**PART THREE**

Part three consists of the following steps, which should result in a paper of at least ten double-spaced pages – probably more, but rarely less. You cannot exceed 15 double-spaced pages, 11-12 point font. It is due on Canvas and is worth 40 points. Please remember to submit it **without your name on it**.

6. **COMMENTARIES**

- The goal of this section of the project is for you to produce a verse-by-verse commentary of your passage, citing the six commentaries that you’ll read. Obviously, the “commentary” that you produce is a researched summary of the information you’ve read. It should be succinct, hitting on the main points of the passage and/or the heavily debated points of interpretation. You do not need to be exhaustive here; you can’t be. This part **cannot** exceed nine [9] double-spaced pages, and should be around 6-7 pages. The best commentary summaries hit the sweet spot of being **detailed and short**. All information MUST be properly footnoted. If you got it from a commentary, even if you’re paraphrasing it, **footnote it**.

- For the purposes of this project, you’re going to be consulting two types of commentaries: pre-modern and modern commentaries. You’ll find that they ask different questions and engage the texts differently, precisely because their contexts and theological formation are different. Yet, if we only read the commentaries that ask questions that “we” do, we’re inclined to think that the church began in the 19th-20th centuries.
  - You’ll start by reading three pre-modern commentaries on your passage (see list below for options). You’ll need one ancient commentary and one Reformation commentary and then one from either period (your choice). You’ll include their insights in your verse-by-verse commentary of the passage (see below for details).
  - Then, you’ll need to choose at least three modern commentaries (see list below for options). Read what they have to say about your pericope.
  - If you want to use a commentary that is not on the list below, you MUST get it approved by me first.

- Before you begin your verse-by-verse commentary, start your paper with the following:
  - A bibliographic list of the commentaries (pre-modern and modern) that you used, in correct SBL format.
  - A **brief**, 1-paragraph summary of what you think is most important about your passage, based on the research in your commentaries. This tells your reader what to look for in the verse-by-verse summaries. **Write this last**, after your verse-by-verse commentary, even though it comes first in your paper.
  - Follow this introduction up with a verse-by-verse composite commentary on your pericope, citing all of the information that comes from commentaries. You don’t need to include everything you’ve read, but focus our attention to the insights you discern that the Holy Spirit is drawing you towards in your meditation on this text.

---

**Gospel Commentaries**

*A Guide to Resources Available Online and in the SPU Library*

**SELECT PATRISTIC AND MEDIEVAL COMMENTARIES**

Many fine English translations of these commentaries are available in the SPU library. Most of these can be found on the shelves at BR60, but sometimes they are located under the specific biblical book. **Note: Blessed Theophylact, the most important medieval commentator for the Eastern Orthodox tradition, frequently passes down what he received from Chrysostom, so if you choose one (and you should!) then avoid choosing the other.**

**Useful Websites: Browse books by ancient author**
A Sampling of Patristic and Medieval Commentaries Available Online and in the Library

**Matthew**
- Origen (184/185 – 253/254), [http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1016.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1016.htm)

**Mark**
- Jerome (347-420), *Homilies of Saint Jerome* (BR60.F3H5 v.2)

**Luke**
- St. Cyril of Alexandria (ca.376-444), [www.tertullian.org/fathers/cyril_on_luke_01_sermons_01_11.htm](http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/cyril_on_luke_01_sermons_01_11.htm)

**John**
- Origen (184/185 – 253/254), [http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1015.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1015.htm)
- St. Augustine (354-430), [http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1701.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1701.htm)
- St. Cyril of Alexandria (ca.376-444), [www.tertullian.org/fathers/cyril_on_john_01_book1.htm](http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/cyril_on_john_01_book1.htm)
- St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), *Commentary on the Gospel of John* (BS2615.53 .T5513)

**Select 16th-18th Century Gospel Commentaries**

Note: John Wesley’s “notes” are often just that—little more than short explanatory comments. Other sections are more substantial, however, so you should definitely consult him as well as the others.

- Martin Luther (1483-1546), *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John* (BR330 .E5 1955 v.22-v.24)
- John Calvin (1509-1564) [www.ccel.org/index/author/C](http://www.ccel.org/index/author/C)
- Matthew Henry (1662-1714) [www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc5.toc.html](http://www.cCEL.org/ccel/henry/mhc5.toc.html)
- John Wesley (1703-1791) [http://www.ccel.org/ccel/wesley/notes.toc.html](http://www.cCEL.org/ccel/wesley/notes.toc.html)

**Select Modern Commentaries**

**Matthew**
These one-volume commentaries are appropriate to consult for any Gospel, though you may not find much on your passage because they are so condensed. Their focus on the context of interpretation makes them worthwhile, however:

- The Women’s Bible Commentary. Louisville: WJK, 2012 (rev. ed.).

7. THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

- This section is the payoff of all the work you’ve done so far. Address the following:
  1. How would you sum up the exegetical “point” of the passage? What is its basic, “plain sense” meaning? Write this in one substantial paragraph.
     a. Note: avoid talking about your context here. Avoid “we” statements or any form of self-reference. Sum up the “point” of the passage on the text’s terms, not on your terms.
  2. Now, move to your context. Describe your context—i.e., your church, your theological reading community—and then state what central theological message this passage might present to them. Even though you’re addressing your specific context, be equally specific about the text’s claims. General statements here won’t get you far. Address this in all three of the classical ways:
     a. Orthodoxy: What does the text urge us to believe? What is this passage’s central contribution to the church’s Rule of Faith (see Nienhuis’s introduction from Methods Assignment 4, if this language sounds unfamiliar)?
b. **Orthopraxy:** What does the text urge us to do? What would it mean for the community of faith to treat this passage as normative for Christian life and witness?

c. **Orthopathy:** What does this text urge us to hope for? What human hopes, fears, or values do you see expressed in this text? How might it touch the soul of your audience? What tensions or difficulties might the text raise for your audience? How might one respond to these?

3. Bring your text to life for the reader in one of the following two ways (this is an abbreviated snippet of where your text would move to proclamation, as in a sermon):

   a. Identify a cultural product (literature, art, music, popular culture, cultural events, politics, etc.) that you might use to help interpret this passage to a contemporary audience. This might be a cultural product that exemplifies the beliefs, practices, or hopes that you identified in your passage. It might be a product that the text could speak into, either for comfort or for challenge. Identify and explain both the product itself and how the text relates to it. Again, be specific.

   b. Identify concrete examples of the claims you identified in 2a-c that you’ve encountered, seen, or heard being lived out in people’s lives, so that others might understand better—through a living example—what this passage is encouraging or challenging them to do. Again, be sure to explain the examples (at least 2, no more than 3) and how they relate to the claims of the pericope.

4. What biblical studies methodologies (introduced by Carvalho) helped you get at your point/message the best? Which ones turned out to be most fruitful in your study?

5. How has this study affected you personally? What has it been like to live with this text for over a month? How has this shaped your life?

6. As always, end with a thorough bibliography.