

The New Testament and Early Christianity  
RS 116A  
Spring Quarter 2008

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Office hours: Mondays 3:00-4:30; Wednesdays 11-12

Course website:

<http://www.religion.ucsb.edu/faculty/thomas/classes/RS116A.html>

## BOOKS

Required for purchase:

Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (4th ed.; New York: Oxford, 2007). Available at UCen Bookstore.

Recommended for purchase:

*The New Revised Standard Version Study Bible* (rev. ed.; New York: HarperOne, 2006).

You can find the New Revised Standard Version on line at <http://bible.oremus.org/>

Note: The above is a good translation with many helpful notes and features. But any translation of the New Testament is acceptable, except the King James Version or the Living Bible. Popular and reliable versions include the New Revised Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible, the New American Bible, the New American Standard Version, the Jerusalem Bible, and the New International Version.

Other materials are posted on Electronic Reserves (e-reserves). These items appear in SMALL CAPS in the schedule of readings below. They can be found under the course reserves heading on the library website ([www.library.ucsb.edu](http://www.library.ucsb.edu) > library services > course reserves > [electronic reservations](#)). You need a password to access it, which will be distributed in class. The readings can be read online, saved for on-screen display as a PDF, or printed.

You can access the site outside of UCSB webspace by setting up a proxy server on your home browser.

See <http://www.library.ucsb.edu/help/proxy/index.html>

## SYLLABUS

N.B.: Both primary and secondary readings are required and should be read BEFORE lecture except where noted. In the press of time, primary readings should be read first, and the secondary readings in the order given. For selections found on found on ERES, the authors' names appear in SMALL CAPS.

### UNIT 1: THE EARLIEST SOURCES ABOUT JESUS

31 March: Introduction. Christian origins and the study of religion.

2 April: How the New Testament came to us.

📖 Secondary: HARRINGTON, INTERPRETING THE NEW TESTAMENT; Ehrman, 1-16, 487-98.

7 April: The Gospel of Mark and miracle stories.

📖 Primary: The New Testament: Mark, chapters 1-9; CARLIDGE, MIRACLES.  
Secondary: Ehrman, 69-91, 240-45.

9 April: The Gospel of Mark and the Passion Narrative.

📖 Primary: Mark, chapters 10-16. *GOSPEL OF PETER*.  
Secondary: Ehrman, 281-90, 215-18.

14 April: Jesus as teacher of wisdom: the *Gospel of Thomas*.

📖 Primary: *GOSPEL OF THOMAS*.

Secondary: KOESTER, INTRODUCTION; Ehrman, 204-13.

16 April: The “synoptic problem” and redaction criticism.

📖 Primary: THROCKMORTON, STILLING OF THE STORM.

Secondary: Ehrman, 56-68, 92-100; BORNKAMM, STILLING OF THE STORM IN MATTHEW.

21 April: The “sayings source” Q and the apocalyptic Jesus.

📖 Primary: MILLER, Q; Mark 13; 1 Thess 4:13-5:11.

Secondary: Ehrman, 254-80.

## UNIT 2: JESUS THE JEW AND THE RELIGIONS OF HIS ERA

23 April: Jesus in the context of Judaism

📖 Primary: JOSEPHUS, JEWISH WAR; Matthew 22:15-46, 23:1-39; Mark 7:1-23.

Secondary: Ehrman, 36-55; PELIKAN, “THE RABBI.”

28 April: The Historical Jesus and groups in first-century Judaism.

📖 Primary: *THE WAR RULE*.

Secondary: Ehrman, 224-39; 246-53.

## UNIT 3: PAUL, THE FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY

30 April: Paul the Jew and his “gospel.”

📖 Primary: Romans 1-11, Galatians.

Secondary: Ehrman, 291-308, 339-48, 356-68; S14: JEWETT, “THE LAW.”

### 5 May: Midterm

7 May: Slide lecture: Greek and Roman religion.

📖 Secondary: Ehrman, 17-35; unnumbered pages between 184-85.

12 May: Paul as a letter writer. The opponents of Paul.

📖 Primary: Philippians, Philemon, 1 Corinthians 1-4, 11-14; 2 Corinthians 10-13; BARRETT, NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUND.

Secondary: Ehrman, 324-39; 348-55.

## UNIT 4: THE GOSPELS: STORIES ABOUT THE DIVINE CHRIST

14 May: Matthew: A scribe trained for the kingdom of heaven.

📖 Primary: Matthew 5-7, 13, 18, 24-25.

Secondary: Ehrman, 101-20.

19 May: The Gospel of John: Signs and dialogues.

📖 Primary: John, chapters 1-6, 9-12, and 14; *APOCRYPHON OF JAMES*.

Secondary: Ehrman, 163-84.

## UNIT 5: CHRISTIAN HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

21 May: Luke-Acts: The first church history.

📖 Primary: Luke 1:1-4; 3:1-3; chapter 24; Acts 1:1-8:3; 18:23-28.

Secondary: Ehrman, 121-62.

26 May: Holiday

28 May: The Revelation: Another approach to history.

📖 Primary: Revelation. Secondary: Ehrman, 469-82.

## UNIT 6: ON THE WAY TO THE SECOND CENTURY

2 June: The Pauline school: the “deutero-Paulines” and the Pastorals.

📖 Primary: Colossians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus.

Secondary: Ehrman, 380-402.

4 June: Two Pauls: the Pastorals and the Acts of Paul

📖 Primary: ACTS OF PAUL.

Secondary: Ehrman, 369-79, 403-15.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

If you are a student with a disability, and would like to discuss special academic accommodations, please contact me during my office hours, by phone or e-mail, or before or after class.

**1. Participation: 10%.** Class discussion is an integral part of this course. Minimal preparation represented by either asking or answering questions of value to the entire class in comprehending the course content will be recorded and evaluated as 10%. As preparation for class participation, students should formulate a question or two while reading the assignments.

**2. In-class midterm exam: 40%.** The exam will take place on 5 May and will consist chiefly of short text identifications and brief descriptions of key terms and concepts. A study guide will be circulated one week before the exam. Please bring blue books to the exam. The exam will account for 40% of the final grade.

**3. A final take-home exam: 50%.** The final exam will consist of essay questions designed to test one’s comprehension of the cumulative course material. The exam must be at least 6 pages; it must also be carefully written with documentation from the textbooks we have read for the course (note title of book and page number, which should be within parentheses in the text rather than in footnotes). The exam must be double-spaced, and typed or computer-generated in Times New Roman or a similar font. The exam questions will be distributed at the end of the ninth week of class, and the exam will be due by Tuesday, 10 June, by 5 pm. It should be turned in to the main office of the Department of Religious Studies (3d floor HSSB Tower), or to the instructor’s mailbox in the mailroom in the same location. Do not shove exams under the office door of the instructor, because they may be counted late!

## LATE POLICY

Timely submission of student work assures fair conditions of evaluation, since an essential condition for this is that all students have a comparable amount of time to complete their assignments. Late submissions will lose a grade increment (e.g. A+ to A) for each two days of tardiness.

## POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Student Code of Conduct clearly sets out a standard of academic honesty and responsibility by which a student’s work must be his or her own work. The faculty in Religious Studies believes that plagiarism is one of the most serious infractions of student conduct and of the intellectual environment of the university. All faculty members have agreed that we will pursue disciplinary actions in all cases of plagiarism and that we will ask the Dean of Students and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies not only to suspend the offending student from the university but also prohibit the student from taking any further courses in Religious Studies. Make certain in your research paper that you attribute to the proper source all materials cited directly or indirectly, whether verbatim or paraphrased.