

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BNT 530 New Testament Introduction

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the content and background of the New Testament, including the critical issues involved in the discipline of New Testament Introduction.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course the student should:

- 1) Have a grasp of the historical background of the New Testament, including political realities, social structures, and religious movements and issues in both the Hellenistic-Roman and the Jewish milieus.
2. Be familiar with the basic history of NT scholarship over the last two centuries, with an end to grasping the fundamentals of modern scholarship. Such familiarity will include a working knowledge of the various methods of NT criticism, the presuppositions that gave rise to them, and their relative applicability today.
3. Be conversant in the primary introductory issues of all NT texts, understanding various points of view and being able to intelligently defend their own.
4. Realize an integration of the often highly technical information and arguments of modern NT scholarship and a living Pentecostal faith, with an end to further edify and empower the Body of Christ.

TEXTBOOKS

Required:

deSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods, and Ministry Formation*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004.

Barrett, C.K. *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1995.

Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Recommended:

Brown, R.E., *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Carson, D.A., Moo, D., and Morris, L. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

Neill, Stephen, and Wright, Tom. *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861-1986*. 2nd ed. Oxford: University press, 1988.

Stein, Robert H. *Studying the Synoptic Gospel: Origin and Interpretation*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

BASIC OUTLINE

- I. New Testament Background
 - A. Greco-Roman Political History
 - B. Jewish History
 - C. Society and Culture
 - D. Hellenistic and Roman Religions and Philosophies
 - E. The Rise of Christianity
2. New Testament Criticism
 - A. History of the Discipline
 - B. Methods of NT Interpretation
3. The New Testament Proper
 - A. The New Testament as Canon
 - B. The Synoptics and the Synoptic “Problem”
 - C. (Luke)-Acts
 - D. The Gospel of John
 - E. Pauline Corpus
 - F. Hebrews
 - G. General Epistles
 - H. Revelation

METHODOLOGY

Course objectives will be met through:

1. Classroom lecture
2. In-class questions, answers, discussions, and brief quizzes
3. Completion of required assignments of reading and writing

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Consistent attendance.** Anticipated absences should be made known to the professor beforehand. Consult the AGTS catalog for seminary policy on the relation between excessive absenteeism and grade reduction.
2. **Completion of reading assignments** on the indicated dates (see course plan handout).
3. **Classroom participation** (discussion, questions, answers) where appropriate.
4. **Completion of “semi-spontaneous” quizzes.** These quizzes will be announced periodically at the beginning of a given class period. At the end of said period the students will be given a question pertaining to that period’s lecture and five minutes to complete the quiz. Questions will be drawn from both lecture content and that day’s

required readings. Quizzes may be somewhat comprehensive (i.e., pertaining to previous days' lectures and/or readings).

5. **Research paper.** A 10-12 page treatment of ONE of the following:

- a. A New Testament backgrounds issue project; OR
- b. A New Testament introduction issue; OR
- c. An in-depth treatment of a chosen text.

See handout for details on all of the above. Selected themes **must** be chosen from option offered on handouts or by special permission from the professor.

6. **Backgrounds Exam**

7. **Mid-term Exam**

8. **Final Exam**

***Late work will be docked one-half letter grade per date unless previous permission has been granted by the professor.**

GRADING PROCEDURE

Class participation 5%

Quizzes 10%

Research paper 20%

Backgrounds Exam 20%

Mid-term exam 20%

Final Exam 25%

Total 100%

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. New York: Doubleday, 1983.

Hennecke, E. *New Testament Apocrypha*. 2nd ed. Edited by W. Schneemelcher. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993.

Josephus. *The Complete Works of Josephus*. Translated by William Whiston. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987.

New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha. Edited by B. M. Metzger and R. E. Murphy. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Secondary Sources:

Aune, David E. *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1989.

Baird, William. *History of New Testament Research, From Deism to Tübingen*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.

- Bauckham, R. ed. *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
- Black, D. A., and D. S. Dockery, eds. *New Testament Criticism and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.
- Blomberg, Craig. *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1987.
- . *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001.
- Bruce, F. F. *New Testament History*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1972.
- . *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Exeter: Paternoster, 1984.
- . *The Canon of Scripture*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1988.
- Collins, John J. *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
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- Evans, Craig A. and Stanley E. Porter, eds. *Dictionary of New Testament Background*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000.
- Green, Joel B. and McKnight, Scot, eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992.
- Guthrie, Donald. *New Testament Introduction*. 4th ed. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990.
- Hawthorne, Gerald F., and Martin, Ralph P., eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993.
- Hengel, M. *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974.
- . *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*. Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity, 2000.
- Jeremias, J. *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969.
- Jobes, Karen H., and Moises Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000.
- Kim, Seyoon. *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on the Origin of Paul's Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Kümmel, Werner G. *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its Problems*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1972.
- . *Introduction to the New Testament*. Rev. enlarged ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 1986.
- Lohse, Eduard. *The New Testament Environment*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1976.
- Marshall, I. H. *New Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977.
- Martin, Ralph, and Davids, Peter, eds. *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997.
- McKnight, Scot, ed. *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989.
- Metzger, B. M. *The Canon of the New Testament*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Ramsay, William M. *St. Paul the Traveller and Roman Citizen*. 15th ed. Edited by Mark Wilson. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001.
- Robinson, J. A. T. *Redating the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976.
- Sanders, E. P. *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.

- Schürer, Emil. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*. Vols. 1-8. Revised and edited by G. Vermes and F. Millar. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973-1987.
- Stemberger, Günter. *Jewish Contemporaries of Jesus: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.
- Stowers, Stanley K. *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986.