



PROVIDENCE
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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

NT5202 The Birth of the New Testament

Martin Culy, PhD
Fall 2019 – September 9-13 module
at Horizon College and Seminary, Saskatoon

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3 credit hours

About the Instructor

Marty Culy is the Director of Cypress Hills Ministries and has served as a Bible translator, college and seminary professor, pastor, and church planter over the past 30 years. He is the founding editor of the Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament commentary series and has authored many articles and nine books, the most recent being *The Book of Revelation: The Rest of the Story* (2017) and *Quoting Corinthians: Identifying Slogans and Quotations in 1 Corinthians* (2018, with Edward Watson). Marty graduated from California State University Fresno (BA), University of North Dakota (MA), Grace Theological Seminary (MDiv), and Baylor University (PhD).

Course Description

A study of the formation and transmission of the New Testament Canon from the teaching of Jesus until the Paschal Letter of Athanasius (367 CE). Required of Master of Divinity students and biblical studies majors in the Master of Arts program.

Course Objectives

- Students will gain a basic understanding of the historical, social, cultural, and religious contexts of the New Testament.
- Students will consider and evaluate various perspectives on the formation of the New Testament canon.
- Students will further their ability to interpret the various genres of the New Testament carefully and appropriately.
- Students will gain an understanding of the overall message and key themes of the New Testament.
- Students will consider how the New Testament impacts ministry in the Church.

Required Textbooks

- Kruger, Michael J. *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2012.
- Watson, Edward W., and Martin M. Culy. *Quoting Corinthians: Identifying Slogans and Quotations in 1 Corinthians*. Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick, 2018.
- Wegner, Paul D. *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

Recommended Resources

- Berding, Kenneth and Matt Williams. *What the New Testament Authors Really Cared About, Second Edition: A Survey of Their Writings*. Kregel Academic, 2016.
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. Third Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

Course Requirements

1. *The Journey from Texts to Translation.*

Read pages 21-37, 51-62, 69-72, 131-151, 207-216, 243-340, 372-403. Makes notes of the *most important points*. Try to focus on the big issues in the history of the Bible. Your grade for this assignment will be based on (1) completing the reading; and (2) demonstrating your thoughtful interaction with the readings. You may fulfil requirement (2) either through oral discussion of the reading with the instructor or through writing a brief essay (1200 words maximum) that highlights the most salient information and reflects on why a basic understanding of the transmission of the New Testament is important for church leaders today. (Note: You will discuss issues of canon more in the *Canon Revisited* assignment.

Due: September 9, 2019. 20 marks.

2. *Quoting Corinthians.*

Read *Quoting Corinthians*. Write a brief response essay (1200 words maximum) in which you: (1) summarize the overall argument of the book; (2) describe how an understanding of Greco-Roman rhetorical practices is an important tool in New Testament exegesis; (3) highlight how this book might help you to grow in your ability to interpret quotations within New Testament letters more accurately; (4) reflect on how this book helps you to evaluate different interpretations of disputed biblical texts more thoroughly and responsibly.

Due: September 9. 20 marks.

3. *Canon Revisited.*

Read *Canon Revisited* in its entirety and write a 1200-word critical book review that identifies and interacts with the central ideas of the book. Your review should include both a summary of the key arguments of each chapter and an assessment of the plausibility of the overall argument of the book. Be sure to use quotes from the book to substantiate the accuracy of your summary and cite page numbers in the book that your summary is referring to even when you are not

quoting the book.

Due: October 11, 2019. 25 marks.

4. New Testament Reading and Research Paper.

Write a research paper (12-15 pages) that thoroughly explores one of the following key themes of the New Testament:

- (1) obedience;
- (2) suffering; or
- (3) the brevity of life in this world.

Begin by determining all of the passages in the New Testament that relate to this theme. To do this, you are required to read through the entire New Testament and make a running list of relevant passages for your research paper. You are free to listen to some or all of the New Testament in audio form rather than reading it, as long as you are able to frequently pause to add to your running list. In a footnote on the first page of your paper, please confirm that you read (or listened) through the New Testament as part of this assignment. Organize your list of passages into groups of passages that focus on particular aspects of the theme. Use those groupings to structure your paper.

Write a first draft of your paper that is based on your own analysis of the relevant passages and on what you learned in class. Once your initial analysis and first draft are completed, proceed to examine relevant secondary literature on the topic. Integrate insights from scholarly resources into your first draft and revise your presentation as needed. Be sure to appropriately cite each resource that you use. Approximately ten secondary resources (articles, books, essays, or dictionary entries) are typically expected, though quality of sources is ultimately more important than quantity. The paper should demonstrate your ability in the areas of research, argumentation, and writing. It should be well-organized, clearly written, and show evidence of careful primary research (engagement with the New Testament) and secondary research (engagement with relevant scholarly literature). It is expected you will use academic journals as well as scholarly books in your research. Papers with a significant number of formatting, grammatical, or typing errors will be marked down accordingly.

Due: December 9, 2019. 35 marks.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic
Monday, Sept 9	Course Introduction Introduction to the NT The “Synoptic Problem” Gospel of Matthew Gospel of Mark Gospel of Luke
Tuesday, Sept 10	Gospel of John Acts of the Apostles Intro to the Pauline Epistles
Wednesday, Sept 11	Romans 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians
Thursday, Sept 12	1 & 2 Thessalonians 1 & 2 Timothy Titus Philemon Hebrews James
Friday, Sept 13	1 & 2 Peter Jude 1, 2, 3 John Revelation

Resources for Effective Bible Reading, Preaching, and Teaching

See the extensive Bibliography available on the Info tab of the course website on populi, Horizon’s course management software system. This Bibliography includes:

- Recommended commentaries
- Reference material on how to read the Bible
- New Testament introductions and theologies
- Bible dictionaries
- Online sources
- Software and mobile apps