

# Course Syllabus

BIBL 121-OL The New Testament  
Fall 2008  
On-line Version

**Instructor:** Mitch A. Mann  
**Office:** School of Theology  
**Office Hours:** I am an off campus instructor.  
**E-mail:** Please email me through the online course email tab, or directly at [mmann@malone.edu](mailto:mmann@malone.edu).  
**Phone:** My home office phone is 330-877-0911. The best times to reach me are after 6:00 pm to 10:00 on weekdays, or all day on weekends.

**Course Description:** This course is a survey of the New Testament in its Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts and as interpreted by modern scholarship. The major literary, theological, and ethical themes are explored with an eye to the development of skills for lifelong biblical study and interpretation.

**Required Texts:** *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey: Second Edition*, by Walter A. Elwell and Robert W. Yarbrough (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998). **ISBN 0-8010-2806-1.**

A modern English translation of the New Testament, these include the NIV, NASV, and etcetera. A Study Bible is best – and a good investment if you do not own one.

**Course materials:** Textbook Student CD (this comes with the text).

## Overall Goals:

As part of the general education requirement at Malone College, BIBL 121 meets the major Education Goals of the College by encouraging students to:

- understand the biblical, historical and theological foundations of the Christian faith;
- think critically and creatively and communicate effectively in multiple contexts;
- explore the implications of the Christian faith for all areas of living, including intellectual, spiritual and community pursuits.

## Course Objectives:

### Knowledge:

1. Understanding the historical, cultural, social, political, economic, and religious environment of the first century A.D., and how this environment relates to the formation of the New Testament (NT).
2. Familiarity with the basic chronology, content, and significant individuals and movements of the NT.
3. Identification of the basic literary genres which comprise the NT and how to interpret these genres properly.
4. Ability to trace the history of the NT text in its pre-canonical shape.
5. Understanding the basic research methods in NT studies.
6. Understanding the history of research in the major areas of NT studies.
7. Ability to give reasoned answers for the Christian faith and its major tenets.
8. Recognize how the NT provides the basis for Christian theology.

### Skills:

1. Ability to interpret the NT using basic hermeneutical, analytical, and synthetic skills.
2. Ability to use basic research tools in NT study including commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and encyclopedias.
3. Skill needed for life long, personal Bible study for spiritual direction and edification.
4. Ability to articulate the Christian faith as expressed in the NT.

### Attitudes:

1. Willingness to investigate the diversity extant in NT scholarship.
2. Appreciation for the unusual claims of the gospel upon the individual.
3. Respect for the impact of the NT upon history and theology.
4. Desire to inquire further into all aspects of the NT.

### Values:

1. The importance of historical context and literary conventions for proper interpretation of the NT.
2. Serious life long study of the NT, both as an academic discipline and for regular personal devotions and study.
3. The NT scholarly enterprise.
4. The NT for direction in faith, practice, and lifestyle.

## Course Particulars:

**Readings:** Please make sure to read the text material before the class in which it is due. In this way we will all be able to help each other.

**Attendance:** Please plan on attending each class session by accessing the course several times a week. By doing so you may at least keep up to speed by reading any new posts to “Q&A for Mitch” and any current class discussions. Both of these will be a great assistance to you the communal aspects of our online course – class interaction and questions are a more challenging aspect to an online course. These areas will be a great course communication source.

**Class Participation:** Class content will be exercise and discussion oriented rather than strictly lecture. Student participation is vital and makes the class time more fruitful for all. Class participation (in class and small group sessions) is also

an important part of your course grade. You will participate by posting to the discussions and the Q&A areas.

**Course Syllabus:** The syllabus is subject to revision. I will contact you if the need to change arises.

**Exams:** You will need prior approval to reschedule an exam date. If the situation arises that you must miss an exam due to an unforeseen emergency, you must provide the instructor with an outside written and verifiable cause.

### **Research Paper Guidelines:**

This is a valuable, and often eye opening, exercise in the practice of establishing CONTEXT, in this case the context of one New Testament book. The body of this paper is 5 to 7 pages of text (standard font and page formatting). Note that the cover page and the Work Cited pages do not count in this page numbering restriction. Please do not exceed 7 pages. Learning to condense your writing by including only the most important discoveries is fundamental to this exercise.

### **General Requirements:**

1. A detailed outline of the research paper (three level minimum for each section of the paper - other than the introduction and conclusion sections) is due midway through our course. Please include at least one example of how you will reference a research point within the body of your paper. (You must cite the source whether you are directly quoting or putting the thoughts of others in your own words.) Please also include the completed "Works Cited" (or APA "References") page as part of this assignment. These two things are requirements, but this is so that I can help you be on track with the paper. This outline is worth up to 10 points. Of course, this means you must have your research completed by this time.

2. Research. Kind of a necessity for a research paper:) Currently, there is not sufficient Biblical research material in the Malone online library system. You will need to visit a library. I recommend the following in this order, the Malone library, for those of you away from campus - any local Christian college or university library, a non-Christian college, local library, or finally any church library (they are happy to let you use their resources - even if you do not attend that particular church - just ask!). If you are in an extreme situation, like a missionary in the bush with absolutely no access to all of the research material, you must contact me before the outline is due to make other arrangements. Finally, there is access through "Doc Sharing" to several ebooks (published books available online).

3. The paper must contain the following required sections located below. To help you stay on target, I require that you use the bolded sections and sub-sections as section headers in the body of your paper. See MLA or APA guidelines for guidance in using section headers.

\* Please note: I recognize that not all of you have the tools to do a correctly formatted formal APA or MLA type research paper. This is a freshman level course. However, I insist that you do somehow show an in text citation for each point you borrow from your research and that you do some sort of last page list of references. This page should be organized and formatted so that one can check your sources, but I do not require formal MLA or APA guidelines. Of course, if you know these formal research guidelines you would be advised for your practice to use them here.

4. It is important to properly document your research from serious Biblical reference sources. These sources will include: **at least two modern commentaries** (published after 1960) **and at least two published books** about your Biblical book (published after 1960). In addition, you need to include **at least one Bible dictionary** (hint, look up the title of your NT book as a start). Of course, one seeking a top grade will go beyond the minimums.

5. Internet sources are very often unreliable, **for this reason please do not use internet based sources for this paper** (*other than published and copywritten ebooks*). As a student new to in depth Biblical research it will be difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff when dealing with internet Biblical information. Additionally, please do not use information from a Study Bible for this paper. Study Bibles are great for quick information, but this project requires much more depth than that available from this type of source. Also remember, please **do not list a Bible as a research source**. Information from the Bible is the content of your paper not a research source about the Biblical book you are studying. Finally, any sources from Matthew Henry or William Barclay are based on information too old or lacking benefit of Biblical manuscript discoveries since 1960 (even more recently dated revisions of these works) - please do not use any sources based on these authors for this paper.

6. As in any undergraduate writing, important components of the grade are grammar, spelling, and sentence and paragraph formation. I prefer that you check the MLA or APA guidelines if you have questions about these things when you write your paper. A terrific site for MLA and APA information is the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL). Click here [OWL](#) for a link to this site. Look for the "Most Popular Resources" section at the right side of the page for formatting and style information on both MLA and APA. OK - I'm not a Boiler Maker fan either, but the information here is top notch!

7. Finally, I have added two extremely helpful documents to our class to assist you in this project. The first document is "Tips and Helps for Writing the Research Paper." The second is "NT Research Paper Sample." Please find these documents in the "Doc Sharing" tab located at the top of our course screen. Since these two documents are a great help for your paper, I give you a friendly strong recommendation to read them before beginning.

This Research Paper is due on near the end of the course. You need prior instructor approval for a date extension.

**Required Sections:**

A. **Introduction** (generally less than a page)

B. **Literary Context** (one or two pages in general)

1. **Genre**

2. **Structure** (including a 2 to 3 level outline of the book – you may single space this section of the paper)

C. **Historical Context** (two to three pages in general)

1. **Author of the Book** (information about who might have written it rather than information about a single author)

2. **Intended Audience** (again proposed audiences rather than information about “The Corinthians” or “Romans”)

3. **Date of the Writing**

4. **Purpose** (around a page)

D. **Conclusion** – What does this book contribute to your walk with God? (About one page in length.)

**Grading Criteria**

Class Participation and Attendance	30 pts.
Two Exams	100 pts. each
Comprehensive Final Exam	100 pts.
Research Paper	100 pts.
Research Paper Outline	10 pts.
Encountering God Exercise	Extra Credit