

REL 142A: NEW TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION

INSTRUCTOR: Leslie R. James, Ph.D.

SEMESTER: Spring 2012

TIME: 10:30-11:30 a.m.

LOCATION: Julian Science 157 MWF

OFFICE: 216 Emison Museum of Arts

OFFICE HOURS: MW 1:30-3:30 p.m., or by appointment

TEL. #: (765) 658-4887

E-MAIL: ljames@depauw.edu

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Borg, Marcus J. *Jesus A New Vision: Spirit, Culture, and the Life of Discipleship*. New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991.

Coogan, Michael D. Ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. An Ecumenical Study Bible. Third Edition. College Edition. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Harris, Stephen L. *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction*. 7th Edition. Boston, Burr Ridge, IL, et al: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2009.

Essays, videos, and other course related material placed on reserve at the Roy O. West Library or directed to be read by the Instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION, OBJECTIVES, PROCEDURES:

This course is an academic introduction to the New Testament (early Christian canonical/non-canonical) literature. The New Testament, like the Bible of which it is a part, can be read from different perspectives. The approach in this course is primarily that of the historical-critical method: It will be concerned primarily with understanding the New Testament texts in relationship to their socio-historical context/environment, how the texts which comprise the New Testament were generated and transmitted, the issues and problems they were responding to in their time, their situation of

composition, the purpose of the New Testament texts, and the historical and other processes that led to the canonization of the texts. You will be expected to appreciate the factors that led to the emergence of the New Testament texts in relationship to Middle Eastern/Mediterranean location, the way in which the New Testament changed the way in which the world was seen, and how it helped shape society initially and subsequently, Western society (in particular) as well as non-Western societies.

The syllabus should be seen as a study guide and trajectory of the course with the major units designed to elaborate on the course's objectives. Students will be exposed to the following and other themes:

1. The Ancient Mediterranean World: its religious and cultural diversity
2. Jewish religion and culture
3. Greco-Roman religion, culture, and civilization
4. New Testament literature: literary genres (Gospels, parables, aphorisms, recitation, metaphor, typology, controversy stories, wisdom)
5. The New Testament and apocalyptic literature
6. The development of the New Testament canon
7. The relationship between the New Testament and the Hebrew Bible
8. Messianism, messianic expectations, the Kingdom of God
9. Images and portraits of Jesus of Nazareth
10. The Gospels: the Synoptic Gospels and John's Gospel
11. Paul of Tarsus: his significance in the development of Christianity, his life, ministry, and ethical teachings

The hope is that through the study of the New Testament knowledge and insights will be gained into the potential of religion to transform/transfigure humankind and societies into models of existence they would not otherwise be, the nature of religion, and its contribution to civilization. Instruction will consist of four basic components: (1) assigned readings, (2) lectures, (3) class discussions/seminars/conferences, presentations, exercises, videos, et al; (4) writing assignments, papers, and exams as scheduled in the syllabus. Reading assignments are to be done before the class period for which they are assigned. Class lectures, discussions and other activities will be based on the assumption that students have done the readings. Instructor's lectures will focus more on synthesizing readings, not simply summarizing contents of readings. Class dialogues and exercises are designed to promote students' insights into the dynamics of the culture, history, aspirations, and world-views of the communities from which the New Testament texts emerged. Through the various learning components it is anticipated that each student

will gain a greater appreciation of the New Testament as a religious text, its past and present impact on Western and non-Western history and civilization, literary canons, and historical consciousness. Hopefully, each student will appreciate the hermeneutical presuppositions s/he brings to the reading of the New Testament and acquire skills to enable her/him to be a reflective reader and interpreter of the New Testament, and appreciate the role of religion in addressing social challenges and effecting social change and transformation.

Students must bear in mind that the fundamental method of teaching in the course is discussion/seminar. Discussion will play an important role in the class. You are expected to attend all classes and participate in them fully; Discussions will proceed in a respectful and dialogical fashion. The purpose of the course is not to create a sectarian battlefield. Through dialogue you will further understand and appreciate the issues and concerns that led to the development of the New Testament canon. Simultaneously, you will facilitate the intellectual environment of the course, a sense of class community, and the foundation for collaborative work. Responsive openness is required.

GRADING POLICY:

1. Regular attendance and class participation are required.
2. The course grade will be assigned according to the following formula: (1) Class participation=15% (based on class attendance and analytical, insightful, and constructive contribution to class discussions), (2) Exams=50% (aggregate of all exams, quizzes, et al), (3) Paper=20%, (4) Group Presentation= 15%.
3. Students must scrupulously observe DePauw University policy regarding academic integrity (plagiarism, etc.). This is a serious matter and requires students' attention and careful consideration. See current Student Handbook on this matter. Students must also bear in mind DePauw University academic expectations.
4. Students' conversations/dialogues/discussions with the Instructor beyond prescribed class times are critical to their overall performance in course. They are an integral to the Instructor's pedagogy. Students are strongly advised to meet with Instructor at the commencement of the semester to discuss the course. In addition students are required to keep set times for

conferences with the Instructor and be co-operative in working with peers on collaborative projects such as group presentations.

5. Assignments are identified in the syllabus; others will be announced in class. Assignments are due on dates specified at the beginning of the class period. Late submission of assignments will result in the reduction of grade. You are required to pay attention to and respect dates specified in the syllabus as well as official dates in the DePauw calendar. Computer and other problems that may arise at the due date for assignments (papers, etc.) will not be considered acceptable for late submission of work.

6. You are always welcome to make an appointment with Instructor to discuss problems you might have understanding any part of the course. This is not a substitute for you to do readings and reflect on them critically. It is critical that you address such areas in a timely fashion.

III. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Research Paper: Each student is required to submit a research paper, according to the terms specified and the date stipulated. The paper will be five (5) pages long, plus a one (1) page of bibliography made up of at least ten (10) scholarly sources. The paper must be typed, double-spaced, using any major citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago, et al) on regular bond paper. One-inch (1") margin on left, right, and bottom sides; one-and-a-half inch (1.5") margin on the topside. Paper, including bibliography must be typed in 12pt font size. Sources listed in the bibliography must be cited in proper format. Type your name and the assignment due date at the top right hand corner of the first page. Do not use a title page. **Pages must be numbered and stapled together.**

The research paper must be on any topic related to specific section/topic/aspect of the course. The topic, focus, title (and subtitle) must be clear and well-defined, selected from the field and issues dealt with in **the first seven (7) weeks of the course, January 30/February 3 to March 12-16, 2012.** It must be clearly situated within the liberation theology paradigm as defined by the course and emphasized by the Instructor. The Liberation Theology paradigm is historically, contextually, and socially located in time. Paper title will be centered in the upper portion of the first page of the paper below name of author, course title, Instructor's name, and date due.

Students are required to prepare and submit a paper proposal to the Instructor for his review prior to meeting with him for conference

on the proposal. This procedure is preliminary to the Instructor's approval of the paper. The typed proposal must give (1) a tentative title and subtitle of the paper, (2) a brief description of the topic to be explored, (3) the main thesis to be made in the paper and its supporting arguments, (4) a brief conclusion, and (5) a bibliography. Remember that the bibliography, placed on a separate page, must have at least ten (10) sources. You are required to give clear evidence that you have used the sources in your paper.

The Instructor's approval is required before start of formal work on the paper. A paper will not be accepted from you, on due date or thereafter, if you do not meet with the Instructor to discuss your paper and have it approved. Observe deadlines. Students must follow any other guidelines the Instructor gives. **Paper Proposal Date: March 14, 2012. Due Date of Paper: April 13, 2012.**

Use of the Internet in academic work requires critical and responsible use. Confine your use of Website references in bibliography to reputable and respected academic sites such as *JSTOR*. For further guidelines on the use of the Internet in doing research read, Charles Lipson, *Doing Honest Work in College: How To Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success. Second Edition.* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 11-13. You are permitted to use a maximum of four (4) different Internet sources to compile your bibliography. In the final analysis, your bibliography must be essentially made up of written, or literary, sources drawn from scholarly academic journals such as *The Journal of the American Academy of Religions*, scholarly textbooks, and articles directly related to the focus of your paper.

Students must scrupulously observe DePauw University policy regarding academic integrity (plagiarism, etc.). This is a serious matter and requires students' attention and careful consideration. See current Student Handbook on this matter. Bear in mind that the academic expectations of DePauw University. For further guidance on the issue of cyber plagiarism/plagiarism read, Charles Lipson, *Doing Honest Work in College: How To Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success. Second Edition.* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 42-53.

Take advantage of all available resources at DePauw, including the Academic Resources Center (ARC), located at Asbury Hall 115, to produce your work. Services include the W-Center (Writing), the S-Center (Speech), and the Q-Center (Quantitative Reasoning). The W-Center should be contacted well in advance of the paper's due date to maximize its assistance in producing the final draft of the paper. Bear in mind the extent of the

ARC's responsibilities in writing papers. In the final analysis, you are responsible for what you have written. DePauw's Roy O. West Library, including the Inter Library Loan (ILL) facility, and the Media Center, are excellent resources to help you do quality work. Reserve facilities well in advance of the time you need them.

2. Group Presentation: Students will be divided into four (4) groups to do presentations. The group presentation is a collaborative project in which class members appropriate significant aspects the course, relate them to real world situations in critical, creative, and imaginative ways. Focus the group presentation from week eight (8), **March 20-22, 2012**, to week twelve (12), **April 23-27, 2012**. This does not mean that insights gained prior to that week cannot be used to develop your project. It is important to see the interconnectedness of all aspects of the course. The project offers the opportunity for members of the class to collaborate with each other and to relate insights from readings and the classroom with the real world. After the groups are defined, and meet to define their projects, observe the following procedures to develop your project:

(i). Each group will make an appointment to meet with the Instructor to discuss and have its presentation proposal, based on a specific New Testament theme/topic. After approval by the Instructor, each group will develop its proposal into a presentation to be delivered to the class on the date listed at the bottom of this section and in the "Schedule of Classes," of the syllabus. The deadline for submission of group proposals and to meet with the Instructor is **April 25, 2012**. **Presentation dates: (1) May 4, 2012: 1 & 2, (2) May 7, 2012: 3 & 4.**

(ii). A typed outline to describe the group's work/project must be submitted at the beginning of the presentation. Each presentation will be at least thirty (30) minutes long, followed by a ten (10) minute period of class discussion to allow other members of the class to respond to the presentation, ask questions, and make comments. Groups are highly encouraged to use technology to produce, develop, and present their projects. The following criteria will be used in evaluating presentations:

1. Clear statement of the title and focus of the presentation
2. Relevance (meaning, significance) of the topic to the course.
3. Meeting with Instructor to submit proposal and discuss presentation.

4. Clear demonstration of the conflict nature of subject.
5. Formal group outline of the presentation submitted at the beginning of the presentation on the date assigned.
6. Evidence of quality preparation and knowledge of the subject dealt with
7. Organization, development, and method of presentation
8. Quality of presentation, coordination between presenters and leading discussion with other class members.
9. Type and quality of material and other resources used in presentation
10. Overall quality of the presentation, delivery, clarity, exposition and coherence in presentation, including introduction and conclusion/summary.

You are encouraged to use the S Center at DePauw to prepare their presentation. The S center is located in the Academic Resources Center (ARC), Asbury Hall 115.

3. Expectations for Class Discussion: Dialogue is a critical component of this course. The Instructor will facilitate the dialogical process of the course. Various liberation theologies arose from conversations, discussions, and debates between human beings as they encountered each other, and as they reflected on their place and status in the modern world. Through study of the various texts that emerged from those conversations you enter into the pain and problems of contemporary existence and are challenged to construct your responses to those problems. Your willingness to engage course material, to pursue dialogue, rather than avoid it, will enrich the class experience and open new horizons of understanding and imagination. You must be prepared to fulfill various assigned roles in discussions throughout the course as requested and to meet with Instructor for preparation, when needed. Preparation is essential to your participation in this course. Readings are fundamental to this process.

4. Syllabus: The syllabus is a trajectory or map to plot the movement of the course. Read your syllabus carefully at the commencement of the semester. Failure to read the syllabus initially and throughout the course can result in your failure to know what is expected of you, how you are responsible to contribute to the life of the course, and integrate the different themes and sections of the course.

5. **Writing:** Exams and other handwritten work will be submitted in blue or black ink unless specified otherwise.

6. **Abbreviations:** The following abbreviations are used in the syllabus (schedule of classes):

NOASB New Oxford Annotated Study Bible

Chap. Chapter

pp. pages

7. Students with Special Requirements:

DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and University administered activities and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA). Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge is strongly encouraged to contact Pamela Roberts, Coordinator of Academic Success and Student Disability Services, for further information on how to receive accommodations and support. Academic Success and Student Disability Services is located in Harrison Hall 302 A, telephone 765-658-6267.

The student is responsible to share the letter of accommodation with faculty and staff members within the first two weeks of class or within one week of receipt of the letter. Accommodations will not be implemented until the faculty member has received the official letter. Accommodations are not retroactive. The student is responsible to discuss implementation of accommodations with each faculty and staff member who receives it.

8. DePauw 175th Anniversary Celebrations.

As DePauw University celebrates the 175th Anniversary of its founding, it is appropriate that students in this New Testament course reflect on the role of Jesus of Nazareth and Paul of Tarsus in the social transformation of their world. It is worthwhile to reflect on their legacy and what it means to make a difference in the world.

**READ YOUR SYLLABUS CAREFULLY AND REGULARLY
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

Week 1:

Jan.30-Feb. 3. Course Introduction and Overview

**SECTION 1: INVITATION TO THE NEW
TESTAMENT**

An Overview of the New Testament

Class Preparation

Readings:

Harris. *New Testament: A Student's Introduction*.
Chap. 1, pp. 2-22.

Week 2:

Feb. 6-10: How the New Testament Was Formed and Handed
Down—Process of Formation and Transmission

Class Preparation:

Readings:

Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 2, pp. 23-37.

The Three Worlds in Which Christianity Originated:
The Diverse World of First-Century Judaism

Class Preparation:

Readings:

Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 3, pp. 42-67.

The World of Greek Thought and Culture

Class Preparation:

Readings:

Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 4, pp. 68-85.

The World of Roman Political Power

Class Preparation:

Readings:

Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 5, pp. 86-104

QUIZ: FEBRUARY 10, 2012

SECTION II: DIVERSE PORTRAITS OF JESUS

Week 3:

Feb. 13-17: The Gospels: Form and Purpose

Class Preparation:

Readings:

Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 6, pp. 109-125.

Mark: The Hidden Messiah and Eschatological Judge

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. The Gospel of Mark (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 7, pp. 126-153.

Week 4:

Feb. 20-24: Matthew: A Teacher Greater Than Moses

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. The Gospel of Matthew (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 8, pp. 154-188

Week 5:

Feb. 27-Mar. 2: Luke: A Savior for “All Nations”

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. The Gospel of Luke (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chaps. 9, 10, pp. 189-217, 221-245, 3. The Acts of the Apostles (NOAB)

Week 6:

Mar. 5-9: John: Divine Wisdom Made Flesh

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. The Gospel of John (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 11, pp. 249-278.

EXAM 1: MARCH 9, 2012

Week 7:

Mar. 12-16: Jesus: A New Portrait

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Borg, Marcus J. *Jesus A New Vision: Spirit, Culture, and the Life of Discipleship*. (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), Preface, pp. 1-203.

PAPER PROPOSAL DUE DATE: MARCH 14, 2012

Week 8:

Mar. 19-23: The Continuing Quest for the Historical Jesus

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 12, pp. 279-298.

The Continuing Quest for the Historical Jesus

2. Appendix: The Other Gospels

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. The Other Gospels—Additional Portraits of Jesus Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 20, pp. 452-468.

SPRING BREAK—MARCH 24-APRIL 1, 2012

SECTION III: AN ACCOUNT OF THE EARLY CHURCH

Week 9:

Apr. 2-6: Paul—Apostle to the Nations

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 13, pp. 302-318.

Week 10:

Apr. 9-13: Unity, Freedom, and Christ's Return: Paul's Letters to Thessalonica and Corinth

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap.14, pp. 319-337, 2. 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians (NOAB)

PAPER DUE DATE: APRIL 13, 2012.

Week 11:

Apr. 16-20: Freedom from Law and Justification by Faith: Galatians & Romans

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Galatians, Romans (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 15, pp. 338-355

2. Letters from Prison: Philippians and Philemon

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Philippians & Philemon (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 16, pp. 356-368.

Week 12:

Apr. 23-27: The Deutero-Pauline Tradition: 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians & the Pastoral Epistles, I Clement, the Epistle of Barnabas

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Ephesians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 17, pp. 369-386.
2. General Letters on Faith and Behavior: Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles, the Teaching (*Didache*) of the Twelve Apostles

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude, 1, 2, 3 John (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 18, pp. 388-409.

**GROUP PRESENTATION PROPOSAL
DEADLINE: APRIL 25, 2012**

Week 13:

Apr. 30-May 4: Continuing the Apocalyptic Hope: The Book of Revelation and Other Jewish/Christian Apocalyptic Works

Class Preparation:

Readings:

1. Revelation (NOAB), 2. Harris. *New Testament*. Chap. 19, pp. 412-438.

**MAY 4, 2012: GROUP PRESENTATION-
GROUPS 1-2**

Week 14:

**May 7-9: MAY 7--GROUP PRESENTATION: GROUPS
3-4**

LAST DAY OF CLASSES—MAY 9, 2012

**FINAL EXAMS: WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2012, 8:30-11:30
am.**