



Religious Studies 2202F/G (570)
Introduction to the Bible: New Testament
Fall/ Winter 2025-2026

Instructor: J.K. Kato

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Course Information

Calendar Description:

An introduction to the distinctive Scriptures of Christianity--the New or Second Testament of the Christian Bible--and to the interpretative methods employed by ancient and contemporary readers of these books.

Antirequisite(s): [Religious Studies 2124F/G](#).

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category B

Subject Code: RELSTUD

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.



Department of Religious Studies

Course Outline –2026-version 1

The New Testament

Religious Studies 2202G / Winter-Spring 2026

5Class Time: Thursdays, 2:30 am – 5:30 pm
Instructor: **Dr. Julius-Kei Kato, S.S.L., Ph.D.**
Email: jkato@uwo.ca (for normal communication with the prof.)
I ENCOURAGE YOU though to communicate with me by sending me a personal/private message (PM) in the chat function of Microsoft Teams. I'll try to get back to you as soon as I can.
Office Hours: Email me at jkato@uwo.ca . BETTER, send a PM at Microsoft Teams.

Facebook: I also encourage students to like my public FB page 'JK Kato-Spiritual Quests & Optimal Living' where I occasionally post things relevant to the study of religion and spirituality. If there is any post directly relevant to this course, it will be labeled #kingsrs2202

Course Description & Course Objectives

The Bible is one of the most influential books in the world. It is considered the revealed Word of God by both Judaism and Christianity; it has formed and shaped civilizations and cultures; it continues to influence us to this day directly and indirectly in many important ways. This course is a survey of the second part of the Christian Scriptures commonly known as the New Testament.

We will explore the New Testament as both *literature* and *history*, interacting with the different “worlds” related to the text. At the end of the course,

[1] the students will have learned well these “three worlds,” namely, (1) *within*, (2) *behind* and (3) *in front of* the texts” while always keeping in mind the sacred status that these writings have for different faith communities.

[2] They will also have learned to read, appreciate, and interpret critically the New Testament as it tells the story of communities which came to believe that God had been revealed in an extraordinary way through Jesus of Nazareth acclaimed as “the Christ.”

[3] Lastly, the students will have learned what the New Testament suggests about how we in this day and age might find important clues to the perennial questions that face humanity.

Texts

Required

Kato, Julius-Kei. *Reading the Bible in a Secular Age: The New Testament as Spiritual Ancestry*. \$41.00 Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2023. ***This course is also partly a reading course because I will assume that you know the information that is contained in the assigned chapters for every class session. Please do your readings well and consistently!***

The New Testament. The **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) with Apocrypha** (or the Catholic edition) is the preferred translation for this course. If you wish to use a different translation, please consult the

instructor. Available online either here <http://bible.oremus.org/> or here: <https://www.biblegateway.com/>

Other Texts for Reference (*Can be found on reserve for this course at the King's library*)

The following works will be very useful to understand the “3 Worlds” of the Bible and to get a good general idea of foundational issues regarding the study of the Bible. They are available at the library on reserve for this course:

Point of View Publishing. *New Angles on the New Testament* (Point of View Publishing 2020). Available only as a Kindle E-book on Amazon.ca for \$9.99 at:

https://www.amazon.ca/gp/product/B08LN2XKXZ/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_d_asin_title_o09?ie=UTF8&psc=1

St. Mary's Press. *Understanding the Bible: A Guide to Reading the Scriptures*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2008.

Carmody, Timothy. *Reading the Bible: A Study Guide*. Paulist Press, 2004.

Frigge, Marielle. *Beginning Biblical Studies*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2009.

Carvalho, Corrine. *Primer on Biblical Methods*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2009. (**highly recommended**)

Throckmorton, Jr. *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1992.

Parallel Gospels Website from the Univ. of Toronto:< <http://sites.utoronto.ca/religion/synopsis/meta-4g.htm> >

On Catholic Principles for Interpreting the Bible, consult:

Harrington, Daniel. *How Do Catholics Read the Bible*. Sheed & Ward, 2005.

Pontifical Biblical Commission. *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*. Pauline Books and Media, 1996.

(Pope) Benedict XVI. *The Word of the Lord (Verbum Domini)*. Pauline Books and Media, 2010.

Some Highly Recommended Online Resources:

- Oxford Biblical Commentary Online through the King's library < <https://www-oxfordreference-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/view/10.1093/acref/9780198755005.001.0001/acref-9780198755005> >
- NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible: through King's https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991045415022005163&context=L&vid=01OCUL_UWO:UWO_DEFAULT&lang=en&search_scope=OCULDiscoveryNetwork&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine
- Bible Odyssey: <http://www.bibleodyssey.org/>
- Electronic New Testament Educational Resources (ENTER) site < <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Links.htm>>
- Bible Gateway < <http://www.biblegateway.com/>>

Course Requirements, Evaluation & Readings

Here is how I will decide on your final grades:

- **Weekly Quizzes (15%)** | There will be an open book but timed multiple choice quiz on the assigned readings every week. Although it is “open-book,” *you have to do* the readings IN ADVANCE in order to do well on this *timed quiz*. More detailed instructions will be given at the beginning of the course.

- **Class Attendance / Active and Critical Participation (15%)** | I will give you several opportunities to show class participation such as *questions, comments, etc. in or outside the classroom or on online forums*. But the major way by which I will gauge this category will be through your Course Journal entries and your participation in the class whiteboard or in-person class. See the more detailed explanations below. ***I highly encourage people to put great weight on participation because I will give EXTRA CREDIT if I see that people TRY their best to participate actively.***
- **Midterm Exam (15%)** | It will cover all lectures and readings to date.
- **Final Exam (35%)** | It will cover all lectures and readings from midterm to the end of the semester.
- **Research Paper (20%)** | The methodology on how to write this paper (based on the “three worlds”) will be taught during the semester.

(RS2202 New Testament) Course Journal

Students are highly encouraged to submit at least 5 course journal entries in the course of the semester. *This is the minimum. You can submit more than five for extra credit(!)*. A journal entry will be about any topic that was covered either in the readings or the lectures. It can have the following components: [1] ‘Points that stood out to you and why’ *accompanied by your critical reflections, comments, and even questions* (remember, if a particular point “strikes you,” it is because you need to hear that at this point in your life; [2] Regardless of whether they “stood out” to you or not, write down—what you think—are the most important objective points in the topic covered, *accompanied by some critical reflections*.

What I am particularly trying to observe in this exercise is the student’s critical reaction to material encountered either in their reading or during class. The format of the journal entry will be clear from the Microsoft form that will be made available every week.

The course journal is one of the main ways by which I will gauge PARTICIPATION. However, if you go beyond the minimum and do this project well (that means: more entries, more depth and elaboration in the individual entries), I will give you extra credit that will go toward your final grade.

IMPORTANT: You have to submit a journal entry within a week **after** a topic is covered in class. When a new topic is introduced in the next class, I will no longer accept journal entries of previous older topics. The rationale for this rule is that I would like you to work regularly on this reflective and introspective exercise and NOT CRAM at the end.

Form of Submission of Course Journal Entries

I will provide a Microsoft Form on our Team Channel for you to submit your journal entries every week. To be explained at the beginning of the semester

Written Assignment – Research Paper

The written assignment is valued at 20% of your final grade. It is a research paper (at least 2500 words, normally, 9-12 pages, letter-size, double-spaced) which should contain an analysis and evaluation of a specific passage from the New Testament chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. The students should use the “three world approach” in their analysis. I will require you to submit a paper proposal sometime after our midterm test. Other details will be provided in the course of the semester.

NOTE WELL : *All written assignments will be submitted electronically through MS Teams. Late submissions without the instructor’s permission will have -5% for each day late (as per department policy)*

Midterm Examination

The midterm examination, valued at 15% of your final grade, will include multiple choice, short answer, and (mini) essay-type questions. **It will be an open-notes/open book exam with a time limit. I will not give you much time. Therefore, you have to study as if it were a closed book exam. Please take this advice seriously: you have been forewarned!**

It may also involve discussing selected passages from the biblical texts with regard to the worlds in, behind and in front of the text. As a general rule, the questions in examinations (midterm and final exams) will not require memorization or rote learning unless they are questions of very important data regarding the Bible (to be pointed out before the exams). What will be most required are: a basic knowledge of certain key notions and aspects concerning the New Testament (to be pointed out explicitly before exams), an ability to interact with and discuss the worlds “behind, in and in front of” the texts, and an ability to appraise the biblical texts critically.

Final Examination

The final examination, valued at 35% of your final grade, will be similar in structure to midterm exams, that is, it will include multiple-choice, short answer, and mini-essay-type questions. It will also involve discussing in writing selected passages from the Bible with regard to the worlds in, behind and in front of the text. The date of the final exam is set by the University.

Like midterm exams, it will be an open-notes/open book exam with a time limit. I will not give you much time. Therefore, you have to study as if it were a closed book exam. Please take this advice seriously: you have been forewarned!

Academic Honesty & Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Nevertheless, as per departmental policy, all required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com

Assigned Readings & Schedule

Readings will be assigned from both the course textbooks and the Bible itself. The attached schedule lists a tentative progression of topics with corresponding readings from the textbook. Passages and readings from the Bible will be assigned throughout the course.

Students are expected to cover the assigned readings before the class period of every week. Assigned readings are essential to your successful completion of the course, both for comprehending lecture topics and completing assignments and examinations.

Good luck and if you have any other concerns, know that I'm always available to discuss them personally with you. Email me at jkato@uwo.ca . Or better, text me at MS Teams.

JK Kato

Winter 2026

(Preliminary version. Final version to be given at the beginning of the semester)

READINGS & PROGRESSION OF TOPICS

Note: Specific readings & passages from the Bible may be assigned as we progress through the course.

Txt refers to our textbook *Reading the Bible in a Secular Age* (Kato)

Week	Date	Topics to be covered in lectures and readings	Readings in Textbook
1	Jan 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Preliminaries 1: Course Introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Optional Reading but required for the midterm exam: Txt, Introduction & Chapter 1 · (also required for the midterm exam) Scholz reading · NO QUIZ TODAY
2	Jan 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Preliminaries 2: Background of the NT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Txt Chap 4 · QUIZ on the readings BEGINS TODAY
3	Jan 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Historical Jesus 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Txt Chap 11
4	Jan 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Historical Jesus 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Murphy, “Jesus acc. to the Gospels” (OWL) · Borg Chap 8 “Reading the Gospels Again”, only pp. 185-192
5	Feb 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Synoptic Gospels · Mark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Txt Chap 5 · Txt Chap 6 · Borg Chap 8 “Reading the Gospels Again”, only pp. 192-195 (on Mark) · Consult Brown Outline, p. 45 (OWL-Resources)
	Feb 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · MIDTERM EXAM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · During class time
6	Feb 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Matthew · Luke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Txt Chap 7 · Txt Chap 8 · Consult Brown Outline, pp 59/ 76-77 (OWL-Resources) · Optional -Chilton on Mamzer (OWL-Resources)
7	Mar 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Christmas/Birth Narratives in Matthew and Luke · John 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Borg Chap 8 “Reading the Gospels Again”, only pp. 195-218 (on Matthew, Luke, John) · Txt, Chap 9 · Consult Brown Outline, p. 117 (OWL-Resources)
8	Mar 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Acts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Harris reading on the <i>Acts of the Apostles</i> (in OWL-Resources) · Consult Brown Outline, p. 99 (OWL-Resources)

9	Mar 19	· Pauline Topics 1	Landry, Chap 14 -Intro. To Paul (in OWL-Resources)
10	Mar 26	· Pauline Topics 2	· TXT Chap 10 · Consult Brown Outline, pp. 149-151 (OWL-Resources) ·
11	Apr 2	· Non-Pauline Letters · Revelation ·	· Harris, pages on Revelation, from <i>Understanding the Bible</i> (OWL-Resources) · Consult Brown Outline, p. 285 (OWL-Resources) ·
12	Apr 9	· Recapping	· Read Txt, Chap 12
		·	·

Resources to be used throughout the semester:

Link#1 - Four Gospels: Comparative Charts

http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Four_Gospel_Chart.htm

Link#2 – Outline of Each Gospel in the New Testament

<https://catholic-resources.org/Bible/FourGospelOutlines.pdf>

Link#3 – Overview of Each Book and Letter in the New Testament

http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/NT_Overviews.htm#Acts

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western’s Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.