



Reuben Welch School of Theology and Christian Ministry

## **HON 2002-1 Honors New Testament History and Religion**

3 Units

Fall 2025 - Quad II

**Meeting days & times: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30AM - 12:00PM**

**Meeting location: Bond Academic Center (BAC) 151**

**Final Exam: Tuesday, December 16th 10:30AM-1:00PM**

| INFORMATION                | SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE                                           |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Instructor title and name: | The Rev. Prof. Kevin Portillo, M.Div.                              |
| Phone:                     | Contact via Email                                                  |
| Email:                     | <a href="mailto:kportill@pointloma.edu">kportill@pointloma.edu</a> |
| Office location and hours: | By Appointment (Email Me)                                          |

### **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.

### **General Education Mission**

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

### **Course Description**

Catalog Description: "Within the context of Christian origins, this course provides an overview of the canonical literature of the New Testament with special attention to its literary history and theological

themes. This course (in conjunction with HON 2001 in sequential quad terms) highlights the theological unity of the Christian Scriptures, while exploring the literary diversity of the two-testament canon. Taken in conjunction with HON 2001 in sequential Quad term.”

*Our particular New Testament course attends to the historical contexts of authors and audience of the New Testament books, while highlighting the narrative details and theology of the individual books and genres. The long-term goal of the course is to provide interpretive resources for a lifetime of faithful Bible reading in service of Christ’s church.*

### **Program and Course Learning Outcomes**

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

1. Identify the historical and theological context of the New Testament;
2. Articulate the unity of the New Testament in its canonical context within the diverse literature of the Christian canon;
3. Articulate and appreciate the ways the Bible, understood as given by divine inspiration, functions as the church’s central norm for Christian discipleship, faith, and practice; and
4. Articulate the basic content of the books of the New Testament and the methods appropriate to the interpretation of those books.

### **General Education Learning Outcomes**

- 1) Link to GE courses and assessment plan: <https://assessment.pointloma.edu/academic-assessment/general-education/assessment-plan/>
- 2) Link to GELO’s: <https://pointloma-public.courseleaf.com/tug-catalog/general-education/>
- 3) This course fulfills **GELO 3**: Students will demonstrate an understanding of Christian Scripture, Tradition, and Ethics, including engagement in acts of devotion and works of mercy.
- 4) New Testament Signature Assignment: *Students will respond in writing to a question in a way that applies reading of New Testament texts to an issue of theological importance, citing Scripture responsibly.*

### **PLNU HONORS**

The Humanities Honors Program exists to promote greater understanding of diverse human traditions of self-awareness and creativity. Examining these traditions in light of the Christian faith and liberal methods of learning, students excel in their abilities to interpret and discuss written, visual, and sonic texts within theological and interdisciplinary frameworks. Students take their education beyond the classroom in extracurricular activities, as well as in works of service and mercy as informed by the Wesleyan tradition.

### **Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources**

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class.

All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

1. Behr, John. *In Accordance with the Scriptures: The Shape of Christian Theology*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2025. [Paperback ISBN: 9798385230815 ; Ebook ISBN: 9798385230839]
2. Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. Second. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2018. [ISBN: 0801099609]
3. The Holy Bible

## Assessment and Grading

Grades will be based on the following:

### Sample Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

| A        | B        | C        | D        | F              |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| A 93-100 | B+ 87-89 | C+ 77-79 | D+ 67-69 | F Less than 59 |
| A- 90-92 | B 83-86  | C 73-76  | D 63-66  |                |
|          | B- 80-82 | C- 70-72 | D- 60-62 |                |

Grading: The student's grade will be based on a combination of class participation, reading, assignments, and exams as follows:

| Possible Points | Assignment                                          |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 100             | Textbook & Lecture Reflection Journal Entries (10%) |
| 400             | Discussion & Writing Groups [4] (40%)               |
| 200             | The New Testament in Christian Worship (20%)        |
| 100             | Mid-Quad Exam (10%)                                 |
| 200             | Final Exam (20%)                                    |

= 1,000 Total Possible Points

**Textbook & Lecture Reflection Journal Entries** (10% of total grade) is vital in a Quad class taught at this pace. One of the textbooks, *Introducing the New Testament* by Mark Allan Powell is required reading for this course. Each student will submit Reflection Journal entry of a minimum of 500 words on Canvas based on the assigned textbook readings for the day and the corresponding lecture from the Professor. The student must have attended that class session in order to receive credit for that day's Reflection Journal Entry. This assignment will count for both the attendance of the student as well as for class participation. If the assigned reading for the day includes more than one chapter from the textbook, then the student may focus on one chapter for the Reflection Journal Entry; 500 words can only say so much, and the professor prefers to prioritize depth of insight rather than breadth of knowledge. Each submission is worth 10 points each. Each submission is due by 11:59PM on the day of that class session. If the student has achieved full credit on this assignment yet more opportunities for Reflection Journal Entries exist, then the student may continue to submit additional journal entries for extra credit until the

end of the semester. This assignment rewards student attendance and participation in every class session. *No late submission will be accepted.*

**Discussion & Writing Groups** (collectively worth 40% of total grade): To foster dialogue, listening, and communal learning, the students will be randomly divided into groups to facilitate a discussion on the assigned textbook readings of this course. The discussion group will be based on the textbook readings assigned to this course. The groups that will be formed will consist of a discussion group and a writing group, and each group will be responsible for their respective instructions. Below is a the list of responsibilities depending on which group you are assigned to during that week:

**Discussion Group:**

- Read the assigned reading of the week. Prepare to contribute to the group discussion by writing down 3-4 minutes worth of content to share with the discussion group.
- Engage directly with the assigned reading of the week. Cite specific passages with page number or, if digital, give context to the passage you will be sharing.
- Summarize theological points by substantiating your claim with quotations. Raise questions to the group, offer comments, express critiques, or share places of confusion so as to contribute to the group discussion.
- Encourage everyone to contribute.
- A list of guiding questions will be provided by the Professor.
- The Professor will listen and take notes of what is shared, who shares, and who makes contribution to the group discussion. The Professor will not speak, rather he will listen.
- After the allotted time is finished or the group decided to end the group discussion, then the Professor will assign a grade to each member of the group.
- *\*Please Note:* The Discussion Group must still submit a Reflection Journal Entry for that class session based on the Lecture.

**Writing Group:**

- Students who are not actively a part of the discussion group will listen to the discussion group with the Professor, but they are not allowed to contribute.
- The Writing Group students will pay attention and take notes during the discussion group time.
- After the group is finished, only the Writing group will be responsible for submitting a reflection of a minimum of 1,000 words to the Professor by 11:59PM on the day of the Discussion Group. The paper needs to include these three items:
  1. A Key Idea that you found compelling or controversial that emerged from the discussion.
  2. An important Theological theme that emerged from the discussion that connects with the New Testament Scriptures.
  3. A Question, Comment, or Critique that you would have raised if you were in the group. Why do you believe this is something important for you to share? (Cite specific questions or comments that the discussion students contributed)
- *\*Please Note:* This will satisfy the requirement of the Reflection Journal entry for the Writing Group. The Writing Group does not need to submit a Reflection Journal entry for that respective date.

*To frame this assignment: Each member of the Writing Group will be responsible for writing around 1,000 words, and each member of the Discussion Group will be responsible for speaking around 1,000 words.*

**The New Testament in Christian Worship** (20% of total grade): The goal of this assignment is to participate, experience, and reflect on how the New Testament Scriptures shapes and forms Christian worship. The Scriptures are a living reality in the life of the Church especially in communal worship. This participation requirement fits with the vision of the Honors Program at Point Loma Nazarene University in encouraging theological education and formation outside of the classroom. Please follow these instructions:

- Attend a full-Christian Worship Service outside of your own denomination or tradition or local congregation that you attend weekly.
- The service must be in-person, and you must attend in-person.
- After attending, write a 1,000-1,200 word reflection paper structured in this way:
  - **Observation:** Describe the church and the service. What were the key elements (music, sacraments, Scripture readings, sermon, etc.)? What struck you as different from your own faith background?
  - **New Testament Scriptures:** Where did you see and/or not see the New Testament shaping the worship service? Were certain NT passages quoted, preached, or embodied in the liturgy? How was the New Testament interpreted (ex: Prayer, Eucharist, Baptism, Mission, Community, Kingdom of God, Heaven, Hell, Salvation, Evangelism, etc.)? Reflect on how the New Testament was used, proclaimed, enacted, prayed, or sung.
  - **Theological Reflection:** What theological commitments did you observe? What does their worship say about their view of Jesus Christ, the Church, the Spirit, the Gospel, Salvation, etc.? How does Christian Worship affect your understanding of the New Testament's role in the life of the Church?
  - **Personal:** What encouraged you? What challenged you? What surprised you? How might this experience shape your future ministry, career, scholarship, or faith?

**\*\*Sunday, November 2nd, at 4PM (All Saints' Day):** The Professor will coordinate a classroom group trip to a worship service and all will be invited to attend together. If you cannot attend on that date, then you are responsible for fulfilling this assignment on your own.

**Mid-Quad Exam:** (10% of Total Grade)

The Mid-Quad Exam will serve as the objective exam in this quad course in Week 4. The students will be examined on the introductory material on biblical interpretation, biblical canonicity, and the theological content of the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). The Mid-Quad Exam will be based on the lectures and the New Testament textbook, *Introducing the New Testament*.

**The Final Exam (New Testament Signature Assessment)** (20% of Total Grade):

The Final Exam will be an examination on the interpretation of the Scriptures as well as examining from the Acts of the Apostles to the Book of Revelation as well as the interpretive framework given throughout the course of this quad term. This exam will be a combination of objective questions with a short answer component at the end based upon the class lectures and the New Testament Textbook, *Introducing the New Testament*. The Final Exam will examine your understanding and knowledge of the New Testament Scriptures. In addition, this assignment will satisfy the New Testament signature assignment for The Reuben Welch School of Theology & Christian Ministry at Point Loma Nazarene University: *Students will respond in writing to a question in a way that applies a reading of New Testament texts to an issue of theological importance, citing Scripture responsibly*. The Final Exam will take place in the classroom on the scheduled day and time.

## **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 [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam 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.

## **Content Warning**

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In [class name], all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include [list topics]. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

## **Trigger Warning**

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In [class name], we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

## **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.

## **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 their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

## **State Authorization**

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on State Authorization to view which states allow distance education outside California.

## **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 Recording Notification**

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

## **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. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

## **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy**

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Violations of this policy will be treated as breaches of academic integrity.

## **PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy**

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). 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 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

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. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

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. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

## **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.



If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at [www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination](http://www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination).

## **Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination**

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at [pointloma.edu/Title-IX](http://pointloma.edu/Title-IX). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at [counselingservices@pointloma.edu](mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu) or find a list of campus pastors at [pointloma.edu/title-ix](http://pointloma.edu/title-ix).

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at [www.pointloma.edu/bias](http://www.pointloma.edu/bias)

## **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 withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

## **Loma Writing Center**

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you’re in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- Appointment Calendar: <https://plnu.mywconline.com/>
- Website: <https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center>
- Email: [writingcenter@pointloma.edu](mailto:writingcenter@pointloma.edu)

## Course Schedule and Assignments

### Week 1: Introduction to The New Testament Scriptures & The Gospel in Four Forms

#### 1. **Tuesday, October 21:**

Introduction to the Course: *Syllabus, Assignments, Textbooks, and Expectations*

Lecture: *What is the New Testament? What are "the Scriptures"? The Biblical Canon*

The Formation of The New Testament Canon: The Consensus of Canonicity

*What is the New Testament? What is the Gospel? What are gospels?*

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 17-57**

#### 2. **Thursday, October 23: NO CLASS (FALL BREAK)**

### Week 2: Introduction to the Gospel According To...

#### 3. **Tuesday, October 28:**

***Discussion & Writing Group #1: The Figuring of Scripture - How to Interpret the Scriptures***

The Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew, Pt. I

The Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew, Pt. II

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 59-93**

#### 4. **Thursday, October 30:**

The Holy Gospel According to St. Mark, Pt. I

The Holy Gospel According to St. Mark, Pt. II

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 95-139**

### Week 3: The Gospel According To...

#### 5. **Tuesday, November 4**

***Discussion & Writing Group #2: The Paschal Christ: The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ***

The Holy Gospel According to St. Luke, Pt. I

The Holy Gospel According to St. Luke, Pt. II

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 141-159**

#### 6. **Thursday, November 6**

The Holy Gospel According to St. John, Pt. I

The Holy Gospel According to St. John, Pt. II

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 161-181**

### Week 4: The Gospel According To...

#### 7. **Tuesday, November 11**

***Discussion & Writing Group #3: The Virgin Mother***

The Acts of the Apostles, Pt. I

The Acts of the Apostles, Pt. II

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 183-203**

#### 8. **Thursday, November 13**

***Mid-Quad Exam***

Week 5: The Acts of the Apostles & St. Paul the Apostle

**9. Tuesday, November 18**

***Discussion & Writing Group #4: Becoming Human & Postscript***

The Pauline Epistles: The Epistle to the Romans

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 205-229**

**10. Thursday, November 20**

The Pauline Epistles: 1 Corinthians & 2 Corinthians

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 247-321**

Week 6: St. Paul the Apostle

**11. Tuesday, November 25**

The Pauline Epistles: Galatians & Ephesians

The Pauline Epistles: Philippians & Colossians

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 339-385**

**12. Thursday, November 27: NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)**

Week 7: St. Paul the Apostle & The Catholic Epistles

**13. Tuesday, December 2**

The Pauline Epistles: 1 Thessalonians & 2 Thessalonians

The Pauline Epistles: 1 Timothy & 2 Timothy & Titus & Philemon

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 387-441**

**14. Thursday, December 4**

The Epistle to the Hebrews

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 443-505**

Week 8: The Catholic Epistles & The Apocalypse

**15. Tuesday, December 9**

The Catholic Epistles: James, 1 Peter, & 2 Peter

The Catholic Epistles: 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 507-529**

**16. Thursday, December 11**

The Book of Revelation

Textbook Reflection Journal Readings: **Powell, p. 531-551**

**Week 9: FINALS WEEK (December 15 - December 19)**

**Final Exam: Tuesday, December 16th 10:30AM-1:00PM**

### **Lomabooks Instructions for Students:**

This course is part of our course material delivery program, LomaBooks. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.

For more information about LomaBooks, please go: [HERE](#)