

The New Testament survey question-assignments

Students will answer the questions provided for all the readings in the New Testament and turn them in for evaluation. Student work will be graded according to how much thought is shown in each answer and not whether the student provides a “right” answer. Indeed, many of these questions have no “right” or “wrong” answers. Many do however. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to think more carefully about the New Testament and how to apply its themes to twenty-first century life. Thoughtful and complete answers will receive full credit. Thoughtless and/or incomplete work will receive no credit.

You will answer these questions by submitting written material to SafeAssign via Blackboard. DO NOT INCLUDE the questions on the handouts; simply number your responses appropriately and write your response in original, complete sentences. You may upload .pdf or Word files, or cut and paste into the SafeAssign browser for your assignment. The window of opportunity to turn in these assignments closes at 11:59 PM on the Sundays they’re due, so plan accordingly. I will not accept late work.

The several sets of questions for these assignments follow at the end of this document.

The New Testament survey paper

Students will write one essay on the theology of Paul. Specifically, students will evaluate the issues raised in one of three films you may watch for this assignment in light of Paul’s theology in Romans. The essay is to be 1000 words in length and will be evaluated according to subject (well developed ideas supported by pertinent data) and format (thesis, outline, grammar, spelling). You must watch the film you choose by the weekend of November 2nd – 3rd; the essay is due by Friday, November 15th, at 11:59 PM via SafeAssign.

The films from which you may choose are the following:

Pale Rider (Clint Eastwood, 1985)

Babette’s Feast (Gabriel Axel, 1987)

Dead Man Walking (Tim Robbins, 1995)

Questions about books of the Bible

Directions: Answer each question completely (complete thoughts, complete sentences). Your answers must be typed and printed to be handed in at the beginning of each class. You may wish to consult the notes of your study Bible for help. However, many of these questions have no “right” or “wrong” answers. Many of them do. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to think more carefully about the New Testament and how to apply its themes to twenty-first century life.

Thoughtful and complete answers will receive higher grades. Spend more time pondering the meaning of what you are reading and less time trying to provide a quick, “right” answer.

Set 1: Due by Sunday night, 8/25/13

Luke 10:25-37

1. What nationality was the man who was traveling to Jericho? What would the Jews who were listening to Jesus assume?
2. Why would the Priest and Levite pass by on the other side?
3. Did the Samaritan take any risks by bringing the man to a Jewish town for care? If so, what were they?
4. This parable is most often referred to as “The Good Samaritan,” and many apply it morally (being a “good” neighbor, etc.). Is this an accurate summary of the parable? Suggest a better “title” for this parable based on your reading.

Matthew 22:15-22

1. Who are the Herodians? (Hint: Who was Herod? Who kept Herod in power?)
2. Do you think Pharisees and Herodians liked each other?
3. How is the question asked Jesus a trick question? (What would happen to him if he answered “yes?” What would happen to him if he answered “no?”)

Luke 18:8-14

1. Would the Jews find verse fourteen hard to accept? Why? (Hint: What did Jews think about Pharisees and tax collectors?)
2. What is the point of the parable?

Mark 8:27-38

1. Why was Peter rebuking Jesus in verse 33? (Hint: What did the Jews expect the Messiah would come and do?)
2. What did the statement in verse thirty-five mean?

Mark 10:35-45

1. Who came to ask Jesus a question and what did they want?
2. What does it mean to sit at the right or left hand of God?
3. What did the Jews think made one great in God’s kingdom? (Hint: How did the Jews expect the Messiah to demonstrate greatness?)
4. What did Jesus say made one great in the kingdom of God?

Set 2: Due by Sunday night, 9/1/13

Matthew

1. Matthew applies a quote from the Old Testament to Jesus in 2:15
 - a. Where is this quote found in the Old Testament?
 - b. To whom does it apply in the Old Testament?
 - c. What is Matthew hinting at by applying it to Jesus?
2. Why was Jesus tempted by Satan?
3. How does Jesus define murder and adultery in the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7)?
4. In the Sermon on the Mount:
 - a. What does Jesus say about divorce?
 - b. About enemies?
 - c. About worry?
 - d. About having a fruitful, godly life?
5. In the gospels, the miracles of Jesus are often called “signs.” What is Jesus referring to when he talks about the “sign of Jonah” in Matthew 12?
6.
 - a. What do you learn about the kingdom of God from the parable of the weeds and the parable of the net (chapter 13)?
 - b. Matthew alone records these parables. Why do you think it would be important for him to do so? (Hint: remember that Matthew was a tax collector)
7. What is significant about Jesus giving Simon a different name (Matthew 16)?
8.
 - a. Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven according to Matthew 18?
 - b. According to Jesus, what should a person do if they have a friend who is engaged in some obvious sin? Look at Matthew 18 for the answer.
9. What command does Jesus give at the end of Matthew? What does baptism have to do with it?

Set 3: Due by Sunday night, 9/8/13

Mark

1. Compare and contrast the way in which Mark begins his gospel with the way Matthew and Luke begin their gospels.
2. Why would Jesus command the man healed from leprosy in chapter 1 not to tell anyone about the miracle? Compare with 3:11-12.
3.
 - a. List the sequence of events from the beginning of chapter eight through 9:12.
 - b. Is there any significance to the sequence other than mere chronological order? (Hint: compare the blind man to the disciples.)
4. In Mark 14, what feast is Jesus celebrating?
 - a. What Old Testament event did it commemorate?
 - b. How does Jesus identify himself at the center of the feast?
 - c. What does this connection with the Old Testament event point to in Jesus' ministry?
5. What did Jesus say on the cross?
 - a. What psalm of the Old Testament is Jesus quoting?
 - b. Read that entire Psalm and list how it foretells what would happen to Jesus during his crucifixion.
 - c. Judging by what Jesus said, what is happening to Jesus on the cross?
6. Is there anything odd about the way the Gospel of Mark ends? If so, what? Compare it with Matthew.

Set 4: Due by Sunday night, 9/15/13

Luke

1. Chapters 1-2 are unique to Luke.
 - a. What information do they record?
 - b. Where might he have gotten this information? Explain why you think this.
2.
 - a. How far is the trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem? (Consult a Bible map or atlas for the answer.)
 - b. How would you feel about such a trip if you were Mary? Why?
3.
 - a. Describe how Jesus was accepted in his home town in chapter 4.
 - b. What would you think of a little brother who, at the age of thirty, began doing the things that Jesus did?
4. Read chapter 7 carefully and comment on the many ways Luke accents God's grace for outcasts.
5. What do the parables in chapter 15 have in common? Whom does Jesus place in the role of "searcher" in the parables? What is the point of these parables?
6. What does Jesus say will happen at the end of the world in Luke 21? What does this make you think about current events in our own day?

Set 5: Due by Sunday night, 9/22/13

Acts

1.
 - a. What were Jesus' last words to his disciples?
 - b. Why were these instructions important?
2. As you read Acts, make a list of fifteen things that the Holy Spirit does, according to Luke.
3. Who is Stephen? What happened to the Church after Stephen was stoned?
4. What was God trying to tell his people through the experiences of Peter with Cornelius?
5.
 - a. What was the topic of discussion at the Jerusalem Council in chapter 15?
 - b. What did the council decide?
 - c. Why was this so important for Gentiles?
6. Write a few paragraphs on this topic: What accounted for the spread of Christianity as you read about it in Acts?

Set 6: Due by Sunday night, 9/29/13

Galatians

1. What are the issues Paul is addressing in this letter, which are set forth in the first two chapters?
2. How does Paul prove in chapter 3 that people are saved by faith and not by observing the Jewish law?
3. What is significance about Paul's emphasis in chapter 4 about the "time having fully come?" What was so unique about the time that Jesus came into the world?
4. How does Paul characterize the Christian life in chapter 5?
5.
 - a. What are the fruits of the Spirit? List them.
 - b. Where do people commonly try to find them?

1 and 2 Thessalonians

1. Paul is defending his ministry in the first three chapters of 1 Thessalonians. As you read this section, read also "between the lines" and make a list of how Paul's ministry at Thessalonica had come under attack.
2. According to Paul in 2 Thessalonians, what will be the sequence of events at the second coming of Christ?
3. Does Paul say that Christians know when the second coming will be?
4. How can Christians prepare themselves for the second coming?

Set 7: Due by Sunday night, 10/6/13

1 Corinthians

1. Why do you think Paul called the message of the Gospel “foolishness” to non-Christians? List all the reasons you find in the first two chapters.
2.
 - a. What is Paul talking about in 3.10-15?
 - b. How does this apply to people today?
3. Compare what Paul states in 6.12-20 with what you hear from society.
4. List the major things Paul states about marriage in chapter 7.
5. Paul was evidently being criticized as a second-rate apostle by the people in Corinth because he did not require any fees for his ministry. How does Paul react to this charge in chapter nine?
7. What does Paul teach about the Lord’s Supper in 10.14-17 and 11.17-33?
8. How would you summarize Paul's teaching about spiritual gifts?
9. How does Paul talk about death and new life in chapter 15?

2 Corinthians

1. What theological explanation does Paul give in chapters 3 and 4 to show why his ministry might not seem so great and glorious?
2. How does Paul talk about death and new life in chapter 5?
3.
 - a. How would you apply Paul’s words in 6.14-18 to your life?
 - b. Does it say anything about the friends you keep? The person you may marry?
4. Why and how does Paul “boast” in the last third of this letter?

Set 8: Due by Sunday night, 10/20/13

Romans

1. In Romans 1.16-17 Paul sets the theme for his entire book. Judging by these two verses, what three things do you think Paul will talk about in Romans? Scan the book or consult an outline of Romans and list the chapters that correspond to the three items.
2. In 1.18-2.19 Paul shows how all people are without excuse before God. How does Paul say this is true in regard to Gentiles? In regard to Jews?
3.
 - a. How does righteousness come from God?
 - c. The Greek word for “righteousness” might also be translated as “justice.” Do people ever question God’s justice?
 - b. How does God demonstrate his righteousness/justice?
4. How does Paul prove from the life of Abraham that righteousness comes by faith?
5.
 - a. What does Paul say happened at baptism in chapter 6?
 - b. What does that mean for you?
6. What would Paul say to the person who states that it doesn’t matter if we sin because God forgives all sin? See 6.15ff.
7. If one is saved by faith, a Jew would naturally ask why God gave the Old Testament laws. How does Paul answer this question in chapter seven?
8. How does Paul characterize the Christian life in 7.7-8.18?
9. Summarize what Paul says about the Jewish people in chapters 9-11.
10. What practical advice does Paul give about government and religious ceremonies in chapters 13-15?

Set 9: Due by Sunday night, 10/27/13

Philippians

1.
 - a. What was Paul's greatest concern while he was in prison?
 - b. What would be your greatest concern if you were in prison awaiting trial?
 - c. How could you have Paul's attitude?
2.
 - a. What attitude does Paul say Christians should have for each other?
 - b. How did Christ exhibit this attitude?
3. Philippians is often considered the "joy" letter. How many instances of the word "joy" can you find in this letter?
4. What is the "secret" that Paul has learned in 4.13? Under what circumstances has he learned it?

Philemon

1. How would you summarize the letter of Philemon in one sentence?

Set 10: Due by Sunday night, 11/3/13

Ephesians

1.
 - a. According to Paul, when did God choose people to be part of his heavenly family?
 - b. Why do you suppose Paul thought it was important for people (like you) to know this?
2. Why is Ephesians 2.8-9 such an important passage about salvation? What does verse 10 further explain about it?
3. How does Paul stress unity in the Church throughout his letter?
4.
 - a. What instructions does Paul give for husbands and wives to follow in marriage?
 - b. What is the pattern for marriage?
5.
 - a. What does Paul mean by the “armor of God?”
 - b. Why is it important?

Colossians

1. Cite at least 3 specific points that Paul seems to make in Colossians that sound similar to the way he expresses them in Ephesians.
2. What truth does Paul express about Christ’s role in creation in Colossians 1? What does “image of God” mean?
3. What does it mean to be “rooted and built up” in Christ, as Paul says in Colossians 2? How does this relate to your own life?

Set 11: Due by Sunday night, 11/10/13

1 Timothy

1. As you read this letter and 2 Timothy, how would you describe Paul's relationship with Timothy?
2.
 - a. What does Paul say about women in worship?
 - b. How should this apply today?
3. What are the qualifications for workers in the Church?

2 Timothy

1. List at least five pieces of advice that Paul gives to Timothy.
2. How does Paul describe scripture in chapter 3? What is it good for?
3. How does Paul indicate in this letter that he thinks he will die soon?

Titus

1. What was Paul's major reason for writing to Titus?
2. How does Paul's message in Titus 3.3-8 compare with Ephesians 2.8-9? How does it compare with Romans 6.1-4?

Set 12: Due by Sunday night, 11/17/13

James

1. James is full of practical advice concerning how Christians should behave. For each section that follows, summarize the advice given by James.
 - a. 1.2-18
 - b. 1.19-27
 - c. 2.1-12
 - d. 3.1-12
 - e. 4.1-12
 - f. 4.13-17
 - g. 5.13-20
2.
 - a. What does James teach about faith?
 - b. Does his teaching contradict what Paul taught about faith?

Hebrews

1. The author of Hebrews spends most of his time showing why Christ is the “High Priest” who is far superior to all Old Testament examples. List at least ten things that he states to support this assertion.
2. What is faith according to the author of Hebrews? Pick one of the examples in Hebrews 11 and describe why the author employs him or her as an example of faith.
3. What does the author of Hebrews say about the “discipline” of God in chapter twelve?

Set 13: Due by Sunday night, 12/1/13

John

1. How does John begin? (Compare this section with Genesis chapter 1.)
2. What is so significant about Jesus' first miracle that John would call it a "sign?" Signs point to something; what does this one point to? To help find an answer, compare this miracle of Jesus to the descriptions of the messianic kingdom in Isaiah 25:6-8 and Amos 9:13.
3.
 - a. How did Jesus tell Nicodemus he could enter the kingdom of God?
 - b. How did he say this happens?
 - c. What does this mean for you?
4. Jesus mentions people who worship "in spirit and truth" in John 4. What does this mean?
5. List the seven "I am..." statements of Jesus in John and summarize what he means by them.
6. Why do the crowds follow Jesus in John 6? Why do they abandon him by the end of the chapter?
7. Jesus heals a blind man in chapter 9.
 - a. Who are the truly blind people in this section?
 - b. Why do you say this?
8. Jesus has been saying it isn't his "time" since John 2. What makes him say that "the hour has come" in John 12? What is involved in his being "glorified," and what does that mean?
9. What does Jesus teach about the Holy Spirit in chapters 14-16?

Revelation

1. Summarize the main points of each letter to the seven churches in chapters 2-3. What are these individual churches "sins" (the things that are "held against them")?
2. Who are the 144,000 in chapter 7?
3. Who are the two witnesses in chapter 11?
4. Who are the woman, child, and dragon in chapter 12?
5. When will the 1000 years of the millennium be fulfilled, which is written about in chapter 20? What happens during that time?