

## **New Testament History and Religion [BIB-102, SECTION 1]**

### **Catalog Description**

Bib-102 [3 units] The literature of the New Testament considered in the context of the beginnings of the Christian community as to its origin, structure, content, and witness to faith.

THIS COURSE IS ONE OF THE COMPONENTS OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AT POINT LOMA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY AND IS LISTED 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*.

### **Purpose of the Course**

*The person and work of Jesus Christ formed the center of early Christian preaching. Moreover, he provided the pattern for the church and for discipleship. Apart from Christ neither the Christian church nor the New Testament documents would exist. The purpose of this course, therefore, is to study the New Testament documents from the perspective of what they reveal about Jesus Christ. The focus of this class is broader than the traditional study of the historical Jesus [the focus of which is to create a historical reconstruction of his life]. Our quest is to discover what the New Testament teaches about his person and work so that we might be able to grasp his significance for us today. To do this we will learn to think Christologically by reflecting on both his words and his life.*

### **Required Texts**

Burge, Gary M., Cohich, Lynn H., and Green, Gene L. *The New Testament in Antiquity: A Survey of the New Testament in its Cultural Context*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009. [NTA]

Fee, Gordon D., and Stuart, Douglas. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. Fourth Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014. [F/S]

Wright, N. T. *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2010. [SC]

A standard translation of the Bible – e.g., ESV, NRSV, NASB, NIV, NKJV, etc.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Identify the historical context of the New Testament
- Articulate the unity of the New Testament in its canonical context within the diverse literature of the Christian canon
- State 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
- Summarize the basic content of the books of the New Testament and the methods appropriate to the interpretation of those books

### **Course Objectives**

- Learn to read the New Testament documents within their *literary, historical, and theological* settings.
- Recognize the central importance of Jesus in the literature of the New Testament (in the development of the early Christian church) and his significance for people in the twenty-first century.

- Gain an overview of the New Testament Scriptures, their origin, background, major themes and essential message (e.g., note the relationship between early Christian thought and its roots in Judaism).
- Make first-hand contact with the New Testament documents in an English translation by formulating the basic theological message of each book and noting its significance for the mission of the contemporary church.
- Become familiar with the various types of literature (*genre*) contained in the New Testament and be able to apply this in the basic interpretation of an assigned biblical text.

### **Course Requirements**

- Complete all assigned readings from the New Testament and the textbooks.
- Complete all writing assignments examinations on their designated dates.
- Write a 1500 word biblical interpretation paper following the exegetical method included in this syllabus. The paper is due **December 2, 2015**, at the beginning of class.
- Participate in class discussions.

### **Grading**

Exam 1	150
Exam 2	150
Exam 3 [Final]	200
Writing Assignment 1 [Mark]	75
Writing Assignment 2 [Galatians]	75
Writing Assignment 3	100
<i>Simply Christian</i> – Critical Response	
Biblical Interpretation Paper	250
Total	1000 points

### **Important Student Information**

**Note:** Academic Accommodations

*All students are expected to meet the minimum standards for this course as set by the Professor. Students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should first discuss options and services available to them in the Academic Support Center (ASC) during the first two weeks of the semester. The ASC, in turn, will contact the Professor with official notification and suggested classroom accommodations, as required by federal law. Approved documentation must be provided by the student and placed on file in the ASC prior to the beginning of the semester.*

**Note:** Inclusive Language Statement

*The School of Theology and Christian Ministry (STCM) is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion of inferiority of women, the STCM urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writing.*

**Note:** Academic honesty is expected in all writing assignments and examinations.

**Note:** General Education Statement

This course is a basic component 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.

**Class Schedule and Assignments**

Date	Lectures	Readings
Sept 1	Introduction to the Class Mark 6:1-6	
Sept 2	<i>Historical Setting of the New Testament</i> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 16-22; 24-51
Sept 4	<i>Historical Setting of the New Testament</i> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> F/S 21-35; <input type="checkbox"/> SC 3-28
Sept 7	<b>No Class – Labor Day Recess</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 54-77; 108-23
Sept 9	<i>The Story of Jesus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 126-46
Sept 11	<i>The Teaching of Jesus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 148-64; <input type="checkbox"/> F/S 154-67 <input type="checkbox"/> Matt 5-7; 13:1-52
Sept 14	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (1) Introduction to the Gospels; Introduction to the Gospel of Mark	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 180-94; <input type="checkbox"/> F/S 132-53 <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 1:1-4
Sept 16	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 1-4
Sept 18	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 5-8:21; <input type="checkbox"/> SC 29-54
Sept 21	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (4) <b>Writing Assignment 1: The Kingdom in Mark – Due</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 8:22-10
Sept 23	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (5)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 11-13; <input type="checkbox"/> SC 55-90
Sept 25	<i>The Gospel of Mark</i> (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 14-16
Sept 28	<i>The Gospel of Matthew</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 166-78 <input type="checkbox"/> Matt 1-4; 16; 20-28
Sept 30	<i>The Gospel of Luke</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 196-211 <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 1-3; 9:51-19:27; 24
Oct 2	<i>The Gospel of John</i> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 214-28 <input type="checkbox"/> John 1-12
Oct 5	<i>The Gospel of John</i> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> John 13-21
Oct 7	<b>Exam 1</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> SC 91-120
Oct 9	<i>Acts</i> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> NTA 230-48; F/S 112-31 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 1-8

Oct 12	<i>Acts</i> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 9-17
Oct 14	<i>Acts</i> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 18-28; <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SC</b> 121-42
Oct 16	<i>Introduction to the Letters of Paul</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 80-105; 250-66; <input type="checkbox"/> <b>F/S</b> 57-92 <input type="checkbox"/> Philemon
Oct 19	<i>Galatians</i> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 268-77 <input type="checkbox"/> Gal 1-6
Oct 21	<i>Galatians</i> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 1-2
Oct 23	<b>No Class – Fall Break</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 442-58; <input type="checkbox"/> <b>F/S</b> 36-56
Oct 26	<i>Galatians</i> (3) <b>Writing Assignment 2: Galatians and the Law – Due</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 3-4
Oct 28	<i>Galatians</i> (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 5-6; <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SC</b> 143-72
Oct 30	<i>Romans</i> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 322-36 <input type="checkbox"/> Romans 1-8
Nov 2	<i>Romans</i> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Romans 9-16; <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SC</b> 173-98
Nov 4	<i>Romans</i> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Romans 1-16
Nov 6	<i>1 Corinthians</i> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 294-309 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Cor 1-7 (especially 1-4)
Nov 9	<i>1 Corinthians</i> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Cor 7-16 (especially 12-15)
Nov 11	<i>2 Corinthians</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 312-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Cor 1-13
Nov 13	<i>Ephesians and Colossians</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 338-48 <input type="checkbox"/> Eph 1-6; Col 1-4
Nov 16	<i>Philippians</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 350-62 <input type="checkbox"/> Phil 1-4
Nov 18	<i>1 and 2 Thessalonians</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 280-91 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Thess 1-5; 2 Thess 1-3
Nov 20	<i>Pastoral Epistles</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 364-73 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Tim 1-6; 2 Tim 1-4; Titus 1-4
Nov 23	<b>Exam 2</b>	
Nov 25	<b>No Class – Thanksgiving Recess</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SC</b> 199-239

Nov 27	<b>No Class – Thanksgiving Recess</b>	
Nov 30	<i>Hebrews</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 386-96 <input type="checkbox"/> Heb 1-13
Dec 2	<i>James</i> <b>Interpretation Paper Due</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 376-83; <input type="checkbox"/> <b>F/S</b> 233-57 <input type="checkbox"/> James 1-5
Dec 4	<i>1 and 2 Peter; Jude</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 398-409 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Pet 1-5; 2 Pet 1-3; Jude
Dec 7	<i>The Letters of John</i> <b>Writing Assignment 3: Critical Response – Simply Christian Due</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 412-23 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 1-5; 2 John; 3 John
Dec 9	<i>The Revelation of John – 1</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NTA</b> 426-39; <input type="checkbox"/> <b>F/S</b> 258-74 <input type="checkbox"/> Rev 1-12
Dec 11	<i>The Revelation of John – 2</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 13-22
Dec 16	<b>Final Examination – 7:30 AM – 10:00 AM</b>	

## **Interpretative Guide**

First, select a passage of Scripture to be interpreted. To find the meaning of your selected passage, choose a thought-unit of reasonable size. If it is too large, you will not be able to provide adequate detail. If too small, you may not have enough content to demonstrate a structural meaning. A non-narrative thought-unit could range from four to 15 verses, a narrative passage might be considerably longer (see Jesus and the Woman at the Well [John 4]). Briefly explain why your passage is a legitimate thought-unit. Look for indicators such as change of subject, speaker, location, genre, etc.

Second, read, re-read, and re-re-read your passage. Spent at least a week (two weeks are recommended) reading through your passage before actually beginning careful study of the passage. After four or five readings of the text, begin to note (by writing down) the significant details of the text and show how they fit together. Note carefully any questions that have arisen during your reading of the text. Think carefully about the overriding purpose of the document in which your passage is found and note how your text is related to it (if you can find the purpose of your book in an Introduction to the New Testament or in the opening of a standard commentary). The goal of this assignment is to learn how to make an appropriate interpretation of your passage by analyzing its structure, setting and content

Third (to be done throughout your study), pray that the Lord will guide you in understanding the text and in hearing (and taking to heart) its message. Prayer is not a substitute for research. But neither is research a substitute for prayer. Do your research with your heart open before God.

Fourth, section your paper under the following headings:

**1. Introduction:** Introduce not only your passage, but the paper. Provide an **outline** of the paper within the introduction. Say what you are going to do. Length: One to two paragraphs.

**2. Justify Your Thought-Unit:** Explain why your passage is a legitimate thought unit. Look for indicators such as change of subject, speaker, location, genre, etc. Pay attention to inclusions. Length: One paragraph. *Note: This section is not about justifying why it is good to study your passage. Rather, it is about justifying why you being with a particular verse and end with a particular verse.* Length: One to two paragraphs.

**3. Identify the Genre:** What is the genre of your specific passage as well as the document to which it belongs? Use Fee and Stuart (*How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*) to point out the implications of your genre for exegesis. Length: One to two paragraphs.

**4. Do the Exegesis:** Now direct your attention to the details of the text. Probe your passage by asking relevant questions of it. Identify the parts by which it is composed. Carefully outline your passage. What did the text mean to its author and its first recipients? Key questions to ask:

(1) What is the **historical context** of your passage? This includes pertinent political, cultural, and social factors, and especially the occasion and purpose of the text. What situation called forth the text from the author? Who is writing/speaking to whom and why? What outside information do we need to know in order to understand what is being said? Are there possible and/or identifiable multiple historical contexts? For example, in the NT the Gospels have the dual setting of Jesus in his ministry and also that of the evangelists and his church. Length: One or two major paragraphs

(2) What is the **literary context** of your passage? What is the larger argument/story-line? What is the writer's line of thought and where does your passage fit within it? Length: One to two major paragraphs.

(3) What is the **content** of your passage? Unpack the "meaning load" that the passage is carrying. Trace the line of thought/argument within the text. Identify the meaning of key words, the significance of key events,

etc. Be able to outline your passage. Know how it hangs together and the point(s) that is/are being made. How does it speak to the situation and what is it saying? This is where you finally get at what specifically the author intended to say, what the passage **meant** when it was first spoken/written and heard/read. At this point, you must decide what your passage is really saying. You may do this by identifying the **Big Idea** of your passage. Construct a single statement that holds all the components of the text together into a meaningful whole. *Do not overlook this step!* The work you do here will pay dividends throughout your entire paper. Length: This is the focal point of your paper. It will take several paragraphs to complete this section.

(4) What is the **theological witness** of your passage? What does the text reveal about the nature of God or what it means to belong to the people of God? What does we learn about God, humanity and the world? The **theological witness** of the text is shaped by the *intention* (or purpose) of your passage. What is the passage doing in the document? What anything of importance be lost were the passage excluded from the document? Can you identify the assumptions which provide the foundation for the content of the passage? (What assumptions are necessary to create a miracle story?) Can you tell the *story/narrative* that surrounds the passage? Beware! This may be your first attempt to make a *descriptive* theological statement! Length: One to two paragraphs.

**5. Make the Application:** Apply what the text meant in its initial setting to life today What is the meaning of the text? Remember that what it meant governs what the text means today. Make application of the theological witness to our own life. Your thinking must go beyond what you passage means to individuals. Think of its impact on the church and society as well. Length: One or two paragraphs, not more than one page.

**6. Conclusion:** You may make the above interpretation section your conclusion, or you may add a conclusion, summarizing the results of your research. You might re-emphasize what the text meant, what it means, and even add a personal note on how doing the paper has affected you. Length: One paragraph..

**Bibliography:** Use at least three translations of the Bible recommended by Fee and Stuart (*How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*). Also use a Bible dictionary and/or Bible handbook where pertinent. Course textbooks should be drawn upon when relevant. You must also consult at least three biblical commentaries, but only after you have complete you own observation of the text.

**NOTE WELL:** *Material found on internet sites is not acceptable for this study.* Ryan Library is filled with excellent resources that will allow you to complete this assignment with ease. Also, notes *from your study Bible are not acceptable.* While these notes are usually of high quality, their worth is limited by the framework in which they are placed. If necessary, your professor will gladly introduce you to the library.

**Length:** The number of paragraphs (and pages) will be governed by the length of your passage, the issues it contains and by the observations you make. Your paper should follow the four heading listed above: historical context, literary context, content, and theological witness.. The paper should be approximately 1500 words in length. Your paper should be typed, with one inch margins, double spaced with a 12 point Times New Roman font (or a font of similar size). Follow a standard manual for bibliography, footnotes, etc. While I am primarily interested in content, care should be taken for spelling, grammar, etc. The paper should read well!

[These guidelines have been gleamed from the work of Dr. Alan Wheatley and Rev. Steve Rodeheaver]