

DM-H602: The Healing Miracles of Jesus

Wesley Theological Seminary
DMin Program, January 11-15, 2016
Dr. Shively Smith, Instructor

Contact Information for Dr. Smith:

Office Hours: Schedule appointments via this link: <http://www.meetme.so/ssmith>.
I am not available on weekends and will respond to emails on Monday.

Office Location: Straughn Hall (main campus), SG-33

Office Telephone: 202.885.8643

Emails: ssmith@wesleyseminary.edu

Course Description:

This class examines the historical, literary, and theological significance of the healing miracles of Jesus through a close review of the Gospel of Matthew's presentation. It focuses on Matthew's descriptions and portrayals of Jesus' healings and miracles, explores healing in light of the socio-historical context of ancient world, and considers how gospel portrayals of healing inform, disrupt, challenge, and/or relate to ministry today when issues of holistic health, mental and physical illness arise.

Required Textbooks:

- Walter T. Wilson, *Healing in the Gospel of Matthew* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014) [Although you only write on 3 chapters for the pre-course assignment, every student should be prepared to offer reflections and engagement on 5 Matthean healing stories covered in the book or put another way, 5 chapters from Chapters 2-13].
- John Pilch, *Healing in the New Testament: Insights from Medical and Mediterranean Anthropology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000).
- James L. Bailey and Lyle D. Vander Broek, *Literary Forms in the New Testament* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992).

Other Required Reading Posted on the Blackboard Course Site

- Michael Joseph Brown, "Matthew, Gospel of," in *New Interpreter's Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 5 (Abingdon Press, 2009), 839-853.
- Warren Carter, "Jesus' Healing Stories: Imperial Critique and Eschatological Anticipations in Matthew's Gospel," in *Currents in Theology and Mission* 37.6 (December 2010): 488-496.
- G. Guy Pujol, Jr. and Margaret Aymer, "Cure or Healing?: Teaching the Healing Miracle Stories through the Lenses of Exegesis and Pastoral Care during the AIDS Pandemic," in *Practical Matters* 4 (Spring 2011): 1-8.
- David Graham, "Jesus as Miracle Worker," in *The Scottish Bulletin of Evangelic Theology* 4 (1986): 85-96.

Pre-Course Assignment: Complete the following prompts, which are due on the first day of class. All submissions should be made through the Blackboard site in the appropriate submission link. Please type in 12-point font, Times New Roman font, single or double space. Total pre-class assignment is 9 pages. The expectation is that ALL books and articles listed above will have been read and considered by the first day of class.

1. Read the "Preface" and "Introduction" to the Bailey and Broek book, *Literary Forms in the New Testament* as well as the sections called: (1) "Miracle Story" (*Literary forms*, 137-144), (2) "Stories about Jesus" (*Literary Forms*, 147-156), and (3) "Pronouncement Story" (*Literary Forms*, 114-122). Give a 1-page summary on each of the forms listed above (miracle story, stories about Jesus, and pronouncement story) based on what the section says. Make sure you answer the questions: What are the characteristics of the literary form? What is its purpose or interpretative value? What is its literary function in the larger context of the particular New Testament narratives it appears in? [3 pages submitted total]

2. Read the "Methodology" chapter of Wilson's book, *Healing in the Gospel*. Then provide a summary and reflection of 3 other chapters of the book from Chapter 2 to Chapter 13. Each chapter of the book from Chapter 2 - Chapter 13 represents a healing miracle Wilson is discussing. For this assignment, then, you are choosing 3 healing miracles to read about in depth and discuss from Chapters 2-13. Each summary-reflection should be 2 pages each and it should address the following points. [6 pages submitted total]

- **Interpretative Thesis** - Restate the main understanding of that Matthean healing story being put forward by the interpreter in your own words. Be sure to cite the page numbers in the footnotes. Should be between 1-4 sentences and no more.
- **Name and Engage Scripture** – In 1-2 paragraphs, list all the scriptures referenced or discussed in the article as pertinent to an understanding of that particular healing miracle. Name the chapter and verse Wilson identifies as key or central to his reading of that miracle story and then engage his use of scripture (i.e. how is he using scripture? What is the exegetical method or approach used to support or produce this reading? What was not considered or overlooked in this scripture passage that you think is significant?)
- **Using the Bailey-Broek book on *Literary Forms in the New Testament*** – In 1-2 paragraphs, discuss how this particular miracle story fits, deviates, or challenges the Bailey-Broek book's description of "Miracle Story" (*Literary Forms*, 137-144), or "Stories about Jesus" (*Literary Forms*, 147-156), or "Pronouncement Story" (*Literary Forms*, 114-122), or some other literary form mentioned in the book *Literary Forms of the New Testament* that you think your particular story fits into.
- **Reflection** – In 1-2 paragraphs engage the following question: How does this reading challenge, enable, critique, or highlight views and/or experiences of healing, health, and/or illness from your own ministry context?