



Queensland  
Theological College



# NT301D/501D

## Jesus and the Gospels

### Online Learning Mode

### Unit Outline

#### **About this Unit Outline**

This unit outline contains information essential to finding your way around the unit **Jesus and the Gospels Online Learning Mode**. It provides a structure for your learning, giving details of lecture topics, assessment requirements, and key resources.

**SEMESTER 1 2018**

## Important notice

While every care has been taken to ensure accuracy in the information given below, **it is the personal responsibility of each student to check the current ACT Handbook**, copies of which may be found in the Library or online at the ACT's website: [www.acttheology.edu.au](http://www.acttheology.edu.au)

It is very important that students plan their time carefully to ensure that reading and especially assignments receive adequate attention and so as to prevent a bottleneck of work at the end of the semester.

It is very important that all quoted material in assignments be properly footnoted and acknowledged. The attention of students is drawn to the ACT's **Academic Misconduct Policy**, as well as ACT **Late Penalties Policy** and **Extensions Policy**, all of which are available on the ACT's website. Failure to comply with the standards required will incur penalties as outlined in the relevant ACT Policies.

The attention of students is also drawn to the section in the current ACT Handbook, headed **"Guidelines for Essays in Coursework Units"** (see also the QTC Student Handbook). All essays and assignments should comply with these standards.

# Information about this unit

## Unit description

Welcome to the study of the life and teaching of Jesus in the setting of the Gospels. No matter how often we read the Gospels, we always are surprised at some new aspect that emerges from the life of our Lord. I pray that as we progress through this study you will be surprised, challenged and encouraged by what you learn. I am looking forward to being a guide on the journey with you.

This unit entails an introductory study of Jesus' life and ministry against its background of the world of that time, as it is recorded in the Gospels. This involves a study of the cultural, political, religious and social background of the Gospels. The Gospels as pieces of literature are examined to see what we can learn about how they came into being and consequently how we can read them better. We then study the life and ministry of Jesus, particularly as this is set out by Mark's Gospel. Such topics as the Kingdom of God, the person of Jesus, the miracles, the ethics of Jesus, the parables, and the passion and resurrection of Jesus are highlighted.

I trust this will be an enjoyable and profitable time for you.

Nick Brennan.

## Learning Outcomes

### NT301D Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, students will:

#### Know and understand

1. The contents, themes and character of the canonical Gospel traditions
2. The life and ministry of Jesus

#### Be able to

1. Explain the influence of the historical, socio-cultural, religious and political setting of first century Palestine as the context of Jesus' life and ministry
2. Analyse the distinctive features of the four Gospels and the interrelationships between them
3. Discuss: a) the life and identity of Jesus; and b) the message and ministry of Jesus
4. Outline the message and the ministry of Jesus

#### Be in a position to

1. Integrate perspectives from 'Jesus and the Gospels' with their other theological studies
2. Apply perspectives from 'Jesus and the Gospels' to current issues in Christian life and thought

### **NT501D Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this unit, students will:

#### Know and understand

1. The contents, themes and character of the canonical Gospel traditions
2. The life and ministry of Jesus
3. Selected approaches to 'Jesus and the Gospels'

#### Be able to

1. Explain the influence of the historical, socio-cultural, religious and political setting of first century Palestine as the context of Jesus' life and ministry
2. Analyse the distinctive features of the four Gospels and the interrelationships between them
3. Discuss: a) the life and identity of Jesus; and b) the message and ministry of Jesus
4. Evaluate selected approaches to 'Jesus and the Gospels'

#### Be in a position to

1. Integrate perspectives from 'Jesus and the Gospels' with their other theological studies
2. Apply perspectives from 'Jesus and the Gospels' to current issues in Christian life and thought

## **How this Unit Contributes to the Course**

The unit is a core unit in the DipTh, DipMin, AssocDegTh, BTh, BMin, GradCertDiv, GradDipDiv or MDiv. An overall understanding of the literature, setting and theology of the Gospels is essential to further more detailed study of the Scriptures. A thorough understanding of the life of Christ and how he described his purpose and work is, of course, essential to Christian discipleship and ministry.

At QTC, all students studying a two, three or four year course include this unit within their studies.

## **Pre-requisites and Co-requisites**

This is a core unit and there are no pre-requisites or co-requisites associated with it.

## How this unit is organized & what we expect of you

This unit is delivered in online mode, and organised in terms of learning activities for you to undertake each week.

Every week we will look at a particular topic (see Unit Timetable), with learning each week involving a combination of reading notes provided by the lecturer, listening to audio material from the lecturer, and readings from the textbook to get you thinking about and applying the material learnt.

Audio recordings and reading notes will normally be provided to you in brief sections on Moodle, to help your learning to be more varied and enjoyable.

During most weeks of the unit you will also participate briefly in discussion on the online forum for the unit, as indicated in the assessment section of this unit outline: further details on what is expected regarding online forum contributions will be provided in Week 1 of the Semester.

The unit will also involve the completion of three further assessments which are designed not only to assess your learning, but also to help you to deepen your understanding of the text.

You will also be expected to read the relevant section of the course textbook (Blomberg) *before listening to the audio part of the lectures.*

This unit is worth 4 credit points. This means that throughout the semester BTh/BMin/AssocDegTh/DipTh/DipMin students and PCQ candidates' course students should be spending an average of 6–7 hours per week on this unit, including lectures. MDiv/GradDipDiv students should be spending an average of 7-8 hours per week, including the class time. If you find that you consistently have to spend more time than this on the unit, please speak with the unit coordinator as a matter of urgency.

Students are required to complete any set pre-reading, post-reading, ungraded exercises and all assessment tasks by the relevant due date.

## Teaching staff

LECTURER AND COURSE CO-ORDINATOR

Rev Nick Brennan

P 07 3062 6939

E [nbrennan@qtc.edu.au](mailto:nbrennan@qtc.edu.au)

Rev Dr Wesley Redgen,

P 07 3062 6939

E [wredgen@qtc.edu.au](mailto:wredgen@qtc.edu.au)

Please feel free to contact Nick if you have any problems or concerns about the course.

## Other Key Contacts

### Registrar's office

Contact the Registrar's office for any queries about which unit to enrol in next, if you wish to change your enrolment, defer due to illness, family circumstances etc., or request an extension for your assessment (criteria apply).

P 07 3062 6939, option 2

E [registrar@qtc.edu.au](mailto:registrar@qtc.edu.au)

### Moodle functions and queries

Contact the Registrar or the Assistant Registrar for help if something on Moodle is not working, if you need help using Moodle etc.

P 07 3062 6939, option 2

E [registrar@qtc.edu.au](mailto:registrar@qtc.edu.au)

### Library/Resources

Contact the Librarian for help with finding resources for your assessment, finding full-text database articles, for help with logging into the library databases and catalogue, to request a chapter of a book or article emailed to you, to request a book posted to you, and for help with how to renew a book for longer or place a hold on a book currently out to another person.

P 07 3062 6939, option 3

E [library@qtc.edu.au](mailto:library@qtc.edu.au)

## Unit timetable: topics & teaching and learning activities

College Week	Lecture Topics	Reading
Week 1 12-16 February	Introduction to the course Introduction to the Gospels	
Week 2 19-23 February	The Background to the Gospels – Political	Ch 1 Blomberg
Week 3 26 February – 2 March	The Background to the Gospels – Religious	Ch 2 Blomberg
Week 4 5-9 March	The Background to the Gospels - Cultural	Ch 3 Blomberg
Week 5 12-16 March	Synoptic problem Distinctive features of Matthew and John	Ch 4 & 5 Blomberg Ch 7 & 9 Blomberg
Week 6 19-23 March	Distinctive features of Luke	Ch 8 Blomberg
Week 7 26-30 March	Mark an outline and features;	Ch 6 Blomberg
EASTER HOLIDAYS / QTC MISSION		
Week 8 16-20 April	The Kingdom of God in Jesus' teaching	Ch 10 & 11 Blomberg
Week 9 23-27 April	The parables and their interpretation	Ch 12 & 13 Blomberg
Week 10 30 April – 4 May	The miracles of Jesus and their interpretation	Ch 14 & 15 Blomberg
Week 11 7-11 May	The ethics of Jesus including the sermon on the mount	Ch 16 Blomberg
Week 12 14-18 May	The passion and its place in the Gospel narratives	Ch 17 Blomberg
Week 13 21-25 May	Resurrection narratives and titles of Christ	Ch 17 Blomberg
Assessment Weeks: 28 May – 15 June		

## NT301D Assessments

**Assessments are submitted online via Moodle**

**In order to pass the unit, you must submit all assessment pieces and attain a mark of at least 50% for the unit as a whole.**

Unless an extension has been applied for and granted in accordance with the Late Penalty Policy found in the QTC Handbook, where a student submits an assessment past its due date, the assessment marks will be reduced at the rate of 3% of the total possible marks for the Assessment item per calendar day, up to 14 days late.

Your essays must also be within 10% of the required word limit and your ability to meet this requirement will also be taken into account in determining your mark. QTC seeks to prepare you for ministry, and in ministry delivering presentations on time and within an acceptable length are essential skills.

ASSESSMENT TASK	DESCRIPTION
<p><b>Forum Participation</b>  <b>Approx. 700 words</b>  <b>10% of final grade</b></p>	<p><b>On two occasions</b> during the semester, students will be asked to upload a <b>brief 150 word Summary</b> of the message of a specific passage within the book/topic we have been studying that week, with the lecturer allocating students to weeks for this task at the end of Week 1. When <b>not</b> scheduled to provide a summary, each student shall, in other weeks, <b>respond briefly in approximately 50 words</b> to the summaries uploaded by other students to the forum. Students will be assessed on their contribution to the forum over ten weeks of Semester. No forum contributions are required in Week 1 or in the weeks when the two primary document studies (see below) are due. In line with ACT attendance requirements, <b>students must contribute in at least eight out of the ten weeks</b>, otherwise they will receive a mark of zero out of ten. A student who does not contribute on at least four out of ten weeks will be deemed not to have attempted this assessment, and will fail the entire unit NT301D, since ACT policies require that students must submit all assessments to be eligible for credit for a unit.</p>
<p><b>Short Response 1</b>  <b>800 words</b>  <b>20% of final grade</b>  <b>DUE DATE: Wed 28 Mar</b></p>	<p>Write an 800 word short response to the following:                      What is a Gospel, and how does our understanding of this question affect our interpretation of the four Gospels?</p>
<p><b>Short Response 2</b>  <b>800 words</b>  <b>20% of final grade</b>  <b>DUE DATE: Wed 16 May</b></p>	<p>Write an 800 word short response to the following:                      Discuss the significance of parables in the ministry of Jesus, according to the Gospels.</p>
<p><b>Take-Home Exam:</b>  <b>2500 words</b>  <b>50% of final grade</b>  <b>DUE DATE: Wed 6 June</b></p>	<p>Students will answer three compulsory set questions, with each answer to be approximately 830 words in length. i.e. 2500 words in total. The questions will be made available via Moodle 7 days before the due date. See the Guide to Assessments in this unit outline for more details.</p>

## NT501D Assessments

**Assessments are submitted online via Moodle**

**In order to pass the unit, you must submit all assessment pieces and attain a mark of at least 50% for the unit as a whole.**

Unless an extension has been applied for and granted in accordance with the Late Penalty Policy found in the QTC Handbook, where a student submits an assessment past its due date, the assessment marks will be reduced at the rate of 3% of the total possible marks for the Assessment item per calendar day, up to 14 days late.

Your essays must also be within 10% of the required word limit and your ability to meet this requirement will also be taken into account in determining your mark. QTC seeks to prepare you for ministry, and in ministry delivering presentations on time and within an acceptable length are essential skills.

ASSESSMENT TASK	DESCRIPTION
<b>Forum Participation</b> <b>Approx. 800 words</b> <b>10% of final grade</b>	<p><b>On two occasions</b> during the semester, students will be asked to upload a <b>brief 200 word Summary</b> of the message of a specific passage within the book/topic we have been studying that week, with the lecturer allocating students to weeks for this task at the end of Week 1. When <b>not</b> scheduled to provide a summary, each student shall, in other weeks, <b>respond briefly in approximately 50 words</b> to the summaries uploaded by other students to the forum. Students will be assessed on their contribution to the forum over ten weeks of Semester. No forum contributions are required in Week 1 or in the weeks when the two primary document studies (see below) are due. In line with ACT attendance requirements, <b>students must contribute in at least eight out of the ten weeks</b>, otherwise they will receive a mark of zero out of ten. A student who does not contribute on at least four out of ten weeks will be deemed not to have attempted this assessment, and will fail the entire unit NT501D, since ACT policies require that students must submit all assessments to be eligible for credit for a unit.</p>
<b>Short Response 1</b> <b>1000 words</b> <b>20% of final grade</b> <b>DUE DATE: Wed 28 Mar</b>	<p>Write an 1000 word short response to the following:            Explain what the synoptic problem is, and discuss why it is significant for interpreting the gospels.</p>
<b>Short Response 2</b> <b>1000 words</b> <b>20% of final grade</b> <b>DUE DATE: Wed 16 May</b>	<p>Write an 1000 word short response to the following:            Discuss the meaning and significance of the phrase 'the kingdom of God' in the synoptic gospels.</p>
<b>Take-Home Exam:</b> <b>3200 words</b> <b>50% of final grade</b> <b>DUE DATE: Wed 6 June</b>	<p>Students will answer four compulsory set questions, with each answer to be approximately 800 words in length. i.e. 3200 words in total. The questions will be made available via QTC Moodle one week before the due date. See the Guide to Assessments in this unit outline for more details.</p>

## Guide to Assessments

### *What are we looking for?*

- All students are expected to read the guidelines for written assignments provided in the ACT Handbooks, available in the library or online. You should also read the relevant sections of the QTC Student Manual available on Moodle.
- All written work for this course should conform to the guidelines of the SBL Handbook of Style (with the exception of Australian spelling conventions.)
- All Greek and Hebrew cited must be typed in a Unicode font; SBL Bib Lit is commended as one font covering Greek Hebrew and Roman Unicode ranges, but is not required. It is freely available from the SBL website:  
<http://www.sblsite.org/educational/biblicalfonts.aspx>
- The Learning Resources listed in this outline provide a beginning point for research for assessments for this course; students are expected to engage with the works listed there, but are not limited to these resources. The literature on the Gospels is massive, and you are encouraged to consult widely.
- Do note carefully the number of words required for each assessment item, depending on whether you are enrolled for NT301D or NT501D.

### **Forum Participation**

Regarding the online participation requirement, we will run on a Wednesday to Wednesday cycle. You will have seven days from the date of the "class" to post any contributions which you would like to make to the forum, if you would like these contributions to go towards your 10% online participation mark. For example, in Week 3, you will be able to contribute comments that "count" from 5pm on the Wednesday of Week 3, until 11:59pm on the Wednesday of Week 4 (I give you a few extra hours to contribute as a bonus rather than an exact seven days!) You are not required to contribute in Week 1 - the formal requirement for online participation will not begin until Week 2.

Weekly topics will be assigned in Week 1 of the unit. When it is not a week where you are listed as having to supply a 150 word (for NT301D) or 200 word (for NT501D) contribution on the weekly topic, you should give some brief remarks or reflections responding to the students who have posted contributions that week.

In order to receive a mark for forum contributions, you need to post something appropriate on at least eight out of the ten weeks when the forums will run and students will be posting contributions.

For NT301D Students, the word count for this assessment is 700 words (i.e. two contributions of 150 words each plus eight responses each of 50 words)

For NT501D students the word count for this assessment is 800 words (i.e. two contributions of 200 words each plus eight responses each of 50 words).

What should a forum contribution or post look like? There is no single format or specific explanation that I have. If you are scheduled to contribute a 150/200 word post on any given

week, you might like to explore some topic which has come up in the unit materials for that week. Please avoid simply summarising what the Lecturer or the textbook has said - the best posts are those which go a little beyond the unit materials, either to reflect on implications of what we have learnt for today, or to reflect upon ethical/theological or practical Christian questions that arise out of the unit materials. You are not expected to do any additional reading to contribute to your posts (though if you wish to, this would be very welcome). In responding to the posts and contributions of other students, again you may discuss any matters which you think are relevant and potentially interesting, however please do be polite and sensitive to others and try and keep your posts related to the topic for the week.

Those contributing the 150/200 word posts each week should try if possible to contribute their posts to Moodle by the Sunday evening of the weekly cycle, to allow other students at least three days to respond.

### **Short Response Items**

Always make sure that you ANSWER THE QUESTION! Before you start to write, you may find it helpful to make sure that you can answer the question asked in a couple of sentences, and then take some time to make sure that your answer is structured appropriately.

The Short Response items require you to demonstrate a good understanding of the topic raised in each question. You will need to read about the topic in the textbook and in your lecture notes, and in resources on QTC Moodle. Then you should consult other books and journal articles to enhance your grasp of the issues. Where you quote words or ideas from these resources, you should acknowledge their authors in footnotes. Your answer should not be simply a collection of quotations, but should discuss the question 'in conversation' with the ideas of scholars who have written on the topic. Your answer should be concise but as thorough as possible within the number of words permitted.

### **Take-Home Exam**

The Take-Home Exam is about breadth of knowledge and understanding, rather than depth. You have only a small number of words with which to answer each question, and so you should not waste words going into highly specific details, or into any matters which are only indirectly related to the question.

Your main aim in each of your take-home exam answers should be to summarize briefly the major important points in relation to the question set, in a way that directly answers the question. You should answer the questions from what you have learnt in lectures, from the textbook (Blomberg), and a number of other resources. Use of resources beyond the lectures and the textbook will contribute to your mark – but the main thing you will be marked on will be your ability to clearly and accurately give a short answer to the question. You should demonstrate some reasonable sophistication in synthesising lecture, textbook, and additional resources. Higher grades will be allocated to those students who can demonstrate higher level skills, including analysis, evaluation and possibly some creative application. Your answers should argue a case rather than merely listing or describing relevant facts and details. All direct quotations in your answers from books and articles should be footnoted, but there is no need to footnote the lectures.

You are generally expected to spend 6-10 hours on a 'take-home' exam.

## Learning Resources

The unit timetable in this unit outline indicates chapters in the textbook for reading each week. The lectures are not designed to provide content that can be found in the textbook. The lectures will assume that the student has completed the reading chapter(s). During the lecture, certain aspects will be emphasised and explained and discussion will be encouraged in order to seek to apply what has been learned to life and understanding.

### TEXTBOOK:

#### ALL STUDENTS MUST BUY OR HAVE ACCESS TO THIS BOOK

Blomberg, C. *Jesus and the Gospels: an introduction and survey*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Leicester: Apollos 2009.

IF YOU WISH TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL BOOKS, THE NEXT ONE(S) TO PURCHASE WOULD BE

Green, Joel B., Jeannine K. Brown, Nicholas Perrin. eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. 2nd ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013.

OR

David A. deSilva. *Honour, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000.

### OTHER REFERENCES

Aland, Kurt. ed, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels: Greek-English edition of the Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*. 11th ed. Stuttgart: UBS, 2000.

Blomberg, C. L. *Interpreting the Parables*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Leicester: Apollos, 2012.

Carson, D. A. and D. J. Moo. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

Green, J. B., and L. M. McDonald eds. *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013.

Gundry, R. H. *A Survey of the New Testament*. 5th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

Guthrie, D. *New Testament Introduction*. 4th rev. ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1990.

Ladd, G. E. A. *Theology of the New Testament*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993.

Martin R. P. *New Testament Foundations: a guide for Christian students*. 2 vols. Exeter: Paternoster, 1975.

Pennington, J. T. *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

Pennington, J. T. *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2018.

Snodgrass, K. R. *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus*. Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2008.

Strauss, M. L. *Four Portraits, One Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels*. Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2007.

Wood, D. R. W., I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer and D. J. Wiseman eds. *The New Bible Dictionary*. 3rd ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1996.

Wright, N.T. *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1999.

This is a short listing. Students should consult the ACT website for further information: [acttheology.edu.au](http://acttheology.edu.au) Then click on 'Our Units', and Search for NT301 or NT501.

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

In most of the units you study at QTC, you will be asked to demonstrate your understanding of the subject matter by writing a short response answer, essay, research paper, book review, take-home exam or the like. Your lecturers and the Moderators of the Australian College of Theology will expect to see that you have consulted current academic research in the form of Journal Articles.

Q: So how do you find good journal articles?....

A: Search the online Journal Databases



**QTC makes available the following Journal Databases which will be useful for finding information for your Short Response answers and Take-Home Exam:**

- ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials

ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials is the full text version of the ATLA Religion Database (ATLA). This database is a collection of major religion and theology journals selected by some of the major religion scholars in the United States. Coverage of this database dates back to 1949.

- Religion and Philosophy Collection

This database provides extensive full-text coverage of such topics as world religions, major denominations, biblical studies, religious history, epistemology, political philosophy, and philosophy of language, moral philosophy and the history of philosophy.

- New Testament Abstracts

69,500+ records which cover New Testament general, Gospels-Acts, Epistles-Revelation, Biblical Theology and the World of the New Testament.

You can search all three databases at the same time through the same EBSCO Platform. Most journal articles will be available as a PDF which you can read, print or save. Access the databases via the QTC Library Webpage <https://www.qtc.edu.au/students/resources/library> and login with the username and password provided on Moodle under the QTC Library subject.

## ACT Standards: Grades

Grades in assessment instruments are awarded in the following categories-

Grade	Score	GPA
Fail (F)	0-49%	0
Pass (P)	50-57%	1
Pass+ (P+)	58-64%	1.5
Credit (C)	65-74%	2
Distinction (D)	75-84%	3
High Distinction (HD)	85+%	4