New Testament Theology
and
Early Christian Literature

Catholic Bible Institute of Southern Arizona – May 14, 2016
https://www.diocesetucson.org/pastoral-service/cbisa/

Felix Just, S.J., Ph.D. – Loyola Institute for Spirituality
http://catholic-resources.org

9:15 Opening Prayer & Announcements

9:30 Session 1 – New Testament Theology/Theologies
Small-group Discussion: Is there an overall “message” in the NT? What is it?
Types of Theology: God/Trinitarian, Christology, Pneumatology, Ecclesiology, Soteriology…
Theologies of Each of the Four Evangelists
Theology of Paul
Theologies of James, Hebrews, and other NT Writers?
Written Assignment for May: Top five take-aways from this year? (over)

11:00 Session 2 – Early Christian Literature: An Overview
Review: Definitions of “Canon” (Bible: OT & NT) & Criteria for Canonicity
Definitions of “Non-canonical”; “Apocryphal”; “Patristic”; “Pre/Post-Nicene”; etc.
Ancient Jewish Writings: OT Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha (HO, pg. 1)
Early Christian Writings: Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles, Apocalypses (HO, pg. 2)
Patristic Literature: Letters, Martyrdoms, Apologies, Sermons, etc. (HO, pg. 3)
Pre-Nicene Writings: Didachë, Epistles of St. Ignatius, Martyrdom of Polycarp (HO, pp. 8-10)
Discussion: What can we learn from these post-biblical early Christian texts?

1:30 Session 3 – Apocryphal Gospels: More Stories about Jesus
Q: Why were these Gospels not included in the NT Canon? What is their value for Christians today?

3:00 Session 4 – Apocryphal Acts & Apocalypses: More Stories about the Apostles
HO texts, pp. 5-6: Acts of Peter, Acts of Paul & Thecla
HO texts, pp. 6-7: Revelation of Paul, Apocalypse of Adam
Q: Why were these texts not included in the NT Canon? What is their value for Christians today?

4:20 Announcements & Thanks; Closing Prayer & Blessing
TOPIC:
What are the FIVE (5) most significant things you learned about the New Testament over the past year, and how do these new insights affect your life and faith?

- Think of truly important insights that you gained this year, not just trivial facts about biblical history or content.
- Try to think of five different things, not just five variations of the same point.
- For each of your five points, not only briefly state WHAT you learned but also explain HOW this insight truly affects your life and how you live your faith.

Format:
- Please do NOT follow the four-part structure that we used for all monthly papers this year (literal, rhetorical, personal, communal).
- Rather, simply explain your five points in five numbered paragraphs (1 to 5).
- Include a brief/compact heading (give your name and your table number/name).
- Your paper should be typed, single-spaced, using normal-sized font (10-12 point), with one-inch margins all around.
- Write about two (2) pages total; that is, each of your five points should require one or two paragraphs: more than just one sentence, but not a whole page each.

Due Date:
- Please email your paper to your reader within two weeks (by May 30, 2016).
- Your reader will then forward all papers from your table-group to both Sr. Paha and to Fr. Just.

THANK YOU for your participation in the CBISA this past year!

May God continue to inspire and enlighten you through the Sacred Scriptures!