

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Course	ENCOUNTERING JESUS IN THE GOSPELS NEWT 0619 1A
Date, Time, and Delivery Format	SEPTEMBER 11 – DECEMBER 4, 2023 ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Instructor	DUNCAN REID, MDiv, PhD Email: dreid@tyndale.ca Phone: 416 226 6620 ext. 2273
Class Information	<p>This course is designed to be asynchronous. Lectures are posted online so students can learn based on their own schedule; the same flexibility is built into the weekly forum discussions within the timeline parameters set out below. The professor plays an active role in moderating discussion, guiding research, and introducing topics and resources.</p> <p>WEEKLY COFFEE HOUR (via Zoom): Tuesdays from 1:30 to 2:30 pm on the days indicated on the course Moodle page (links on page under given week). Alternative arrangements to meet with the professor are possible for those who are unable to attend at these times.</p> <p>Email correspondence: a response can be expected within 1-3 business days.</p>
Course Material	<p>Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One.</p> <p>Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.</p>

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an opportunity to study Jesus through the lens of the canonical Gospels. We will consider what it means to know and follow Jesus based on an approach that combines careful academic enquiry with faithful engagement of the Gospels as scripture. In addition to

considering the methods and findings of the modern historical quest for Jesus, this course will reflect upon the nature and implications of various aspects of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection as they pertain to the life of faith and the mission of the church today.

Recommended prerequisites: BIBL 0501

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By actively listening to weekly lectures, participating in online forums, researching and writing a formal research paper, and composing a final integration paper, students will be able to:

1. Identify some of the different images of Jesus that have been proposed throughout history and into the modern era.
2. Reflect critically upon the historical and theological nature of the Gospels as first century narratives of Jesus' life.
3. Explain the relevance of the first century Jewish and Greco-Roman context for understanding Jesus and the Gospels.
4. Discuss the value of the 'the quest for the historical Jesus' in relation to the church and its mission.
5. Integrate historical, theological, and experiential approaches to knowing Jesus and engaging in his mission.
6. Describe the nature and ongoing relevance of Jesus' words and deeds related to his kingdom message.
7. Discuss the nature and significance of Jesus' death, resurrection, and incarnation.
8. Engage critically and creatively with the course materials and participants in working out the implications for personal spiritual formation and the mission of the church.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

In addition to listening to the weekly lectures on the course page on classes.tyndale.ca, you will be required to read the following:

Allison, D.C. *The Historical Christ and the Theological Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009. ISBN 978 0 8028 6262 4

Borg, Marcus J., and N. T. Wright. *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. ISBN 978 0 06 128554 7

Nolan, Albert. [*Jesus Today: A Spirituality of Radical Freedom*](#). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006. ISBN 978 1 57075 672 6

Stanton, Graham N. [*The Gospels and Jesus*](#). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. ISBN 978 0 19 924616 8

Note: while not required I highly recommend that you obtain a Gospel Synopsis (e.g., Aland or Throckmorton as listed in the bibliography) as an aid to consulting parallel Gospel accounts.

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

The following books provide some helpful additional background reading:

Theissen, Gerd, and Annette Merz. *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. ISBN 0 8006 3123 4

Eve, Eric. *Behind the Gospels: Understanding the Oral Tradition*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014. ISBN 978 1 4514 6940 0

Sanders, E. P. *The Historical Figure of Jesus*. London - New York: Penguin Books, 1995. ISBN 0140144994 9780140144994

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Living Jesus: Learning the Heart of the Gospel*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999. ISBN 0 06 064283 1

Wilkins, Michael J., and J. P. Moreland, eds. *Jesus Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995. ISBN 0 310 21139 5

Tyndale recommends www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance in this course is demonstrated by regular log-ins and up-to-date participation in forums.

Each student will be evaluated on the basis of the following assignments (percentage of course grade in brackets).

1. Weekly Reflection Posts:

Due weekly on any of 6 out of 12 weeks (5% of course grade)

A forum for posting these “Weekly Reflections” will appear on the course page just below the posted lecture videos for each week. It potentially addresses any one of the stated Learning Outcomes but especially #8. During any given week the student is expected to make **two posts** as follows: (1) provide a brief comment and/or question (one paragraph of 100-200 words) in response to the course material (lectures and/or reading) for the given week; (2) provide a brief response (one paragraph of 100-200 words) to the post of one other student who has posted that same week. At some point in your two posts comment on the practical significance of your reflections for Christian life and the mission of the church. You can choose the weeks on which you post but to obtain the full 5% of the course grade for this assignment you must post on at least 6 of the 12 weeks. As per the dates on the course page (and in the Course Schedule below), each week runs from Monday to Sunday. For a post to count toward the course grade it must be posted **before 11:59 pm on Sunday of the given week (after this the forum will be locked and therefore unavailable for new posts).**

Grading rubric: the following rubric will be used in grading this assignment:

Percentage of Course grade	Weekly Reflection Posts
5	Provides two posts on at least 6 out of 12 weeks. Each post is approximately 100-200 words in length and in keeping with the above description. Posts occur before 11:59 pm on Sunday of the given week and follow the ‘guidelines for online engagement’ listed below (under General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work).
4	As above but posts 5 out of 12 weeks.
3	As above but posts 4 out of 12 weeks.
2	As above but posts 3 out of 12 weeks.
1	As above but posts 2 out of 12 weeks.
0.5	As above but posts 1 out of 12 weeks.

2. Group Discussion Forums:

Three forums due on weeks 4, 6 and 8 (50% of course grade)

Group Discussion forums are an important component of this course and will involve you interacting with a small group of fellow students in relation to a question posted by the instructor. These discussion forums will address various aspects of the Learning Outcomes. The groups will be assigned randomly in week 3 and will consist of four or five students. The duration of each discussion forum will be one week (Monday to Sunday) and the format for each week will be as follows:

- (a) 'Discussion question': the **instructor** will post the discussion question along with assigned reading and a grading rubric (**NOTE**: in addition to appearing in the forums, a pdf document containing all the questions is posted directly below the syllabus on the course page, enabling you to work on your answers in advance).
- (b) 'Student responses': each student will post a response to the discussion question. Each response should be written as a prose style essay (**12 point font and double-spaced**). The specific length of each essay will be indicated in the question but will typically be 3-5 pages. The 'student response' must be **posted as a pdf document by 11:59 pm on Monday** of the given week. You will not be able to see other student responses until you have posted your own response.

Instructions on style: There is no need for a title page but you should have your name and a brief title in the header of the paper (or in the first line). Given the word/page limit you will need to be succinct in your response (e.g., no need for introductory paragraphs and extraneous words – just answer the question as succinctly and clearly as you can). There is much that can be said in three to five pages when you write clearly and succinctly, which is part of the challenge of this assignment. Do not use footnotes but instead provide in-text citations with page number references (e.g., Wright 2009, 33) when you are referencing secondary sources. You should also include a bibliography that provides full bibliographic information (e.g., Wright, N. T. Paul, *In Fresh Perspective*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009) for all the sources that you cite. The bibliography should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style (see below for links to this resource) and appear at the end of your document (it is not included in your page count).

- (c) 'Secondary reflection': once you have posted your response you will be able to see the responses of other students. After reading through the other 'student responses' from your group you need to post a single reflection (approximately 200 to 400 words) in which you summarize how your thinking has been enhanced, challenged and/or changed by reading the other responses in your group (this should be posted as a reply

directly into the dialogue box of the forum rather than as an additional pdf attachment). Any comments on the work of others should be given respectfully and conform to the 'guidelines for online engagement' listed below (under General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work). This summary comment must be **posted by 11:59 pm on Thursday** of the given week. No further posts are *required* but feel free to continue dialoguing over points of interest.

Assignment Grading: A grading rubric is posted on the course page. This includes guidelines on penalties for late or missed assignments.

3. Research Paper:

Due on Monday, November 27, 2023 (45% of course grade)

Subject matter: Each student will write an academic research paper related to encountering Jesus in the Gospels. The topic may be related to material discussed in the lectures, but students are free to propose alternative research topics according to interest, desire and relevance. In each case it will important to formulate a clear research question (e.g., what were the most likely human and historical factors that contributed to Jesus being executed by crucifixion?), which should be stated in your opening paragraph. In the process of answering your research question seek to integrate historical and theological methodology as well as drawing out the relevance of your findings for spiritual formation and the mission of the church today.

Form: The paper should have a clear introduction, body and conclusion. Your research question should be clearly stated in your introductory paragraph as well as an explanation of why you consider it important to address and how you plan to go about addressing it. The body of the paper should present your research findings in a clear and logical manner. The conclusion reiterates the key findings and conclusions of your research. Section headings should be used to organize the paper.

Style: The paper should be approximately 10 pages in length (maximum 12, not including title page or bibliography) with footnotes (not endnotes) and a bibliography of sources consulted. Please follow the Chicago Manual of Style for footnotes and bibliography (click on "Go to Notes and Bibliography" in the following Tyndale e-resource link: [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#)). The paper should be written in 12 point font, double-spaced, and preferably Times Roman font with 1 inch margins. The bibliography should include all items of secondary and primary literature that are cited (not Bibles but it is good to indicate in a footnote or parenthesis which version/versions you are using) and should include a good cross section of types (commentaries; books; articles) and viewpoints. Make sure to include page numbers and a title page (title of paper; your name; due date; course code and name of professor).

Please also consult "General Guidelines for Submission of Written Work" below.

This paper will be graded according to the following rubric:

	Research	Argumentation	Writing
A	Provides a clearly articulated research question and indicates why this question deserves attention. Provides evidence of in-depth research from a variety of secondary (and possibly primary) sources representing a cross section of views on the subject matter at hand. Bibliography of secondary sources includes at least 15-20 items (not including course texts, bibles or study bibles).	Presents research in a manner that succinctly, clearly and even-handedly summarizes the views of others. Demonstrates appreciation of the complexity of the issues while drawing clear conclusions based on a balanced appraisal of the evidence that identifies both the weaknesses and strengths of various viewpoints.	Writes clearly, succinctly and persuasively in presenting research and conclusions directly related to the research question. Paper is well organized and avoids confusion, unnecessary details and repetition, or inefficient wording. Uses appropriate footnoting and bibliography format that demonstrates a well-rounded and careful use of the research materials. Free (or almost free) of stylistic and grammatical mistakes.
B	Provides a clearly articulated research question and shows evidence of well-rounded research that includes different perspectives on the issue at hand. Bibliography of secondary sources includes at least 10-12 items (not including course texts, bibles or study bibles).	Presents research findings clearly and succinctly. Demonstrates ability to understand and critically evaluate differing viewpoints while drawing your own conclusions.	Writes clearly and persuasively in presenting conclusions. Organizes paper appropriately and utilizes proper footnoting and bibliographic style. Relatively few stylistic and grammatical errors.
C	Research question is provided but lacks clarity or relevance. There is evidence of research but secondary sources are limited in number, quality, and/or relevance.	Presents research findings and draws out a conclusion but lacks clarity and/or does not deal adequately or even-handedly with research materials.	Writing may be lacking in clarity, persuasiveness or organization. Fails to consistently use appropriate footnoting and bibliographical style.

	Bibliography of secondary sources includes at 6-10 items (not including course texts, bibles or study bibles).		Several stylistic and grammatical errors.
D	No clear evidence of a research question. Some evidence of research but secondary sources are limited in number, quality and relevance.	Confusing or inadequate presentation of findings and conclusions. Failure to understand or interact with secondary sources.	Writing is unclear and poorly organized. Footnoting and bibliography are inadequate or missing. Multiple stylistic and grammatical errors.
F	Either no paper submitted or paper lacks evidence of a research question and use of secondary sources.	Paper lacks any presentation of research findings or argumentation.	Paper is confusing and disorganized. No evidence of footnoting or bibliography. Stylistic and grammatical errors are multiple.

E. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

F. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation will be based upon completion of the assignments (as outlined above):

Assignment	Due Date	% of final grade
1. Weekly General Forum	Weekly (any 6 out of 12 weeks)	5%
2. Group Discussion Forums	Weeks 4, 6, 8	50%
3. Research Paper	Monday Nov 27	45%
Total Grade		100%

G. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Written assignments are due on the dates indicated above and should be type written, *double-spaced, 12 point font (preferably Times Roman; 10 point font for footnotes), and one inch margins*. Responses to forums should be posted directly into the given discussion forum. Please remember that these are academic forums and that all posted comments are expected to adhere to the following '**Guidelines for Online Engagement**' (especially when commenting on the work of others):

- Comments are consistently characterized by respectful language and tone toward others who you may disagree with;
- Comments are devoid of sexism, racism, personal attacks, 'put downs' or any other content that might be taken as personally offensive by others;
- Comments are respectful of class diversity in relation to age, gender, ethnicity, cultural background and denominational background;
- Comments avoid passing judgment on another person's motives or spiritual maturity;
- Comments avoid giving unsolicited pastoral advice, counsel, or spiritual direction to other students;
- While disagreement is expected, healthy and necessary to learning, it should be expressed in a respectful manner that invites further dialogue and growth in mutual understanding.

The remaining assignments (research and integration papers) should be uploaded onto the course page through the appropriate portal (Word or pdf formats will be accepted). Late papers (if the portal is closed) can be emailed directly to the professor at the email address at the top of this syllabus. Please label the file with your name and assignment (e.g., John Smith research paper). The deadline for submission is midnight on the due date.

It is expected that written work is submitted in a straightforward style of academic prose and demonstrates clear organization, argument and coherent thought. It ought to be free of spelling mistakes, punctuated correctly, and adhere to basic rules of grammar. Ensure that you have accurately and fully documented any secondary sources used in your paper (including footnotes and bibliography). If English grammar is challenging for you then you are expected to seek help (e.g. from the writing services of the Centre for Academic Excellence).

For proper citation style, consult the [tip sheet, "Documenting Chicago Style"](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially ch. 14. For citing scripture texts, refer to sections 10.44 to 10.48 and 14.238 to 14.241 from the *Chicago Manual of Style* or reference the [tip sheet, "How to Cite Sources in Theology"](#).

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests

and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#) as well as [tip sheets](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to text-matching software called Turnitin. This software is used to ensure the originality of academic writing and to check that all of the sources used have been cited correctly. The instructor for this course will be using this software for the research paper assignments that are submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. When you submit your assignment, you will see a summary of your submission, which includes the file(s) that you submitted as well as a similarity report generated by Turnitin.

Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (aa@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

H. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

The core of the course content involves the posted lectures and the required texts (Allison 2009; Borg & Wright 2007; Nolan 2006; and Stanton 2002). The following schedule indicates the subject matter of the weekly lecture, the reading schedule for required texts, the dates of online group discussion forums (assignment #3), and the date for submission of the research paper (assignment #3). Assignment #1 (Weekly Reflections) can occur on any of the given weeks.

Note: pay careful attention to the assigned reading as the load varies from as high as 97 pages (week 6) to as low as 45 pages (week 8) in a given week. It will be helpful to keep this in mind as you plan your reading schedule. While I have assigned most chapters in the required texts you will notice that some have been made optional.

Week 1: Sep 11 – 17

Online lecture: Images of Jesus: yesterday and today

Required reading: Allison 1-52 (52 pages; chaps 1 + 2); Nolan xvii-xx and 1-25 (28 pages; Intro and chaps 1 + 2) (total 80 pages)

Week 2: Sep 18 – 24

Online lecture: Searching for Jesus: what kind of sources do we have?

Required reading: Stanton 1-36 and 122-139 and 143-163 (75 pages; chaps 1, 2, 7, 8); Nolan 26-35 (10 pages; chap 3) (total 85 pages)

Week 3: Sep 25 – Oct 1

Online lecture: Searching for Jesus: history and theology

Required reading: Allison 53-78 (26 pages; chap 3); Stanton 164-177 (14 pages; chap 9); Borg & Wright vii-xi and 3-27 (30 pages; Intro and chaps 1 + 2); Nolan 36-46 (11 pages; chap 4) (total 81 pages)

Week 4: Oct 2 – 8

NOTE: On-line group discussion forum #1 (assignment #2)

Online lecture: Putting Jesus in his place: the first century Mediterranean world of Jesus and the Gospels

Required reading: Allison 79-103 (25 pages; chap 4); Stanton 178-202 (25 pages; chaps 10 + 11); Nolan 47-62 (16 pages; chap 5) (total 66 pages)

Week 5: Oct 9 – 15

Online lecture: Jesus and the message of the kingdom: a general introduction

Required reading: Allison 104-119 (16 pages; chap 5); Stanton 203-217 (15 pages; chap 12); Nolan 63-88 (26 pages; chaps 6 + 7) (total 57 pages)

Optional reading: Stanton 218-231 (15 pages; chap 13)

Week 6: Oct 16 – 22

NOTE: On-line group discussion forum #2(assignment #2)

Online lecture: Jesus and the message of the kingdom in individual Gospels

Required reading: Stanton 37-121 (85 pages; chaps 3, 4, 5, 6); Nolan 89-100 (12 pages; chap 8) (total 97 pages)

READING DAYS: Oct 23 – 29 (No lecture of forums this week)**Week 7: Oct 30 – Nov 5**

Online lecture: Jesus' deeds of power yesterday and today

Required reading: Stanton 232-239 (8 pages; chap 145); Borg & Wright 31-76 (46 pages; chaps 3 + 4); Nolan 101-110 (10 pages; chap 9) (total 64 pages)

Week 8: Nov 6 – 12

NOTE: On-line group discussion forum #3 (assignment #2)

Online lecture: Encountering Jesus' death: a general introduction

Required reading: Stanton 255-291 (37 pages; chaps 17 + 18); Nolan 111-118 (8 pages; chap 10) (total 45 pages)

Week 9: Nov 13 – 19

Online lecture: Encountering Jesus' death in individual Gospels

Required reading: Borg & Wright 79-107 (29 pages; chaps 5 + 6); Nolan 119-136 (18 pages; chaps 11 + 12) (total 47 pages)

Week 10: Nov 20 – 26

Online lecture: Encountering the risen Jesus

Required reading: Borg & Wright 111-142 (32 pages; chaps 7 + 8); Nolan 137-156 (20 pages; chap 13 + 14) (total 52 pages)

Optional reading: Borg & Wright 189-204 (16 pages; chaps 13 +14)

Week 11: Nov 27 – Dec 3

NOTE: Research Paper (Assignment #3) due on Monday, November 27

Online lecture: Incarnation and divinity

Required reading: Stanton 240-245 (6 pages; chap 15); Borg & Wright 145-168 (24 pages; chaps 9 + 10); Nolan 157-179 (23 pages; chaps 15 + 16) (total 53 pages)

Optional reading: Borg & Wright 171-186 (16 pages; chaps 11 +12)

Week 12: Dec 4 – 8

Online lecture: Discipleship and mission: following Jesus today

Required reading: Stanton 292-299 (8 pages; chap 18); Borg & Wright 207-250 (44 pages; chaps 15 + 16); Nolan 180-192 (13 pages; chap 17) (total 52 pages)

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

([Tyndale Library](#) supports this course with [e-journals](#), [e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).)

The bibliography of secondary literature on Jesus and the Gospels is enormous. A select bibliography of primary and secondary literature has been posted separately on the course web site.

VI. FINAL COMMENTS

In the interest of achieving these desired aims of this course it may be necessary to alter details in the above outlined syllabus.