



NTEN5351 Interpreting the NT 1: The Gospels
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Division of Biblical Studies
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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

The purpose of this course and the related course NTEN5352: Acts through Revelation, is to introduce students to the literature of the New Testament. Besides an overview of the history of the canonization and text of the NT, this course especially focuses on studying the content and theology of the Gospels, the historical and cultural contexts surrounding them, the hermeneutical considerations for interpreting them, and certain questions addressed by contemporary scholarship related to them.

Student Learning Outcomes

This course seeks to realize the following in student learning:

1. Students should understand thoroughly the history, background, hermeneutical considerations, text and canon history, and overall content and theology of the Gospels.
2. The student should be able to apply adequately the history, background, hermeneutical considerations, text and canon history, and overall context and theology of the Gospels to a historically-based interpretation of the text.
3. The student should be able to communicate clearly the historical context, exegetical meaning, and theological implications of the text to a contemporary audience.

Embedded Assignment (Exegesis Paper)

Using the method taught in the course, the students are to write a 2000-word exegesis paper (not counting bibliography or footnotes) demonstrating their own exegesis of a particular passage in the Gospels.

1. Students should clearly demonstrate an understanding of a sound method for exegesis
2. Students are to demonstrate the use of appropriate tools, methods, and resources in the application of sound exegetical principles.
3. Students are to communicate the meaning of the text, keeping in mind the contemporary audience.

Textbooks

The following textbooks are required for the course:

The Bible (any major translation or the Greek NT)

Burge, Gary M. and Gene Green. *The New Testament in Antiquity: A Survey of the New Testament Within Its Cultural Contexts*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, Zondervan Academic, 2020.

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* 4th ed. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2014.

Williams, Peter J. *Can We Trust the Gospels*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2018.

Extra Credit Reading: Students may contact the professor for help selecting a book on the Gospels to read for extra credit.

Course Teaching Methods

The primary method of instruction in the course will be class lectures, discussions, and other resources that will be mentioned during the class.

1. Internet resources may be used or referenced, with Canvas normally being used as well for the class.
2. Written assignments and tests will be used to provide students with an opportunity to assimilate the course material, show understanding of the assigned readings/topics, and demonstrate competency in the subject matter.

Course Requirements

Reading/Reading Notes (10% of final grade)

Students will read all assigned materials for the course. Students will read the Gospels 2x in two different English translations. The first reading must be completed by the midterm, and the second reading must be completed by the end of the course. Students will keep notes from their reading of the Gospels. These notes may include questions about the text, references to the Old Testament or other biblical texts, differences between the gospels, exegetical insights, etc. The notes should demonstrate active engagement with the text. The Reading Notes and a log of all course readings are due on **May 3**.

Class Participation (10% of final grade)

Students are expected to actively engage in and participate in class sessions. The class participation grade will include both attendance and participation in class sessions.

Hermeneutics Position Paper (10% of final grade)

Students will write a 1,200-word paper describing their own philosophy of Hermeneutics. The paper should reflect textbook reading, class discussion, and additional reading in the area of Hermeneutics. Students will define and explain

their own approach to interpreting the biblical text. This assignment is due on **March 10**.

Midterm (20% of final grade)

Students will take a midterm that covers background issues to the study of the New Testament and the hermeneutics topics covered in the first half of the semester.

Exegesis Paper (20% of final grade) [Embedded Assignment]

Using the method taught in the course, students will write a 2,000 word exegesis paper (not counting bibliography) demonstrating their own exegesis of a particular passage in the Gospels.

1. Students should clearly demonstrate an understanding of a sound method for exegesis
2. They are to demonstrate the use of appropriate tools, methods, and resources in the application of sound exegetical principles.
3. They are to communicate the meaning of the text, keeping in mind the contemporary audience.

The exegesis paper is due on **April 12**.

Application/Theology Paper (10% of Final Grade)

Students will write an approximately 1,200 word paper dealing with the application of the passage from their exegesis paper. Students must clearly communicate the theology of the passage and demonstrate specific ways in which the passage can be applied to a modern audience. This assignment is due on **April 25**.

Final Exam (20% of final grade)

Students will take a final that covers critical introductions to the Gospels and the content and interpretation of the Gospels, including specific passages discussed in class.

Extra Credit Reading

Students may earn a maximum of 3 points extra credit to be added to the final average by reading a book on the Gospels chosen in consultation with the professor. Students must submit a 2-paged, single-spaced critique of the book. By submitting a critique, students are affirming that they read the book. All extra credit reading must be completed by the time of the final exam.

Evaluation of Grade

Reading and Reading Notes	10%
Class Participation	10%

Hermeneutics Position Paper:	10%
Midterm	20%
Exegesis Paper:	20%
Application/Theology Paper:	10%
Final Exam	20%

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend and participate in the class sessions. Any student missing more than nine hours may receive an automatic grade of “F” for the course. Three tardies will count as one absence.

Policy for Late Submissions

Three points per day will be deducted for late submissions. Late submissions must be turned in within two weeks of the due date. Any submissions after two weeks from the due date will not be accepted.

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. Canvas.NOBTS.com Click on the “Help” button for technical questions/support requests regarding the NOBTS Canvas System. You can also email questions to canvas@nobts.edu
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer. A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Canvas shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center’s page on the seminary website at: <https://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf>

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Course Schedule (B = Burge & Green; F= Fee & Stuart; W = Williams)

Jan. 18 Introduction to the Course
The Development of the NT Canon (B: 19-28 and 569-586; W: Intro)

- Jan. 25 The Need to Interpret (F: 21-35; W Chapter 1)
History of Interpretation (B: 131-50; W Chapter 2)
- Feb. 1 Hermeneutical Method (B: 151-180; W: Chapter 3)
Gospel Genre, The Synoptic Problem, Parables Genre (F: 154-67; B: 181-204)
- Feb. 8 Text and Translation (F: 36-56; B: 442-446; W: Chapter 4)
Intertestamental History (B: 29-66; W: Chapter 5)
- Feb. 15 The Jewish World of the Gospels (B: 67-100; W Chapter 6)
Biblical Intertextuality (W: Chapter 7)
- Feb. 22 The Old Testament Story, Biblical Theology (W: Chapter 8)
Introduction to the Gospel of Mark (F: 132-53)
- Mar. 1 Key Passages in Mark (B: 229-246)
Midterm
- Mar. 8 Key Passages in Mark
Key Passages in Mark (continued)
- Mar. 15 **Spring Break**
- Mar. 23 Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew (B: 205-228)
Key Passages in Matthew
- Mar. 29 Key Passages in Matthew
Key Passages in Matthew (continued)
- Apr. 5 Introduction to the Gospel of Luke (B: 247-266)
Key Passages in Luke
- Apr. 12 Key Passages in Luke
Key Passages in Luke (continued)
- Apr. 19 Introduction to the Gospel of John (B: 267-86)
Key Passages in John
- Apr. 26 Key Passages in John
Key Passages in John (continued)
- May 3 Review and Discussion
- May 10 Final Exam from 9:00-11:00 am