

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Degree Completion Program
BNTD 530 New Testament Introduction
May 5 – June 2, 2005
3 credits · 4th credit option

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introductory study of the New Testament, focusing on textual issues, background of the culture and period, and content of the New Testament books.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the course is to provide participants with an overview of essential components for understanding the New Testament. After successfully completing all course requirements, the student should be able to:

- Identify and critique various interpretive textual concerns
- Interpret the text in light of cultural and historical realities
- Relate the basic background, structure, purpose, and theme for each New Testament book
- Read, live, and communicate the New Testament writings with greater accuracy, confidence, and success

METHODOLOGY

With the degree completion delivery system, the student must give due diligence to reading, reflection, and writing assignments for each class session. These will be augmented by lecture, discussion, and small group exercises.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Elwell, Walter A. and Yarbrough, Robert W. *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

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

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attend and actively participate** in all class sessions.
2. **Complete all assigned reading**, as scheduled.
3. **Reading Reflection Papers:** A 2-page summary/reflection of the assigned reading is due at the beginning of each class, including the first session. The paper should contain:
 - A statement that you have read the assignment in its entirety
 - A brief overview of the reading which identifies major themes
 - At least half, and preferably three-fourths, of the paper should convey the student's careful reflection upon those issues which were particularly enriching and/or challenging.
 - *Note:* the student may omit one reflection paper, as his/her schedule dictates. Only four reading reflection papers are required for full credit. However, late papers will not be accepted, so please plan accordingly. Also, students will be asked to sign a statement in the last class confirming that they have read all assignments.
4. **Application Projects:** In each of the first three sessions, students will receive three options for further research, reflection, and application to their current ministries. The response will be written in a 5-page paper which includes pertinent textual and background issues, in addition to New Testament texts. Papers are due at the beginning of class sessions 2, 3, and 4.
5. **Contextual Assignment:** During the month of May, students will choose one of the following options to be prepared, enacted, and written up in a 5-10 page paper. Student will be expected to invest no less than 10 hours in the fulfillment of the assignment. The paper should include the content of the choice, as well as a report on its preparation and delivery. Paper is due at the beginning of the 5th class session. Options include:
 - Develop a small group, Sunday school, children's church, or youth group lesson or devotion.
 - Develop a sermon/teaching for a church, prison, or nursing home service.
 - Write a letter to a pre-believer in your life, tackling a key salvation issue (deity of Christ, salvation through Christ alone, resurrection, sin, etc.).
 - Create a lesson for a new believer, introducing him/her to the New Testament.
 - *Other.* Consult with professor for an option not listed above but more suitable to your ministry.
6. **Optional 4th Credit:** Students taking the class for four credits may choose of one of the options below. All choices requiring additional papers will be due at the beginning of the 5th class session.
 - Read an additional 400 pages from the bibliography and write a 10-page reading reflection.
 - Increase length of all writing assignments: Application Projects (3 @ 15 pages each) and Contextual Assignment (1 @ 15-20 pages).
 - Do two additional Contextual Assignments of no less than 10-15 pages each.

- Do 20 hours of Internet Research on New Testament resources and compile a 5-7 page annotated bibliography of your findings.

Guidelines for Papers

Papers should follow standard Turabian formatting and style. All papers should be accompanied by a cover sheet and stapled (not bound in any kind of cover).

COURSE GRADING

Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Reading Reflection Papers	20% (four 2-page papers @ 5% each)
Application Projects	45% (three 5-page papers @ 15% each)
Contextual Project	25%

Note: Grading scale for 4th credit option will be adjusted according to student's choice of assignment.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR CLASS SESSIONS

Assignments for Session One, May 5

Reading: The Gospels
Encountering the New Testament Chapters 1-12
Backgrounds of Early Christianity Introduction, Ch. 1, Ch. 5

Writing: Reading Reflection Paper #1

Assignments for Session Two, May 12

Reading: Acts
Encountering the New Testament Chapters 13-16
Backgrounds of Early Christianity Chapter 2

Writing: Reading Reflection Paper #2
 Application Project #1

Assignments for Session Three, May 19

Reading: Romans, Corinthians, Galatians
Encountering the New Testament Chapters 17-19
Backgrounds of Early Christianity Chapter 3

Writing: Reading Reflection Paper #3
 Application Project #2

Assignments for Session Four, May 26

Reading: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, & Titus
Encountering the New Testament Chapters 20-21
Backgrounds of Early Christianity Chapter 4

Writing: Reading Reflection Paper #4
Application Project #3

Assignments for Session Five, June 2

Reading: Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, Revelation
Encountering the New Testament Chapters 22-24, & Epilogue
Backgrounds of Early Christianity Chapter 6

Writing: Reading Reflection Paper #5 (not required if 4 have been turned in previously)
Contextual Project Paper
4th Credit Option Assignment(s) (not including “increased length” assignments, which are due as scheduled)

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by Lori S. O'Dea, D.Min., March 2005