



**WBUonline Campus
School of Christian Studies**

UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

COURSE NUMBER & NAME:

RLGN 1302 VC04 New Testament History

TERM & DATES:

Fall 2 2021 Oct 11-Dec 11, 2021

INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. J. M. Givens Jr.

Professor of Theological Studies, Director of Online Christian Studies Programs

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office phone: 806.291.1166 (assistant 806.291.1160)

WBU Email: jgivens@wbu.edu

Mobile phone: 806.292.3957 (prefer to reserve this for emergency situations, which is not defined as last minute work based on student preference . . . plan ahead on assignments)

OFFICE HOURS, BUILDING & LOCATION:

Flores Bible Building office suite

Mon 10:00-11:30; 2:00-3:30; Tues 8:30-11:00; 2:00-3:00; Wed 10:00-11:00; 2:00-3:30; Thurs 8:30-9:30
CST/CDT (phone and instant messaging; email anytime or set up appointment for different time)

COURSE MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

Asynchronous interaction with specific deadlines managed through [Blackboard](#)

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

An introductory survey of the historical literature with special attention to the background and origins of Christian beliefs and practices, and to the life of Jesus Christ and the early Christian community.

PREREQUISITE:

None

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCE MATERIAL:

Title	Editor/Author	Publisher	Year	ISBN
NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible	Walton/Keener	Zondervan	2016	9780310431589

NOTE: Due to unique features of *The NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible* assigned in readings, other translations and other study Bibles are **NOT ACCEPTABLE** substitutes for class preparation. Use of a different text may impact performance in class.

NOTE: If you use the e-book version, pagination will not be the same as what is listed in Blackboard for the physical text. You will have to use the table of contents at front of text and/or list of articles at back of text to find assigned readings. (These are determined by the e-publishers and not the text publisher, so the version in Blackboard, Kindle, iBook, Nook, etc. are all different.)

NOTE: There is an Automatic eBook already in the Blackboard classroom – click on the menu link for information. In the Course Info section are explanations about the pros and cons of eBook and printed text. Should you wish to purchase a print copy remember to opt out by the date listed in Blackboard.

INTERNET EQUIPPED COMPUTER

1. Must conform to [minimum recommended settings](#) identified by WBUonline
2. Should use compatible browser and have [correct settings](#) as recommended by Blackboard
3. Must utilize WBU [student email account](#) for official university communications

WBU BLACKBOARD COURSE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

1. [Blackboard website URL](#)
2. Login username: WBU student id (9 digit number, usually 3-5 zeros at beginning)
3. Login password: first three letters of first name + first three letters of last name (unless you have used Blackboard previously and have changed your password)
4. Technical support: 24/7 via phone, chat, ticket requests; see links on Blackboard login page

OPTIONAL MATERIALS**Blackboard Mobile App**

Bb Student by Blackboard—Apple App Store or Google Play (only use as needed; many assignments are not displayed correctly in the app, so you will not see all instructions)

Internet or App for Audio-Mobile NIV texts

While textbook is required for additional readings, students may also access/download one of the following web-based or app-based texts of the NIV for assisting with the reading of the assigned Bible passages (apps in iTunes App Store or Google Play)

1. Bible Gateway app and [website](#)—free NIV audio and text within the app; 3 options available—dramatized and two readers

2. Other options exist for websites and apps, but remember these only provide the NIV text and not the additional reading assignments from the *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*

COURSE OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES:

The student will

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical, geographical, religious, and social context of the New Testament world.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of some of the critical methods used in New Testament studies.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic content of the New Testament and its main teachings (theological content).
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the canonical process producing a more complete understanding of the compilation of the New Testament.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Attendance for online courses is defined fully in the [university catalog](#).
2. Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses.
3. Student "attendance" in an online course is defined as active participation in the course as described in the course syllabus (completing weekly assignments).
4. Students aware of necessary absences must inform the professor with as much advance notice as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements.
5. Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 3 or more weeks of an 11 week term, may receive an F for that course.
6. Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given term is considered a "no-show" and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus.
7. When a student reaches a number of absences considered by the instructor to be excessive, the instructor will submit a Report of Unsatisfactory Progress to the student's WBU student email account and to appropriate university personnel.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported and second offenses will result in suspension from the university.

DISABILITY STATEMENT:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291-3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING CRITERIA:

1. *Blackboard Scavenger Hunt*. The hunt is designed to help familiarize you with the essential features of Blackboard. **Complete by Wednesday of Week 1 (3rd day of class). 1 point** will be deducted each day for **late submissions**.
2. *Assigned Readings*. Weekly reading assignments are listed in the schedule. These should be completed toward the beginning of the week as much as possible to ensure time to complete other assignments which depend on the readings.
3. *Lectures*. Students will read lectures each week.
4. *Weekly Quizzes*. After reading the Bible and the lecture, students will take a quiz to review understanding and to prepare for the final exam.
5. *Discussion Boards*. Students are expected to respond to weekly topics assigned by the instructor in a thoughtful, academic manner. These questions are reflective in nature and intended to encourage thought about the readings and lectures as well as to facilitate dialogue on these topics. **Sunday deadline for initial responses.**

Students should also engage in **robust discussions** with their classmates about posts on discussion boards. This is a minimal expectation of two substantive responses per week. These interactions are due by **Wednesday of the week following** the initial posts. All discussion posts should strive to build community and enhance the learning process.

Note: Because the university classroom is a place designed for the free exchange of ideas, we will frequently encounter the opinions of others which may seem novel and, occasionally, outlandish. We should show respect for one another in all circumstances. Part of the learning experience will be the opportunity to hear other opinions and/or interpretations of the assigned readings. Therefore, we should show respect for one another by exhibiting patience and courtesy. Persistent belligerence of another's views will **lower** your **class participation grade**.

6. *Cultural Backgrounds Journal*. Each week, you will read at least one article regarding the historical background of the New Testament from the textbook and post a reflective journal entry discussing how the reading helps you better understand the culture of the New Testament and/or the assigned readings. Details in Blackboard.
7. *Final Exam*. The final exam is comprehensive. Questions will be multiple choice, true/false, matching, and short answer/fill in the blank. The exams will cover material from the video lectures and assigned readings. The exam is closed book, closed notes. It may be difficult if you do not study and prepare for it throughout the term.

Note: The second exam will be **proctored** (monitored). The first exam is not proctored to give the student an idea of the exam expectations. The student is responsible to secure an approved proctor following [WBUonline process](#). (WBU testing sites do not require

WBUonline staff approval.) **Online remote proctoring is an option** if time or location hinders other approved testing venues.

Practice Quizzes: The final exam is difficult if you have not prepared through the course of the term. Each week, practice questions will be posted on Blackboard for the exam as soon as you complete the weekly graded exam. These questions are *related to actual questions* that will be on the exam. (The content is the same, although the question itself may appear in a different form on the exam.) **Practice quizzes are not graded. They are only for personal preparation for exams.** (The quizzes are visible in the grade center and may show a “grade” after you take them, but these grades are visible only so you can see your answers and level of success on the practice quiz.) The practice quizzes are provided to prepare students for the exam, like a personal tutor. ***Students can take the practice quizzes as often as they wish. Students who utilize practice quizzes on a weekly basis see significant improvement in exam score!*** If students do not know the answer to a practice question, they can find it by opening the corresponding lecture and reviewing it.

8. *Community Development (extra credit)*. It is important in this class to create a learning community to encourage active learning and enhance the online experience. As stated above, students should engage in **robust discussions** with their classmates about posts on discussion boards. If a student’s grade is on the border between two grades, overall interaction with classmates and instructor will be evaluated. In addition to responding to classmates’ posts on weekly assigned discussion topics, there is a weekly thread entitled “anything else?” where students can ask questions about issues in the reading they didn’t find addressed in the lectures or topics they would like to discuss about the readings/lectures. There are also a number of non-point discussion boards (prayer requests, study halls for quizzes) intended to encourage community. Other means to develop community that will be considered for borderline grades are the content posted to students’ wiki page, whether the student created an avatar and completed other scavenger hunt assignments, and utilized the practice quizzes.

GRADING CRITERIA

1. University Grading Scale

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	below 60

2. Computation of Final Grade

a. Blackboard Scavenger Hunt	5%
b. Weekly Quizzes:	25%
c. Weekly Discussion Boards:	25%
d. Cultural Backgrounds Journal:	15%
e. Final Exam:	30%
f. Practice Quizzes (prep for exams):	0%

Grade Appeal Statement: Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process

described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

COURSE CONTENT & OUTLINE

All reading assignments should be completed **PRIOR** to other assignments for the week.

Abbreviations are located on p. xv of *The NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*. **Please read in order assigned.**

Example of format of class; specific assignments will be posted weekly in Blackboard.

1. Introductions and overview of the Four Gospels
2. Birth and Childhood Narratives; Jesus' Galilean Ministry
3. Luke and John's Unique Features; Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem
4. Jesus' Final Week, Death, and Resurrection; the Primitive Church
5. Paul's Early Ministry and Letters; the Corinthian Correspondence
6. Paul's Later Ministry; Letter to the Romans; Prison Letters; Pastoral Letters
7. The General Letters and the Revelation
8. Final Exam

OBSERVATION AND INVITATION

This is an academic class which will explore the historical background and literary features of the New Testament. *The Christian belief about the Bible, however, is that it is intended to speak God's word to the reader about her or his own life circumstances.* Therefore, if you ever have **questions** about how the Bible readings apply to your own life **or wish to talk** about your personal, spiritual life in a format other than the classroom, I would be happy to visit with you by email, instant messaging, or phone.

CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT

It is the instructor's belief that the Bible is written *exactly* the way God intended for it to be written. Further, the instructor holds to the Baptist view of religious liberty for all—including his students.

The liberty I contend for is more than toleration. The very idea of toleration is despicable; it supposes that some have a pre-eminence above the rest, to grant indulgence; whereas, all should be equally free, Jews, Turks [i.e., Muslims], Pagans and Christians. Test oaths and established creeds should be avoided as the worst of evils.

- Virginia Baptist and First Amendment advocate John Leland;
quoted in *Baptist Ways* by Bill Leonard [2003], pp. 130-31)