

ASSOCIATED CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS OF TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Graduate Course Syllabus

Course Number: BIB 640 OL

Course Name: New Testament Theology

Semester and Year: SU 2023

Instructor: Jonathan Numada, PhD

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Course Instruction: June 26 – August 19, 2023

Office Hours: Wednesdays (9am to 10am PST; Zoom link to be posted to Moodle)

Course Description

Various issues related to the nature of New Testament Theology are considered and concerns related to topical/thematic and author/strata approaches are discussed. The theologies of the New Testament documents and collections are explored in the context of their historical development for the themes, motifs and concepts that are their common and distinctive contribution to the theology of the New Testament.

Course Objectives

Knowledge and its Application

- Demonstrate an ability to research the cultural background of the New Testament.
- Demonstrate an ability to interpret the New Testament in light of Jewish and Greco-Roman culture and common literary conventions.
- Practice major strategies for using the New Testament as a resource for theology.

Cognitive Complexity

- Differentiate the unique theological emphases in the various parts of the New Testament canon.
- Illustrate the areas of theological, historical, and literary commonality in the New Testament canon.
- Demonstrate the ability to independently resolve ambiguities in Greek language use in the New Testament.
- Appraise the major approaches and strategies for discerning New Testament theologies to enable theological construction.

Inter-and intra-personal Wellness

- Demonstrate increased professional capacity and autonomy in the collaborative task of biblical interpretation.
- Display superior organizational and time management skills.
- Demonstrate academic and personal integrity.

Aesthetic Expression and Interpretation

- 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.
- Demonstrate an increased sensitivity to how historical and cultural factors contribute to how modern interpreters prioritize New Testament data in their construction of contemporary theologies and interpretations.
- Distinguish the unity found within the diversity of the New Testament's theologies.
- Demonstrate an increasing interpretive confidence in handling the New Testament texts and their theological themes for their application to meeting contemporary spiritual needs.

Social Responsibility and Global Engagement

- Critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to New Testament theology to better facilitate the pursuit of theological construction.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze, appraise and evaluate the text to contextualize and adapt its theology for diverse ministry contexts, be they local or global.

Spiritual Formation

- Demonstrate a holistic awareness of how the message of the New Testament centers our personal spiritual life on the person of Jesus.
- Demonstrate an ability to do New Testament Theology to promote the spiritual well-being of others.
- Demonstrate an ability to debate theological issues while exemplifying a Christian ethic in pursuit of truth, reconciliation, compassion and hope.

Leadership

- Demonstrate integrity and humility in all matters.
- Demonstrate collaborative skills and an ability to debate and successfully resolve interpretive issues when engaging in theological dialogue.

Required Texts and Materials

Required

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

Thiessen, Matthew. *Jesus and the Forces of Death*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020.

Useful resources included in the ACTS Logos package

DeSilva, David. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2004.

Barry, John D, et al., eds. *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham: Lexham, 2016.

***Note: Logos also has other useful reference works, commentaries, and word study tools that you may find helpful for this course.**

Course Activities and Requirements

Discussion Forums

- During discussion forum weeks:
 - the first forum post is due midnight on Tuesday
 - the second forum post is due midnight on Wednesday
 - the third forum post is due midnight on Thursday.

Written Assignments

- Written assignments are due by midnight (your time) on the Saturday of the week they are due. 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.

Late Assignment Policy

- Please contact the instructor immediately via email if you need an extension.
- In the case of illness, whenever possible please try to secure a doctor's note. If you cannot secure a doctor's note, please notify the instructor as soon as possible and provide the doctor's note when completing the *Incomplete Grade Contract*.
- Students must submit an *Incomplete Grade Contract* to the university registrar if they wish to submit any outstanding work after the course end date. The form is available on the ACTS website.

Course Assignments

Here is an overview of all the assignments followed by a detailed description of them:

Initial Course Zoom Meeting

We will have an initial Zoom meeting during the first week to discuss the syllabus and assignments. This will also be a great chance for everyone to meet each other and ask questions.

Meeting Date: 6pm to 7pm (PST) on June 27, 2023.

Readings (10%)

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

Additional supplementary readings (SR) intended to facilitate class discussion and the engagement of NT materials with culture will be made available via the Moodle website at: learn.twu.ca

Reading Report Due: June 28, 2023.

Participation (30%)

"Classroom" participation is gauged by the degree to which a participant engages in the 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.

Cumulatively, Readings and Participation are worth 30% of the final score.

Written Assignments (60%)

Assignments should follow Turabian or SBL formatting (APA is acceptable for students in counseling 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. Essays should begin with a separate title page, with the bibliography placed after the essay and beginning on its own new page.

Make sure you know how to make the most of the Journals Databases (EBSCO, JSTOR, ATLA) and TWU library electronic resources (ebooks). If you are not familiar with these tools, I strongly recommend you take Research Methods concurrently with this course. Bible Study notes are not appropriate resources for graduate work.

Submission of Assignments. Please submit your assignments to the appropriate folder in the course website at: learn.twu.ca

A. Assignment 1: Book Review and Critique (10%)

Due: July 15, 2023.

- Review Matthew Thiessen's *Jesus and the Forces of Death*. In doing so, explore the implications of Thiessen's argument for how we do Biblical Theology.
- The *review* and *critique* portion that summarizes the content and argument(s) should constitute no more than two thirds of the paper. Be sure to:
 - Summarize the content of this book in *your own* words.
 - Explain their most interesting or important points.
 - Provide constructive criticisms for parts of the book that you think could use more development or refinement, or its possible limitations.
- Spend the remainder of the paper exploring the most important implications of the book's argument for using the Bible as a theological resource in your spiritual life and ministry.
- The Book Review and Critique should be 8 to 10 pages (12-point font, double-spaced).

B. Assignment 2: Theologian Review Paper (20%)

Due: July 29, 2023.

- Select one of the following significant personalities who have either written NT theologies or contributed to the scholarly discussion about the New Testament (see list).
- Write a 10-page review and assessment of their contribution. It should include the following elements:
 - i. a brief biographical sketch and their confessional background.
 - ii. a description of their major contributions to the field of NT theology or biblical studies.
 - iii. a brief critical analysis of **one key book** by that individual. Address the following:
 - a. identify what they are attempting to accomplish or reacting against
 - b. a brief discussion of two or three key influential assumptions or presuppositions
 - c. assess whether their approach is hermeneutically sound
 - d. provide two or three evaluative insights about their overall contribution in terms of their strengths, limitations, etc.
 - iv. a discussion of the theological implications for the church, ministry, ethics, or spirituality.
 - v. a bibliography of sources you consulted in order to complete the project.

Tips

- Your critical analysis should use specific, concrete examples from your selected book, preferably where they analyze a passage or theme.
- Use scholarly book reviews from the Journals databases, obituaries, and dictionaries/encyclopedias to get a general picture of the theologian's background, context, and a better sense of their work.

- Resources that can help you get started include:

William Baird, *History of New Testament Research*. 3 vols. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.

Stanley E. Porter and Sean Adams, eds., *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*. 3 vols. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2021.

- Please select someone from the following list:

C. H. Dodd	A. T. Robertson	Bruce J. Malina
B. F. Westcott	James D. G. Dunn	George Eldon Ladd
Joachim Jeremias	Albert Schweitzer	Leon Morris
Eugene Nida	Rudolf Bultmann	Martin Hengel
F. C. Baur	I. Howard Marshall	Johannes Weiss

Note: Google and Wikipedia are great tools for finding background on these individuals. However, 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 (book reviews, dictionaries listed above, or sources that the article cites).

C. Theological Research Application Paper and Video Presentation (30%)

Due: **August 14, 2023**.

Select one New Testament theological issue and explain its importance for church life, ministry, and witness today. Example topics include but are not limited to:

- 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.
- viii. New Testament teachings on Gender.

The paper should be 12 pages double-spaced (excluding Title Page and Bibliography). Approximately 6 pages should be devoted to historical, cultural, and exegetical issues, approximately 2 or 3 pages to theological construction, and 2 or 3 pages to cultural exegesis and contemporary application.

The Video Presentation should be a summary of your paper and the importance of your findings for ministry or the Christian life. Students are free to select an appropriate format for their presentation such as a PowerPoint presentation on a *Zoom* recording (students may use their TWU Zoom accounts) or a simple *PowerPoint* presentation with a voiceover. Presentations must be uploaded to Moodle on the same date as the papers. The videos should be no more than 10 minutes in duration.

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.
- 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 shed 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.

Keep it Relevant

- Identify points of cultural contact between the New Testament context and your own. Devote some space to clearly communicating how your New Testament theological issue addresses challenges that the church or society faces today.

Keep it Informed

- Make sure you know how to make the most of the Journals Databases (EBSCO, JSTOR, ATLA) and TWU library electronic resources (ebooks). If you do not, I recommend you take Research Methods concurrently with this course.
- Use of *at least* 12 significant peer-reviewed sources of which fully 1/3 are from significant journals and periodicals.

D. Forum Dialogues with Student Papers (10%)

In order to facilitate dialogue, each presentation will have 2 fellow students assigned as dialogue partners who will view the video presentations and pose their thoughts and questions about the content. That is, each participant will dialogue with 2 presentations by fellow students. Discussion questions for guiding your conversation will be posted to Moodle.

- Question 1 Due: Tuesday
- Question 2 Due: Wednesday
- Presenter Response Due: Thursday

Assignments and Due Dates

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage
Course Meeting	June 27	
Assigned Pre-Readings (individual)	June 28	10%
Discussion Forums	2x; Week Assigned	20%
Book Review and Critique	July 15	10%
Theologian Review Paper	July 29	20%
Theological Research and Application Paper	August 14	30%
Forum Dialogues with Student Papers	Tues, Wed, Thurs of Week 8	10%

Course Outline

Note: *Written* assignments are due by midnight on the **Saturday of that week. *Forum posts* are due **Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday**.

Introduction: NT Theology and NT in Context		
Week 1 (June 26-July 1)	Review	Assignments Due
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Introduction • New Testament History, Story, and Contextualization 	T:19-42	Pre-Reading
The First 30 Years Part 1: The Theology of Paul		
Week 2 (July 3-8)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Paul's Life • The Early Paul: Thessalonians & Galatians • Corinthians • Philippians 	T: 219-275, 276-341 SR: Berding and Ong	Forum Week #1
Week 3 (July 10-15)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romans • Colossians & Ephesians • Pastoral Epistles • Paul as a Theologian 	T: 342-407, 408-479	Book Review and Critique
The First 30 Years and Beyond: Non-Pauline Epistles		
Week 4 (July 17-22)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • James, Peter, Jude • Johannine Epistles • Hebrews 	T: 483-535, 536-568, 569-84, 585-611 SR: J Silva	Forum Week #2
The Church Comes of Age: The Synoptic Gospels and Acts		
Week 5 (July 24-29)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Gospels • Mark & Matthew • Luke-Acts 	T: 45-110, 111-49	Theologian Review Paper
The Church Looks Forward: John and Revelation		
Week 6 (July 31-Aug 5)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John • Apocalyptic and Revelation • Theological Integration 	T: 150-80, 612-677	
The Church Reflects: Discovering vs Building New Testament Theology		
Week 7 (August 7-12)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Case Studies 		Term Paper
The Church Engages: Letting the New Testament Speak Today		
Week 8 (August 14-19)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity and Diversity in NT Theology • Encounter and Response 	T: 681-755	Forum Dialogue on Paper Presentations

Course Pre-Reading Requirement

Due to the condensed nature of this course, please complete the above outlined reading before the course begins.

You will be expected to integrate ideas from this textbook into the forum discussions and other assignments

Readings and Online Forum Participation (25 % of the final grade)

Students are expected to make meaningful conversational and substantive contributions to the discussion forums.

- By *conversational contributions*, I mean simply joining the flow of discussion with shorter responses (e.g. questions, affirmations, quick thoughts about what someone has said).
- By substantive responses, I mean responses that show a deep processing of relevant ideas (this usually takes 200-300 words).

We have a tremendous opportunity to build upon one another's knowledge, insights, and experience. Our goal is to collaborate in the forum. At times, we will respectfully challenge each other. We anticipate that this will be a rich time of dialogue. To create a safe environment for this to take place, we must build a supportive subculture that encourages one another. Disagreeing and challenging can be stimulating if done in an edifying manner.

Substantive participation may include (among other things):

- Providing and developing a new thought, idea, or perspective.
- Citing an experience or example of what we are learning and showing how it applies.
- Adding a new twist on a perspective.
- Critically reflecting on an idea/concept.
- Questioning or challenging a principle/perspective and giving reasons for your questioning.
- Integrating Scripture and other sources in a meaningful way

What Substantive Participation is NOT:

- Very basic comments such as "I agree" or "I disagree."
- Restating what someone has said (*unless there is a direct purpose in doing so*).
- Disrespectfully disagreeing.
- Pat answers that are not thought-provoking.

Below are examples of how to stimulate your own and others' thinking:

- What would happen if...
- Other times it may be helpful to...
- It is my understanding...what is your experience with this?
- You might approach this from...
- Is it possible that...
- Would you consider...
- Maybe...
- Possibly...
- Sometimes...

- I'm wondering if...
- Do you think...

Have fun!

Note: You can use any of your forum posts in other papers for this course. I would also encourage you to view the posts of others as resources that you can cite in your papers. Everyone brings a wealth of insights into the class!

Course Evaluation

Near the conclusion of this course, you will be asked to complete a course evaluation. Because feedback is very important, the course evaluation is a required part of the course and is tied to the submission of your last assignment. The course evaluation will be integrated into the Moodle classroom in Week 8.

Grading System

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.

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.

READING STATEMENT

I have read ____ % of the assigned portions of Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*.

I have read ____ % of Thiessen's *Jesus and the Forces of Death*.

I have read ____% of the Supplemental Readings (SR) Assignments.

Name: _____ Date Signed: _____

Signature: _____

Course Policies

ADD/DROP POLICY

All ACTS World Campus courses are open for registration until the first day of class. Once the class has begun, students wishing to drop the class must complete a course drop form (<https://www.actsseminaries.com/assets/acts-add-drop-change-of-registration.pdf>) and submit it to the Registrar's Office using the TWU HelpDesk feature (twu.ca/help). Tuition (excluding fees) refund rates are as follows:

Weeks 1-2 - 100%

Week 3 - 60%

Week 4 - 50%

Week 5 - 40%

Weeks 6-8 - 0%

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.

PAPER FORMATTING

The preferred manner for citations is the Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format. For information and accuracy you may wish to reference the following style guide: Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 9th ed. Students may find the following website helpful: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that Trinity Western University, Langley campus is located on the traditional ancestral unceded territory of the Stó:lō people.