

*“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.”*

<b>Course</b>	<b>THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS</b> NEWT 0726
<b>Date, Time, and Delivery Format</b>	SEPTEMBER 12 – DECEMBER 9, 2022 MONDAYS, 6:45 PM – 9:35 PM IN-PERSON ONLY
<b>Instructor</b>	<b>IAN SCOTT, PhD</b> Telephone/voice mail: (416) 226-6620 Ext. 6719 Email: <a href="mailto:iscott@tyndale.ca">iscott@tyndale.ca</a>
<b>Class Information</b>	The classes will be in-person on Mondays from 6:45 PM – 9:35 PM. Students may participate in live-streamed/in-person office hours as posted below.  <b>In-person Office Hours:</b> Mondays 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM <b>Livestream Office Hours:</b> Thursdays 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM Other times by appointment
<b>Course Material</b>	Access course material at <a href="https://classes.tyndale.ca">classes.tyndale.ca</a> or other services at <a href="#">Tyndale One</a> . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

## I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study focusing on the Gospel of John on the basis of the English text. After reviewing the background to the Gospel, emphasis is placed on tracing the author’s thought and identifying theological motifs.

Not long after it was written the Gospel of John was called a “more spiritual” account of Jesus’ life. The Fourth Gospel’s direct teaching and evocative symbolism have helped to make it one of the most influential books in the New Testament. In this course we will examine the Gospel of John from the standpoints of history, literature, theology, and spirituality. Students will gain hands-on experience using academic tools and methods to reconstruct the original context and

significance of John's message. We will also employ some techniques from literary criticism to explore the contours of John's story. Finally we will ask how the Fourth Gospel might shape our thought and practice in the contemporary world. Along the way we will compare a modern academic commentary on John with an early commentary by a great Christian leader of the 4th century AD. This comparison will give us the opportunity to reflect on the variety of ways in which John's Gospel has been read over the centuries and on the hermeneutical issues involved in moving between the ancient text and our contemporary world.

*Prerequisite: Biblical Interpretation (BIBL 0501)*

*Recommended: New Testament Theology and History (NEWT 0522)*

## II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- reproduce a detailed outline of John's Gospel;
- outline John's treatment of several important theological themes;
- discuss the social and historical setting of John's Gospel and how it informs our reading of the book;
- discuss John's interpretation and re-application of Old Testament and early Jewish texts, themes, and symbols;
- analyze the narrative structure of a story in John's Gospel and discuss how this structure influences our understanding of the evangelist's message;
- discuss several points at which an ancient and a modern commentator on John disagree, explaining what gives rise to the disagreement and discussing the hermeneutical issues involved;
- discuss the significance of John's thought for contemporary Christian thought and practice;
- identify and discuss the hermeneutical issues involved in moving between John's first-century vision to the contemporary world.

## III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### A. REQUIRED READING

Moloney, Francis J. [\*The Gospel of John\*](#). Sacra Pagina. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998. [ISBN: 9780814659670]

My preferred English translations are the NIV, NRSV, and New Jerusalem Bible. These are the most widely used translations in the Evangelical, Mainline, and Roman Catholic churches respectively. All three strike a good balance between accuracy and readability. Other translations may be better in a given verse, but they will inevitably be worse elsewhere. So

while these are not perfect translations there are none better. (Note that the *NASB is not preferred* and **please do not use the KJV or Authorized Version**, or the RSV. Loose translations such as *the New Living Translation, the New English Bible, and the Message* are also not *appropriate* for this kind of study. If you do not own an appropriate translation you may use the electronic copies available free online at [Bible Gateway](#) or at [www.stepbible.org](http://www.stepbible.org) [see below]).

## **B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS**

Tyndale recommends [www.stepbible.org](http://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](http://classes.tyndale.ca).

## **D. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

There are four principles of learning that undergird the assignments for this course. First, **we learn best when we put new knowledge to use right away**. Rather than simply feeding information back to an instructor, we learn best when we are engaged in a project or problem that requires us to apply our new skills and information. So, throughout this course we will focus on applying our new knowledge in the interpretation of NT passages.

Second, we learn better when we **acquire new knowledge in the context of the same activities we will pursue outside the course**. If we learn by pursuing artificial “textbook” problems, then we will not necessarily transfer that knowledge into real-world contexts. On the other hand, if we practice real-world activities from the beginning, then we are likely to use new skills and information beyond the course. Although students will put their Seminary education to use in many different ways, we will all be involved somehow in reading and interpreting Scripture. This activity is, in many ways, the common core of our multi-faceted roles in God’s kingdom. It is central to our personal devotional lives, our leading of small groups, our strategizing about community outreach, our preaching, our teaching, our spiritual direction, our counseling, our visiting of prisoners, our creation of music and works of art, etc. So, as we learn about the New

Testament in its context, we will focus at each stage on how this new knowledge helps us to interpret specific passages in each biblical book.

Third, we learn best **when we are pursuing questions we form for ourselves, rather than questions that are set for us by an instructor**. When we help to set the direction of our own learning, we are immediately more motivated and more likely to connect what we learn with other areas of knowledge. So students will bring some of their own questions to the weekly discussion groups and will decide for themselves what passage they want to examine in their final interpretation essay.

Fourth, we learn best when we **help one another grapple with questions**. Much of the North American educational system is oriented toward isolated, individual learning. This fosters a competitive, status-driven mindset in which I evaluate my learning based on my victory over others (“top-of-the-class”) and based on self-centred external rewards (“grades” and a good transcript). The problem is that both of these tendencies run directly counter to the values of God’s kingdom in which we are called to “build up” the community and sacrifice our own status for the sake of others. So a significant portion of our class time will be spent in discussion groups wrestling together with the text of John.

### **1. In-class Group Discussion Contributions (30% of final grade)**

Students will participate in small-group discussions during our weekly class sessions. These discussions will be based in part on reading questions set by the instructor. Students are expected to demonstrate in the discussions that they have (a) read and understood the week's sections in John's Gospel and in the textbook; (b) reflected on the set reading questions enough to offer a substantial response; (c) reflected enough on the reading to formulate questions of their own to share with the group. **After each class session, students will provide the instructor with a peer evaluation grade out of 10 for each of their fellow group members.** Students should use the rubric posted on the course page in order formulate these marks. The instructor will also observe the discussions and will reserve the right to balance peer grades that he judges not to reflect a student's actual learning and contribution. Peer grades will be submitted via a web-app at <https://learngreek.ca/grades>.

**Students absent from a class will receive 0/10 for their discussion contributions on that day** unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor or the student can demonstrate that the lateness is the result of a medical or similar emergency. In that event the student must contact the professor as soon as possible to arrange an alternative assignment to make up that week’s discussion grade.

### **2. Written Small-Group Forum Contributions (2 \* 10% = 20% of final grade)**

Students will also participate in two written small-group forums during the term. These forums will focus on consolidating students' understanding of the large, over-arching themes and structures of John's Gospel. For each forum, students will each post a 350-500 word answer to discussion questions provided by the professor. Students will then provide a brief (100-200 word) response to each of their fellow group members' posts. Each forum will take place over a two-week period, with responses due one week after the due date for students' initial post. These due dates are as follows:

<b>Forum A: Book of Signs</b>		
	Initial posts due	<b>11:59pm Monday, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup></b>
	Responses due	<b>11:59pm Saturday, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Forum B: Book of Glory</b>		
	Initial posts due	<b>11:59pm Monday, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup></b>
	Responses due	<b>11:59pm Saturday, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup></b>

Because of the time-sensitive nature of these forums, and the need for students to respond to one another, **unexcused late posts and responses will receive a "zero."** This is to allow other students in your group to plan their time, as well as to ensure that students' forum activities coincide with the appropriate livestream sessions. In case of a medical emergency, technical failure, or similar problem the student must email the professor directly as soon as possible to arrange accommodation.

A rubric for forum participation is provided on the course page.

### **3. Interpretation Essay: Due by 11:59pm on December 9<sup>th</sup> (50% of final grade)**

Students will write a final essay of **10-12** pages providing and defending an interpretation of one passage from John's Gospel. Full instructions, including a rubric, are provided on the course page.

#### **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 assignments that are submitted through your course resource page at [classes.tyndale.ca](http://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](http://classes.tyndale.ca) course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

## E. ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

### Individual help from the professor

Students are always welcome to contact the professor directly by email. Email is usually the most reliable way to make contact, but students may also make appointments to talk by telephone or video chat. Students located nearby are welcome to come by the professor's scheduled office hours listed at the top of this syllabus or (if these times are not feasible) request an appointment at another time. Even if you come during scheduled office hours it is always a good idea to make an appointment ahead of time by email. Otherwise students will be seen in the order they arrive.

**\*\*Please note that, in the interest of preserving work-life balance, I do not answer class-related emails over the weekend. Any emails received between Friday evening and Monday morning will be answered during the day on Monday. At other times, please expect that email responses may take up to 48 hours.**

## F. 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.

## G. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Weekly lecture attendance	3 hours per week (12 weeks = 36 hours)	--
Weekly discussion preparation	3.5 hours of reading and preparation per week (11 weeks = 38.5 hours total)*	30%
Written forums	3 hours per forum (2 forums = 6 hours total)*	20%
Interpretive Essay	30 hours*	50%
	110.5 hours total	100 %

\* Please note that these times are average and approximate. The actual time you spend will vary depending on each student's skills and aptitudes. These numbers are intended to reflect a median (middle-of-the-road) student experience. If, however, you find yourself spending much longer than these time estimates please contact the professor.

## **H. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK**

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. Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#). Citation and other [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.

### **Submission of Written Assignments**

All assignments must be submitted on deadline. Late written assignments will be penalized according to the policy laid out in the current academic calendar. Written assignments that are not posted on a course electronic forum should be uploaded using the link provided on the course web page. Feedback on such essays will be provided to the student's Tyndale email account. PDF format is strongly preferred for the submitted files. All contemporary word processors have the ability to save (or "export") the word processing file as a PDF.

### **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](mailto:aa@tyndale.ca)) before proceeding.

## I. 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

Each week students should

- **read the set passages** from John's Gospel
- **read the commentary** on those passages in Moloney
- **reflect on the week's group discussion questions**

Although they are not included on the course outline, students are **expected to read the introductory sections of Moloney's commentary during the first two weeks of class.**

Sept. 12 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction: A "More Spiritual" Gospel
Sept. 19 <sup>th</sup>	John 1:1-3:36
Sept. 26 <sup>th</sup>	John 4:1-4:54
Oct. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	John 5:1-6:71
Oct. 10 <sup>th</sup>	Thanksgiving (No class)
Oct. 17 <sup>th</sup>	John 7:1-9:41
Oct. 24 <sup>th</sup>	John 10:1-12:50 <b>Forum A posts due by 11:59pm Monday, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Forum A responses due by 11:59pm Saturday, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup></b>
Oct. 31 <sup>st</sup>	John 13:1-14:31



Nov. 7 <sup>th</sup>	John 15:1-16:33
Nov. 14 <sup>th</sup>	John 17:1-26 <b>Forum B posts due by 11:59pm Monday, Nov. 14<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Forum B responses due by 11:59pm Saturday, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup></b>
Nov. 21 <sup>st</sup>	John 18:1-19:42
Nov. 28 <sup>th</sup>	John 20:1-21:25
Dec. 5 <sup>th</sup>	1, 2, 3 John Conclusions: The Johannine Vision of Life in Christ <b>Interpretation Essay due 11:59pm, Fri. Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> **</b>

## L. 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](#).)

Some helpful bibliographies are posted on my blog:

- Good academic commentary series for NT studies:  
<https://iscott.wordpress.com/2015/01/05/16/>
- A few of my commentary “picks”: <https://iscott.wordpress.com/2015/01/05/some-good-commentaries-on-each-new-testament-book/>
- Good journals for NT studies: <https://iscott.wordpress.com/2015/01/05/good-journals-for-new-testament-studies/>
- Good (and bad) reference works for NT studies:  
<https://iscott.wordpress.com/2015/01/05/good-and-bad-reference-works-for-new-testament-studies/>

See also the bibliographies in Moloney.