clarence and Doulos, Bill Lane, *Cotton Patch Parables of Liberation* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1976, ISBN: 0-8361-9151-X) \$18.00
Sermon of the Mount (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1952, ISBN 0-8170-0501-3)

Reference:

Barnette, Henlee, Clarence Jordan: *Turning Dreams Into Deeds* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 1992, ISBN: 1880837005)
Coble, Ann Louise, *Cotton Patch For The Kingdom: Clarence Jordan's Demonstration Plot at Koinonia Farm* (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2001, ISBN: 0836191668) *OUT OF PRINT*
Fox, Emmet, *Sermon on the Mount: The Key to Success* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 1989, ISBN: 0060628626)
Hollyday, Joyce, ed., *Clarence Jordan: Essential Writings (Modern Spiritual Masters Series)* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009, ISBN: 1570754977)
Jeremias, Joachim, *Parables of Jesus* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2 revised edition, 1972, ISBN: 0023605103)
Scott, Bernard Brandon, *Hear Then the Parable* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989, ISBN: 0800624815)
Kay Weiner, *Koinonia Remembered: The First Fifty Years* (Americus, GA: Koinonia Partners, 1992, ASIN: B000L7BK42)

Plagiarism Policy: <http://www.psr.edu/plagiarism-policy>

English as Second Language (ESL) Policy:

1. Upon request by the ESL student to the PSR faculty, the faculty member will extend the deadline for papers one week to allow time for editing.
2. Upon request by the ESL student, PSR faculty will allow twice as much time for ESL students to complete in-class written exams.

The PSR curriculum aims to develop Progressive Christian leadership in students. A Progressive Christian leader:

1. Is rooted in Christian tradition
Has the ability to re-appropriate tradition for new times/places
Can critically analyze texts and traditions
2. Understands the contextual nature of knowing and understanding
Understands one's own perception is limited

Understands the reality and value of multiple perspectives
Understands ambiguity and complexity and can hold the tensions related to difference
Can critically evaluate a context and respond

3. Is self aware/spiritually grounded

Has an engaged spirituality
Is self-reflective and reflexive

4. Works in partnership

Is actively involved in ecumenical and interfaith conversations
Appreciates the value of diversity and moves beyond appreciation to engagement
Is socially connected and can work collaboratively
Is competent in cross-cultural situations
Nurtures the development of leadership in others

5. Can envision and engage in the creation of a more just world

Holds a liberation perspective
Has a global consciousness
Works for social change and has a systemic perspective
Is involved in institutional transformation

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