

**New Testament History and Religion
BIB 1002**

Point Loma Nazarene University

Fall 2019

Wed. and Fri. 8:15-9:30am

Professor:

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

Email: bradkelle@pointloma.edu

Office: Smee Hall

Phone: 849-2314

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.

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 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 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.*

**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 *nine* 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. Take-Home Midterm Celebration of Learning: There will be one mid-term Celebration of Learning (exam), given as a take-home. See the date on the course schedule. Further instructions will be provided in class.

5. 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 on the day and time given on the university's final exam schedule.

***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 at the start of class on Wednesday December 4, 2019.**

***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>
347	Celebrations of Learning (9 Reading Quizzes)
80	Take-Home Midterm Celebration of Learning
100	Final Celebration of Learning
*Total: 527 (possible points)	

<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 **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. 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 **in person, in hard copy, in class** on the day listed as the due date. *NO assignment may be submitted electronically (by email, etc.) for full credit.* If the student "forgets" an assignment, he or she may submit it after class (either electronically or in hard copy) for no more than half credit. Any assignment submitted electronically (whether late or on-time) will receive 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 Disability Resource 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 Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to

demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

Tentative Course Schedule

1. Wed. Sept. 4

A. Starting Points: Introduction to the Course

B. Why Study the NT?

Readings: None

2. Fri. Sept. 6

What Is the NT and Why Was It Written?

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

3. Wed. Sept. 11

The NT as Part of Christian Scripture: Inspiration and Authority

Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. 2255-2260 ("Inspiration of Scripture")

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #1: The books of the NT (be able to write in order of Protestant canon)**

4. Fri. Sept. 13

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

Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. 2243-2247 ("Reliability of Scripture")

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #2: *New Interpreter's Study Bible* article, "Reliability of Scripture"**

5. Wed. Sept. 18

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

Readings: none

6. Fri. Sept. 20

What Is the NT and From Where Did It Come (Pt. 3)? Jewish & Apocalyptic Backgrounds

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

7. Wed. Sept. 25 (MACM Class for Dr. Kelle)

What Is the NT and From Where Did It Come (Pt. 4)?

Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. 2261-2267 ("Guidelines for Reading and Interpretation") & pp. 2268-2273 ("Varieties of Readings...")

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #3 over *New Interpreter's Study Bible* articles, "Inspiration," "Culture and Religion," "Guidelines for Reading," and "Varieties of Readings"**

***FRI. SEPT. 27: NO CLASS (Dr. Kelle teaching a M.A. Christian Ministry course)**

8. Wed. Oct. 2

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

Readings: 1. (Review from last class) *New Interpreter's Study Bible* pp. 2261-2267 ("Guidelines for Reading and Interpretation") & pp. 2268-2273 ("Varieties of Readings...")

9. Fri. Oct. 4

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

Readings: 1. Dennis Bratcher, "The Gospels and the Synoptic Problem" (provided in class hardcopy or electronically by pdf)

10. Wed. Oct. 9

Matthew: Jesus, the Jewish Messiah (Pt. 1)

Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introduction to Matthew
2. Matthew 1—11; 13—14; 21—28

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #4 over Bratcher, "The Gospels and the Synoptic Problem" and the *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introduction to Matthew**

11. Fri. Oct. 11

Matthew: Jesus, the Jewish Messiah (Pt. 2)

Readings: 1. Be sure you've completed the assigned Matthew readings from last class

12. Wed. Oct. 16

Mark: Jesus, the Suffering Servant

Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introduction to Mark
2. The Gospel of Mark (all)

13. Fri. Oct. 18

Luke: Jesus, the Universal Savior of the Lowly (Pt. 1)

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

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #5 over the *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to Mark and Luke AND main characters/events in Mark and Luke**

14. Wed. Oct. 23

Luke: Jesus, the Universal Savior of the Lowly (Pt. 2)

Readings: 1. Review assigned readings from last class as needed

***Give out Take-Home Midterm Celebration of Learning (due next class)**

***FRI. OCT. 25: NO CLASS (Fall Break)**

15. Wed. Oct. 30

John: Jesus, the Pre-existent Word

- Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introduction to John
2. The Gospel of John (all)

***DUE: Take-Home Midterm Celebration of Learning**

16. Fri. Nov. 1

Acts: The Story of Early Christianity

- Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introduction to Acts
2. Acts 1—4; 6—7; 8—10; 13—16; 21—25; 28

17. Wed. Nov. 6

Reading the New Testament in a Diverse Contemporary World

- Readings: 1. Kwok Pui-lan, "Reading the Christian New Testament in the Contemporary World" (copied or electronic as pdf)

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #6 over Pui-lan, "Reading the Christian New Testament" (quiz covers ONLY pp. 11-25)**

18. Fri. Nov. 8

A. "To the Gentiles": The Life and Ministry of Paul

B. What Is a NT "Letter"?

Readings: none

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #7 over *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to John and Acts AND main characters/events in John and Acts**

19. Wed. Nov. 13

Romans

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

20. Fri. Nov. 15

1 & 2 Corinthians ("The Corinthian Correspondence")

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

21. Wed. Nov. 20

Exploring the NT Letters: Ephesians and 1 Thessalonians

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

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #8 over *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians**

***FRI. NOV. 22: NO CLASS (Dr. Kelle at the Society of Biblical Literature Conference)**

***WED. NOV. 27 & FRI. NOV. 29: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)**

22. Wed. Dec. 4

Exploring the NT Letters: 1 Timothy and James

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

***DUE: Optional Extra-Credit Report on Non-Canonical Early Christian Document**

***CELEBRATION (Quiz) #9 over *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introductions to Ephesians, 1 Timothy, and James**

23. Fri. Dec. 6

“Futurama”: Apocalyptic Literature and the Book of Revelation (Pt. 1)

Readings: 1. *New Interpreter's Study Bible* introduction to Revelation
2. Revelation 1-11

24. Wed. Dec. 11

“Futurama”: Apocalyptic Literature and the Book of Revelation (Pt. 2)

Readings: 1. Revelation 12—22

25. Fri. Dec. 13

Making Sense of the Whole

Readings: none

****FINAL CELEBRATION OF LEARNING (final exam) takes place on the scheduled day according to the university's final exam schedule (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!]).**