

**New Testament History and Religion  
BIB 1002 (sect. 1)**

Point Loma Nazarene University

Spring 2022

Mondays 3:00-6:00pm

Professor:

The Rev. Dr. Brad E. Kelle, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: See schedule on door

**Course Description and Purpose**

*PLNU Catalogue Description:* Within the context of Christian origins, an overview of the canonical literature of the New Testament with special attention to its literary history and theological themes.

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” or “academic” study of the New Testament as ancient Christian literature.

**Course Learning Outcomes (School of Theology and Christian Ministry)**

*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.

**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.

**Foundational Explorations 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 Text (Required)

1. *The New Interpreter's Study Bible*(NRSV). Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.

### Course Requirements

1. Class Participation and Attendance: In this abbreviated 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 ONE [1] class meeting), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (more than THREE [3] 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.*

*\*NOTE: Giving false information on the daily roll sheet (i.e. signing someone else in or having someone else sign you in) is an act of cheating that is equal to cheating on an exam. It will subject you to the academic dishonesty penalties of the university, including failure of this course and possible expulsion from the university.*

2. 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. A significant part of the student's grade comes from quizzes over the assigned reading material (see below).*

3. Celebrations of Learning (a.k.a. Reading Quizzes): There will be *eight* such celebrations (often called, erroneously, "quizzes") that cover various reading assignments and associated class lectures. The dates of the quizzes are listed on the course schedule and study guides ("party favors"! ☺) will be provided.

4. Midterm Celebration of Learning: There will be one mid-term Celebration of Learning (exam). See the date on the course schedule. Further instructions will be provided in class.

5. Observations-Posting Assignments on Canvas from Two Video Lectures: On two occasions this semester, each student will watch a recorded lecture and then post on the course's Canvas site **three (3) observations** from that lecture, **including a one to two sentence explanation of why each** of the three observations is significant. The lectures and due dates for the assignments are provided on the course schedule in this syllabus.

**\*More Specific Instructions:**

a) After watching the assigned lecture, *select three (3) significant statements or points made* or things you observed in the video lecture and explain briefly for each one of your three observations why you thought *it was significant*.

b) Should be a total of **400 words** for all 3 observations combined

6. Final Celebration of Learning: There will be a final Celebration of Learning (a.k.a. final exam) at the end of the course. Details and a study guide will be provided in class. The final celebration will take place *in the classroom* on the day and time given on the university's final exam schedule: **MONDAY MAY 2, 2022 at 1:30pm.**

**\*OPTIONAL EXTRA-CREDIT PAPER:** Report on a Non-Canonical Early Christian Document: The student should select one of the non-canonical writings from early Christianity given at the on-line locations below, read it carefully, and write a paper that analyzes it in dialogue with the canonical writings. These documents are available on-line and provide an interesting resource for understanding the variety of non-canonical early Christian writings. The student should be sure to write on a primary document and not a secondary article talking about some document. The paper should be **3-4 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins** on all sides. *The student may receive up to 40 points extra-credit to be added to the semester total points.* **The paper is due on CANVAS on Sunday April 10, 2022 by 11:59pm.**

**\*INSTRUCTIONS:** In the paper, the student should undertake three tasks: 1) using the introduction to the document (if one is provided), summarize the context (if known) from which the document comes; 2) summarize the content of the document; and 3) briefly compare it with a similar writing that was included in the NT (for example, if you read a non-canonical gospel, compare it with one of the four gospels in the NT).

**To select your document:** 1) go to <http://wesley.nnu.edu> THEN...

2) click "Noncanonical Literature"

3) select from the listings under heading "New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha"

4) Choose *one* of the following genre categories THEN *choose one of the documents listed below* (your choice must be from these options):

"Apocryphal NT Acts":

"The Acts of John"

"The Acts of Paul"

"The Acts of Philip"

"Apocryphal NT Apocalypse":

"The Apocalypse of Adam"

"The Revelation of Moses"

"The Apocalypse of Paul"

"Apocryphal NT Gospels":

"The Infancy Gospel of Thomas"

[Greek Text A]

"The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary"

"The Gospel of Thomas"

"Pseudonymous Writings":

"The Epistle of the Apostles"

"The Epistle to the Laodiceans"

## Course Policies

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

<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
307	Celebrations of Learning (8 Reading Quizzes)
80	Midterm Celebration of Learning
40	Observation Postings on Two Video Lectures
100	Final Celebration of Learning
<u>*Total: 527 (possible points)</u>	

<u>*Grading Scale:</u>	94-100 A	84-86 B	74-76 C	64-66 D
	90-93 A-	80-83 B-	70-73 C-	60-63 D-
	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	50s F

2. Attendance: In this abbreviated 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 ONE [1] classes), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (more than THREE [3] 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. Please note that it is the student's responsibility to obtain notes, etc. from other students for any missed classes.*

*\*NOTE: Giving false information on the daily roll sheet (i.e. signing someone else in or having someone else sign you in) is an act of cheating that is equal to cheating on an exam. It will subject you to the academic dishonesty penalties of the university, including failure of this course and possible expulsion from the university.*

3. Late Work Policy: In order not to be considered "late," all assignments must be submitted by the day and time listed as the due date. *Grace Period: If the student "forgets" or otherwise misses an assignment, she or he may submit it up to one week after the due date for no more than half credit. No assignment will be accepted for credit of any kind more than one week after the original due date. (NOTE: Any extra-credit assignments must be submitted on or before the due date and will not be accepted late for credit of any kind).*

4. Laptops, iPads, etc.: Students are *not* permitted to use laptop computers, iPads, or similar devices in class during the class sessions (if you have documented reason to do so from the Educational Access Center or other extenuating circumstances, please discuss with the professor).

5. Inclusivity: 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. This course will strive to practice sensitivity toward and foster respect for issues of inclusivity in matters of language and conduct. Each student should seek to enrich this inclusive atmosphere in both their class contributions and personal interactions.

6. Academic Honesty: 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.

7. Academic Accommodations: If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Educational Access Center (EAC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation.

8. 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.

### **Course Credit Hour Information**

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3-unit class delivered over 16 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes.

### **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.

## Tentative Course Schedule

### 1. Tuesday Jan. 11 (\*Special Monday Session on Tuesday)

Starting Points: Introduction to the Course and Why Study the NT?

**This week BEFORE class session #2:**

- Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. xv-xvi ("Introduction") and pp. xvii-xx ("To the Reader")  
 2. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. 2255-2260 ("Inspiration of Scripture")

**\*MONDAY JAN. 17: NO CLASS (MLK holiday)**

### 2. Monday Jan. 24

- A. What Is the NT and Why Was It Written?  
 B. The NT as Part of Christian Scripture: Inspiration and Authority

**This week BEFORE class session #3:**

- Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. 2243-2247 ("Reliability of Scripture")  
Study for in-class Celebration of Learning (Quiz) over having memorized the list of the books of the New Testament

### 3. Monday Jan. 31

A. **\*In-Class CELEBRATION (Quiz) #1: The books of the NT (be able to write in order of Protestant canon)**

B. What Is the NT and From Where Did It Come (Pt. 1)? Anthology, Origin, Composition

C. What Is the NT and From Where Did It Come (Pt. 2)? Canon and Historical Context: Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Apocalyptic Backgrounds

**This week BEFORE class session #4:**

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: CELEBRATION (Quiz) #2: *New Interpreter's Study Bible* article, "Reliability of Scripture"**

- Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. 2274-2279 ("Culture and Religion among the Ancient Israelites")

**\*NOTE:** Next Monday we will NOT meet in the classroom. You will watch a recorded lecture video online AND complete on Canvas a homework assignment (see below)

### 4. Monday Feb. 7 (\*NOTE: We will NOT meet in the classroom today)

Watch on Canvas the recorded lecture video: What Is the NT and From Where Did It Come (Pt. 3)? Jewish & Apocalyptic Backgrounds

**This week BEFORE class session #5:**

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm:** Observations-Posting Assignment on the Recorded Video Lecture—see instructions on p. 2 of this syllabus

- Readings: 1. Dennis Bratcher, "The Gospels and the Synoptic Problem" (provided on Canvas under the "Files" link)

2. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. 2261-2267 ("Guidelines for Reading and Interpretation") & pp. 2268-2273 ("Varieties of Readings...")

### 5. Monday Feb. 14

- A. How Then Should We Read the NT? Methods for NT Study  
 B. Introducing the Gospels: a. What Is a Gospel? b. The “Synoptic Problem”

**This week BEFORE class session #6:**

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: CELEBRATION (Quiz) #3 over New Interpreter’s Study Bible articles, “Inspiration,” “Culture and Religion,” “Guidelines for Reading,” and “Varieties of Readings”**

- Readings: 1. *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* introduction to Matthew  
 2. Matthew 1—11; 13—14; 21—28  
 3. *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* introduction to Mark  
 4. The Gospel of Mark (all)

### 6. Monday Feb. 21

- A. Matthew: Jesus, the Jewish Messiah  
 B. Mark: Jesus, the Suffering Servant

**This week BEFORE class session #7:**

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: CELEBRATION (Quiz) #4 over Bratcher, “The Gospels and the Synoptic Problem” and the New Interpreter’s Study Bible introduction to Matthew**

- Readings: 1. *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* introduction to Luke  
 2. Luke 1—6; 9—15; 22—24

### 7. Monday Feb. 28

- A. Luke: Jesus, the Universal Savior of the Lowly (Pt. 1)  
 B. Luke: Jesus, the Universal Savior of the Lowly (Pt. 2)

**This week BEFORE class session #8:**

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: CELEBRATION (Quiz) #5 over the New Interpreter’s Study Bible introductions to Mark and Luke AND main characters/events in Mark and Luke**

*\*Watch on Canvas the recorded lecture video: “John: Jesus, the Pre-existent Word”*

*\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: Observations-Posting Assignment on the Recorded Video Lecture on John—see instructions on p. 2 of this syllabus*

- Readings: 1. *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* introduction to John  
 2. *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* introduction to Acts  
 3. Acts 1—4; 6—7; 8—10; 13—16; 21—25; 28  
 4. Kwok Pui-lan, “Reading the Christian New Testament in the Contemporary World” (available on Canvas under the “Files” link)

**\*MONDAY MARCH 7: NO CLASS (Spring Break)**

### 8. Monday March 14

- A. Acts: The Story of Early Christianity
- B. Reading the New Testament in a Diverse Contemporary World

**This week BEFORE class session #9:**

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: MIDTERM Celebration of Learning**

- Readings:** 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introduction to Romans  
2. Romans 1—12

### 9. Monday March 21 (Class meeting only from 3:00-4:15pm)

- A. *In-class*: “To the Gentiles”: The Life and Ministry of Paul and What Is a NT “Letter”?
- B. *Watch on Canvas the recorded lecture video*: Romans

**This week BEFORE class session #10:**

**\*Watch on Canvas the recorded lecture video**: Romans

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: CELEBRATION (Quiz) #6 over *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to John and Acts AND main characters/events in John and Acts**

- Readings:** 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to 1 and 2 Corinthians  
2. 1 Corinthians 1—2; 5—7; 12—14

### 10. Monday March 28

Exploring the NT Letters: 1 & 2 Corinthians (“The Corinthian Correspondence”)

**This week BEFORE class session #11:**

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: CELEBRATION (Quiz) #7 over *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians**

- Readings:** 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to Ephesians and 1 Thessalonians  
2. Ephesians (all) and 1 Thessalonians (all)  
3. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to 1 Timothy and James  
4. 1 Timothy (all) and James (all)

### 11. Monday Apr. 4

- A. Exploring the NT Letters: Ephesians and 1 Thessalonians
- B. Exploring the NT Letters: 1 Timothy and James

**This week BEFORE class session #12:**

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: Optional Extra-Credit Report on Non-Canonical Early Christian Document**

- Readings:** 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introduction to Revelation  
2. Revelation (all)



**12. Monday Apr. 11**

- A. "Futurama": Apocalyptic Literature and the Book of Revelation (Pt. 1)
- B. "Futurama": Apocalyptic Literature and the Book of Revelation (Pt. 2)

**This week BEFORE class session #13:**

***\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: CELEBRATION (Quiz) #8 over New Interpreter's Study Bible introductions to Ephesians, 1 Timothy, and James***

**\*MONDAY APR. 18: NO CLASS (Easter Break)**

**13. Monday Apr. 25**

- A. Finish Revelation (if needed)
- B. Review for the Final Celebration of Learning
- C. Making Sense of the Whole

**\*\*FINAL CELEBRATION OF LEARNING (final exam) takes place in the classroom on the scheduled day according to the university's final exam schedule: **MONDAY MAY 2, 2022 at 1:30pm** (note: according to university policy, you cannot reschedule your final exam unless you have three final exams scheduled for the same day [not even if your parents bought airline tickets for you before they knew your finals schedule!]).**