

LAIDLAW COLLEGE
Te Wananga Amorangi

115.515 Biblical Theology
Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

Campus: Distance Learning
Tutor: David Wells

Semester SS, 2017-18
NQF Level 5, 15 credits

CONTENT OVERVIEW

This course explores the unity, diversity and central themes of God's written word, the Bible. It explores a narrative approach to understanding the Bible and its theological themes, and context.

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

1. Articulate a clear understanding of the nature and characteristics of the Bible.
2. Describe the biblical story, along with its key events, themes and theological foundations.
3. Explain the connections between Biblical Theology and other theological approaches, and use the method of Biblical Theology as one way of responding to the Bible.
4. Reflect on the relationship between the Bible, theology, and contemporary life in both New Zealand and global contexts.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Semester Week	Week start	Topic	Assessment Task	Word count	Due date	% Final grade
1	27/11/17	The Bible and Theology	Discussion forum	200+50	3/12/17	4.2%
2	4/12/17	The Bible: Unity and Diversity	Discussion forum	200+50	10/12/17	4.2%
3	11/12/17	Creation: God Establishes His Kingdom (Act 1)				
4	18/12/17	Fall: Rebellion in the Kingdom (Act 2)	Discussion forum	200+50	24/12/17	4.2%
5	25/12/17	Redemption Initiated: The King Chooses Israel (Act 3 Scene 1)				
6	1/1/18	Redemption Initiated: The King Chooses Israel (Act 3 Scene 2)	Discussion forum	200+50	7/1/18	4.2%
7	8/1/18	A Kingdom Story Waiting for an Ending – The Second Temple Period	Worksheet #1	3 pages	14/1/18	15%
8	15/1/18	Redemption Accomplished: The Coming of the King (Act 4)	Discussion forum	200+50	21/1/18	4.2%
9	22/1/18	The Mission of the Church: Spreading the Good News of the King (Act 5)				
10	29/1/18	Redemption Accomplished: The Return of the King (Act 6)	Worksheet #2	2 pages	4/2/18	15%
11	5/2/18	The Bible, Biblical Theology, Wisdom and Vocation	Discussion forum	200+50	11/2/18	4.2%
12	12/2/18	The Bible, Biblical Theology and All of Life	Integrative Essay	2000	18/2/18	45%

Notes:

1. The standard course schedule has been compressed for summer school. There is no break, even over the Christmas/New year period. We recommend you plan to do your work well in advance of days you intend to take off.
2. The library will be open 8am-5pm except over the period from 23/12/17 to 7/1/18. Loan periods will be adjusted to compensate for the closure. Please ensure you obtain any resources required for the assignment before the close down.
3. Academic support will be available every weekday except the statutory holidays. You will be advised on who to contact.

LEARNING HOURS

Learning guide & readings	50 hours
Discussion forums	25 hours
Story of the Bible Worksheet #1	15 hours
Story of the Bible Worksheet #2	15 hours
Integrative Essay	45 hours
TOTAL	150 learning hours

Although this guideline regarding learning hours is not intended to be applied rigidly, it should help ensure a balanced workload.

ASSESSMENT TASKS DETAIL

1. Discussion forums

Length:	200 words per initial post, at least 50 words for response posts.
Percentage weighting of final grade:	25% (4.2% each)
Due date:	11.55 pm Sunday, end of weeks 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 11.
Learning outcomes:	1, 3, 4
Learning hours:	25

Discussion forums will require you to engage with various themes and topics. The purpose is to create an opportunity for students to discuss aspects of the course in a well-informed but informal way.

Typically you will be required to prepare an initial post in response to a reading and/or some question/s. Over the 7 days following your initial post, you are to engage in genuine conversation with one or two other students by posting response(s) to what they have written, and either responding to those who have commented on what you have written, or entering into any further dialogue about the topic. Specific instructions will accompany each discussion forum.

As a minimum requirement to pass this assessment task, in addition to your initial post you need to respond to at least one other student's post, but you are encouraged to have a meaningful and constructive dialogue with others.

A link to further details about expectations for discussions online, and their grading, can be found within each discussion forum on Moodle.

Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold.)

1. Engagement with	Comments show excellent understanding of the topic.
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material	Reasoning and connections are clearly articulated.
2. Constructive engagement with others	Meaningful contribution to the online community is shown by both considering and responding to issues raised by others in a timely way, using thought provoking questions as appropriate.
3. Structure and presentation	Clear, well-formed structure. Accurate spelling and grammar. Concise writing.

2. The Story of the Bible Worksheets

Length:	Worksheet 1 - OT: maximum 3 pages in 10-point Arial font, single spacing. Worksheet 2 - NT: maximum 2 pages in 10-point Arial font, single spacing.
Percentage weighting of final grade:	30% (15% for each worksheet)
Due date:	Worksheet 1 – OT: 11:55 pm Sunday, Week 7 Worksheet 2 – NT: 11:55 pm Sunday, Week 10
Learning outcomes:	1, 2
Learning hours:	30 (15 hours for each worksheet)

Templates for these two worksheets will be available on Moodle as Microsoft Word documents, and must be completed electronically and uploaded to Moodle by the due date. Be sure to take careful note of the word limit instructions above. The worksheets will require you to engage with the main parts of the Story of the Bible.

Story of the Bible Worksheet #1 – The Old Testament Story

In this worksheet you will explore the main events that make up the Old Testament story, locate them within the biblical text, and think about the key themes and theological insights associated with these events. Where possible, put something in every box on the worksheet. **You will find this worksheet to be most meaningful if you complete it as you go through the course, rather than just before it is due;** that way you will have time to reflect on the significance of what you are learning.

- Use the already-completed cells as a guide about how you might fill in the worksheet
- In the **Biblical Passage** column, simply identify the large narrative chunks of scripture that tell this part of the Story. This may be several chapters, will often be whole books, or even multiple books of the Bible. Do not go below the chapter level in terms of detail (e.g. for the Patriarchs, simply put Genesis 12-50, not Genesis 12:1 – 50:26). Do not add in prophetic material, only the key parts of the narrative.
- In the **Key Themes** column, identify the **two or three** (no more than three) most important themes covered in this part of the story. Choose **ONLY** from the list of themes in the list below. For each theme you identify, name the theme and describe very briefly how you see that theme demonstrated in this part of the story – no more than one sentence for each theme.
- In the **Key Event/s** column, name the key events in this part of the story – do not describe them in detail. Make sure that you put the events within each of the major sections in chronological order.
- In the **Theological Insights** column, briefly describe what you learn about God, the world, humanity, salvation, etc. from this part of the story. Where possible, link your theological insight to a particular part of the story. Also, express your theological insights as complete statements, not just single words or ideas (e.g. “By eating from the forbidden tree, humans rebelled against God” rather than just “Rebellion against God”).

Story of the Bible Worksheet #2 – The New Testament Story

This worksheet covers the New Testament – see Part A (above) for instructions.

List of themes you may choose from as you complete your worksheets:

- Covenant
- The Kingdom of God
- The Missional heart of God
- Law
- The Temple
- The People of God
- Sin and Judgement
- Salvation/Redemption
- Creation/recreation
- Land
- Promise/hope
- Rest
- Righteousness/justice

Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold.)

1. Knowledge of the Biblical Story	Shows awareness of key contours of the biblical story and where key events fit in the Bible.
2. Understanding of Biblical Themes	Major themes identified and appropriately associated with the biblical story.
3. Theological Insights	Demonstrates an awareness of how theological understanding emerges from reflection on the biblical story and themes.
4. Structure and presentation	Worksheets are filled in accurately and in accordance with instructions.

3. Integrative Essay

Length:	2000 words
Percentage weighting of final grade:	45%
Due date:	11:55 pm Sunday, Week 12
Learning outcomes:	1, 2, 4
Learning hours:	45
Expected Sources	The two text books, the Bible and at least three other resources.

In this integrative essay you are to **summarise** the story of the Bible, trace **two** key themes throughout the biblical story, reflect on these themes theologically, show how these themes help frame the overall story of the gospel, and consider implications for contemporary life.

So you need to do four key things:

- **Summarise** the overall story of the Bible, starting with creation and ending with the consummation of all things in the second coming of Christ. You should mention the key events that make up the biblical story, and refer to key relevant biblical texts or passages.
- As you tell the story, weave **two** biblical themes from the list provided above (in the Story of the Bible worksheet assignment) into the story. Briefly identify all the key points or

events throughout the biblical story which intersect with your two chosen themes, so that you develop a coherent description of those themes throughout the biblical story. You may want to draw on the material in your worksheets to help with this. Be sure that you clearly identify your two chosen themes at the beginning of the essay.

- As you reflect on each of these two themes in light of the material you have covered in this course, describe what they tell us about the **key theological ideas** of the Christian gospel (e.g. who God is, who human beings are, the problem of sin, the salvation God offers through Christ, the people of God, etc.) Describe what theological insights each theme provides, and how these inform our understanding of the gospel story.
- Finally, discuss how the theological insights you have identified challenge you to think and act differently as you **engage with the contemporary world and culture today**, both in New Zealand and also in our global context.

A suggested possible structure for your essay is:

- Introduction** – opening comments, including identification of your two themes (about 100 words)
- Main body** of the essay, in which you summarise the biblical story and weave your two chosen themes into the story. You may choose to also weave your theological insights into this part of the essay, or you may include this as a separate section. (about 1500 words)
- Implications** for contemporary life (about 300 words)
- Conclusion** – closing comments and summary (about 100 words)

Criteria for Assessment (major criteria are in bold.)

1. Description of biblical story and associated themes	Biblical story is summarised accurately. The two themes are clearly identified and described. Both themes are accurately traced throughout the biblical story, with linkages to key events noted.
2. Theological Insights	Theological insights are appropriate to the chosen themes, and integrate well with the wider course material studied. Linkages to the wider gospel story are clear and well described.
3. Contemporary application	Applications to contemporary life and contexts are appropriate and clearly articulated. Evidence of good engagement with the implications of biblical theology.
4. Structure and presentation	Clarity, format, spelling and grammar; annotation and bibliography are all correct.

TEXTBOOK

The required texts for this course are:

Bartholomew, Craig G, and Michael W. Goheen. *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014.

[Please note the above book was also published in 2006 in the UK by SPCK. This is an abridged edition, and is NOT the correct edition for this course. Please be sure to buy the 2014 Baker Academic edition.]

Plantinga Jr., Cornelius. *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002.

NOTES

Please note:

- All assignments need to be presented according to the Laidlaw College "Guidelines for Written Assignments".
- Assignments are to be submitted to Moodle no later than 11.55pm on the due date, unless otherwise noted.
- Assignments must comply with the standards set out for assessment in Laidlaw College's "General Information and Regulations".
- Please see these regulations for guidance on extension requests, submission of late work, and plagiarism.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

In order to ensure a wide and balanced appreciation of the range of theological opinion found in the Christian community, especially recommended additional works are listed below. Those indicated with an asterisk (*) are on short-loan in the library:

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Alexander, T. Desmond and Brian S. Rosner, eds. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000. (In Reference Collection)

*Baker, David L. Two Testaments, *One Bible: The Theological Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments*. 3rd ed. Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 2010.

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Clowney, Edmund P. *Preaching and Biblical Theology*. London: Tyndale Press, 1962.

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