

[Jan 1, 2022 draft]

## New Testament Introduction (BIBNT-500)

Thursday 8-11am Synchronous on Zoom, Feb 3–May 5, 2022  
[except Spring break March 25]

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Notes: 1) Those register for the course agree to read the assigned Raymond Brown's chapters and the NT texts before class.

2) Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary is committed to **providing the most accessible learning environment** as possible for students with disabilities. Should you anticipate or experience **disability-related barriers** in the academic setting, please contact Student Access to move forward with the established accommodation process (e: [student.access@garrett.edu](mailto:student.access@garrett.edu); p: 847-467-5530). If you already have established accommodations with Student Access, please let me know as soon as possible, preferably within the first two weeks of the term, so we **can work together** to implement your disability accommodations. Disability information, including academic accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is **confidential under FERPA regulations**.

### 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 biblical interpretation. Two emphases: first, special attention will be given to background and content of these documents. Second, 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 purpose and learning process:

**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 therefore the 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 May 5 (Thursday)**—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” section. 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 10** and second review due **Feb 17**; see “A Guide to Writing Critical Report” in the Course Pack) 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 of Yeo's book, and **select two of the following chapters only: 2, 4, 7, 10** [pdf of these four chapters are on Moodle]. **If** you choose to do your exegetical paper on **John 1:1-9**, then do your critical report on Yeo's “Light and New Creation in Genesis and John” [pdf on Moodle].

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

### C. Grade, Learning outcomes, Expectations

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

Exegetical/Interpretive Paper	200
Two Reports on Yeo	100
Reading	50
Class participation	50
Total:	400

Grade:	A 400-371	A- 370-331
B+ 330-301	B 300-271	B- 270-231
C+ 230-201	C 200-171	C- 170-131
		D 130-101

Or on 100-point scale:

A 94-100	A- 90-93 (91.5)	
B+ 87-89 (88)	B 84-86 (85)	B- 80-83 (81.5)
C+ 77-79 (78)	C 74-76 (75)	C- 70-73 (71.5)
D 60-69 (65)		

### Learning outcomes

By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. describe and interpret the NT texts at the graduate school level [if you have done engagingly reading of the assigned textbooks, attended classes, and completed all the assignments];
2. do exegesis of a particular NT text [following the exegetical steps shown in class lectures and with the resources introduced. TA is ready to give you a hands-on help too];
3. do a hermeneutical section of a paper that bridge the NT text to our world.

### 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. It is your responsibility to pick up material and learning process on class missed.

2. All assignments have to be submitted in order to earn a passing grade.

3. Please have your *Bible* with you when you are on Zoom. Before coming to class, please read *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 and rubric in the Course Pack.

### D. 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 3

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

### Reading:

Brown, Chap. 2 (How to Read the New Testament). Q: List the major methods of biblical interpretation discussed in the chapter.

Brown, Chap. 4 (Political and Social World). Q: How the political and social background information helps you understand the NT? Give two examples.

Brown, Chap. 5 (Religious and Philosophical World). Q: Give two examples (say, Pharisees, Gnosticism, or others) re. the continuum of thought or worldview in first century out of which the NT texts emerged and engaged?

### Feb 10 Daniel Smith with us at 9:30am on Zoom

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

Reading: **Read Galatians, then Brown:**

Brown, Chap. 6 (Gospels in General). Q: What are the three stages of the formation of the three Gospels? What is the “synoptic problem”?

Brown, Chap. 19 (Gal). Q: p. 480 question 5: How do you understand the relationship between freedom and law in Galatians?—therefore the outline of the six chapters of Galatians? Any relevance of this discourse (between freedom and law) to our modern world?

Yeo, Chap. 2 (Gal). Q: What are the two ways to interpret “faith of/in Jesus,” and also “works of law”? How are these four meanings make sense of the thesis of Galatians?

Assignment: **Critical Review 1 due** (one of chapters 2, 4, 7, 10 in Yeo, *What Has Jerusalem to Do with Beijing?* or Yeo, “Light and John”)

## Section II: Gospels

### Feb 17

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

Reading: **Read Mark and Matthew**, then Brown:

Brown, Chap. 7 (Mark). Q: Why the passion narrative in Mark occupies such a long space (significance) in Mark’s Gospel?

Brown, Chap. 8 (Matt). Q1: Note the point made in issue (3) [p. 218] by Brown re. christology and ecclesiology in the Gospel of Matthew. Does he make sense for you in your understanding of this Gospel? Q2: Summarize the basic themes of the following sections, and contrast Jesus’ teaching with OT message: Book One (3:1-7:29); Book Two (8:1-11:1); Book Three (11:2-13:52); Book Four (13:53-19:2); Book

Five (19:3-26:1)? [Consult Brown]

Assignment: **Critical Review 2 due** (one of chapters 2, 4, 7, 10 in Yeo, *What Has Jerusalem to Do with Beijing?* or Yeo, “Light and John”)

### Feb 24: Dr. Baffes with us on NT study by world Christianity (8-9:30am)

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

Reading: **Read Luke and Acts**, then Brown:

Brown, Chap. 9 (Luke). Q: How does Luke use time-and-space categories in his narrative? Why and how Luke pays attention to history in light of his theology?

Brown, Chap. 10 (Acts). Q: Note the role of the Holy Spirit in the various missions of the early church/apostles. How do we write Acts 29 today?

### March 3

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

Reading: **Read John and 1 John**, then Brown:

Brown, Chap. 11 (John). Q: What are “book of glory” and “book of sign” (as applied to the Gospel of John)?

Assignment: **Annotated Bibliography**

## Section III: Pauline Epistles

### March 10

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

Reading: **Read 1-2 Thess and 1 Cor**, then Brown:

Brown, Chaps. 18 (1 Thess) and 26 (2 Thess). Q: How is 2 Thess different from 1 Thess? Compare and contrast the eschatological views

of 1 and 2 Thess?

Brown, Chap 22 (1 Cor). Q: What are the issues faced by the Corinthian church? How did Paul respond to each of these issues, and what kind of ecclesiology or christology is assumed by Paul in 1 Corinthians?

Assignment: **Background/Context of your paper**

### **March 17**

- Philemon: Critique of Slavery in Rhetoric of “Splachna”
- Romans: Building of “God’s Beloved”

Reading: **Read Philemon and Romans**, then Brown:

Brown, Chaps. Chap 21 (Philemon). Q: Produced in prison, these documents address what issues? How can these documents be read to address what issues for us today?

Brown, Chap. 24 (Rom). Q: List one or two of your favorite texts in Romans, and explain why? How would Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Christians read Romans differently? And why?

**March 24** [Spring break: No class]

### **March 31**

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

Reading: **Read Ephesians and Pastorals**, then Brown:

Brown, Chap. 28 (Eph). Q: Observe the ways Christ was viewed in (Colossians and) Ephesians. What are the household codes, and their significance, even today?

Brown, Chaps. 29 (Tit), 30 (1 Tim). Q: Why do you think the three documents (Pastoral Epistles) pay attention to Christian ethic (way of living), doctrine (what to believe), and institution (polity and organization)? How might these three relate to a vibrant church and its

mission?

Assignment: **Exegesis—one-word or one-phrase study**

## **Section IV: General Epistles (mostly Jewish Christian)**

### **April 7**

- Hebrews: Faith and Spirituality (Yichen Liang)

Reading: **Read Hebrews**, then Brown:

Brown, Chaps. 32 (Heb) Q: Pay attention to the unique features of this NT document. Take note of keywords used in the document, and begin to ask how these words might help you understand the main thesis in the book of Hebrews especially in light of the Old Testament themes or figures.

### **April 14** [Maundy Thursday, No Class]

\*please spend 3 hours on your own for reading or library research to complete the assignments in this course

### **April 21**

- James: Wisdom and Friendship
- 2 Peter and Jude: Apologies of Faith

Reading: **Read James, 2 Peter and Jude**, then Brown:

Brown, 34 (Jam) Q: Pay attention to the word “wisdom” and its cognates in the book of James. See if you can list the themes that flow from the mega theme “wisdom.”

Brown, 35 (Jude) and 36 (2 Peter) Q: Note the “defensive” tone of these two NT books. Why do you think they were written that way?

Assignment: **cross-cultural reading of your biblical text**

### **April 28**

- Revelation: Jesus the Warrior-Lamb and the Scroll of History

Reading: **Read Revelation**, then Brown:

Brown, Chaps. 37 (Rev) Q: Note the contrast between the suffering/judgement texts with the praise/hymn texts as you read through this “beautiful?” document.

**May 5: Exegetical Paper due** (send to Moodle). No extension allowed.

- Putting it together
- Closure: Sending forth...

## E. 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].) [Amazon \$25.90]

Brown, Raymond E. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1997 [ISBN-10: 0300140169]. [Amazon \$29.90] **Not** the abridged edition

Yeo, K.K. *What Has Jerusalem to Do with Beijing?* Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2018. [ISBN-10: 1532643284] [Amazon kindle is \$9.90 only]

Secondary main texts (Not required, but highly recommended):

Capitani, Diane and Melanie Baffes. *Research and Writing in the Seminary*. McFarland, 2014. [ISBN 9780786 478644]

Cosgrove, Charles, Herold Weiss, K. K. Yeo, *Cross-cultural Paul*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. [ISBN-10: 0802828434]

Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003; 3rd edition. [ISBN-10: 0802822215].

Throckmorton, Burton H. ed. *Gospel Parallels*, 5th ed. New York: Nelson, 1992. [ISBN-10: 0840774842]

Yeo, K. K. *The Spirit Intercedes*. Illustrated by Claire Matheny. Oregon: Cascades, 2009. [ISBN-10: 1606087940]

2. Supplemental Texts: Not required but for further studies

### B1. Bible

*The Greek New Testament*. Fifth Edition (Corrected). Edited by Kurt Aland et al. United Bible Societies, American Bible Society, 2015; or *Novum Testamentum Graece*. 28th edition. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012.

*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Edited by K. Elliger and W. Rudolf. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1977.

*The Contemporary Parallel New Testament* (KJV, NCV, NIV, NKJV, NASB, CEV, NLT, The Message). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Ed. J. H. Charlesworth. New York: Doubleday, 1983.

Sparks, H. F. D. *A Synopsis of the Gospels: The Synoptic Gospels with the Johannine Parallels*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964.

### B2. Basic—NT in General and Pauline Studies--Reserve in Library

Aichele, George et al. *The Postmodern Bible: The Bible and Culture Collective*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

Alter, Robert and Frank Kermode. *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987.

Anderson, R. D. *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul*. Kampen Kok Pharos, 1996.

Antoine Gérard, et al. *Exegesis: Problems of Method and Exercises in Reading (Genesis 22 and Luke 15)*. Trans. Donald G. Miller. Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1978.

Aune, David E. *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972.

\*Baffes, Melanie, ed. *Text and Context: Vernacular Approaches to the Bible in Global Christianity*. Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2018.

Bailey, James L.; Broek, Lyle D. Vander. *Literary Forms in the New Testament*. Louisville: Westminster Press, 1992.

Barclay, John M. G., and Simon Gathercole, eds. *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*. London: T & T Clark, 2006.

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- Barr, David L. *New Testament Story. An Introduction*. Second Edition. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1995.
- Barrett, C. K. *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents*. Rev. ed. Harper San Francisco, 1989.
- Beker, J. Christiaan, *Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel: The Coming Triumph of God*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.
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- Berding, Kenneth and Matt Williams, ed. *What the New Testament Authors Really Cared About: A Survey of Their Writings*. Kregel Academic, 2008.
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- Black, David Alan. *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation*. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.
- Black, David Alan; Bockery, David S. *New Testament Criticism and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991.
- Blount, Brian K., ed. *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.
- Boers, Hendrikus. *Christ in the Letters of Paul: In Place of a Christology*. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006.
- Borg, Marcus J. and Wright, N. T. *The Meaning of Jesus. Two Visions*. New York: Harper San Francisco, 1999.
- Borg, Marcus J. *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*. Harper San Francisco, 1994.
- Boring, M. Eugene, Klaus Berger and Carsten Colpe, eds. *The Hellenistic Commentary on the New Testament*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1995.
- Bratcher, Robert G. *Marginal Notes for the New Testament*. New York: United Bible Societies, 1988.
- Breytenbach, Cilliers and Johan C. Thom, Jeremy Punt, eds. *The New Testament Interpreted: Essays in Honor of Bernard C. Latagan*. Leiden: Brill, 2006.
- Briston, John Temple. *What Paul Really Said about Women*. San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1988.
- Brondos, David A. *Paul on the Cross: Reconstructing the Apostle's Story of Redemption*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006.
- Brower, Kent E. and Andy Johnson. *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2007.
- Bullinger, E. W. *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible. Explained and Illustrated*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *New Testament and Mythology and other Basic Writings*. London: SCM Press, 1985.
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- Carroll, John T. Cosgrove. Charles H. Johnson, E. Elizabeth. *Faith and History*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990.
- Carson, D. A., Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.
- Cartlidge, David R. and Dungan, David L., eds. *Documents for the Study of the Gospels*. Revised and Enlarged Edition. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994.
- Caputo, John D. *What Would Jesus Deconstruct? The Good News of Postmodernism for the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
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- De Wit, Hans, ed. *Through the Eyes of Another: Intercultural Reading of the Bible*. Elkhart: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2004.
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