

[Dec 1, 2020 version]

New Testament Introduction (BIBNT-500)

Tue 8-11am on **Feb 2–April 13** except Spring break/March 23, 2020
Synchronous on Zoom

Instructor: Prof. K. K. Yeo (kkyeo@garrett.edu);
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Note: Those register for the course agree to read assigned Raymond Brown's chapters and the NT texts before the day of the class.

A. Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to the 27 New Testament documents in the light of the historical-critical methods as well as of more recent theories of interpretation. Two emphases: first, special attention will be given to background and content of these documents. Second, principles of exegesis with attention to history of early Christianity. Third, an attempt will be made to relate the New Testament materials to our contemporary world.

B. Objectives, Rationales and Assignments

Knowing: the content and methods of reading the New Testament books;

Being: a faithful and spiritual minister of God based on the New Testament messages;

Doing: the ministries of the Church in a world sustained by the New Testament theologies, THUS twofold purposes:

First, to provide NT “mapping” process, paying attention to both the ancient Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish cultures as well as our contemporary readerly contexts. “Mapping” requires one to know the territory: not only the primary text, the secondary voices of interpreters, but

also the background and the confluencing traditions out of which NT books evolve and speak to. The main text is NT itself.

The **second** purpose of the course is to allow a hands-on experience of doing a 10-page double-spaced exegetical paper on one of the following five biblical texts (200 points, **due April 16, Friday**—no extension allowed; 4 parts of this paper are due at different weeks to help you do the exegetical paper step by step):

John 1:1-9

Acts 17:22-27

Gal 2:13-17

1 Cor 11: 7-12

Heb 4:1-7

To prepare for the first assignment, the class will be equipped with various tools to approach the texts in both hearing the message and in speaking (expressing) the word. The exegetical steps will be shared in first few lectures of the course. Please consult the Course-pack on “Writing An Exegetical Paper.” On format and style as well as research writing for the exegetical paper, see Yeo, *What Has Jerusalem to Do with Beijing?* Chapter 2 [Pickwick, 2018]) as an example; also Diane Capitani and Melanie Baffes, *Research and Writing in the Seminary* [McFarland, 2014]).

Second assignment is writing two critical reflection papers (first review due **Feb 9** and second review due **Feb 16**) based on cross-cultural readings and exegetical approach in Yeo’s book (*What Has Jerusalem to Do with Beijing?*) (100 points). Please use the twentieth anniversary edition, and select two of the following chapters *only*: 2, 4, 7, 10.

Third assignment is reading of NT texts and assigned material before class (50 points), plus participation in class discussion (50 points).

C. Class Schedule and Assignments

Read the biblical texts to be covered before coming to class, then read Brown.

Section I: Introduction to NT Studies

Feb 2

- Syllabi and Assignments
- Context/Culture: *Pax Romana* and Peace of Christ (Movie)

Reading:

Brown, Chap. 2 (How to Read the New Testament).
Brown, Chap. 4 (Political and Social World).
Brown, Chap. 5 (Religious and Philosophical World).

Feb 9

- Text, Reading, Criticisms: Exegesis and Hermeneutics
- Galatians: Law and Christ
- Use of library for biblical research

Reading:

Brown, Chap. 6 (Gospels in General).
Brown, Chap. 19 (Gal).
Yeo, Chap. 2 (Galatians).

Assignment: Critical Review 1

Section II: Gospels

Feb 16

- Hellenized Palestine and Jewish Sects
- Mark: The Crucified Servant
- Matthew: The Prophesized Messiah and Rabbi/Teacher

Reading:

Brown, Chap. 7 (Mark).
Brown, Chap. 8 (Matt).

Assignment: Critical Review 2

Feb 23

- Luke: The Historian on Savior of the World
- Acts: The Mission/Church in the Power of the Spirit

Reading:

Brown, Chap. 9 (Luke).
Brown, Chap. 10 (Acts).

March 2

- John: The Logos and the Signs
- 1 John: Love vs hate; Light vs. darkness

Reading:

Brown, Chap. 11 (John).

Assignment: Annotated Bibliography

Section III: Pauline Epistles

March 9

- 1-2 Thessalonians: Rhetoric of Hope
- 1 Corinthians: Inverted Logic of the Cross

Reading:

Brown, Chaps. 18 (1 Thess) and 26 (2 Thess).
Brown, Chap 22 (1 Cor).

Assignment: Background/Context of your paper

March 16

- Philemon: Critique of Slavery in Rhetoric of "Splachna"
- Romans: Building of "God's Beloved"

Reading:

Brown, Chaps. Chap 21 (Philemon).

Brown, Chap. 24 (Rom).

March 23 [Spring break: No class]

March 30

- Ephesians: Cosmic Christ and Cosmic Church
- Pastorals (1, 2 Timothy, Titus): Orthodoxy, Ethics and Institution

Reading:

Brown, Chap. 28 (Eph).

Brown, Chaps. 29 (Tit), 30 (1 Tim). Assignment: Exegesis—one-word or one-phrase study

Section IV: General Epistles (mostly Jewish Christian)

April 6

- James: Wisdom and Friendship
- Hebrews: Faith and Spirituality

Reading:

Brown, Chaps. 32 (Heb) and 34 (Jam)

Assignment: cross-cultural reading of your biblical text

April 13

- Revelation: Jesus the Warrior-Lamb and the Scroll of History
- Closure: Sending forth...

April 16: Exegetical Paper due (send to Moodle). No extension allowed.

D. Grade Summary (based on 400 points and 4-point scale)

Exegetical Paper	200
2 Reports on Yeo	100
Reading	50
Class participation	50
Total:	400

Expectations:

1. Zoom attendance is expected. Absence or tardiness will result up to a *reduction of one full letter grade*—more than a 10-minute late will be marked as an absence.
2. All assignments have to be submitted in order to get a passing grade.
3. Please have your *Bible* with you when you are on Zoom. And please *read ahead the NT book* assigned for the day of the class.
4. Exegetical papers will be graded based on the following criteria: (a) consistent and proper style/documentation; (b) clear and succinct writing/expression; (c) ability to do research and use scholarly material; (d) coherent and convincing content as well as argumentation and exegetical steps; (e) relevant and creative hermeneutics. For more, see grading sheet in the Course Pack.

D. Bibliography

1. Main Texts: Required (reserve in library)
The New Testament. Recommend NRSV. (such as: *Harper-Collins Study Bible: NRSV*, edited by W. A. Meeks et al. New York: HarperCollins, 2006 [ISBN-10: 0060786841].)
 Brown, Raymond E. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1997 [ISBN-10: 0300140169].
 Yeo Khiok-khng. *What Has Jerusalem to Do with Beijing?* Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2018. [ISBN-10: 1532643284] [The four chapters for reading reports will be available in pdf on Moodle. If you need to buy the whole book, Amazon kindle is \$9.90 only]