

New Testament Introduction (NTL 710)
Front Range Bible Institute



Professor Tim Dane
Fall 2018

Syllabus for New Testament Introduction (NTL 710)

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I. Course Description

New Testament Introduction (NTI) deals primarily with the origin of the NT. This topic includes two major realms of discussion: textual criticism and Bible Introduction. The former has often been known by the expression “lower criticism,” while the latter has often been known by the expression “higher criticism.”

Textual criticism focuses upon the transmission of the text. This includes studies of manuscript evidence, early translations, and early quotations, and what kinds of tangible evidence there is concerning the transmission of the text from the first century to the present.

Bible Introduction (Higher Criticism) looks at the origin of the writings themselves and deals with issues of authorship. Bible Introduction also deals with issues of historical and cultural background that formed the background for when these writings came to men from God. Higher Criticism includes the broad look at the origin of the Bible (General Introduction) as well the narrow book by book focus (Special Introduction).

This course will also deal with liberal forms of Higher Criticism known generally by the expression Historical Criticism (hereafter HC). The focus in this regard will be for helping students become generally familiar with the presuppositions and methods of HC so that he will be equipped for recognizing and refuting false claims.

II. Course Objectives

- A. To have the knowledge and skill for analyzing textual variants within the NT and choose which readings best represent original readings.
- B. To be able to articulate in general terms the nature of Scripture.
- C. To be able to explain the background and manner in which God gave Scripture through human vessels.
- D. To be able to explain the manner in which God providentially brought the NT books together into a recognized canon.
- E. To be able to recognize and refute the false claims of Higher Critical methods.

III. Required Course Materials

A. Resources:

- i. Professor’s notes on NTI
- ii. Norman Geisler, *A General Introduction to the Bible*.
- iii. Norman Geisler, *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980).

- iv. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, Rev. edition. Downers Grove: IVP, 1990. (this will be a resource for your future use. We will not be reading it during the class)
- v. F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*.
- vi. Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament, Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 3rd Enlarged Edition. New York: Oxford, 1992.
- vii. Robert L. Thomas, *A Harmony of the Gospels*. (this will be a resource for your future use. We will not be reading it during the class)
- viii. Robert L. Thomas and David Farnell, *The Jesus Crisis*.
- ix. Robert L. Thomas, *Three Views of the Synoptic Problem*. (this will be a resource for your future use. We will not be reading it during the class)

B. All students: Your own computer or at least access to a computer

- i. Class presentations should be on Microsoft Word, although the hard copies of your project do not necessarily have to be done on this program. Using the same program may be helpful when it comes to questions about style and formatting.
- ii. It is recommended (though not required) that you see if you could employ Power Point in your teaching.
- iii. You do not need to have a laptop in class, but you may use one for note-taking if you prefer.

C. Logos Libronix Bible Software Program (highly **recommended** as a personal study tool, but not required for the class. Group discount may be possible through FBI).

IV. Course Requirements

A. Attend all classes (if a student must miss a class, he must obtain a DVD)

B. All students:

- i. Read appendices in the professor's class notes (97-238, 141pp.)
- ii. Read Geisler: *Inerrancy* (502pp.)
- iii. Read Geisler: *A General Introduction to the Bible* (455pp.)
- iv. Read Bruce: *The Canon of Scripture* (334pp.)
- v. Read Metzger: *The Text of the New Testament* (297pp.)
- vi. Read Thomas: *The Jesus Crisis* (386pp.)
- vii. Future Resource that is not required reading during this course: Guthrie: *New Testament Introduction* (28-985, 957pp.)

Total Reading: 2115

Reading allocation @ 3 minutes per page:

Appx. 6600 minutes

Appx. 100 hours

Appx. 16 hours per week for six weeks

Appx. 2 ½ hours per day

Recommendation: grow in your discipline to speed up your reading and toward 2 to 2 ½ minutes per page.

Remember this reading is taking the place of other outside course requirements

- C. All students: take notes as appropriate
- D. All students: take quizzes

V. Course Grading Criteria

- A. 10% Perfect class attendance
- B. 20% Quizzes averaged (drop lowest grade)
- C. 30% Mandatory for all: read 100% of Geisler *Inerrancy* and *A General Introduction*
- D. 20% Mandatory for all: Read Bruce: *Canon of the Scripture*
- E. 10% Read appendices in professor's notes
- F. 5% Read Metzger *The Text of the New Testament*
- G. 5% Read Thomas *The Jesus Crisis*

VI. Course Schedule

	Date	Topic (subject to change based on progress)	Reading:	Assignments
1	Sep. 6	Introduction, Fundamental Presuppositions, Textual Criticism (TC)	Geisler: <i>Inerrancy</i> (502pp.)	
2	Sep. 13	TC continued	Read Metzger <i>The Text of the New Testament</i> (297pp.)	
3	Sep. 20	General Introduction: NT History, The Canon: definition, production, correct view, collection, recognition, reading		
4	Sep. 27	General Introduction, The Canon: collection, circulation, tests, affirmation, cessation, Special Introduction:	Geisler: <i>A General Introduction</i> (455 pp.)	

		overview of NT books		
5	Oct. 4	Special Introduction: book-by-book review		
6	Oct. 11	Special Introduction: book-by-book review	Read Bruce: <i>The Canon of the Scripture</i> (334pp.)	
7	Oct. 18	Special Introduction: book-by-book review		
8	Oct. 25	Historical Criticism	Read Thomas <i>The Jesus Crisis</i> (386pp.)	
9	Nov. 1	Historical Criticism		
10	Nov. 8	Historical Criticism	Read appendices in professor's notes (141pp.)	
11	Nov. 15	Historical Criticism		

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