

BIB 4002 – The Letters of Paul
Faith, Hope, and Love across Distance and Difference

3 Units, *Spring 2024*

Tuesdays, 4:30–7:30 P.M., Smee Wesleyan Center Classroom

Final Exam: Tuesday, April 30, 7:30–10:00 P.M.

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Open Office Hours: Mon, 10:45-11:45 A.M.; Wed, 1:30-2:30 P.M.

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PLNU Mission

To Teach – To Shape – To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

How do followers of Christ live in step with the Holy Spirit? A study of Paul's letters to far-flung churches around the ancient Mediterranean, most of which he founded and nurtured as a missionary pastor.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, you will be able to ...

1. Describe and compare the Pauline Epistles;
2. Apply exegetical techniques to the interpretation of particular epistolary passages;
3. Defend a presentation of Paul's life and theological convictions based on his corpus of letters; and
4. Analyze selected Pauline passages with application to the present day.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

1. Matthew L. Skinner, *A Companion to the New Testament: Paul and the Pauline Letters* (Baylor, 2018). ISBN 9781481307833
2. Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *When in Romans: An Invitation to Linger with the Gospel according to Paul* (Baker, 2016). ISBN 9780801097386
3. Lisa Bowens, *African American Readings of Paul: Reception, Resistance, and Transformation* (Eerdmans, 2020); ISBN 9780802876768

RECOMMENDED:

1. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, 2nd Ed. McKnight, Cohick, & Gupta, eds. (IVP: 2023); ISBN 9780830817856
2. The Bible in the NRSV translation (ask the prof for study Bible edition suggestions, if needed)

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

The following are the grading categories weighted percentages:

Assessment Category	%	Assessment Category	%
COURSE PREPARATION & PARTICIPATION <input type="checkbox"/> Active, Participatory Class Attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Note Submission	40	FINAL CONTEMPORARY APPLICATION OF A PAULINE EPISTLE AND EXPLANATORY GUIDE <input type="checkbox"/> Builds on carefully researched study of one of Paul’s letters <input type="checkbox"/> Interprets & applies distinctives of letter and knowledge of Pauline theology to modern context.	30
LEARNING LEADERSHIP <input type="checkbox"/> Dictionary Abstract & Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Letter-Study and Class Leadership	30		

Course Preparation & Participation (weighted 40%) recognizes that this class juggles many goals (hermeneutical, historical, literary, ministerial, theological, etc.) on a once-a-week meeting schedule. Overall, the course stands or falls based on students’ investment and engagement. On the rare occasion when class must be asynchronous, thoughtful engagement in online discussion (etc.) will constitute “participation.” **Fulfills Outcomes #1-4**

- Active, Participatory Class Attendance** is expected. A portion (10%) of the class grade rewards the student’s commitment to showing up to class meetings. Students will be evaluated based on their active participation throughout the class period. Distracted, disruptive, or non-participatory attendance will be penalized and count as half-absences. Come ready to learn and engage the subject matter. Points will be awarded according to this scale:

Unexcused Absences:	0	1	2	3	4+
Total Points:	100 pts	90 pts	60 pts	30 pts	0 pts

- Reading Note Submission** (300 pts) holds students accountable for the reading that should inform our discussions. Note-submissions will constitute evidence of engagement with required learning materials and gauged on the analytical approach needed for academic reading. There will be 13 Reading Note Submission [📄] opportunities (25-points each); the student’s lowest note score will be dropped. See Canvas for note-taking guidance.

Learning Leadership (weighted 30%) structures will give students opportunities to study a subject and epistle in greater detail, becoming a resource person for the class. Guidelines for research will give parameters for the desired end-product. Each will represent the early stages of a research inquiry and initial use and synthesis of resources, rather than the proof and conclusion of a thesis. **Fulfills Outcomes #1 + 2**

- Dictionary Abstract and Presentation** (100 pts) requires the student to summarize briefly an assigned entry from the *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters, 2nd Ed.* or the *New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* (as specified), chosen from a list of instructor-approved options [📄]. See Canvas for more information. *Due-dates will vary based on student choices.*
- Letter-Study and Classroom Leadership** (200 pts) in pairs, a head presenter and a peer-supporter, students will (based on assigned and extra readings) lead the class’s discussion on a particular Pauline epistle [🗣️]. (Students will participate in two presentations to fulfill each role.) The readings and additional research will necessitate consultation with the professor in advance of the class period for leadership. The presenters will provide an info-rich and thoroughly cited handout for their professor and classmates, guide the class in passage-explanations and lively discussion of important interpretive matters, and, thereby, get to know (and share the knowledge of) at least two of Paul’s letters in greater depth.

The **Final Contemporary Application of a Pauline Epistle and Explanatory Guide** (weighted 30%) will mix creativity, pastoral/theological sensitivity, and substantial research. In consultation with the professor and balanced with

classmates' letter-preferences, the student will select one of Paul's letters as the focus of her/his research and as a basis for contemporary application. Prior staged assignments will guide the study and provide feedback to students during the process. In the final stage, the student will write several chapters of a letter to a church (or modern-day Christian community) and will present selections during Final Exam period. **Fulfills Outcomes #1-4**

Letter grades will be determined according to the following scale:

Points	Grade	Points	Grade
93-100%	A	73-76%	C
90-92%	A-	70-72%	C-
87-89%	B+	67-69%	D+
83-86%	B	63-66%	D
80-82%	B-	60-62%	D-
77-79%	C+	59% and below	F

FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances. **Course Policy:** A late assignment will be penalized an automatic -10% deduction for every 24-hour period past the due date.

SPIRITUAL CARE

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in Christian faith. Please contact the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#) as needed.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course. Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

LANGUAGE AND BELONGING

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality. You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the school urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings. Thus, terms like “man” or “mankind” or the pronoun “he,” should not be used to refer to all humans. Instead “humanity,” “humans,” and “he or she” better acknowledge women as full persons. Papers submitted with exclusive language will receive a point deduction (minor, but an incentive to be attentive).

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Use of laptops and other devices are expressly discouraged in class, in order to foster the highest level of conversation and engagement with others. Students may consider using certain types of technology to aid their learning outside of class and some assignments will require it (esp. on Canvas). If a student is in need of technological resources, please contact student-tech-request@pointloma.edu.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g, ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski) is not permitted, and use of these tools will be treated as plagiarism.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Upper-division Biblical Studies courses, which rely on high levels of student participation, require a lot of reading/study investment and time-management. Plan accordingly. Student presentations will necessitate significant preparation; excellent presentations represent a mix of academically rich content and engaging presentation style. Please respect the break limits on behalf of your fellow students. The following schedule will be flexibly applied to account for student learning needs and interests, but the basic pattern for our class meetings will be ...

Tuesdays	
4:30 - 5:00	Prayer & Big questions/observations
5:00 - 6:00	<u>Student Classroom Leadership</u> (if scheduled) : Focal Texts and guided exegesis; Bringing in insights from secondary readings
6:00 - 6:15	<i>BREAK</i>
6:15 – 6:50	Dictionary Article Presentation(s)
6:50 – 7:30	Application; Theological Reflection

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Wk	Date	Due before class (all students) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Biblical texts to read by class time ➤ <i>Textbook selections</i> to read by class time 📄 Note Submission ✉ (Part of) Final Project 	IN-CLASS TOPIC + Staggered Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Dictionary Article (indiv., <i>DPL</i> or <i>NIDB</i>) 🗣 Student Classroom Leadership
1	Tues, Jan 9	<u>INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS</u> <u>WHO WAS PAUL?</u> IN CLASS: 📖 Acts 9:1-23; 11:19-30; 13:1–18:23; 26:1–28:31; Galatians 1:11–2:14; Philippians 3:1-11; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11	<u>ACTS + “PAULINE AUTOBIOGRAPHY”</u>
2	Tues, Jan 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 1 and 2 Thessalonians ➤ Skinner, Chs. 1-2 (p. 1–45) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>1 & 2 THESSALONIANS</u> <u>ANCIENT LETTER-WRITING</u> 📖 EXAMPLE: Paul in Acts and Letters (<i>DPL</i>) *Sign up for topics 📖
3	Tues, Jan 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Romans Chs. 1–11 carefully; (Skim Chs. 12–16) ➤ Skinner, Ch. 3 (p. 47-77) ➤ Gaventa, Chs. 1-2 (p. 1-74) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>ROMANS</u> 📖 Righteousness (<i>DPL.II</i>) *Sign up: Classroom Leadership book 🗣
4	Tues, Jan 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Romans Chs. 12–16, carefully; (Skim Chs. 1–11) ➤ Gaventa, Chs. 3, 4, & Conclusion (p. 75-128) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>ROMANS, CONTINUED</u> 📖 Gentiles + Hellenism, Roman (<i>DPL.II</i>) 📖 Gospel (<i>DPL.II</i>)
5	Tues, Feb 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 The letter (or letters) you are assigned ➤ The Skinner chapter(s) associated with your assigned letter (see syllabus below) 	<u>EPISTLE RESEARCH & PREPARATION FOR CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP</u> ✉ Select Final Application letter (Canvas)
6	Tues, Feb 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 1 Corinthians ➤ Skinner, Ch. 4 (p. 79-108) ➤ Bowens, Intro. (p. 1-14); On William J. Seymour (p. 204-215) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>1 CORINTHIANS</u> 📖 Gifts of the Spirit (<i>DPL.II</i>) 📖 Eschatology (<i>DPL.II</i>) 🗣 1 Cor. 1–8 + 🗣 1 Cor. 9–16
7	Tues, Feb 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 2 Corinthians ➤ Skinner, Ch. 5 (p. 109-133) ➤ Bowens, Beginning of Ch. 4. (p. 265-270) and “Traveling to the Third Heaven” (p. 281-283) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>2 CORINTHIANS</u> 📖 Faith, Faithfulness (<i>NIDB</i>) 📖 Justification (<i>DPL.II</i>) 🗣 2 Cor. 1–5 (incl. discussion of integrity) + 🗣 2 Cor. 6–13
8	Tues, Feb 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Galatians ➤ Skinner, Ch. 6 (p. 135-155) ➤ Bowens, On Charles Harrison Mason (p. 215-223) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>GALATIANS</u> 📖 Law (<i>DPL.II</i>) 📖 Holy Spirit (<i>DPL</i>) 🗣 Gal.
	Tues, Mar 5	NO CLASSES – SPRING BREAK	
9	Tues, Mar 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Philippians ➤ Skinner, Ch. 9 (p. 193-206) ➤ Bowens, On Morte, Charlie, through “I Saw Jesus” (p. 270-281); From “Blackberry Patch” through end of Ch. 4 (p. 283-290) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>PHILIPPIANS</u> 📖 Cross + Cruciformity (<i>DPL.II</i>) 📖 Lord (<i>DPL.II</i>) 🗣 Phil.

Wk	Date	Due before class (all students) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Biblical texts to read by class time ➤ <i>Textbook selections</i> to read by class time 📄 Note Submission ✉ (Part of) Final Project 	IN-CLASS TOPIC + Staggered Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Dictionary Article (individ., DPL or NIDB) 🗣 Student Classroom Leadership
10	Tues, Mar 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Colossians & Philemon ➤ Skinner, Ch. 10 (p. 207-219); Ch. 14 (p. 277-288) ➤ Bowens, Ch. 1 (only p. 15-30); On John Jea (p. 59-73); On Philemon and the Fugitive Slave Act (p. 113-124); On James Pennington (p. 142-152) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>COLOSSIANS & PHILEMON</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Slavery (NIDB) 📖 Church (DPL.II) 🗣 Col.
11	Tues, Mar 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Ephesians ➤ Skinner, Chs. 7-8 (p. 157-191) ➤ Bowens, Ch. 3, beginning, through Ransom (p. 187-204) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>EPHESIANS</u> <u>DISPUTED PAULINE CORRESPONDENCE</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Kinship Language in Paul (DPL.II) 📖 Sexuality, Sexual Ethics (DPL.II) 🗣 Eph.
12	*Tues, *Apr 2	<u>* ASYNCHRONOUS RESEARCH + WRITING DAY</u> <i>While your professor is at a conference out of the country, you should invest a total of 9 hours (6 prep hours + 3 in-class hours) in preparing for your final course assignment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✉ Letter Outline + Bibliography for Epistle Explanatory Guide <u>DUE</u> by end of day
13	Tues, Apr 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus ➤ Skinner, Ch. 13 (p. 253-275) ➤ Bowens, On Jarena Lee and Zilpha Elaw (p. 73-97); On Maria Stewart (p.124-142); On Payne (p. 152-162) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>PASTORAL EPISTLES</u> <u>1 & 2 TIMOTHY, TITUS</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🗣 1 & 2 Tim. 📖 Women + Women Named in Paul (DPL.II) 📖 Ethnicity in Paul's World (DPL.II)
14	Tues, Apr 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bowens, On Julia Foote through end of Ch. 2 (p. 163-186); On Ida B. Robinson (p. 224-228); On David Walker & "Using Paul to Resist ..." (p. 97-112); On Albert Cleage Jr. (235-238) ➤ Carla Works, "Women in the Pauline Mission" (see Canvas) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP IN PAUL'S LETTERS</u> <u>SLAVERY AND LIBERATION IN PAUL & HIS INTERPRETERS</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Mission (DPL.II)
15	Tues, Apr 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bowens, On Martin Luther King Jr. (p. 238-264); On Howard Thurman (p. 229-233); & All of Ch. 5 (291-306) ➤ Mark Nanos, Paul & Judaism (see Canvas) 📄 Submit Notes 	<u>ISRAEL AND THE LAW IN PAUL</u> <u>CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION IN PAUL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 Christology (DPL.II) 📖 Paul and Judaism (DPL.II)

PLNU FINALS WEEK: April 29 – May 3, 2024 **Our Final Exam Session: Tues, Apr 30, 7:30 – 10:00 P.M.**

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