

Petrine Epistles

NT 2XP3/ 3XP3 / 6XP6

McMaster Divinity College
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Fall 2015 (Term 2)
Saturdays (9:00am–4:00pm)
Sept 26; Oct 31; Nov 14; Dec 5

COURSE DESCRIPTION

NT 3XP3 / 6XP6 — Petrine Epistles

It is always the case that some books of the Bible are emphasized more than others. In this course, we will examine two New Testament epistles that are often neglected in both academic and ecclesial contexts. Together, we will try to determine why these letters are often neglected, and we will strive to understand their distinctive contribution to the New Testament and to Christian theology. In particular, we will explore how the letters' emphasis on suffering and hope is relevant in different parts of the world today, including post-Christendom Canada.

Students taking this course as MA/PhD student will focus on scholarly discussions surrounding the Petrine Epistles and will produce new and insightful analyses of the letter using one or more interpretive methods.

NT 2XP3 — Preaching the Petrine Epistles Using Greek

In addition to the above, this course for Pastoral Language students will provide an opportunity for further engagement with the Greek of the New Testament. In particular, students will learn additional vocabulary, and will practice reading, exegeting, and translating passages from the Petrine Epistles.

SPECIALIZATIONS

Biblical Studies (BS)

Students taking this as a Biblical Studies course will be encouraged to explore the historical and cultural setting of the Epistles, as well as scholarly debates concerning the interpretation of their contents.

Christian Worldview (CW)

Students taking this as a Christian Worldview (CW) course will be encouraged to examine the worldview that underlies the Epistles and to bring it into dialogue with 21st-century worldviews, with a primary goal being to discern what contemporary worldviews might learn from the Petrine Epistles.

Pastoral Studies (PS)

Students taking this as a Pastoral Studies (PS) course will be encouraged to explore how the ideas and exhortations in the Epistles are relevant for Christian faith and practice in the 21st century, with special emphases on suffering, social identity, and communal purity/integrity.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will be encouraged to:

Knowing

- Memorize the basic structure and content of the Petrine Epistles
- Learn about the historical and cultural setting in which the Petrine Epistles were written
- Understand how 1 and 2 Peter seek to strengthen Christian faith
- Learn more Greek vocabulary and grammar (NT 2XP3 only)
- Gain some exposure to the Greek of 1 & 2 Peter (NT 2XP3 only)

Being

- Appreciate the importance of participating in respectful discussions about biblical texts
- Develop the ability to reflect upon the contemporary relevance of ancient biblical texts in a humble manner that is sensitive to both ancient and contemporary contexts
- Learn about and respond to Jesus' example as a human sufferer
- Become cautious interpreters of Greek texts (NT 2XP3 only)

Doing

- Develop responsible exegetical methods
- Talk intelligently about 1 and 2 Peter
- Draw upon the Petrine Epistles in order to address matters of importance in the 21st century
- Take time to examine the Petrine Epistles in their original language (NT 2XP3 only)

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Prerequisites for NT 2XP3: NT 1C03 and NT 1A03, or equivalent.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Note: Students are required to complete all of the following assignments. No unfinished assignments are permitted. *Each written assignment should be uploaded in PDF format to the designated Avenue to Learn dropbox. A penalty of 2% per day will be applied to all late*

assignments. Assignments cannot be submitted after December 18th without written permission from the Office of the Registrar (thomn@mcmaster.ca).

NT 3XP3 — Petrine Epistles

1. Class Preparation and Participation (0%). Students are expected to complete assigned readings, to attend all Saturday classes, and to participate in class discussions.
2. Reflection Papers (5% + 15% = 20%). At the beginning of the semester, each student will briefly describe how they view the Petrine Epistles and how they understand their relevance for discipleship, theology, and ministry. At the end of the semester, the same assignment will be repeated, with emphasis falling on how the student's understanding has been challenged and refined. The initial paper should be roughly 600 words and is due on **September 19**; the concluding paper should be roughly 1,200 words and is due on **December 12**. Please note that, while the use of the first person is an integral part of these assignments, the thoughts included in them should be well-organized and clearly presented (i.e. they are not to be casual diary entries). For information about what constitutes good self-reflection, see the relevant rubric on Avenue to Learn (A2L).
3. Reading Reflections and Discussions (20%). Following the reading of each major section in *The Life and Witness of Peter* (i.e., chs. 1–5; 6–10; 11–14; 15–17), students will write a brief reflection that engages with the assigned reading. These four reflections must demonstrate familiarity with what has been read, including either a quotation or a brief summary of the specific claim(s) under discussion, but more importantly, they should discuss how the ideas presented in the reading have informed or challenged either the student's understanding of Peter and the Petrine Epistles or the student's understanding of the importance/relevance of the Petrine Epistles. Students with different specializations will no doubt wish to focus on different aspects of the reading, but there is no restrictive focus for the reflections; they can engage in matters of history, exegesis, theology, spirituality, contemporary life, ministry, etc., and they can make reference not only to general points but also to specific life situations or specific contemporary contexts for which the ideas in the assigned reading seem relevant. The only overriding requirements as regards content are that the reflections: (1) engage explicitly with the relevant section in *The Life and Witness of Peter*; and (2) engage in thoughtful and critical reflection such as would lead to the development of a more mature awareness (e.g. the questioning of prior assumptions, the formation of new insights, the recognition of previously unseen implications/applications, etc.) as opposed to rote summarization or affirmation of familiar ideas and commitments. Each of the four reflections will be posted on an Avenue to Learn discussion forum, and then students will interact with one another by means of follow-up discussion threads. Each initial reflection post should be approximately 400–500 words, and follow-up posts should include thoughtful responses that in some way

clarify, challenge, or extend the reflections of others. The discussion posts may be written the casual style of discussion forums, but their content should be well-articulated and easy to follow. The due dates and times will follow the schedule below (i.e. **September 25; October 30; November 13; December 4**).

4. Past-Oriented Paper (25%). In this assignment, students will study some socio-cultural feature of the first-century world (e.g. sacrificial systems, ancient households, slavery, the persecution of early Christians, honour and shame, etc.) and then explore how familiarity with that cultural feature enhances their understanding of a specific passage (or group of passages) from the Petrine Epistles. Each paper must include three elements: (1) a discussion of some ancient socio-cultural context; (2) a discussion of how this context is relevant to the message of 1 and/or 2 Peter; and (3) a comparison of our 21st-century context with the ancient context and a discussion of how knowing (or not knowing) the ancient context affects 21st-century readings of the Petrine Epistles. The results of this exercise will be written up in a paper that is 3,000 words in length, that cites appropriate scholarly resources, and that follows the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*. Topics and passages should be approved by the professor as soon as possible. Papers are due on **October 24**.
5. Present-Oriented Paper and Presentation (25% + 10% = 35%). In this assignment, students will write a paper that evaluates the contemporary significance of one of the following: (a) Peter's perspective on suffering; (b) Peter's eschatological hope; (c) Peter's moral exhortations; (d) Peter's warnings about false teachers. Then each student will present, in a conversational manner, an oral discussion of their topic that effectively communicates the results of their research to fellow students in the class. The written papers must include three elements: (1) a discussion of the chosen Petrine theme, including careful interaction with the relevant biblical passages; (2) a comparison of Peter's ancient context with our 21st-century context, with a special focus on cultural dynamics that complicate a contemporary appropriation of Peter's teaching (e.g. the notion of human rights, the passing of 2,000 years, changing morals, church growth and denominationalism, etc.); and (3) a discussion of how 21st-century Christians can appropriate and embody the chosen theme, including very concrete examples. All three elements need to be present in all papers, but they do not need to be evenly weighted in terms of length; rather, BS students should emphasize the first, CW students should emphasize the second, and PS students should emphasize the third. In total, all papers should be 3,500 words in length, they must incorporate appropriate scholarly resources, and they should follow the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*. Presentations may not be longer than 10 minutes, and should not involve visual aids. Presentations will take place on **December 5**. Papers are due on **December 12**.

NT 2XP3 — Preaching Using Greek

1. Class Preparation and Participation (0%). See above.
2. Reflection Papers (5% + 15% = 20%). See above.
3. Reading Reflections and Discussions (20%). See above.
4. Notes and Translations (30%). Pastoral Language students will submit a detailed set of notes pertaining to three assigned passages from the Petrine Epistles. The notes should provide basic text-critical comments, parsings (where a form is tricky or where one of its grammatical features is important for discussion), information about word meanings, grammatical observations or questions, comments on how the passage relates to the wider context of 1 or 2 Peter, historical observations, socio-cultural observations, theological insights, and the like. In essence, the notes should demonstrate awareness of (although not necessarily mastery of) the various things about which a good pastor will be aware when preaching or teaching a biblical text. Alongside these notes, the assignment must also include the student's own translation of the assigned passage into smooth and readable English, with the translation taking into account the issues raised in the notes. In order to complete this assignment, students will use the apparatus in their Greek New Testament, their existing knowledge of the Greek language, grammar books and lexicons, electronic videos and/or readings posted to Avenue to Learn, the OpenText.org annotations and/or other web resources, and commentaries on the Petrine Epistles. Students who are unfamiliar with any of these resources will find help on Avenue to Learn. There will also be a discussion forum on Avenue to Learn where students can ask questions, help one another, and receive assistance from the professor and his graduate assistant(s).
5. Exegetical Paper (30%). Each Pastoral Languages student will write an exegetical paper that contains a sustained exegetical discussion of a specific passage from the Petrine Epistles and that employs suitable methods of biblical scholarship. The paper should demonstrate awareness of the text-critical, linguistic, historical, sociological, and theological facets of the chosen passage, citing commentaries, scholarly books on the topic/passage, journal articles, and reference books (e.g. grammars, lexicons, encyclopedias/dictionaries). It must also discuss how the passage speaks into contemporary theology, discipleship, and ministry. Papers should be at least 3,500 words in length, and should follow the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*. Topics are to be chosen in consultation with the professor as soon as possible. The essay is due on **December 12**.

NT 6XP6 — Petrine Epistles (M.A./Ph.D)

1. Class Preparation and Participation (0%). Students are expected to complete assigned readings, to attend all Saturday classes, and to participate in class discussions. Additional readings for MA/PhD students will be assigned and/or distributed during of the course.

2. Issue-Oriented Research Paper (50%). In this paper, students will advance an argument pertaining to an important scholarly issue involving the Petrine Epistles. The paper must be 7,000 words in length and must follow the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*. It is due on **October 30**.

3. Text-Oriented Research Paper (50%). In this assignment, students will analyze a specific passage (or groups of passages) from the Petrine Epistles using one or more interpretive methods. The paper must be 7,000 words in length and must follow the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*. It is due on **December 12**.

For all students, the professor assumes that students already know how to research and write papers. Content, clear thinking and depth of analysis and research are the most important requirements, but clarity and consistency of presentation are also of high importance. Students *must* follow the style guidelines in the presentation of their work, and students are strongly encouraged to read the rubrics on Avenue to Learn *before* working on any written assignments.

All assignments must be in by **December 18**. No assignments will be accepted after that date.

GRADING SUMMARY

NT 3XP3 – Petrine Epistles

Participation	---
Introductory Reflection	5%
Reading Reflections & Discussions	20%
Past-Oriented Paper	25%
Present-Oriented Paper	25%
Presentation	10%
<u>Final Reflection</u>	<u>15%</u>
TOTAL	100%

NT 2XP3 – Preaching Using Greek

Participation	---
Introductory Reflection	5%
Reading Reflections & Discussions	20%
Notes and Translations	30%
Exegetical Paper	30%
<u>Final Reflection</u>	<u>15%</u>
TOTAL	100%

NT 6XP6

Participation	---
Issue-Oriented Research Paper	50%
Textual-Oriented Research Paper	50%
TOTAL	100%

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

Students are required to possess the following:

NT 3XP3 — *Petrine Epistles*

An English translation of the New Testament.

Helyer, Larry R. *The Life and Witness of Peter*. Downer's Grove, IVP, 2012.

Note: Additional electronic readings will be made available through Avenue to Learn (A2L).

NT 2XP3 — *Preaching Using Greek*

Students are required to possess the following:

An English translation of the New Testament.

Helyer, Larry R. *The Life and Witness of Peter*. Downer's Grove, IVP, 2012.

A standard edition of the Greek New Testament, such as the Nestle-Aland (27th or 28th ed.), UBS (4th or 5th ed.).

A suitable Greek–English lexicon (see below).

Porter, Reed, and O'Donnell, *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

Students are recommended to possess (or have access to) the following:

A parsing tool, such as biblewebapp.com, Bibleworks, Logos, or Accordance.

Porter, Stanley E., *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).

Metzger, Bruce Manning. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2nd ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994. [A copy can be made available for consultation during the semester.]

NT 6XP6 — Petrine Epistles (M.A./Ph.D)

Students are required to possess the following:

A standard edition of the Greek New Testament, such as the Nestle-Aland (27th or 28th ed.), UBS (4th or 5th ed.).

Note: Additional readings will be made available through Mills library or through Avenue to Learn (A2L).

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Saturday Sessions	Class Agenda
Sep 26	Welcome & Presentation of Syllabus The Apostle Peter Introduction to 1 Peter 1 Peter 1
Oct 31	1 Peter 2–5
Nov 14	Introduction to 2 Peter 2 Peter 1–3
Dec 5	Guest Lecture: Peter and Post-Christendom Concluding Thoughts Oral Presentations

Due Dates	Assignments
Sep 19 @ 11:59pm	Initial Reflection
Sep 25 @ 11:59pm	Reading Reflection (chs. 1–5)
Oct 24 @ 11:59pm	Past-Oriented Paper <u>OR</u> Notes & Translations
Oct 30 @ 11:59pm	Reading Reflection (chs. 6–10) <u>OR</u> Issue-Oriented Research Paper
Nov 13 @ 11:59pm	Reading Reflection (chs. 11–14)
Dec 4 @ 11:59pm	Reading Reflection (chs. 15–17)
Dec 12 @ 11:59pm	Present-Oriented <u>OR</u> Exegetical <u>OR</u> Textual-Oriented Research Paper
Dec 12 @ 11:59pm	Concluding Reflection

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY (NOT INCLUDING ESSAYS/ARTICLES)

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Balch, David L. *Let Wives Be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter*. SBLMS. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981. BS 2795.2 .B34

Bauckham, Richard. *Jude, 2 Peter*. WBC 50. Waco: Word Books, 1983.

Beare, Francis Wright. *The First Epistle of Peter*. 2nd ed. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1958. Storage 227.92 .B582 B2

Beasley-Murray, George Raymond. *The General Epistles: James, 1 Peter, Jude, 2 Peter*. Bible Guides. London: Lutterworth, 1965. BS 2777 .B43 1965

Best, Ernest. *1 Peter*. New Century Bible. London: Oliphants, 1971. BS 491 .C4 1971 V.279

Bird, Jennifer G. *Abuse, Power and Fearful Obedience: Reconsidering 1 Peter's Commands to Wives*.

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- Brown, Raymond Edward, Karl P. Donfried, and John Henry Paul Reumann. *Peter in the New Testament*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1973. BS 2615 .P47
- Cavin, Robert L. *New Existence and Righteous Living: Colossians and 1 Peter in Conversation with 4QInstruction and the Hodayot*. BZBW 197. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013. BS 410 .Z7 NO.197
- Charles, J. Daryl. *Virtue Amidst Vice: The Catalog of Virtues in 2 Peter 1*. JSNTSupp. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997. BS 2795.2 .C43 1997
- Cranfield, C. E. B. *The First Epistle of Peter*. London: SCM, 1950. Storage 227.92 .C891
- . *I & II Peter and Jude: Introduction and Commentary*. Torch Bible Commentaries. London: SCM, 1960. BS 2795.3 .C7 1960
- Cross, F. L. *I Peter: A Paschal Liturgy*. London: A.R. Mowbray, 1954. 227.92 .C951 Storage
- Cullmann, Oscar. *Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr: A Historical and Theological Study*. 2nd ed. The Library of History and Doctrine. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962. BS 2515 .C813 1962
- Danker, Frederick W. *Invitation to the New Testament Epistles IV: A Commentary on Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, and Jude, with Complete Text from the Jerusalem Bible*. Doubleday New Testament Commentary Series. Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1980. BS 2775.3 .D26
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- . *The First Epistle of Peter*. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. BS 2795.3 .D32 1990
- . *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006. BS 2795.53 .D38 2006
- Donelson, Lewis R. *I & II Peter and Jude: A Commentary*. NTL. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010.
- Dryden, J. de Waal. *Theology and Ethics in 1 Peter: Paraenetic Strategies for Christian Character Formation*. WUNT. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006. BS 2795.52 .D79 2006
- Du Toit, David S. *Bedrängnis und Identität: Studien zu Situation, Kommunikation und Theologie des 1. Petrusbriefes*. BZBW 200. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013. BS 410 .Z7 NO. 200

- Dubis, Mark. *1 Peter: A Handbook on the Greek Text*. BHGNT. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2010.
- Elliott, John Hall. *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Doubleday, 2000. BS 192.2 .A1 1964 .G3 V.37B
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Reassessments of the Letter of First Peter. LNTS 364. London: T & T Clark, 2007.

Webb, R.L., and D.F. Watson. *Reading Second Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of Second Peter*. LNTS 382. London: T & T Clark, 2008.

Williams, Martin. *The Doctrine of Salvation in the First Letter of Peter*. SNTSMS 149. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. BS 2795.6 .S25 W55 2011

Williams, Travis B. *Good Works in 1 Peter: Negotiating Social Conflict and Christian Identity in the Greco-Roman World*. WUNT 337. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014. BS 2795.6 .S55 W55 2014

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SUITABLE GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICONS

Bauer, Walter, Frederick W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

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CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

The following guidelines are presented to encourage all students to participate together in this course, and should be kept in mind at all times.

1. Please respect the opinions of others, even if you do not agree with them. Extend courtesy by not ridiculing others' ideas, but feel free to respond to them logically and critically and in an orderly manner.

2. Students should be on time to class, or be prepared to offer an explanation after class to the professor.
3. Students are expected to stay for the entire class session, unless arranged in advance.
4. Students may eat and drink in class so long as they do not distract others or leave a mess behind.
5. Students should not engage in anything during class time that prevents them from focusing and participating in class discussions.
6. Students are not to carry on private conversations in class. If something is unclear, the whole class will benefit by a question being asked out loud.
7. Cell phones and related devices are to be silenced during class. If a student must for some reason accept a phone call, he or she ought to discretely leave the class in order to do so.

Students who fail to respect these guidelines will be dismissed from the class, with all of the consequences implied.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty (<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>).

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) for plagiarism detection. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com can submit an electronic copy of their work via email in PDF format and no penalty will be assigned, but all submitted work is subject to normal verification standards in order to ensure that academic integrity has been upheld (e.g. online search).

STYLE

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*:

https://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdc_styleguide.pdf

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

GENDER INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.