



SCHOLÉ ACADEMY
CLASSICAL ACADEMIC PRESS

God's Great Covenant: New Testament 1

Mrs. Elizabeth Kaufman

Yearlong Course

2023-2024

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:

Grades 6-8; 9th graders welcome! This course is designed as an introductory New Testament course with an assumption that enrolling students have a basic working knowledge of Old Testament Bible texts and the life of Jesus Christ. Students who have a more thorough grasp of the Old and New Testament scriptures will make deep connections with familiar territory, but this is not a pre-requisite. The course is recommended for students who want an interactive study of the life and ministry of Jesus that looks closely at the time, place and context of the gospel accounts. Students should be prepared to read scripture, engage in dialogue with instructor and peers, reflect on questions and pose their own, memorize some scripture passages, and practice the oral tradition of “re-telling” scriptural accounts with accuracy and interest.

Please note: This course is the equivalent of one high school credit in Bible / History.

REQUIRED TEXTS:*

[God's Great Covenant: New Testament 1](#), (Student Edition), by Claire Larson. Classical Academic Press.

[The World Jesus Knew](#), by Marc Olson. Sparkhouse Family. October 3, 2017

A Bible: Instructor recommends [NIV Kids' Visual Study Bible](#). Zonderkidz. June 6, 2017; *Although “kids” is in the title, this is a standard NIV translation, not modified or paraphrased. Hardcover and leather covers are both available. One benefit of this publication is the single-column format that makes the text more readable and accessible for narrative purposes.*

Scripture Journal (recommendations forthcoming, not lined pages)

*Required texts are not included in the purchase of the course.

NOTE: While our primary text will be *God's Great Covenant: New Testament 1*, the instructor will adapt and augment the curriculum as she sees best for the learning objectives of the course. As such, students should also be prepared to regularly print PDF files supplied by the instructor.

COURSE SCHEDULE

ORIENTATION SESSION:

Tuesday, August 29 at 11:00 a.m.

CLASS SESSION DATES:

Classes will take place on Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00-12:15 a.m. (ET) for 32 weeks.

Semester 1: September 4 to January 19

Thanksgiving Break: November 20-24

Christmas Break: December 18-January 5

Semester 2: January 22 to May 24

Winter Break: February 19-23

Holy Week Break: March 25-29

OFFICE HOURS: Your teachers are available outside of scheduled class times! During “Office Hours” students and parents may raise questions, seek assistance, or review class material. This can happen via email or a meeting in the Zoom classroom. Your teacher will do their best to respond within 24-48 hours; please note that your instructor lives in a timezone that is ET+7 hours, which may cause some delay in response time.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The events in the life and ministry of Jesus are likely familiar to many middle school students. But, investigating the gospel accounts within the context of the Jewish / Roman world at the turn-of-the-timeline illuminates more than just the facts and accounts surrounding Jesus’s life and work; it gives us a fuller understanding of Jesus as God-made-man and shines light on the brilliance of His planned arrival to a certain people, at a certain period in time, at a certain place in the world, to make a certain point for us all.

This course begins with a short introductory review of what a covenant is, and what God’s Covenant was from the beginning of biblical scripture. We will spend a few weeks investigating the historical, geographical, political and religious rules of the day using the introductory pages of “God’s Great Covenant: New Testament 1” by Classical Academic Press. While this may

sound rather formal, the approach is interactive and engaging: we'll view age-appropriate archaeological documentaries, draw comparisons of simple maps of ancient and modern Israel, and discuss our own observations of text and media. Investigating societal structures in simple forms will help us to better understand the complexities of the interactions Jesus had with various groups and individuals. Spending time to grasp this backdrop gives us a more "3D" view of the life of Jesus and his contemporaries.

This is followed with a steady walk through major parts of the four gospels with a focus on the centrality of God's message through Christ as recorded by four different authors. We'll reflect on the importance of the fact that the four accounts are similar but not exactly the same. Character studies will help us to uncover God's character revealed in Christ, and will help students to think deeply about the importance, necessity and wonder of Christ being fully God and fully man. Through it all, we will see how the gospels point back to prophecies from the Old Testament. In this way, students begin to grasp the continuity of "God's Great Covenant" of love and salvation revealed and fulfilled from the first pages of scripture to the ascension of Christ. As we read in Hebrews 1:1-3: "Long ago, God spoke many times, and in many ways through the prophets, but now in these final days, He has spoken to us through His Son... The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God."

I hope you'll join me in studying the fascinating life and times of Jesus Christ!

We have planned to cover all 32 chapters of the course text with the intention that students will be able to transition smoothly to *God's Great Covenant: Old Testament 2* next year. However flexibility has been allowed to adapt the pace if, after correspondence with students and parents, the need should arise to proceed more slowly. Mastery is more important than quantity – *multum, non multa!*

Please note: Are you wondering if this course would take away from your family Bible instruction? While the course could certainly stand on its own as an independent Bible course for the school year, it is never our intention to replace parents in the biblical instruction of their children. Please feel free to reach out to the instructor to better understand how this course might be used to guide and enrich your family Bible instruction.

COURSE MAP

"God's Great Covenant: New Testament 1, The Gospels" provides a wonderful guide through our scriptural study. We use this book to guide us through the academic year, covering approximately one chapter per week. Looking through this course text provides a clear overview of the material we will cover. A more detailed explanation of our coursework follows:

Quarter 1: Where and When does Jesus arrive in the timeline of God's Great Covenant?

We begin by asking what is covenant? In a quick overview, we see that God's covenant with His people has been consistent and unfolding throughout the Old Testament. This is

foundational work that sets the stage for the rest of the course, as we constantly will notice patterns, phrases, and concepts in the New Testament that point us to the Old. Without this connection, the birth and life of Jesus sort of floats in time and space without an anchor. We also consider the experience of the nation of Israel during the Inter-testamental period and into the first century AD. This quarter is meant to anchor our understanding of Christ as a fulfillment of God's Covenant **within** the context of time and space, and to extend our understanding of Jesus as a living hope for His people **beyond** the confines of time and space.

SCHOLARSHIP SKILLS: memorization, note-taking, copywork, keeping a common-place notebook, accurate narration from text, creative narration from perspective, summarizing, timeline work, accessing online media

Quarter 2: Jesus's Invitations and the Importance of Four Gospels

Taking a closer look at the life of Jesus in his early years makes him "come alive" as a real person who entered human history. We consider how Jesus's most used name (Son of Man) defines not only his identity, but also His relationship to God and to us! We also investigate how the four gospel accounts are not divergent but consistent accounts written in various styles with various effects helping to create a more solid case of "the parts complete the whole." In order to better understand this, we engage in activities that help us to see how multiple testimonies around events in our own lives work in much the same way. This approach to the gospels creates a deeper interest in and understanding of what was recorded, how it was told and why. We also spend time considering the various ways Jesus invited his disciples to follow him, helping us to think about how He might also invite us. All of this gives us a sense that the birth and early life of Jesus was at once rich, mysterious, joyous, cosmic and personal.

SCHOLARSHIP SKILLS: oral retelling, reference to past learning (i.e. quarter 1), Socratic dialogue, organizing information, word-study (some basic understanding of grammar / parts-of-speech), looking-up scripture references

Quarter 3: What it Means to be a Part of Jesus's Upside-Down Kingdom

In quarter 3, we follow Jesus throughout Palestine and witness his interactions with people from all classes and positions in society. Our earlier study of the roles of prophets, priest and kings from the Old Testament (covered in Quarter 1) helps us to see how Jesus fulfills all three of these roles and up-ends expectations of what Messiah would be like. We begin to see how Jesus establishes a "new law" by fulfilling the "old law" and living the law out perfectly as further fulfillment of his Covenant established from the beginning of creation. We consider the constant conflict between Jesus and the Sanhedrin, and investigate the perspectives of pharisees, sadducees, priests, and Roman rulers in order to better understand why Jesus was a controversial character. Above all, we also consider Him as consistently loving. As we watch and listen-in on Jesus's

interactions with the poor and vulnerable in society, we join the disciples in wondering what kind of Messiah is this?

SCHOLARSHIP SKILLS: referencing OT scripture to form NT perspective; using scripture in dialogue; role-playing in historical context; recording Who, What, Where, When, Why, How details with accuracy; elocution; reflective writing.

Quarter 4: The Continuation of God's Covenant in Christ's Death, Resurrection & Ascension

In the events surrounding Jesus's crucifixion, death, and resurrection, we recognize that His social / religious / political "rise and fall" were actually His sovereign / faithful / spiritual "fall and rise." So much about the way of Jesus is backward and upside down compared to the expectations placed on Him and in Him. We consider what are our own expectations and notions of Jesus? We trace the events leading up to his death and resurrection carefully, considering why these details were recorded for us. Beyond the physical events, we draw on our study of Jesus's fulfillment of the law and the prophets to consider the spiritual meaning of his resurrection for us personally. We end considering Jesus's parting demonstrations of love, forgiveness and invitation and wonder together about what His new life means for us in light of personal reflection and Protestant doctrine. Our final project is to pen a guided reflective epilogue as if we were a contemporary of the disciples, pulling together texts and concepts that we have covered throughout the year and drawing conclusions that summarize our learning as expressed by one of the leaders of the early Christian church, Saint Augustine: "The Son of God became the Son of Man that you who were the sons of men might be made sons of God."

SCHOLARSHIP SKILLS: annotating text, asking and answering intriguing questions, grade-level writing skills, organizing information, drawing conclusions by citing evidence.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS

Students enrolling in Scholé Academy's Canterbury House of Studies will be expected to show development of Executive Function Skills throughout the year. Executive Function Skills speaks to a set of qualities and skill sets students can develop and hone to better to approach the courses, lectures, readings, and teachers they will encounter in their future academic coursework.

The expected disposition is that of an 'engaged student'. Scholé Academy commends four other important skills which ought to be observed by students.

1. **An Engaged Student:** One who is willing to step into the arena of class discussion, ask questions, supply answers, and consider how the discussion at hand applies to oneself.

2. **Note Taking:** A student must be engaged with the class by taking notes on important and relevant content in an organized fashion. They should then independently consult those notes for assignments and in preparation for assessments. It is essential that all students acquire a notebook for use during the class, as this will keep them organized by subject.
3. **Attention to Detail & Preparedness:** These students are ones who consistently adhere to deadlines, submission requirements, adhere to style guides and codes, confirm technology is working prior to the start of class, are responsible to determine how to proceed after an absence, are responsible for consulting their course syllabus and adjusting as the class proceeds, etc.
4. **Critical Reflection:** These students are ones who receive feedback to their submissions, and then apply that feedback to future assignments rather than repeating mistakes. These students also glean information from the live class critiques of fellow students and learn from others what mistakes to avoid.
5. **Initiative/Maturity:** This student will be proactive in listening to the teacher's comments, assessing how they apply to his/her work, taking the initiative to schedule office hours with the teacher if necessary.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS IN ACTION

Since we are studying the Bible together, it is of utmost importance that students come to class with a respect for the text and a desire to uphold and understand its treatment as sacred. In this spirit, the classroom will be an environment of respectful, joyful, and friendly learning, which will facilitate the study of a complex but approachable text. Our goals are to learn to love and love to learn what we regard as "God's holy and inspired Word."

Students will be following the sequence of study contained in *God's Great Covenant: New Testament 1, The Gospels*. **The primary goal for the student will be to acquire an understanding of the life and times of Jesus Christ through a study of the gospels. They will build their New Testament literacy upon Old Testament contextual elements and gain basic knowledge of the geo-political features present in Jesus's day. The greater goal is that students develop an appreciation of the connectedness, continuity and beauty of scripture. This appreciation will inform their other studies and their beliefs as they grow and mature.**

Some student work will be completed in the textbook. However, a large portion of the class will involve regular classroom participation; taking notes on presentations, videos and discussions; and reading aloud from scripture and scriptural summaries. Students will receive homework based on these in-class activities. Students will also be encouraged to use some online tools.

During class time, students will share responses, pose questions, and dialogue with peers. Each week the teacher will lead discussions informed by the content laid out in the text or assignments. Class time will also make use of multiple outside sources that are highly engaging: videos, websites, music and occasionally poetry. The “table will be set” with a rich assortment of “foods,” and students should find multiple ways to enjoy the process of learning together.

Students are expected to arrive to class on time with all assigned material completed. The instructor will facilitate learning for the student, but the responsibility for staying up-to-date with classwork and assignments is ultimately the responsibility of the student.

Students who have not submitted their homework to the appropriate Canvas assignment folder prior to the start of class may be asked to leave the Zoom session to work privately until they have completed the day’s assignment. After they have completed their homework submission, they will be permitted to rejoin the class in session. Time spent in a breakout room will constitute an absence from class.

All assignments will be due in the appropriate Canvas Assignment folder prior to the start of class each day. Students turning in late work will not be able to receive full credit. Students will submit their work by scanning their homework pages and uploading it into the Schoology assignment window as **one PDF document**. **Photographs of completed assignments will not be accepted as they are incredibly difficult to read.**

STUDENT GRADING AND EVALUATION

While pursuing New Testament 1 will be “restful” and enjoyable, we also recognize the need to provide grades for students who will be using this course as part of their prepared college transcript. It’s a delicate balance to achieve both restful learning and excellent academic performance, especially in the subject of biblical studies and spiritual formation. Earning a specific grade should not overshadow achievement goals for mastery of this discipline. Scholarly study of biblical scripture calls upon core disciplines central to a Classical Education: careful reading, accurate recording, reflective consideration, logical reasoning, critical thinking, and socratic dialogue. Practicing these aspects of thoughtful learning will be a necessary and significant component of future satisfaction and success in upper-level biblical studies. In that sense then, attaining a mastery of biblical study is its own reward, though the instructor will assign the following grades to your student’s level of achievement: *magna cum laude* (with great praise); *cum laude* (with praise); *satis* (sufficient, satisfactory) and *non satis* (not sufficient).

Ideally, every average student working diligently should do praiseworthy work (*cum laude*). Those who excel beyond this expectation will receive *magna cum laude* for their efforts. Work which demonstrates minimal but sufficient mastery will be designated *satis*. *Non satis* designates work that demonstrates insufficient mastery; a student with a consistently *non satis* grade will not be recommended for continuation to the next level New Testament study. Additionally, we will provide a transcript with a traditional percentage grade to the requesting parent at quarterly

intervals. All students will receive both a Scholé evaluation and a percentage grade at the end of the year.

STUDENT EVALUATION : MASTERY PORTRAIT

In this course students will receive the foundations of biblical literacy that will prepare them for further biblical studies. This course will also provide the components necessary to reference certain biblical texts from memory in order to apply them to conversation and faith development. Students will practice respectful dialogue about spiritual and biblical topics with peers, which is a key skill for the formation of belief, for the gentle and respectful treatment of those who hold differing beliefs or viewpoints, and for the confident articulation of personally held beliefs.

1. At the completion of this course *cum laude* students will know by heart:
 - Assigned scripture passages
 - A basic timeline of events in the life of Jesus
 - Geographical locations central to the gospels
 - Certain prophecies that the Protestant Church asserts are fulfilled in Christ
 - Roles of various religious and political leaders in the first century AD / CE.
2. Additionally, students will have begun to practice certain skills necessary to contemplate scriptural texts:
 - Reference map work
 - Use of concordance / other Bible reference tools
 - Identifying genre / purpose of various writings
 - Creating a timeline to organize events
 - Comparative treatment of OT scriptures quoted by NT speakers
 - Etc.
3. Students will also be guided in development of the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Love. This course intends for students to encounter something of the beauty and power not only of the written *logos*, but of the living *logos*, the “Word made flesh,” as they encounter the gospel accounts of Jesus, the Christ.

STUDENT EVALUATION: ASSIGNMENTS, TYPES & WEIGHTS

The teacher will communicate with students regarding assignment feedback and grading through the free online grading system, Canvas. The teacher will provide students with more detailed information and access to the Latin 1 course page.

Students’ grades will have the following weight (out of 100):

1. Class Participation: 40
2. Homework assignments: 30
3. Recitation & Retelling: 30

Typically Speaking:

- magna cum laude is the grade range of 94% or above.
- cum laude is the grade range of 85-93%
- satis is the grade range of 75-84%
- non satis is any grade lower than a 75%

This reflects the student's mastery and commitment to being fully prepared for and engaged in the course.

Students and their parents will receive quarterly feedback from their teachers in the form of a quarterly update.

STUDENT EVALUATION: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are on their honor to abide by Scholé Academy's Learning Philosophy which assumes the personal cultivation of Student-Virtues described in the Student-Parent Handbook. **We ask that parents proctor any quizzes or tests to help keep their children accountable.**

Specifically, cheating and plagiarism are punishable offenses. Copying the work of other students is prohibited and proper citation of all sources is essential.

THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM:

We will be using the free online "virtual classroom" software provided by Zoom. The live, interactive nature of our courses is foundational and we require cameras to be on during all class sessions. The virtual classroom will provide students with interactive audio and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video and other media can be displayed and analyzed. We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom. Courses will be managed through our learning management system, Canvas.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the [Technology in the Classroom](#) section of the Student Parent Handbook.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Elizabeth Kaufman is an educator, musician, and homeschooling mother of four. She teaches at Scholé Academy online in the Canterbury House of Studies. She is passionate about guiding children and families into biblical literacy and learning how to form a life that is increasingly guided by the study of scripture and the observations and rhythms of the church calendar.

Elizabeth holds a M.Ed. and earned her BA in Spanish from Hope College with minors in Music (piano performance) and Elementary Ed.. A missional mindset led her to work in various countries, teaching art and music in an American School in the Dominican Republic, grades 2 and 3 in a British school in Tanzania, and Spanish at a Montessori school in Michigan. Elizabeth went on to choose motherhood and homeschooling as a full-time pursuit and has loved teaching her four sons for the past nine years while living mostly in East Africa.

Throughout this time, she has grown increasingly committed to Classical Christian education and has developed a love for “living” literature and biblical scholarship. She has also combined her love of music and scripture to compose several collections of songs for young students and families to learn scripture together and to sing through liturgical seasons. Elizabeth believes that every course of study is an invitation to witness God’s redemptive work in the world and to be formed and transformed by it.

Elizabeth lives in Kenya where her husband teaches biblically-based church discipleship and her sons enjoy living and learning “in the bush.” When not teaching or composing, you can find Elizabeth researching the Bible through books and podcasts, trail running, hosting meals for friends and travelers, watching her sons ride motorbikes, or pursuing drawing and watercolor as an amateur artist. One day she hopes to learn a thing or two about gardening. You can listen to her music for learning scripture at www.musictomemorize.org.

Please note: While this syllabus addresses details specific to this course, it is not extensive. Parents should also read the Student-Parent Handbook located on scholeacademy.com and be familiar with the ideas, policies, and procedures outlined.