North Park Theological Seminary
3225 W. Foster Avenue, Chicago, IL 60625

BIBL 5240 Hyflex-Hybrid Main Campus (Section 1–2; 3hrs)
New Testament 1: Texts and Their World
Spring 2027 *Syllabus*

Instructor	**Max J. Lee** The Paul W. Brandel Professor of Biblical Studies Professor of New Testament
Class Hours/ Location:	**Tuesday 5:45–7:15pm CST** A hyflex-hybrid course (hyflex: on-campus + simultaneous stream; hybrid: ½ course content online + ½ through class time)
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Catalog Description
This course explores the interpretation, context, and content of the New Testament. Attention is given to the nature of the New Testament as Scripture and to fundamental hermeneutical issues, with a focus on historical criticism as a basis for theological interpretation. The political, social, and religious worlds of Second Temple Judaism and of Greco-Roman society are described as a framework for studying Matthew through Revelation. The content of selected books from each of the genres and historical phases of the New Testament is examined, and important theological themes running across the canon are introduced (e.g. Christology, eschatology). Particular emphasis is placed on engagement with texts in their historical contexts and the development of basic exegetical skills.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the class, students will be able to:
1. demonstrate knowledge of the New Testament texts in such matters as their genres, historical origins, general content and literary relationships to each other
2. explain the significance of the world of the New Testament (historical, social, cultural, and religious contexts) for the interpretation of its texts
3. exegete selected passages from New Testament texts in an informed way in the light of critical discussion relating to them
4. explain and illustrate the hermeneutical challenges involved in interpreting the New Testament texts for Christian discipleship and ministry today

Required Textbooks
1. ***The English Bible*** in any contemporary translation, but preferably the **NRSV** or **TNIV**. You are encouraged, not required, to use your **Greek NT** if you are learning or have taken the Greek sequence.

   For Eng trans, please do not use a paraphrased translation (e.g., New Living Bible) or an idiomatic/colloquial one (e.g., Eugene Peterson's translation). A more literal translation of the Hebrew/Greek texts is needed. If you have any questions about what translation to use, please ask the instructor of the course.

2. Frederick J. **Murphy**, *Early Judaism: The Exile to the Time of Jesus* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002; repr. Tyndale House, 2006). 978-1598561319

   One of the best introductions to 2nd Temple Judaism with generous Eng. trans. of primary texts.

3. Donald A. **Hagner**, *The New Testament: A Historical and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012; repr. 2022). 978-1540966643

   Fantastic introduction to the historical-critical issues of the New Testament with careful theological analysis of major themes. More cutting edge issues will be addressed in the NT1 reader.

4. [**NTR**] Max **Lee**, ed. *New Testament 1 Reader*

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This reader contains additional required reading assignments for the course. **Students are expected to print out their own hard copies** of the articles as part of their textbook costs **or read them in electronic form online or with their mobile device / tablet**. The reader includes the writings of both past and present contributors to New Testament scholarship who have fundamentally shaped (for better or for worse) the way modern readers understand major theological and historical themes in the New Testament. You will be reading either directly from these authors themselves or secondary descriptions of their work. Special attention was given to scholars who are major "influencers" in biblical research.

Assignments and Exams

Assignment Description/Summary	**Maximum Point Value**	**Percentage Grade**
PowerPoint Presentation	100	15%
5 Quizzes (online) [6 quizzes – 1 drop = 5 X 50pts]	250	36%
Reading Contract	100	15%
Preliminary Research (bibliography of your final paper) [50pts]	50	5%
Final Paper	200	29%
Total Possible Points/ Percentage	700	100%

5 Online Quizzes (**250pts**; 6 quizzes – 1 drop = 5 X 50pts per quiz; 36% of your final grade)
You will be given 6 quizzes throughout the semester (the lowest quiz score will be dropped). These are end-of-the-module quizzes on the class readings and lecture material. The quizzes will be a mixture of objective questions: multiple-choice, true/false, matching, and short answer/essay. The quiz is closed book/closed note (honor system).

Oral Presentation + Accompanying PowerPoint (**100pts**, or 15% of your final grade) [meets learning objectives #1–4]

Depending on the class size, students be assigned into groups [2-3 members] and work together with their group—for their assigned presentation

For your presentation, please provide and submit a **PowerPoint slideshow as you make your presentation online.**

Be aware that there are 2 parts to this assignment, and each part has different goals.

Pre-Presentation Meeting (prior to your presentation date): Talk with the instructor a week before your presentation (individually or as a group) to discuss your topic and reading (can be in person or by stream). This is usually done the after our class session (whether in person or MS Teams) for about 20 min one week (1) before your presentation date.

Oral Presentation with a PowerPoint for the class (**100pts**); please submit the PowerPoint onto Canvas on the day you present *prior* to the start of class.

Your task will be mainly to summarize the article(s)/reading(s) and explain its contents as if the class has not read it (even though they will), to identify strengths and weakness of the reading, and the "so what?" or theological/pastoral implications for ministry

Your presentation should be 15 minutes in length (aim for 15min; at 20 min the instructor will cut you off for time's sake). Be prepared to be the 1st responders to questions the instructor or your fellow classmates will have once you present

Important note: Most of your presentation is focused on summarizing the reading accurately (75% of the time; and the other 15% for strength/weakness+ 10% pastoral implications), in detail, as if you are presenting to a group of people who have not done the reading (although the whole class is expected to have read the assigned reading for class discussion). Please see the rubric in the appendices.

Preliminary Research Assignments (**50pts**;5% of your final grade)

You will be helped in the process of writing your final research paper with some preliminary assignments to get you to work on the research during the Spring Reading week. This preliminary assignment is worth 50pts each and mostly designed to get you to gather resources to write the paper so you do not rush at the last minute. See the appendices below for guidelines.

Reading Contract (**100pts**; 15% of your final grade)

Due at the end of the semester: you will be asked to sign off on the reading you did for class. If you read 100% of the assigned reading, then 100pts, 90% then 90pts, and so on.

Final Paper (**200 pts**; 25% of your final grade)

You will be asked to write about 5 single-spaced pages; or 8-10 double-spaced pages; the word count ***excludes*** footnotes, title page, bibliography, appendices) interpreting a particular text/pericope in the Gospel or letters (choices will be provided from which you can choose). The criteria for the final paper is included below in appendices. Note: There is no final exam. The quizzes plus this final paper assignment replace it.

Make-up work

Work should be turned in on time. Late papers/assignments will be deducted 5pts for each day it is late (excluding weekends/holidays). No assignments will be accepted 1 week after the due date unless there are extenuating circumstances as outlined by the student handbook.

All work must be submitted through Canvas so the instructor can make use of the online grader. No email submissions are accepted. If you have trouble with Canvas, please let the instructor know and contact North Park's COE (Center for Online Education) for support.

Grading System

The following is the seminary grading scale used for the course and is by percentage %:

95–100%	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D –
94-93	A–	83-80	C	69-below	F
92-91	B+	79-78	C –		
90-88	B	77-76	D +		
86-87	B –	75-72	D		

Policy on Excused vs Non-Excused Absences

If you experience difficulties, please speak to the instructor about it. Illness and other unforeseen circumstances beyond your control will be regarded sympathetically, but poor planning on your part is not a good excuse. Poor attendance without good reason will affect the mark awarded for the overall grade for the course.

Academic Honesty

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park Theological Seminary is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion.

Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another's work as one's own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another's answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one's answers or work.
4. The use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software and presenting your essay/paper as an original composition authored by you or to impersonate you in assignments

In the special instance of group work, the instructor will make clear his/her expectations with respect to individual vs. collaborative work. A violation of these expectations may be considered cheating as well. For further information on this subject you may refer to the Academic Dishonesty section of the University's online catalog.

Disability Accommodations

North Park Seminary provides services for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to programs, services, facilities, and activities. Students with a disability who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Seminary Academic Services as soon as possible. If desired or necessary, discussion pertaining to documentation and accommodation can take place at another suitable location or by telephone. Further information about the American Disabilities Act Services is found in the Student Academic Handbook.

Title 9

Students who believe they may have experienced sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking should contact the Title IX Coordinator (773) 244-5664 or TitleIX@northpark.edu to learn more about reporting options, resources, and support services.

As members of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty members are private resources meaning we are legally obligated to share information about the behavior reported above with the University's Title IX coordinator. If you are unsure whether you want your concerns disclosed to the Title IX Coordinator, we encourage you to contact Counseling Support Services at (773) 244-4897 or counseling@northpark.edu. Please refer to North Park's Safe Community site for reporting, contact information, and further details.

Incomplete grades

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as "I" until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of "I" will automatically be changed to "F." For the full policy, see page 15 of the Seminary Academic Catalog.

Class Schedule

Module	Topic/Description	Reading Assignments
M1	**Module 1: Historical Criticism and the Historical Setting of the New Testament**	
Jan 12	**Intro to the Course**; Course Syllabus; and Methods in NT Interpretation	**Hagner:** ch. 1 "Approaching the NT, 3–11
	The Letter to Philemon as a Test Case for the Historical-Critical Method	**NTR**: Edwards, "Philemon,"571–80
	The above will be covered for the 1st day of class so please do the reading prior to class because we will discuss it	
Jan 18–22	**The Evangelical Covenant Church Midwinter Conference (No class)** No class session but you may want to get a jump on the reading for next week because it is lengthy.	
Jan 26	**Intertestamental History and Theological Developments** (Part 1): The Ezra-Nehemiah Restoration Movement and the Impact of Hellenism	**Murphy**: ch. 1 (pp. 9-21 only); ch. 2 ("Terminology: Jews and Israelites" box only on p. 63; "Key Figures in the Restoration" box only on p. 75; and "The Mission of Nehemiah–Conclusion," pp. 77-90)
	Watch video lectures on the above reading and content before class	
	Intertestamental History and Theological Developments (Part 2): From the Maccabean Revolt to the Dawn of the Roman Empire	**Murphy**: Ch. 3 (all) "Hellenism, Judaism, and the Maccabees"
	The above content will be covered in class	
	Take Quiz 1 (by Fri Jan 29 11:59pm CST)	
M2	**Module 2: The Messiah, the Kingdom of God, and the Gospel of Mark**	
Feb 2	**The Gospel of Mark**: Messianism and the Messianic Secret	**Hagner**: ch. 11 The Gospel according to Mark, 163–86
	Watch video lectures on the above reading and content before class	
	Mark's Christology and Community	**NTR:** Collins, *Jesus the Messiah-Hermeneia,* 53-72
	The above content will be covered in class	
Feb 9	**The Major Sects of 2nd Temple Judaism** and the Political, Cultural, and Social Milieu of 1st Century Palestine	**Murphy**: ch. 5 (Dead Sea Scrolls discovery; community; pp. 167-77 only); ch. 6 (all); Ch. 7 (Herod and his family; pp. 245-51 only); Ch. 8 (governors, pp. 281-92, Pilate 305-11; Felix to Florus, p. 317-25)
	Watch video lectures for above	
	Major Sects of 2nd Temple Judaism: The Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes	
	The above content will be covered in class	
	Take Quiz 2 (by Fri Feb 12 11:59pm CST)	
M3	**Module 3: The Gospel of Matthew, Luke, and the Synoptic Problem**	
Feb 16	**The Gospel of Matthew**: The New Torah from the New Moses	**Hagner:** ch. 12 "The Gospel according to Matthew," 193–217
	Watch video lectures for above	
	Binding and Loosing in the Sermon on the Mount—**Group A Presentation**	**NTR:** Powell, "Binding and Loosing" 81-96; **NTIC**: Zacharias, "Kingdom Ethos (Matthew 18:1-35), 74–77.
	The above content will be covered in class	
Feb 23	**The Gospel of Luke**: The Master and the Master Story-Teller (the Parables and Miracles of Jesus)	**Hagner:** ch. 13 "The Gospel according to Luke," 227-48 **NTR**: Snodgrass, "Parables of Lostness," 93-95; 117–44; Stuhlmacher, "God's Son and God's Kingdom," 81-88
	Watch video lectures for above	
	The Synoptic Problem	**Hagner**, ch. 9 "The Synoptic Problem," 131–50
	The above content will be covered in class	
	Take Quiz 3 (by Fri Feb 26 11:59pm CST)	

Module	Topic/Description	Reading Assignments
M4	**Module 4: The Gospel of John and Acts**	
Mar 2	**The Gospel of John**: The Parting of Ways and Narrative Cycles	**Hagner**, ch. 14 "The Gospel according to John–The Content and Purpose of the Gospel," 255–92
	Watch video lectures for above	
	Characters as Examples of Believing and Unbelief (The Gospel of John, cont.) **Group B Presentation**	**NTR**: Culpepper, "The Minor Characters," in *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*
	The above content will be covered in class	
SR Mar 8–12	**Spring *Reading* Week (No class)** **Start your research for your paper topic!** Read the final paper guidelines carefully once through. Pick your topic. Compile your preliminary bibliography. Write all of this down on the NT final paper worksheet (see the appendices). **Submit the worksheet (50pts) on Canvas by Fri Mar 12 11:59pm CST**	
Mar 16	**The Book of Acts**, Ancient Historiography and the Early Christian Church	**NTR**: Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian*, pp. 1-25
	Watch video lectures for above	
	Paul's Mission: From Saul the Pharisee to the Apostle to the Gentiles **Group C Presentation**	**NTR**: Murphy O'Connor, "Growing up in Tarsus," pp. 32-51; Hengel, "Upbringing and Education," 18–39
	The above content will be covered in class	
	Take Quiz 4 (by Fri Mar 19 11:59pm CST)	
M5	**Module 5: Paul's Mission, Gospel and Theology**	
Mar 23	Interpreting Paul's **Letters to the Church at Corinth** in their Greco-Roman Context	**NTR**: Moyer, "The Gods of Corinth—Skepticism," 20–38
	Watch video lectures for above	
	Religious Practice among Christians and Pagans	**NTR**: Lee, "The Reality of Freedom in Christ," 170-88
	The above content will be covered in class	
Mar 30	**The Letter to the Galatians a**nd Paul's critique of the Law	**NTR**: Das, "The Crisis in Galatia," 17-48
	Watch video lectures for above	
	The Power of Sin and God's Saving Power **Group D Presentation**	**NTR**: Longenecker, "What Did Paul Think Is Wrong in God's World," 171–86
	The above content will be covered in class	
Apr 6	**The Letter to the Romans** and Justification through Faith	**Hagner**, ch. 29 Romans (read until the end of the section The Gospel according to Romans 1–8)
	Watch video lectures for above	
	Interchange in Christ (Romans, cont.) **Group E Presentation**	**NTR**: Hooker, "Interchange in Christ and Ethics," 3–17
	Watch video lectures for above	
	Take Quiz 5 (by Fri Apr 9 11:59pm CST)	

Module	Topic/Description	Reading Assignments
M6 Apr 13	**Module 6: Paul's Legacy and the General Letters**	
	Paul's Legacy: The Prison Letters (Eph/Col) and the Pastorals (1-2 Tim/Titus)	**Hagner**: ch. 31 Colossians only (pp. 562–73); ch. 32 Ephesians (pp. 585–601) **NTR**: Cotter, Magic Papyri and Folk Religion (select primary source texts on magic, powers and principalities)
	Watch video lectures for above	
	The Letter to the Philippians and the Anti-Imperial Christ-Hymn **Group F Presentation**	**NTR**: Wright, Gospel and Empire, 59–79
	The above content will be covered in class	
Apr 20	Perseverance and Apostasy in the General Epistles: **James**, **Hebrews, 1-2 Peter** and **Jude**	**NTR**: Osborne, "A Classic Arminian View," 86-128; Marshall, *Kept by the Power of God*, ch. 7 (pp. 158-71), ch. 8 (in part; pp. 186-90)
	Watch video lectures for above	
	1-3 John and Early Christian Heresies	
	The above content will be covered in class	
Take Quiz 6 (by Fri Apr 23 11:59pm CST)		
M7 Apr 27	**Module 7: The Apocalypse of John**	
	John's **Apocalypse**: Breaking the Code	**NTR**: Lee, Introduction to Revelation+7 Seals
	Watch video lectures for above	
	Excursus: Eschatology in 1-2 Thessalonians	
	The above content will be covered in class	
Final Exam week	Reading Day (on campus students; May 5) Please **submit your reading contract** before the term ends on Thurs May 6th 11:59pm CST	
	——— Exam Days (May 6–7)—— **No Exam**. Final papers are due Friday May 7th by 11:59pm CST	*Congratulations! You made it!*

Bibliography

Collins, Adela. *Mark: A Commentary*. Hermenia. Minneapolis: Fortress 2007.

Cotter, Wendy. *Miracles in Greco- Roman Antiquity*. New York: Routledge 1999.

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Snodgrass, Klyne.*Stories with Intent*: *A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. Repr. 2018.

Stuhlmacher, Peter. *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. Trans. by Daniel P. Bailey. Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 2018

Wright, N.T. "Gospel and Empire." In *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, 59- 79. Minneapolis: Fortress 2005.

Appendix 1
Grading Rubric for Class Presentations (100pts)

1. **Summary** of the Assigned Reading (**40pts**)

* Was it accurate? was the author's ideas assessed fairly in his/her own context

* Did it identify a thesis and the key / main supporting arguments versus non-salient, tangential issues mentioned by the author

2. **Organization**, Timing, and Quality of PowerPoint Presentation (**20pts**)

* Was the presentation organized well and the presentation coherent?

* Did the presenting group give their presentation within the time frame allotted?

3. **Critical Engagement** and Theological Reflection

* Did the group critically engage the readings, pointing out strengths, weaknesses, and possible theological / pastoral implications of the work (**40pts**)

Random **Bonus** (**5pts**)

* Was there something the group did that was exceptionally done well? Made their presentation outstanding in any of the above 3 categories

* Here is where the group could have highlighted a tangential point of the reading that was interesting or particular relevance to our context but without neglecting the coverage of key issues / arguments

Appendix 2:
Stylistic Guide to General Paper/Essay Assignments

- Your paper/assignment must be ***typed***; no hand-written papers will be accepted.
- ***Avoid*** slang, colloquialisms, dangling antecedents, contractions, and any other ungrammatical or informal use of language
- **You are allowed to include excerpts or quotations *if* they are *primary* sources (= Eng. trans. of Greek/Latin/Hebrew/or Aramaic sources from the 2nd century BC–1st century AD).** Be sure to give the full citation of the primary source and the Eng. translator/translation from which you draw your excerpt/quotation.

- **Do NOT quote or excerpt from *2ndary* sources without a word of explanation**.
  Preference: **Summarize all 2ndary sources (= modern works) *in your own words* and footnote your work**.
  Alternative: **Quote the 2ndary or modern source but give a commentary on the quotation/excerpt.**
  Too many students uncritically cut and paste quotations/excerpts in the body of their prose and weave it seamless as part of one stream of consciousness. This uncritical patchwork of quotations is poor writing. Do not assume that the reader will automatically grasp the way you understand a particular excerpt simply by quoting it without any qualifying/explanatory remarks. If you feel a quotation from a 2ndary source is worth quoting as an excerpt, then single space the quotation, indent the margins on both sides, and **explain after you quote the source why it is important, how you are interpreting the excerpt, and what you expect the reader to learn from it.**
  * Unqualified, cut/paste quotations or excerpts of 2ndary sources will result in a deduction in your grade.
  * Excessive quotes will result in your paper being returned ungraded and your being asked to rewrite it.

- Your work should be *well-documented* with footnotes and bibliography.
- You should consult outside secondary sources to help you interpret the biblical texts or describe the cultural or historical context from the 1st century world from/within which you are interpreting the text.

Generally, your sources should meet the following criteria:

a. **They must be an *academic* source written by a professional scholar within the guild of New Testament scholarship or ancient classical world**; *no* devotional-type of materials are allowed unless they are simply rhetorical devices to introduce your paper or end it. Instead include academic journal articles, essays, monographs and where applicable, critical reviews.
b. **No internet sources**. This does not include material you access as PDF's from the North Park's library database or other database collections. Wikipedia does NOT count, for example, but a PDF of an article from the *Journal of Biblical Literature* is a fine source. Often internet sources/websites receive their information from published works, so it is far better to consult directly the resources on which the internet site depends rather than relying on their distillation of the published sources.
c. **For the biblical material, do not use 2ndary sources that are originally published *before 1950.*** That means: you may not use a book that was originally published in 1910 but was simply reprinted in 1990. Of course this does NOT include primary sources, which, depending on what historical event you choose, may pre-date 1950. The point is: don't use, for example, a commentary on Romans from before 1950. Use the most up-to-date or definitive references for 2ndary source material.
d. **No NRSV or NIV study notes** (even from your textbook Harper Collins NRSV)
e. **Bible dictionary or encyclopedic sources** are allowed but only *the ones listed in the textbook/reference section of this syllabus*. Other Bible dictionary sources require instructor approval. When in doubt, ask!

e. In your **biblical commentary** choices**, use *technical* commentaries, not devotional ones**. That means the NIVAC (= the NIV Application Commentary) should be used sparingly. Your first choice commentaries include but are not limited to:

> **Word Biblical Commentary; Baker Exegetical Commentary on the NT; New International Commentary on the NT; New International Greek New Testament Commentary; Anchor Bible; Hermeneia; New Testament Library; Sacra Pagina; Pillar; and International Critical Commentary**. Many of these will be in **reference section** of Brandel Library.

f. Journals and essays should be academic sources, including but limited to: *The Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Neotestamentica, Biblica, Journal of Biblical Literature, New Testament Studies, Novum Testamentum, Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Journal of Early Christian Studies, Journal of Theological Studies, Interpretation*, and many others.

g. Books and monographs (= books published in a series) should be academic sources printed by university presses like: Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Harvard University, etc. Also are books by publishers dedicated to academic works: Mohr-Siebeck, Walter de Gruyter, Baker Academic, Eerdmans, Continuum, T&T Clark, Fortress, Peeters, Wipf and Stock, Routledge, Wiley, Hendrickson, Westminster-John Knox, E.J. Brill, and others.

Appendix 3:
Guidelines for the New Testament Research Paper (200pts; Lee)

Paper Objectives:
1. To study and interpret carefully a specific passage/text in the New Testament
2. To put into practice the principles of exegesis exercised throughout the course where the interpreter places the text within its historical, social, political, religious and cultural context. The aim of the paper is to use the best of historical critical studies to interpret the text as it would be understood in the 1st century world and theologically and pastoral apply that same message for our world today.
3. To use the secondary academic/scholarly resources available to the student for the exegetical task including, but not limited to: lexicons, Bible dictionaries/encyclopedias, academic commentaries, monographs/books, journal articles, reviews and essays.
4. The above objectives will hopefully be met as you endeavor to write a paper from a chosen passage below within its first century AD historical-cultural context.

Topics: Choose <u>one</u> (1) of the following:

1. **Matthew 6:25-34**: Jesus' sermon on anxiety and **poverty** in first-century Judea/Galilee.
2. **Mark 1:2–6:** John the Baptist's baptism and the types of **ritual cleanliness rites** in 2nd Temple Judaism
3. **Luke 22:15-20:** The Lord's Supper and how the **Passover** was practiced in 2nd Temple Judaism.
4. **John 18:19–38:** Jesus' Trial Scenes before Pilate and the **Roman tribunal system**
5. **Acts 19:11-17** Paul's miracles *vis-a-vis* ancient practices of **magic and demon exorcism**
6. **1 Corinthians 9:23-27** and the Greco-Roman system for training **athletes** for competition
7. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** and **Roman triumphal procession** tradition
8. **Romans 3:21-27** and the **righteousness**/justice of God in Judaism
9. **Galatians 3:2-9** and the **role of Abraham** as an exemplar of Torah obedience in Israel's history
10. **Other topic**: topic of your choice from a finite text in New Testament (from 5-7 verses) but you must receive instructor approval by *writing a formal proposal* including a preliminary bibliography

Important Highlights:
- Your paper/response should be **2000-2500 words** (about 4-5 single-spaced pages; or 8-10 double-spaced pages; the word count ***excludes*** footnotes, title page, bibliography, appendices). Please use Times Roman font or the like, 12pts for the main text. Margins: 1inch on each side: top, bottom, right, left. Use page #'s and **put your word count on the title page** of the paper.
- **Document your work**. Please follow *Turabian*. Please do not use your own bibliographic style. You will be marked off for wrong citation practice. .
- The assignment is worth **200 pts**.

Assignment Details:

Stage 1: Initial Preparation

1. Read the passage carefully in more than one English translation (NRSV, TNIV, other)
2. As you are reading, ask yourself the following questions, do some preliminary research and consult a few commentaries for help, and record your notes:

(i) **Literary Genre and Context** – what type of literature is involved? How will it affect the nature of the exegesis offered? how does the passage relate to what precedes and follows it? What is its place within the section of the biblical book?

(ii) **Structural Analysis/Diagramming of the Passage** - What is the flow of thought in the passage? What are its constituent parts and how are they related? Are there any recurring terms or parallel situations? Is there a climax or centre of gravity toward which the whole passage moves or around which it revolves? You will include your diagram/semantic analysis of the text as an appendix.

(iii) **Lexical/Word Studies** – Are there any significant words, terms, or phrases that deserve special attention because they are difficult translate, or because they have a place in the sentence that make them an important point of interpretation?

(iv) **Historical and Cultural Context** - do some aspects of the passage require you to explore related aspects of ancient society in order accurately to interpret them? are their **OT echoes** in the text that the author uses and interprets in a particular way? Are their **Jewish or Greco-Roman parallel traditions** that can help illuminate the text's meaning? (For this last question, the paper topics suggests the parallels for you although you are not limited to these suggestions)

(v) **Theological Reflection and Application** – what are the theological implications of the text and their significance for the life and work of the contemporary church?

3. Having read and researched all of the above, try to **rank the issues in order of importance**. This order may change in the light of subsequent reading, but it will help you to have some idea of which areas deserve most attention and will probably occupy the most space in your final paper. Note that depending on the text and what issues are embedded within it, your ranking of which issues are most important will be different from another student's who has chosen a different text.

An Important Note: everyone has to have a background section (v) **Historical and Cultural Context** as major section of your paper. Other components (i - vi) may or may not be relevant for the interpretation of your text.

Another Important Note: You do NOT want write on all components (i - vi) but after you do your preliminary preparation, decided which components are important for the interpretation of the text and which can receive minimal or no treatment because they do not bear any direct help on interpretation.

4. **Complete Proposal Stage 1** (see the form at the end of this document). You may not simply use the questions as listed above in your proposal. The examples I have provided are general types or categories of questions. You must make your questions specific to the text you have chosen

Type out the form at the end of this appendix for Stage 1: Initial Preparation and submit this assignment **on Canvas** (no email submissions)

Stage 2: Research and Using Secondary Literature

1. When you asked the above questions, hopefully your secondary literature included *academic* commentaries, Bible dictionaries/encyclopaedias, monographs/books, journal articles, essays and reviews. Are the issues they deal with similar to the ones you have identified on first reading? If not, or if you discover that they raise new ones, you may wish to modify your list/ranking of issues.
2. Do not rely on popular /devotional commentaries and articles (e.g. W. Barclay, M. Henry). They may offer much for your devotionals or sermons, but they will not help your research work!
3. Use at least **3 academic/exegetical commentaries**, at least **3 journal articles/essays**, at least **1 technical monograph/book** focused on your passage (some commentaries will include bibliographies for each section of text). How much more you need to read is for you to judge. You should do as much or as little necessary for you to have a thorough grasp of the issues involved in interpreting the text.
4. **Complete Proposal Stage 2** (see the form at the end of this document) **on Canvas** (no email submissions)

Stage 3: Writing Your Paper

1. What you do **not** want to do is divide your paper by: 1. Word study, 2. diagramming the sentence, 4. etc. This is a poor way to organize you paper. It will read like 6-7 separate sections without any overall sense of how you are interpreting the text. Yes you have done this as part of your *preliminary* research work, but having done the research, **you should be ready to argue for a central thesis with four to five supporting arguments defending the thesis' validity**.
2. You are aiming to write **an integrated exegetical paper with a thesis**. In other words, you are trying to present an argument that will convince your reader as to the purpose(s) of the passage and what themes/arguments support that purpose. What is being said and why? **Your introduction should include your thesis statement and the supporting arguments you will make** throughout the paper.
3. As you organize your paper this way, you may well find that minor issues are squeezed out of the main body of your essay and should only receive a brief mention or are relegated completely to the notes.
4. You should begin by giving an excerpt of the text in English translation, choosing the one you think best communicates the text's meaning.
5. A rigid verse by verse approach is NOT recommended. Divide your paper by section and each section focuses on one of the supporting arguments for your thesis.
6. While you are avoiding a verse by verse analysis, nevertheless your exegesis should certainly stay close to the text. It should not turn into a general essay about some issues only loosely related to the text, but should make frequent and specific reference to features of the text.
7. Your exegesis should demonstrate that you understand how the individual issues discussed are *interrelated* and how decisions about them *contribute* to *your overall understanding* of the passage.
8. Refer to **Appendix 2** for the sources, grammar, and style guide
9. You should write in continuous prose, but **use headings and subheadings for your sections.**
10. Your final paragraph(s) should provide clear conclusions and relate these to the life and work of the contemporary church.
11. You should include a bibliography that displays your sources in the proper form (Turabian or Chicago Manual of Style)
12. Your exegetical questions should not be listed in the paper itself. They are designed to enable your thinking and planning rather than to be part of your final presentation.

SOME LAST WORDS OF WARNING AND ENCOURAGEMENT

* Warning: plagiarism of any kind will result in an F for the assignment and possibly an F for the course. If you have any questions on what constitutes plagiarism, please talk to the professor. Intentional or not, if plagiarism is found in a paper, it will be noted and graded accordingly
* Try to have fun writing the paper. My hope is that the skills you will procure in completing the assignment will lead to life-time habits of interpreting the word of God and placing yourself under its authority in trust and obedience.

Note: Your paper will be graded according to the following **rubric** (last page)

BIBL 5240 New Testament 1: The Texts and their World
Research Paper Preliminary Worksheet (50pts)

Name:
Text Chosen:

1. What is your preliminary sense of what really matters in this passage? What is the main theme or issue? How would you rank your questions in order of importance?

2. Provide a list of commentaries and other sources that you will use in your paper (follow the Appendix guidelines).

3. Has your thinking about the text changed or developed as a result of your reading? Are some of your questions different now? What do you now think is the main theme or issue?

Rubric for Research Papers in Biblical Studies

Outcome	A	B	C	D	F
Capacity to engage Historical & Literary Contexts that is directly relevant to the interpretation of the text	Excellent explanation of historical cultural context of the biblical text, its author and/or readers; excellent use of ancient primary sources to explore cultural context; excellent assessment of literary structure and canonical context	Solid explanation of the historical cultural context of the biblical text, its author, and/or readers; solid use of ancient primary sources to explore cultural context; solid assessment of literary structure and canonical context	Acceptable explanation of historical cultural context of the biblical text, its author, and/or readers; some times the info is too general to be of direct relevance to the interpretation of the text; acceptable but some times too broad an assessment of literary structure and canonical context	Weak explanation of historical cultural context of the biblical text, its author, and/or readers; many times the info is too general to be of direct relevance for interpreting the text; too weak or broad an assessment of literary structure and canonical context	Poor or no explanation of historical cultural context of the biblical text, its author, and/or readers; the info is so general it provides no help for interpreting the text; poor or way too broad an assessment of literary structure and canonical context
Clarity of Argument/Thesis	Creative and insightful thesis with key issues identified; very clear and cogent argument leading to a compelling conclusion; excellent interaction with appropriate number/quality of 2ndary sources	Clearly stated thesis with most key issues identified; coherent argument throughout leading to a worthwhile conclusion; solid interaction with appropriate number/ quality of 2ndary sources	Acceptable thesis with some key issues identified but some missed; somewhat coherent argument leading to a defensible conclusion; acceptable interaction with some number of quality 2ndary sources but some are too popular/inadequate	Weak thesis with several key issues missed; argument frequently lacking in coherence and leading to a weak conclusion; only a poor level of interaction with 2ndary sources; most sources are inadequate	Thesis not clearly stated with little identification of key issues; generally incoherent argument that fails to lead to a conclusion; little or no interaction with secondary sources
Use of English Bible trans, commentaries, and other 2ndary sources to show how the original languages, grammar, cultural contexts, history, politics or religion(s) affect interpretation	Work with several Eng Bible trans, commentaries and other sources show an excellent evaluation of grammatical issues; insights integrated superbly into the argument; textual variants are assessed where relevant	Work with a few Eng Bible trans, commentaries, and other sources show a very good evaluation of grammatical issues; insights integrated well into the argument	Work with a good Eng Bible trans, commentaries, and other sources show an adequate evaluation of grammatical issues; insights integrated adequately into the argument	Work with a good Eng Bible trans, commentaries, and other sources show an inadequate and weak evaluation of grammatical issues; insights integrated inadequately into the argument	Work with a good Eng Bible trans, commentaries, and other sources show an very poor evaluation of grammatical issues; no insights integrated into the argument
Insight in Application	Very strong evaluation of theological issues in the text; genuine depth of insight concerning contemporary implications	Solid evaluation of theological issues in the text, several worthwhile insights concerning contemporary implications	Some appropriate evaluation of theological issues in the text, limited but valid insights on contemporary implications	Very limited or inadequate evaluation of theological issues in the text, very few valid insights concerning contemporary implications	Little or no capacity to evaluate theological issues in the text, little or no identification of contemporary implications
Attention to Standards in Presentation	Right length; excellent grammar/spelling; excellent style/citation	Right length; few minor lapses in grammar/spelling; very good style/citation	Good length; some lapses in grammar/spelling; good style/citation	Major lapses in proper length, grammar/spelling, style/citation	Improper length; very poor grammar/spelling, style/citation