



# BIBS 221/321

## The Gospels

### Course Outline 2021

#### **SEMESTER 1 2021**

##### **Lectures/Videoconference:**

Tuesdays 2:00-3:50 pm

##### **Videoconference:**

Tuesday 13 April 6:10-8:00pm  
Distance Students only

##### **Lecturer:**

*Dr Don Moffat*

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(09) 557 0643

Welcome to this course on the four Gospels of the New Testament. The aim of this paper is to provide a detailed introduction to the study of the Gospels, with exegesis of selected texts.

The course aims to address some simple but important questions, such as: What is a Gospel? Why are there four gospels? What are the distinctive features and messages of each Gospel? We will deal with these questions in short modules over the semester. The initial section will explore the nature of the Gospels. This will be followed by an exploration of each Gospel, its distinctive features and key themes. That exploration will be followed by a discussion about how we understand Jesus. The course will also look at features of the gospel story, such as parables and miracles, and the final days

of Jesus' life. We will explore in some detail specific passages in the Gospels of Luke and John with a focus on the use of appropriate interpretive methods.

## LECTURER'S INTRODUCTION

The lecturer for this paper is Dr. Don Moffat who is the Sir Paul Reeves' Lecturer in Biblical Studies at St John's Theological College and visiting lecturer in the Otago Theology Programme. Dr. Moffat is based in Auckland. He can be contacted by phone on: (09) 557 0643 or by email: [don.moffat@otago.ac.nz](mailto:don.moffat@otago.ac.nz).

## LEARNING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### 200-level

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Discuss the critical issues associated with the study of each of the Gospels and one theme of significance for each of the Gospels
- Assess a range of views about the genre and purpose of the Gospels
- Exegete selected texts using established methods of interpretation

**300-level**

- Critically analyse the critical issues associated with the study of each of the Gospels and one theme of significance for each of the Gospels
- Critically evaluate a range of views about the genre and purpose of the Gospels
- Exegete selected texts demonstrating advanced skills using established methods of interpretation

**TEACHING****This paper is taught by:**

- Weekly lectures with classes in Auckland, video linked to Dunedin campus or accessible online. The lectures are recorded and the recordings can be accessed through Blackboard.
- One videoconference specifically for distance students unable to attend the lectures will be offered to summarise lecture content and answer questions.

**COURSE STRUCTURE**

**Week 1:** Tuesday 2 March, 2.00-3.50pm

*Course orientation*

*Topic 1a: Introducing the Gospels*

*Topic 1b: The nature of the Gospels: Genre, Format, Relationship*

**Week 2:** Tuesday 9 March, 2:00-3:50pm

*Topic 2a: Introducing Mark*

*Topic 2b: Themes in Mark*

**Week 3:** Tuesday 16 March, 2:00-3:50pm

*Topic 3a: Introducing Matthew*

*Topic 3b: Themes in Matthew*

**Week 4:** Tuesday 23 March, 2.00-3.50pm

*Topic 4a: Introducing Luke*

*Topic 4b: Themes in Luke*

**Week 5:** Tuesday 30 March, 2.00-3.50pm

*Topic 5a: Exegesis of Luke 19:1-10*

*Topic 5b: The Kingdom of God, Miracles*

***Assignment 1 due 31 March***

***Mid Semester Break 5 – 9 April***

**Week 6:** Tuesday 13 April, 2.00-3.50pm

Topic 6a: Parables

Topic 6b: Exegesis Luke 19:11-27

**Tuesday 13 April 6.10-8.00pm. Videoconference for Distance Students only**

**Week 7:** Tuesday 20 April, 2.00-3.50pm

Topic 7a: Introduction to John

Topic 7b: Themes in John

**Week 8:** Tuesday 27 April, 2.00-3.50pm

Topic 8: Jesus: The Gospels

**Week 9:** Tuesday 4 May, 2.00-3.50pm

Topic 9a: Why 4 Gospels?

Topic 9b: Women in the Gospels

**Week 10:** Tuesday 11 May, 2.00-3.50pm

Topic 10: Jesus: Historical and New Perspective

### **Assignment 2 due 14 May**

**Week 11:** Tuesday 18 May, 2.00-3.50pm

Topic 11: Exegesis John 13 & 14

**Week 12:** Tuesday 25 May, 2.00-3.50pm

Topic 12a: The Last Days: Last Supper

Topic 12b: The Last Days: Why was Jesus killed?

**Week 13:** Tuesday 1 June, 2.00-3.50pm

Topic 13a: The Crucifixion

Topic 13b: The Resurrection

## **RESOURCES**

- Blackboard, the University's online learning tool;
- Study Guide modules, to be posted on Blackboard over the Semester
- This Course Outline, which explains how the course is taught
- Course Readings posted on eReserve, which you can access via Blackboard;
- An essential textbook, G. N. Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus*, 2nd ed.
- The Department's "Study and Style Guide" which recommends students use the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Chicago Style Guide when writing essays. It is available online at <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>
- The handbook *Distance Learning Information and Support 2021*, providing advice on administrative matters not covered in this course book and on the Distance Library Service. (You may download the PDF from the 'Essential Information' web page).

## **THIS IS IMPORTANT!**

**Please Note:** You must have access to Blackboard and your University email address in order to complete this paper. You will receive access once your enrolment is complete. Communications from your lecturer regarding teaching matters will be provided **only** through Blackboard and your University email address, as outlined in the University's Student Communications Policy, so you must check these emails regularly. eVision will also send important messages through your University email. If you have any concerns about your access to Blackboard or to other course resources, please contact the lecturer or administrative staff immediately so that these can be resolved.

You will find there is a lot of helpful information and resources on the Theology Programme's website. In particular, we require you to read the section called "Essential Student Information." You will find it here:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

This page provides a number of useful resources such as the *Study and Style Guide* and the Plagiarism Declaration Form you must attach to your assignments. It supplies detailed information on assessment and student support. In particular, it contains guidance on the topics of plagiarism and deadlines, both of which can incur penalties if not heeded. This also is where you will find instructions for making online discussion posts and submitting assignments electronically. So it is very important you make yourself familiar with this material. Our assumption is that you have read it.

We will make reference to information on the website in the following pages, so do take the time to follow the links and absorb the material. It will save you from making costly mistakes and help to make the practical experience of distance study a straightforward one.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

The following book is **essential** for this course.

Stanton, G.N. *The Gospels and Jesus, 2nd ed.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

The book can be obtained from the University Book Shop, 378 Great King Street, Dunedin. Phone 03 477 6976, fax 03 477 6571, email: [ubs@unibooks.co.nz](mailto:ubs@unibooks.co.nz)

## ASSESSMENT

The assessment for this paper comprises three elements:

Assessment Task	Percentage
Assignment One	15%
Assignment Two	30%
Final Examination	55%

## VIDEOCONFERENCES AND LECTURES

### How should students prepare for each videoconference/lecture?

- Read the relevant section in the Study Guide and the Readings associated with it beforehand.
- Think about the issues raised in the course material and jot down a few points that you might like to make during the discussion.

### What will we do at the videoconferences/lectures?

- The weekly video lectures will be run much like a regular campus lecture with an introductory overview and instruction on a specific topic. Participation through discussion and questions is encouraged
- The lecturer will ask questions to engage students in discussion. The focus will either be on the readings and the issues they raise or assume knowledge from the readings. Some readings are labelled **high priority** and will be the basis of discussion

An interchange of views and reactions to the study material is an important aspect of each videoconference. Each participant brings a unique combination of prior experience, study and theological perspective to the videoconference – and each participant is a resource for the group as a whole.

In this kind of learning situation it is very important that participants prepare well, not only to master the study material provided but also to be ready to state and support their own viewpoints in dialogue with the whole group.

### Accessing the Videoconferences

For information about accessing Zoom please refer to the 'Essential Information' web page (link given above). The URL you need to access the meeting is given on the '**Zoom Instructions**' link on the Blackboard page for this paper.

Videoconference Lectures for **Campus** students are held **weekly on Tuesdays from 2.00 - 3.50 pm**. These will be held in one of the AV rooms in the Link Building near the Central

Library. Distance students are welcome to attend these sessions but please inform the Programme beforehand, as seating may be limited. (Likewise, Distance students may join in the sessions by videoconference.) Recordings of all lectures will also be posted on Blackboard under 'Videoconference Recordings'.

### **Schedule of Distance Videoconferences**

One additional videoconference for **Distance** students will be held on a **Tuesday evening from 6:10 to 8.00 pm**. A second will be held if there is a demand. **These are designed as summary tutorials for those who cannot attend the weekly videoconference lectures.**

Videoconference	Date
1	13 April
2	18 May (If required)

## **REFERENCING SYSTEM**

For writing essays, the Programme requires that you use the 16th edition of the Chicago Style Guide, which is the norm for many academic journals in the Humanities and is often recommended for theses in the humanities. The Programme has prepared a *Study and Style Guide*, which outlines the Chicago Style and offers other advice on essay presentation. You may find it via the Programme's "Student Resources and Information" page: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

## **SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK**

All assignments shall be submitted **electronically** via the "Assignment" feature on Blackboard by **midnight** on the due dates notified. Please do not submit paper copies. For full instructions about how to submit assignments electronically via Blackboard as well as other important information on plagiarism, grading, and deadlines, please see the "Essential Information" web page.

All Assignments submitted in the Theology Programme must be prefaced with a student Plagiarism Declaration Form. They will not be deemed to have been submitted unless and until the Plagiarism Declaration Form has been submitted.

It can be downloaded from <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/> It is also on the Blackboard site for this course.

## ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS

The assessment required the completion of three pieces of work. Assignment one (15% of the grade) and two (30% of the grade) are focused on exegetical work. The final requirement is an examination (55% of grade) that will focus on the topics studied in the course.

Assignments one and two are related and are to be done using the same piece of text. You are to choose one gospel text from the list below. The combined assignments will result in a detailed exegesis of the passage you choose.

All arrangements for **Exams** are handled by the Examinations Office. Note that for Distance students your eVision address will be used to set the venue so please ensure this is up to date and contact Examinations if there is any change. All enquiries about the exams should be directed to the Examinations Office at [examinations@otago.ac.nz](mailto:examinations@otago.ac.nz), 03 479 8237.

When finalised the date, time and venue will be posted on your eVision calendar - it is your responsibility to check this.

### 200 level

**Assignment 1:** 1200 words                      15% of grade                      Due date: 31 March

Choose one of the passages below. Write a description of the passage that identifies its literary context in the Gospel and describes its structural features. Identify its key rhetorical and redactional (editorial) elements.

**Assignment 2:** 2000 words                      30% of grade                      Due date: 14 May

Building on the work you did for Assignment 1, write a detailed exegesis of the same passage that you analysed for that assignment. In addition to explaining the meaning of the passage, identify the significance of the passage, that is, explain how it contributes to the evangelist's wider gospel message.

**Final Exam**    55% of grade

### 300 Level

**Assignment 1:** 1500 words                      15% of grade                      Due date: 31 March

Choose one of the passages below. Write a critical analysis of the passage that identifies its literary context in the Gospel and describes its structural features. Identify its key rhetorical and redactional (editorial) elements.

**Assignment 2:** 2500 words                      30% of grade                      Due date: 14 May

Building on the work you did for Assignment 1, write a detailed exegesis of the same passage that you analysed in assignment 1. In addition to explaining the meaning of the passage, assess the contribution of the passage to the evangelist's wider gospel message.

**Final Exam**    55% of grade

**Passages for Assignments 1 and 2. Choose from the following:**

Matthew 6:1-18  
Mark 4:35 - 5:20  
Luke 18:9-30  
John 6:1-40

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity means being honest in your studying and assessments. It is the basis for ethical decision-making and behaviour in an academic context. Academic integrity is informed by the values of honesty, trust, responsibility, fairness, respect and courage. Students are expected to be aware of, and act in accordance with, the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic Misconduct, such as plagiarism or cheating, is a breach of Academic Integrity and is taken very seriously by the University. Types of misconduct include plagiarism, copying, unauthorised collaboration, taking unauthorised material into a test or exam, impersonation, and assisting someone else's misconduct. A more extensive list of the types of academic misconduct and associated processes and penalties is available in the University's Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.

It is your responsibility to be aware of and use acceptable academic practices when completing your assessments. To access the information in the Academic Integrity Policy and learn more, please visit the University's Academic Integrity website at [www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity](http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity) or ask at the Student Learning Centre or Library. If you have any questions, ask your lecturer.

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116838.html>  
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116850.html>

**STUDENT SUPPORT**

The “**Essential Information**” web page provides helpful information on how to access the University Library's resources, as well as a guide to the support services available to students at the University of Otago, including the Student Learning Centre and Disability Support.

For all **administrative enquiries**, please contact the Theology Administrator on:  
Email: [theology@otago.ac.nz](mailto:theology@otago.ac.nz) Phone: 03 479 8639

**We recommend that you contact the Theology programme as soon as possible if you have any problems participating in the course or accessing resources. Please remember to check your University email account regularly for updates and announcements.**

**Theology Programme**

University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054, New Zealand  
[www.otago.ac.nz/theology](http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology)