



**Associated Canadian Theological Schools
of Trinity Western University
Graduate Course Syllabus**

**BIB 540: New Testament Foundations
(BIB 640: New Testament Theology)
Semester Year: Spring 2023**

Instructor: Don Chang, Ph.D.
Associate Prof. of Biblical Studies
Contact Information: don.chang@twu.ca
604-888-7511 (ext. 3968)
Credit Hours: 3

Meeting Times: Wed 6:00 to 8:40 pm
Semester Dates: Jan 10 to Apr 14, 2023
Classroom: Fosmark JH 1
Course Website: learn.twu.ca

Course Description

This course provides an introductory survey to the New Testament and its social and canonical settings. It will engage in a study of the major themes and theological expressions of the New Testament documents in the context of their historical development, listening for both commonalities and distinctives in theological expression with a concern for communicating their message to contemporary culture.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:

1. Have a deeper appreciation of and love for Jesus, the Christian faith, and Scripture.
2. Gain a greater understanding of the New Testament text, contents, history, and theology.
3. Identify the various social and religious settings of individual New Testament books and apply them in the reading and understanding of each book.
4. Formulate theological applications that are consistent with the original intention of biblical passages and the trajectories that they sketch.

Course Learning Outcomes

Cognitive

- i. Examine the cultural, literary, and theological background of the documents that make up the New Testament.
- ii. Differentiate the unique theological emphases in the various parts of the New Testament canon, as well as their areas of commonality.
- iii. Appraise the major approaches and strategies for discerning New Testament theologies to enable theological construction.

Affective

- i. Demonstrate an increased interpretive sensitivity to how historical and cultural factors contributed to the composition of the New Testament documents and the contemporary communication of their teachings.
- ii. Distinguish the unity found within the diversity of the New Testament's theologies.
- iii. Demonstrate increasing interpretive confidence in handling the New Testament texts and their theological themes for their application to meeting contemporary spiritual needs.

Practical

- i. Apply insights derived from personal study of New Testament theology to contemporary life, community, and the church through sermons, Bible studies, or other media.
- ii. Discern "points of contact" between ancient and contemporary culture and use these to communicate the Gospel message today.

Texts and Materials

Required Textbooks

DeSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
*Degree Students: available through Logos.

Merrick, James R. A. and Stephen M. Garrett eds. *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

Recommended Textbook

Thielman, Frank. *Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.

Attending Via Live-Stream

The **default** mode of this course is **an in-person class**, and students are expected to show up in the classroom at each session. However, Live Streaming through zoom is offered to students outside the Fraser Valley region beyond West Vancouver and Chilliwack. Students with special needs for live-streaming should consult with the instructor prior to each session.

Live Stream students participate in the same class sessions as on-campus students. The camera should be on throughout each session. The instructor will email a link so that LS participants can join. The link is typically sent out 10 minutes before the class session. Class handouts, PowerPoints, readings, and other materials will be posted on the course website at learn.twu.ca.

Course Activities and Requirements

Assignments are due by midnight of the due date. I would ask that you submit your assignments in the online Moodle classroom accessible through learn.twu.ca. When you go to the Moodle classroom, you will see assignment folders where you can submit assignments.

Attendance and Class Participation

The course has 12 days of class. Missing a class affects a 2% deduction of one's overall grade. If a student misses more than three sessions (1/4 of the whole class), s/he cannot pass the course. Consistent attendance, personal preparation and intelligent participation in informal and organized discussions in class ensure that you obtain the greatest benefit from this course.

“Classroom” participation is gauged by the degree to which a participant engages in the in-class and online discussion forums. ACTS students come from diverse educational, socio-economic, and theological backgrounds. Since we will not all agree on every matter or consider each issue to be of equal importance, it is vital that all participants be intentional about modelling civility, empathy, and reasoned discourse when participating in group discussions.

Submission of Assignments

Please submit your assignments to the appropriate folder on the course website at: learn.twu.ca

Late Assignment Policy

The instructor generally accepts late assignments. Late assignments lacking a valid reason for being late (i.e., a family emergency such as a major illness) will be penalized -0.25% from the overall grade for each day late. Weekends count as one day.

*In the event that an extension is needed, please contact the instructor immediately via email.

*In the case of illness, whenever possible, please try to secure a doctor's note.

Course Load

Typically, 40 hours of work are required to complete the work necessary to earn one semester hour of credit—hence, 120 hours for a 3-credit course. This load includes class sessions, course readings (1000—1200 pages), and the time required to complete written assignments.

Paper Style

Assignments should follow SBL formatting (APA is acceptable for students in counselling programs but *must include page numbers in any citation*). Essay assignments should be double-spaced and written in English using Times New Roman 12-point font. Citations should take the form of footnotes using single-spaced 10-point font. Essays should begin with a separate title page, with the bibliography placed after the essay and beginning on its own new page. Students must use scholarly theological tools in their research; Bible Study notes are not appropriate resources for graduate work.

1. Reading Report (10%) | Due on Session #12

Students are expected to read 1000-1200 pages for a three credit-hour course. By the end of the course, you should have read the required textbooks—Merrick & Garrett in their entirety and the assigned portions of deSilva (see Course Outline on page 9).

Read the assigned course textbooks and relevant Scripture portions noted in the syllabus, and complete and sign the Reading Report appended below.

2. Critical Book Review (20%) | Due on Session #3

- Write a 7-8-page book review (12-point font, double-spaced) of Merrick and Garrett's *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*.
- The *review* portion, in which you will summarize the content and argument(s) of the book, should constitute no more than 2/3 of the project.
- The *critique* portion in which you assess, evaluate and appreciate the text should comprise 1/3 of the project.
- Include:
 - a. Bibliographic data at the beginning of the introduction.
 - b. The author's professional and theological background.
 - c. Summarize the content of the book in ***your own words***.
 - d. Explain the most interesting or important points in the book.
 - e. Provide constructive criticisms of parts of the book that you think could use more development or refinement or its possible limitations.
 - f. Summarize how this book is useful to you or how it might be useful to others.

Tips:

A good book review paper will have the following component:

Introduction (1/2 – 1 page)

- Give full bibliographical data at the beginning of the section.
- Author's (or editor's) educational (or scholarly) and ministry background and theological stance, which are relevant to the topic of the book in the first paragraph.
- Identify and describe the purpose of the book and the layout of the book.

Body (5 - 6 pages)

- Summarize the content of the book with the reader's own words
- Identify and describe the points of argument that the author uses to persuade his readers.
- Discuss the persuasiveness of the author and whether the stated argument of the author has been achieved and how, and if not, state why not.
- How would you describe the author's style?
- Identify strengths or weaknesses of the book. Support your evaluation with clear explanations.
- State how helpful this book is to your understanding of the process of Biblical Interpretation and your personal development in your ministry.

Conclusion (1 page)

- Conclude with an appraisal of your reading experience. What personal value did you learn from it? What significant insights did you gain with reference to the subject?

3. Thematic Analysis Paper (30%) | Due on Session #6

- Write a 12-page analysis of Jesus’s ideas concerning the theme of purity in Mark 7:14–23. It should include the following elements:
 - Give an overview of the core beliefs about purity in Leviticus 19–20 or one Old Testament prophet. (2 or 3 pages)
 - Give an overview of how Jesus makes a unique contribution to biblical ideas about purity and how Jesus remains consistent with the Old Testament in Mark 7:14–23. (2 or 3 pages)
 - Give an overview of how one other New Testament writer (such as Paul, Peter, Acts, etc.) applies Jesus’s ideas to their context. (2 or 3 pages)
 - Apply this biblical theology to your own context so that it speaks meaningfully and can be practiced within the Church and Christian discipleship. (2 or 3 pages)
- On average, 10 peer-reviewed sources should be consulted, including journal articles, commentaries, lexicons, and Bible dictionaries.
- Note: Google and Wikipedia are great tools for finding background on these individuals, but, as a rule, use Wikipedia as you would any other dictionary or encyclopedia: use it to get started, but move on to the more authoritative sources (books, articles, or other websites) that the article cites. Avoid citing the Wikipedia article itself because the authors are generally unknown and, as a wiki, it is fluid and subject to editing.

4. Class-Presentation (10%) | Due on Session #7–11

- Students perform class-presentation on their research for the “Theological Research and Application Paper.”
 - Class presentation can be executed by a group or an individual.
 - The presentation material does not need to be a complete paper
 - The class presentation will be a mid-way checkup of and further development opportunity for each one’s final paper.

5. Theological Research and Application Paper (30%) | Due on Session #12

Select one New Testament theological issue and explain its importance for church life, ministry, and witness today. Select one of the following:

- i. One metaphor used in the NT for describing the function of the Atonement.
- ii. Relation of Christianity to the Mosaic Law.
- iii. Covenant theology in the New Testament.
- iv. Wisdom Christology.
- v. Temple Ecclesiology.
- vi. The role of Gentiles as compared to Jews in God’s people.
- vii. A ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Tips:

Keep it Focused

- Focus your study on a single corpus or book but try to **concentrate your attention on a single passage** that you think is representative of an author’s viewpoint.

- Show awareness of how your theological issue may be handled similarly or differently in other parts of the New Testament but avoid rabbit trails.

Keep it You

- Familiarize yourself with the relevant passages of Scripture BEFORE going to theological texts, commentaries, or specialist studies.
- You should examine the historical context of the passage or issue, the occasion for the issue, literary context, and authorial intent, and how these are important for interpretation and personal application.
- Identify important Greek words, check their meaning in a lexicon or commentary and compare the meaning of this word in other places in the New Testament or Septuagint. Explain how the meaning of these important words sheds light on your topic.
- Try to rely as much as possible on your own thinking and reasoning and dialogue with scholars rather than citing them as authorities. (When you explain your understanding/interpretation of the chosen passage, do not simply provide information in a descriptive way. Based on your own interpretation, develop/forgo your [interpretational] points by engaging different scholarly interpretations)

Keep it Relevant

- Identify points of cultural contact between the New Testament context and your own. Devote some space to clearly communicate how your New Testament theological issue addresses challenges that the church or society faces today. In other words, each portion of your paper (i.e. theological issue, biblical interpretation, and contemporary theological implication) should indicate clear relevancy to each other.

Keep it Informed

- Demonstrate the importance of the Old Testament for your New Testament theological issue.
- Use at least 12 significant peer-reviewed sources, of which fully 1/3 are from scholarly journals and periodicals. Study Bibles and Bible study notes DO NOT count as appropriate sources.

The paper should be 14 pages long, double-spaced (excluding Title Page and Bibliography), in Times New Roman font. Approximately 6 pages should be devoted to historical, cultural, and exegetical issues; approximately 3 pages to theological construction; 3 pages to a contemporary application (ethical, social, ecclesiological, etc.); and 1 page each for introduction and conclusion.

Assignment Schedule

| Due Date | Assignments | % Final Grade |
|----------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Session #3 | Critical Book Review | 20% |
| Session #6 | Thematic Analysis Paper | 30% |
| Sessions #7–11 | Class Presentation | 10% |
| Session #12 | Theological Research Paper | 30% |
| Session #12 | Reading Report | 10% |

Grading Scale

| Letter Grade | Percentage | Description | Grade Point | Meaning in Graduate Work |
|--------------|------------|----------------|-------------|---|
| A+ | 97-100 | Superior | 4.30 | Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable. |
| A | 93-96.99 | Excellent | 4.00 | Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use. |
| A- | 90-92.99 | Very Good | 3.70 | Thorough and plausible development of position. Skillful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage. |
| B+ | 87-89.99 | Proficient | 3.30 | Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage. |
| B | 83-86.99 | Good | 3.00 | Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws. |
| B- | 80-82.99 | Average | 2.70 | Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws. |
| C+ | 77-79.99 | Adequate | 2.30 | Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Considerable number of issues related to coherence and style. |
| C | 73-76.99 | Acceptable | 2.00 | Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar. |
| C- | 70-72.99 | Needs Work | 1.70 | Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision <i>or</i> references and resources not taken fully into account <i>or</i> examples are basic or not completely convincing <i>or</i> barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies. |
| F | Below 70 | Below Standard | 0.00 | Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level. |

Course Outline

* This is a course outline guide. The course schedule is subject to change

* Class session #5 is scheduled in ACTS Independent Study Week (Feb 22, 2023). If the majority of the participants want to keep the Independent Study Week, sessions #5–12 can be deterred by one week.

| Date | Discussion Topics | Readings/Assignments Due |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Introduction: NT Theology and NT in Context | | |
| Session 1 Jan 11 | - Syllabus & Course Introduction - New Testament History, Story, and Contextualization | deSilva chs.1–2; T:19-42 |
| Jan 18 | No Class – One Week Module Course | |
| 2. The First 30 Years Part 1: The Theology of Paul | | |
| Session 2 Jan 25 | - Introduction to Paul’s Life - Early Paul: Thessalonians & Galatians | deSilva chs.11, 13; T: 219-275 |
| Feb 1 | No Class – One Week Module Course | |
| Session 3 Feb 8 | - Corinthians - Philippians | deSilva chs 14, 16; T: 276-341 Critical Book Review Due |
| Session 4 Feb 15 | - Romans - Colossians & Ephesians | deSilva chs 15, 18; T: 342-407 |
| Session 5 Feb 22 | - Pastoral Epistles - Paul as a Theologian | deSilva ch 19; T: 408-479 |
| 3. The First 30 Years Part 2: Non-Pauline Epistles | | |
| Session 6 March 1 | - Introduction - James, Peter, Jude | deSilva chs 21–23; T: 483-535, 569-84 Thematic Analysis Paper Due |
| Session 7 Mar 8 | - Johannine Epistles - Hebrews | deSilva chs10,20; T: 536-568, 585-611 Class Presentation |
| 4. The Church Comes of Age: The Gospels and Acts | | |
| Session 8 Mar 15 | - Introduction to Gospels - Mark & Matthew | deSilva chs.4–6; T: 45-110 Class Presentation |
| Session 9 Mar 22 | - Luke-Acts | deSilva chs. 7–8; T: 111-49 Class Presentation |
| Week 10 Mar 29 | - John - Theological Integration | T: 150-80 Class Presentation |
| 5. The Church Looks Forward: Revelation | | |
| | - Apocalyptic and Revelation | deSilva ch.24; T: 612-677 |
| 6. The Church Reflects: Discovering vs Building New Testament Theology | | |
| Session 11 Apr 5 | - Unity and Diversity - Encounter and Response | T: 681-755 Class Presentation |
| 7. The Church Engages: Letting the New Testament Speak Today | | |
| Session 12 Apr 12 | - Application Case Studies: Bringing New Testament Theology to Issues in Everyday Life. | Theological Research Paper Due Reading Report Due |

Course Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AT TWU

One of the core values of Trinity Western University is the integration of academic excellence with high standards of personal, moral, and spiritual integrity. The university considers it a serious offence when an individual attempts to gain unearned academic credit. It is the student's responsibility to be informed about what constitutes academic misconduct. For details on this, and on identifying and avoiding plagiarism go to the [University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar](#) (p. 47).

<https://prezi.com/od62fxnkbmxh/plagiarism-how-to-get-it-out-of-your-life/> (Prezi presentation)

<http://bit.ly/1p00KX3> (Google Slide presentation offering more comprehensive information)

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

Students with a disability who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and include the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office on their website at: <http://www.twu.ca/student-life/student-success/disabilities-and-equity-access>.

HOSPITALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

TWU is committed to an ethic of inclusion centred on the principles of Christian hospitality, reciprocity and reconciliation. We seek to cultivate generous learning spaces that are based on respect for differences and are open to diverse views, opinions, and identities that are thoughtfully expressed in a collegial manner. We welcome and value all voices, including those from under-represented groups or those who have been marginalized.

The following policies are optional but recommended, to allow you to efficiently respond to student challenges to the syllabus. *Click on these fields and press delete if you do not wish to use them.*

CAMPUS CLOSURE AND CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event of extreme weather conditions or other emergency situations go to the <https://www.twu.ca/campus-notification>.

COURSE GRADE APPEALS

Students can appeal their grade to the course instructor by stating in writing their reasons for contesting the grade. Deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has receipt of grade. Formal course grade appeals can be made with the ACTS Office.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Course evaluations are important for improving teaching outcomes, faculty professional development, and the student learning context. Completion of course evaluations is, therefore, considered to be a course expectation. Professors will schedule time for students to

fill out online course evaluations (20-30 minutes) on their personal laptops or a collegium computer during the last scheduled class of the semester. Students who are absent that day or who are otherwise unable to complete the online course evaluation during the last class will be expected to make every effort to do so by the last day of exams. Information about how to access online evaluation forms will be provided to the faculty and students prior to the last week of classes by the ACTS Administration.

RESEARCH ETHICS

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/research/research/research-ethics/default.html>. Those needing additional clarification may contact the ACTS Academic Dean's office. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AT TWU

Christian scholars at TWU regard academic integrity to be a core value. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and are required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship. This means that all members of the TWU academic community must avoid all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. ACTS uses the TWU Student Handbook as a guide for our seminary students. Though some features in the handbook are focused on the university's undergraduate population, it provides essential student life information for ACTS students as well. It can be found online at: <http://www.twu.ca/studenthandbook/>.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource in this regard has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or can be viewed in flash (self-running) tutorials of different lengths:

<http://williambadke.com/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://williambadke.com/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

http://williambadke.com/Plagiarism_Short.swf (8 minute flash tutorial)

EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with disabilities who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and such documentation should include a statement regarding the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office outlined on the TWU website at

<http://twu.ca/life/wellness/learningresources/disabilities-and-equity-of-access/steps-to-attaining-disability-services.html>.

POLICY INFORMATION AND STUDENT CONCERNS

Information on academic and community life policies and procedures that affect students can be found in the ACTS *Academic Catalogue*, which is available on the ACTS website (www.actsseminaries.com) under the *Academics* tab. Students who wish to communicate concerns or to lodge academic appeals are welcome to contact the appropriate faculty or staff member directly, or to fill out and submit the relevant Concerns & Grievances or Appeals form found on the *Files & Forms* page of the *Current Students* section of the ACTS Website.

READING STATEMENT

I have read ____ pages of Merrick & Garrett eds, *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy* (336 pages in total).

I have read ____ pages of the assigned portions of DeSilva, *Intro to the NT*. (assigned portions are 760 pages of the book)

Name: _____ Date Signed: _____

Signature: _____