

Type: Core
Course Code: CHCU E1015
Title: Introduction to Christian Culture
Pre-requisites: General requirements for entrance to CDCE

Aims and Objectives:

The main objective of this course is to present an introduction and an orientation to the study of First Testament and New Testament cultures and to introduce the historical-critical analysis of gospel narratives.

Learning Outcomes:

The students will be able to discuss the First Testament and New Testament cultures and they will be able to explain the basic criteria employed in historical-critical analysis of gospel narratives.

Course Content:

1. What is culture? The main elements in understanding culture, the functions of culture, the gospel and culture.
2. The cultural background of the First Testament: the geography of Palestine, the history of Israel, the institutions of Ancient Israel (marriage, the "free" citizens, slaves, politics, the economy, the sacrifices, the festivals).
3. The cultural background of the New Testament: the political and social world of NT times, the religious and philosophical world of NT times.
4. Introduction to the Sacred Writings of Christians: the manner in which the writings which the Christians regard as sacred were composed and how they came to be preserved, the methods employed in the study of the Sacred Writings (Textual Critique, Historical Critique, Source Critique, Form Critique and Redaction Critique), the concepts of "inspiration" and "canonicity", manuscript evidence for the Text of the New Testament.
5. The Founder of Christianity: Roman and Jewish sources, the canonical and non-canonical (apocryphal) texts on the historical Jesus, John the Baptist, the Kingdom of God, the meal fellowship, the God of Jesus, the death and resurrection of Jesus, Christian interpretations of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Methodology:

Lectures, discussions, visual aids and presentations.

Scheme of Evaluation:

Year-end examination.

Recommended Reading:

Brown, R.E. - North, R. (1992). *Biblical Geography*. NJBC, TPI, Bangalore, 1175-1195.

Brown, R.E. (1997). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. ABRL, Doubleday, NY, 1-93.

Castelot, J.J. - Cody, A. (1992). *Religious Institutions of Israel*. NJBC, TPI, Bangalore, 1253-1283.

Haight, R. (1999). *Jesus Symbol of God*. Maryknoll, Orbis, NY.

Meyer, J.P. (1991-2001). *A Marginal Jew. Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. Vols. 1-III, ABRL, Doubleday, NY.

de Vaux, R. (1961). *Ancient Israel. Its Life and Institutions*. Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 24-38.

Wright, A.G. - Murphy, R.E. - Fitzmyer, J.A. (1992). "A History of Israel", *NJBC*, TPI, Bangalore, 1219-1252.

දිසානායක, එච්. (2000). *නාසරතයේ ජේසු*, සාමාන්‍ය 2. සමාජය සහ සාමයික කේන්ද්‍රය, කොළඹ.

විජේසිංහ, එස්. එල්. (2000). *බයිබලය අධ්‍යයනයට අත්වැලක්*, සාමාන්‍ය 3. සමාජය සහ සාමයික කේන්ද්‍රය, කොළඹ.