

## New Testament History and Religion BIB 1002 (3 units)

Point Loma Nazarene University

Spring 2025

**Mondays 2:45-5:45pm**

\*Final Exam: Monday May 5, 2025 @ 1:30pm

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.

### Course Text (Required)

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

### 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 Requirements

1. Class Participation and Attendance: 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 (1 full class session), 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.*

*\*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. Bible Labs: Each student will be assigned to a “lab group.” Throughout the class meetings across the semester, there will be six “labs” that the group will conduct. The assignments will be provided in class. The labs will take place in the second half of the class session. *NOTE: You cannot make up a lab that you miss. However, each student may miss two and drop those two missed labs (in other words, only four labs will count as grades for the course).* If you complete all six labs, then two of them count for extra credit (10 points each extra credit). **You must bring the required *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* for the course to class to complete these labs.**

5. 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.

6. Observations-Posting Assignments on Canvas from **THREE** Video Lectures: On three 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

7. 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 5, 2025 @ 1:30pm**. *Note: the final exam will NOT be open-book or open-note. It will be a traditional exam.*

## 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)
100 (4 at 25 pts each)	Bible Labs (4 out of 6 counted for the semester)
100	Midterm Celebration of Learning
60	Observation Postings on 3 Video Lectures
100	Final Celebration of Learning
<u>*Total: 667 (possible points)</u>	
<u>*Grading Scale:</u>	
93-100 A	84-86 B
90-92 A-	80-83 B-
87-89 B+	77-79 C+
	74-76 C
	70-73 C-
	67-69 D+
	64-66 D
	60-63 D-
	50s F

2. Attendance: 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 (1 full class session), 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.*

*\*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. 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 a bias incident regarding language, you can find more information on reporting and resources at [www.pointloma.edu/bias](http://www.pointloma.edu/bias).

5. Use of Technology: In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information on Canvas for this course. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers compatible with their computer available to use. If a student is in need of technological resources please contact [student-tech-request@pointloma.edu](mailto:student-tech-request@pointloma.edu). Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

6. 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.

7. 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](mailto:EAC@pointloma.edu) or 619-849-2486). 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. The EAC makes accommodations available to professors at the student's request. 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 special accommodations.

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.]

**9. 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.

**10. 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.

**11. 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.

## **Tentative Course Schedule**

### **1. Mon. Jan. 13**

- A) Starting Points: Introduction to the Course
- B) 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")
3. Start memorizing the names of the books of the New Testament for upcoming Celebration of Learning

**\*MONDAY JAN. 20: NO CLASS (Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday)**

### **2. Mon. Jan. 27**

**\*\*Organize Bible Lab Groups**

- A. What Is the NT and Why Was It Written?
- B. The NT as Part of Christian Scripture: Inspiration and Authority
- C. **Bible Lab (in class): "Inspiration of Scripture"**

**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. Mon. Feb. 3

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

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")

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

### 4. Mon. Feb. 10

A. How Then Should We Read the NT? Methods for NT Study

B. **Bible Lab (in class):** Biblical Interpretation Assignment #1

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

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

**\*Complete on Canvas by Sunday 11:59pm: Observations-Posting Assignment** on the Recorded Video Lecture on Jewish and Apocalyptic Backgrounds—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* introduction to Matthew

3. Matthew 1—11; 13—14; 21—28

### 5. Mon. Feb. 17

A. Introducing the Gospels: a. What Is a Gospel? b. The "Synoptic Problem"

B. Matthew: Jesus, the Jewish Messiah

**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 Mark

2. The Gospel of Mark (all)



## 6. Mon. Feb. 24

- A. Mark: Jesus, the Suffering Servant  
 B. **Bible Lab (in class)**: Gospel Playlist and Discussion

**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. Mon. Mar. 3

- A. Luke: Jesus, the Universal Savior of the Lowly  
 B. **Bible Lab (in class)**: Luke and the Unique Parables

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

**\*Study for the Midterm Celebration of Learning** (watch the Midterm Review Session video available on Canvas)

**\*MONDAY MARCH 10: NO CLASS (Spring Break)**

## 8. Mon. Mar. 17

**Midterm Celebration of Learning (a.k.a. Midterm Exam) in class**

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

**\*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

## 9. Mon. Mar. 24

- A. Acts: The Story of Early Christianity  
 B. “To the Gentiles”: The Life and Ministry of Paul and What Is a NT “Letter”?

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

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

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

Readings: 1. *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* introduction to Romans  
 2. Romans 1—5  
 3. *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* introductions to 1 and 2 Corinthians  
 4. 1 Corinthians 1—2; 5—7; 12—14

### 10. Mon. Mar. 31

- A. Exploring the NT Letters: 1 & 2 Corinthians (“The Corinthian Correspondence”)
- B. **Bible Lab (in class)**: Biblical Interpretation Assignment #2 (assessment assignment)

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

**\*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 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)

### 11. Mon. Apr. 7

- A. Exploring the NT Letters: Ephesians and 1 Thessalonians
- B. **Bible Lab (in class)**: 1 Timothy as a NT Letter

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

**\*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* introduction to Revelation  
2. Revelation 1-13

### 12. Mon. Apr. 14

- 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**

**Readings:** 1. Review *New Interpreter’s Study Bible* introduction to Revelation  
2. Revelation 14-22

**\*MONDAY APRIL 21: NO CLASS (Easter Break)**

### 13. Mon. Apr. 28

- 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 5, 2025 @ 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!]). Note: the final exam will NOT be open-book or open-notes. It will be a traditional exam.**