

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

**22200ww Intro to NTI**

3 credit hours

“So anyone who thinks that he has understood the divine scriptures or any part of them, but cannot by his understanding build up this double love of God and neighbor, has not yet succeeded in understanding them.”

~ Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*

# Professor

Dr. Jonathan Pennington

# Course Description

This course will expose the student to issues concerning how to interpret the Gospels and provide an historical and theological survey of each of the four Gospels, culminating with discussion of how these four Gospels witness to the one Jesus. (3 hours)

# Course Objectives

By studying the materials presented in this course, listening to the lectures, and completing the assignments and assigned projects, the student will be able to:

1. Give a brief description of significant events and writings of the Second Temple period.
2. Summarize the critical and introductory issues concerning studying the four Gospels.
3. Summarize the basic contents and theology of each of the four Gospels.
4. Confidently use a basic methodology for interpreting the Gospel narratives.

# Required Texts

Hill, C. E. *Who Chose the Gospels?: Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy*. Oxford University Press, 2012. ([Purchase](https://www.amazon.com/Who-Chose-Gospels-Probing-Conspiracy/dp/0199640297/ref=sr_1_1?sr=8-1&ie=UTF8&keywords=who%2Bchose%2Bthe%2Bgospels&tag=ntex-20&qid=1468586913))

Strauss, Mark L. *Four Portraits, One Jesus: A Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels*. Zondervan, 2007. ([Purchase](https://www.amazon.com/Four-Portraits-One-Jesus-Gospels/dp/031022697X/ref=sr_1_1?sr=8-1&ie=UTF8&keywords=strauss%2Bfour%2Bportraits&tag=ntex-20&qid=1468586856))

Pennington, Jonathan T. *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012. ([Purchase](https://www.amazon.com/Reading-Gospels-Wisely-Theological-Introduction/dp/0801039371/ref=sr_1_1?sr=8-1&ie=UTF8&keywords=pennington%2Breading%2Bthe%2Bgospels%2Bwisely&tag=ntex-20&qid=1468587053))

**Choose One**

Maier, Paul L. *Pontius Pilate: A Novel*. 2nd ed. Kregel Publications, 2014. ([Purchase](https://www.amazon.com/Pontius-Pilate-Paul-L-Maier/dp/0825443563/ref=sr_1_1?sr=8-1&ie=UTF8&keywords=paul%2Bmaier%2Bpontius&tag=ntex-20&qid=1468587206))

Rice, Anne. *Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt: A Novel*. Ballantine Books, 2008. ([Purchase](https://www.amazon.com/Christ-Lord-Out-Egypt-Novel/dp/0345492730/ref=sr_1_1?sr=8-1&ie=UTF8&keywords=anne%2Brice%2Bjesus&tag=ntex-20&qid=1468587271))

**Note:** These are both very beneficial to read and I recommend both, but only one is required and you can choose. Anne Rice’s novel gives a first person narration of Jesus’ life while 7-8 years old. Paul Maier’s book sits Pontius Pilate and 1st century Christianity squarely in its Roman Imperial context. For whichever textbook you choose you will need to write a 750-word response paper by the end of the semester.

**Recommended**

Green, Joel B., Prof Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin, eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. 2nd ed. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2013. ([Purchase](https://www.amazon.com/Dictionary-Jesus-Gospels-IVP-Bible/dp/0830824561/ref=sr_1_1?sr=8-1&ie=UTF8&keywords=dictionary%2Bof%2Bjesus%2Band%2Bthe%2Bgospels&tag=ntex-20&qid=1468588217))

If the student would like to access other resources for this course, please visit the James P. Boyce Centennial Library’s [Distance Students Services](http://library.sbts.edu/distributed-learning-services/).

# Course Assignments

***Reading Quizzes***

The student will complete reading quizzes over each chapter of Strauss and Pennington. These quizzes are not designed to be tricky but to assess a careful reading of each text. These are closed book and closed note with a 15 minute time limit. There will be no more than 10 questions per quiz.

***Gospel Reading Guides***

The student will read each Gospel in their entirety and complete the reading guide for each Gospel. These are completion grades so do not spend too much time with answering the questions. This is designed to help aid you to pay attention to important people, facts, and themes in each of the Gospels. This will also serve as a helpful guide for the exams.

***Closer Readings***

In conjunction with your reading of the Four Gospels in their entirety, you will also be assigned 5 passages for which you will give a “closer look.” For these assigned passages you will use the Closer Reading Study Sheet found on the LMS. This includes doing a narrative analysis of the text and answering a few additional questions. This assignment will be typed out and uploaded through Canvas by the by the due date on the course schedule for which the passage is assigned.

I will provide an example in Canvas of what I am speaking about to give you direction

Reading Response

You will choose between two historical novels. They are both very beneficial to read and I recommend both, but only one is required and you can choose. Anne Rice’s novel gives a first-person narration of Jesus’ life while 7-8 years old. Paul Maier’s book sits Pontius Pilate and 1st century Christianity squarely in its Roman Imperial context. For whichever textbook you choose you will need to write a 750-word response paper (see schedule for due date).

## Exams

The exams will cover content found in the lectures, Gospel readings, and assigned textbook readings (Hill, Pennington, Strauss). The exam will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, matching, and short answer. You will have 45 minutes to take each exam and it is closed note and closed book.

## Live-Sync

Each student is expected to attend the two live sync sessions. The first session will go over the first closer reading (after it has been turned in) and offer interpretive helps and answer any questions. The second session will be a Q&A covering the reading, lectures, and other course content.

# Grading Breakdown

Reading Quizzes 15%

Gospel Reading Guides 10%

Reading Hill Report 10%

Reading Response 10%

Closer Readings 30%

Exams 15%

Live-Sync 10%

**TOTAL 100%**

# Grading Scale

94% - 100% A 84% - 87% B 74% - 77% C 64% - 67% D

90% - 93% A- 80% - 83% B- 70% - 73% C- 60% - 63% D-

88% - 89% B+ 78% - 79% C+ 68% - 69% D+ 0% - 59% F

# Technology Requirements

* A computer with basic internet access will be needed for this course
* If you need technical support during this course, please email or call Campus Technology ([helpdesk@sbts.edu](mailto:helpdesk@sbts.edu)) or visit <http://www.sbts.edu/online/introduction/becoming-an-online-student-2/technical-support/> for more contact information.

# Expectation of Students

**Email:** Students are expected to check their SBTS email accounts at least twice a week throughout the semester. This is necessary to stay up to date on pertinent class communication and updates.

**Acceptable Document Formats:** PDF ONLY

# Online Course Policies

**Late Work:** Points received for any late assignment will be radically reduced by 50%, and it is unlikely that the student will receive a final grade above C. Unless every assignment is completed, you will receive a failing grade for the course.

**Respect for Divergent Viewpoints:** Students and faculty are to show appropriate respect for each other even when divergent viewpoints are expressed through class assignments and discussion boards. Such respect does not require agreement with or acceptance of divergent viewpoints.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:** Students who pass off ideas or words of another person as their own without crediting the source are guilty of intellectual property theft or literary theft better known as plagiarism. Students who conduct any part of their participation in the course in a fraudulent or deceptive manner are guilty of cheating. Students caught in either of these acts of academic misconduct will be reported to the Dean of Students, resulting in disciplinary action up to and including failing the course and academic dismissal.

**Special Needs:** As an institution, we strive to work with students and any challenges they face to the full degree possible. If there are any physical or mental challenges that might need special accommodation, please contact the instructor prior to or on the first day of class.

**Grievances and Grade Disputes:** If a student has a concern about a grade that he or she received, the student is expected to request clarification from instructor via email. If the student still has significant concern, he or she may contact the Dean of the School of Theology.

**Course and Syllabus Modification (Disclaimer):** This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the leaning objectives, instructional format, readings, activities, evaluation criteria, policies and procedures, and other information necessary for students to complete this course. The instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as deemed necessary to maintain the integrity of the learning experience as a result of events and circumstances that occur during the course.