

Note:

Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form.

MOODY DISTANCE LEARNING

Course Number, Name, and Credit Hours

BI-1115 New Testament Literature 1, 4 credit hours

Course Description

This course introduces students to the narrative, legal, and genealogical literature of the New Testament. Distinctive features and functions of various literary types are discussed. Course also surveys students to a variety of New Testament themes.

Course Objectives

By the completion of this course students should be able to:

- Describe the various genres and poetic elements at work within the gospels and Acts and how they affect biblical interpretation.
- Assess the key themes of “the gospel” and “the kingdom of God” in terms of their New Testament precedence, theological contours, and contemporary outworking.
- Defend and discuss the reliability of the gospels and Acts on historical, philosophical, and literary grounds.
- Describe the structure and content of the book of Acts according to its literary message and historical progression.
- Trace the emergence, structure, and practices of the early church according to Acts and in their historical context.
- Compose biblically sound ideas for preaching, teaching, and discipleship by applying proper exegetical methodology in the gospels and Acts.

Course Textbook(s) and/or Supplemental Information

Required textbooks for all Moody Online classes can be found on the [Required Textbooks](#) section of the Moody website.

Assignments

Class Participation: Active participation is expected in this online course. Participation includes two main areas: discussion boards and reading.

- Discussion Boards:** The student must maintain a significant presence in the discussion board. Students must make an initial post that indicates a familiarity with the assigned text(s) and critical thought on the subject and the question at hand. This initial post is due each week by 12:00 AM CDT on Saturday. Students must make two additional posts on fellow student’s postings by 12:00 AM CDT on Tuesday.
- Reading Course Expectations:** The completion of the course reading, online articles, etc. is an important part of the course. You are expected to complete the weekly reading

assignments prior to your discussion boards each week so you are able to discuss the concepts with others in the course.

Paper Assignments:

- **Assignment 1: *The King Jesus Gospel* Review**

After completing the assigned reading, students will write a 3-4 page double spaced review of the book. This review should examine and evaluate the main argument the author makes in his book.

- **Assignment 2: Jesus Under Fire**

Suppose that you have received an email from a college-aged friend who you know well. He/she is attending a well-known university and has decided to take an elective on Jesus and the gospels. Though your friend's intention was to grow in their faith through this endeavor, it does not take him or her long to realize they are in over their heads. Your friend has been asked to study the gospels from a non-confessional and critical point of view. Only a few weeks in, he or she has more questions than answers.

Using the "Jesus Under Fire Outline" document in Week 2's **Lesson Resources** folder, in a **minimum 3-page double spaced paper**, compose a friendly and helpful response to your friend's question. Students are encouraged to depend upon this week's reading in Wilkins and Moreland. Superior grades will be given to students whose responses adequately answer each question and demonstrate a measure of creativity (believability).

- **Assignment 3: Kingdom of God**

The "Kingdom of God" is a central message and interpretive motif within the life and ministry of Jesus. In this assignment, students will be asked to consider the way in which the gospels (and therein the life of Jesus) develop this message.

Explain how each of these participates in some part of the message or ministry of the kingdom of God. Papers must be **2-3 double spaced pages** in length. This assignment is due by the end of **Week 5**.

- **Assignment 4-1: Allegorical Interpretation**

One of the central interpretive debates concerning the parables is whether they are to be interpreted as single main-point lessons or as theological allegories. To further examine the contours of this debate and see how it affects interpretation, students will reexamine a well-known parable, the parable of the Prodigal Son.

- **Assignment 4-2: Parable Writing Competition**

One of Jesus' favorite methods of teaching was to speak in parables. As many readers of Scripture may have experienced, it is not always easy to determine what Jesus' intended message must be. Proper interpretation requires a keen eye to multiple layers of context within the gospels and their authors, setting, and message.

In this assignment, students will produce *Scripture-like* parables to emulate, and thus better understand, how parables function in the gospels. These parables may use settings, images, and ideas similar to the gospels (e.g., agriculture), or else set their parables in the present day. (If choosing the present day, avoid using non-Western cultural concepts)

Your parable should be 150-300 words in length and contain a New Testament spiritual or moral lesson. These parables should **not** be overly simple, terse, or obvious. Just as Jesus' parables were difficult to discern, submissions should demonstrate a level of complexity that may facilitate some ambiguity and speculation for readers.

- **Assignment 5: Interpretation of Jesus' Sermon**

In this assignment, students should approach the Sermon on the Mount (specifically Matthew 5:38-42) with fresh eyes attempting to shed all interpretive presuppositions. After reading Matthew 5-7 in its entirety closely examine 5:38-42.

Next, read the commentaries on these passages by both McKnight and Carson representing two prevailing viewpoints today. Based upon your understanding of biblical interpretation, genre, the Kingdom of God, and what you have read both in Matthew and the commentaries, use the "Interpretation of Jesus Sermon" worksheet to complete the assignment.

- **Assignment 6: The History of Acts**

Students' readings in lessons 5-8 have a twofold purpose: (1) to take students deeper into the events of Scripture than by their reading alone and (2) to expose students to important issues in NT scholarship today. It should be difficult for students to fail to notice the way in which Dunn writes about the historical reliability of the Bible. As a historian (see syllabus notes on the Dunn text), Dunn wrestles with some issues that frequently come up for Evangelicals, as defenders of biblical inerrancy. Often he may come to conclusions that students (and MBI) do not agree with.

Using the "History of Acts Worksheet" document provided in the Course Resources folder, answer the following questions:

1. Do you find any validity with Dunn's conclusions that sometimes the writers of Scripture could be misinformed about minor details of history? Why or why not?
2. In what ways do you believe Dunn's opinion on this issue contradicts Evangelical definitions of inerrancy?
3. Whether or not you agree with the way Dunn deals with supposed historical problems in the NT, write a definition of inerrancy that deals with Scripture's historical reliability for both small and large details of history.

- **Assignment 7: Paul's Evangelism Strategy**

To Christians Paul is the ultimate example of a missionary, pastor, teacher, and theologian and should serve as an example for all who aspire to fulfill these callings. Paul is renowned both for his obedient and sacrificial spirit as well as his success. Christians today are blessed every day by both his missionary work and writings.

Using the "Paul's Strategy Worksheet" document provided in the Course Resources folder, write an essay addressing the points brought up.

Assessments

Students' grades for this course will consist of:

Class Participation (32%): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Boards (22%) • Reading (10%) 	Week 1 Discussion Board	5%
	Week 2 Discussion Board	5%
	Week 3 Discussion Board	5%
	Week 7 Discussion Board	7%
	Reading Expectations	10%
Assignments 56%	1 – <i>King Jesus Gospel</i> Review	14%
	2 – Jesus Under Fire	6%
	3 – Kingdom of God	6%
	4-1 – Allegorical Interpretation	7%
	4-2 – Parable Writing Competition	6%
	5 – Interpretation of Jesus' Sermon Questions	5%
	6 – The History of Acts	7%
	7 – Paul's Evangelism Strategy	5%
Reading Quizzes 12%	Reading Quiz 1	4%
	Reading Quiz 2	4%
	Reading Quiz 3	4%
		100.00%

Letter grades are determined by the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent	Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent
A	96% or higher	C	73 - 76.9%
A-	90 - 95.9%	C-	70 - 72.9%
B+	97 - 89.9%	D+	67 - 69.9%
B	83 - 86.9%	D	63- 66.9%
B-	80 - 82.9%	D-	60 - 62.9%
C+	77 - 79.9%	F	Below 60%

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Course Bibliography

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