School of Theology and Christian Ministry

BIB1002 New Testament History and Religion

3 Units

Spring 2026

Tuesday and Thursday	Dr. Matt Wilson
11a-12:15p	
Taylor Hall 312	mattwilson@pointloma.edu
Final Exam: Thursday 10:30a	**Office: Smee Hall**
Additional info:	**By Appointment**

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

This course is designed to open a conversation (that will hopefully last a lifetime) about the New Testament. The class provides an introduction to (1) the literature/content of the New Testament in its social, historical, literary, and theological contexts; and (2) the critical study of the New Testament. Along these lines, this course is designed as a *journey*, which serves to introduce the student to the basic content of the divine-human drama that unfolds within the pages of the Bible and to equip the student with the foundational tools and skills to continue the dialogue with that drama throughout his or her life.

Cognitive development will be encouraged through textbook readings, classroom discussions/lectures, and periodic examinations. Social development will be encouraged through small group discussions and exercises as well as through the relating of biblical concepts to contemporary social issues. Spiritual development will be encouraged through a dialogue with the dynamic faith of the Christian Scripture, a faith that grew out of the community of believers and continues to challenge and shape that community in contemporary settings.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

1) Identify the historical contexts 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 in which 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.

Note: This course is one of the components of the General Education Program at Point Loma Nazarene University, under the category of "Responding to the Sacred." By including this course in a common educational experience for undergraduates, the faculty supports the study of Scripture and Christian heritage as foundational in the pursuit of knowledge and the development of personal values.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation and Attendance: In this journey through the story of the NT, class attendance is a necessity for optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings *(more than THREE [3] classes),* the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent *(more than SIX [6] classes),* the student may be de- enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See Academic Policies in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. In addition, each student is expected to participate actively in class by contributing to the discussions on the basis of his or her reading of the assigned material.

Readings: The NT is the primary text for this course. All readings are required. Please bring your Bible to class. It is important to keep up with the readings on a session by session basis or the information will quickly become overwhelming.

Podcast Engagement: Supplementing lectures and reading is engagement with podcast lectures and presentations. Students shall engage with two assigned podcasts. A 2-page response paper is required to demonstrate engagement. Responses should not be summaries but thoughtful engagement with insights and critiques of the podcast.

Exams: There will be two exams (dates of the exams are listed in the Tentative Schedule). These exams will cover lectures and assigned readings and will consist of multiple choices and short answer questions. The final exam will not be cumulative and will only cover the material after the mid-term exam.

Experience with Christianity and the New Testament Reflection: Each student brings different experiences and perspectives to the New Testament and the Christian faith. In 1000 words, explain your personal experience with Christianity and the New Testament. What is your faith background?

What, if any, of the New Testament have you read? What questions do you have as you approach the New Testament and this course in particular?

Reading Response Paper: There will be two reading response papers written in response to *Christianity's Surprise* by C. Kavin Rowe and *Reading While Black* by Esau McCaulley. The reading response papers should make clear and specific points while demonstrating engagement with the reading for best results. Specific instruction on each particular book response can be found in each reading response should be at least 1500 words, double-spaced, in Times New Roman or Helvetica, 12 pt. font. Each reading response paper has particular questions that need to be addressed in the reflection. Those exact questions can be found in the assignment description on Canvas.

Final Paper (Signature Assignment): Students will turn in a final paper any time before or on the day of the final exam. The final paper will discuss one NT passage (no less than 10 verses) with one particular theme. You may choose your theme from one of these topics: the nature of Jesus Christ, the importance of the resurrection, race and ethnicity in the New Testament, or the political function of the church. If you want to write your final paper on another theme, you must receive permission from the professor. Final papers should (1) investigate and interpret the literary and historical contexts, (2) argue a thesis based on the interpretation of the selected passages, and (3) make a direct connection to an OT passage or NT outside of the selected genre in which you are interpreting. The thesis should be underlined, indicating the thesis being argued. Each final paper should be 2000 words, double-spaced, Times New Roman or Helvetica, 12pt font. It is required that you consult at least 3 academic commentaries, sources, or articles for the research and writing of this final paper. Unless it is 1-2 verses, do not quote scripture. Only reference it by book, chapter, and verse(s). Assume the reader has a bible in front of them.

DATE PRESENTED	CLASS CONTENT OR ASSIGNMENT	ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE
Jan. 13-15	*Required Reading*: NISB – pg. 2274-2279 Maps 1, 14, 17, 18, 19 Rowe *CS*: Ch.1 Mark 1; Matt. 1-4; Luke 1-4; John 1-2	**1.17: Experience in Christianity Paper due**
Jan. 20-22	*Required Reading*: The Gospel of Mark Rowe *CS* Ch. 2	
Jan. 27-29	*Required Reading*: The Gospel of Matthew Rowe *CS* Ch. 3	
Feb. 3-5	*Required Reading*: The Gospel of Luke Rowe *CS* Ch. 4	

Feb. 10-12	*Required Reading*: The Gospel of John Rowe *CS* Ch. 5	**2.14: Christianity's Surprise Reading Response Paper Due**
Feb. 17-19	*Required Reading*: Matt: 26-28, Mark 1-16, Luke 22-24, John 13-20	
Feb. 24-26	*Required Reading*: Migliore Article Acts 1-12	**2.28: Willie James Jennings Podcast Paper Due**
Mar. 3-5	*Required Reading*: Acts 13-28	**3.5: Mid-Term**
Mar. 10-12	***SPRING BREAK***	
Mar. 17-19	*Required Reading*: 1 & 2 Thessalonians Galatians Philippians McCaulley *RWB* Ch.1-2	
Mar. 24-26	*Required Reading*: 1 Corinthians Romans McCaulley *RWB* Ch. 3-4 **Wiley Lectures: March 23-25: Extra Credit**	**3.28: *Generous Orthodoxy* Podcast Paper Due**
Mar. 31-Apr. 1	*Required Reading*: 2 Corinthians Philemon Ephesians Colossians McCaulley *RWB* Ch. 5-6	**4.2: Wiley Lecture Extra Credit Due**
Apr. 7-9	*Required Reading*: 1 & 2 Timothy Titus Hebrews James McCaulley *RWB* Ch. 7 & Conclusion	**4.11: Reading While Black Reading Response Paper Due**
Apr. 14-16	*Required Reading*: 1, 2, & 3 John	
Apr. 21-23	*Required Reading*: The Book of Revelation 1-11	
April 28-30		**May 8: Final**

	Required Reading: The Book of Revelation 12-22	**Paper Due**

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

1. *The New Interpreter's Study Bible*(NRSV). Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.
2. Rowe, C.Kavin. *Christianity's Surprise*. Nashville; TN. Abingdon Press. 2020.
3. McCaulley, Esau. *Reading While Black.* Downer's Grove; IL. IVPress. 2020.
4. Migliore, Daniel, *Faith Seeking Understanding*. (Violence and the Cross). Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing. 2004. pgs. 187-196
5. Enns, Peter. 2021, November). *Willie James Jennings – The Book of Acts & The Acts of the Spirit* . https://peteenns.com/episode-188-willie-james-jennings-the-book-of-acts-the-acts-of-the-spirit/
6. Gladwell, Malcolm. (Author).(2016, August). *Generous Orthodoxy*. http://revisionisthistory.com/episodes/09-generous-orthodoxy

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Note: Clearly define a grading policy to avoid any confusion concerning expectations. It is most helpful if at least two things are present: 1) a point distribution and 2) a grading scale.

Assignments by Points:	Grade Scale:	
• Participation and Attendance: 75 pts • Syllabus Quiz: 25pts • Podcast Engagement (25pts): 50pts • Experience in Christianity: 100pts • Readings Response (100pts): 200pts • Exams (100pts): 200pts • Final Paper: 200pts Total: 850pts	A=93-100 A-=92-90 B+=87-89 B=83-86 B-=80-82 C+=77-79	C=73-76 C-=70-72 D+=67-69 D=63-66 D-=60-62 F=0-59

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 BIB1002, 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 Bible and Theology 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 online (distance education) outside of California.

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 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. 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.

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.

Use of Technology

The use of laptops is not permitted during class lectures. Notes can and should be taken with pen on tablet or paper.

The 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
- Website
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu