

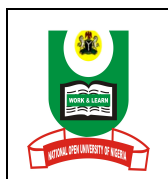
**CTH 608**

**CRITICAL INTRODUCTION TO  
THE NEW TESTAMENT**

**Course Guide**

**COURSE  
GUIDE****CTH 608****CRITICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT**

Course Developer	Dr. Olubiyi A. Adewale National Open University of Nigeria Victoria Island, Lagos
Course Writer	Dr. Olubiyi A. Adewale National Open University of Nigeria Victoria Island, Lagos
Course Editor	Dr. (Mrs.) Martina I. Atere Lagos State University Ojo
Course Coordinator	Revd. (Dr.) Jacob A. Owolabi National Open University of Nigeria Lagos
Programme Leader	Dr. Olubiyi A. Adewale National Open University of Nigeria Victoria Island, Lagos

**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

National Open University of Nigeria  
Headquarters  
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Abuja Annex  
245 Samuel Adesujo Ademulegun Street  
Central Business District  
Opposite Arewa Suites  
Abuja

e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)

URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

National Open University of Nigeria 2007

First Printed 2007

ISBN: 978-058-040-9

All Rights Reserved

Printed by Goshen Print Media Ltd  
For  
National Open University of Nigeria

<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Introduction .....	1
What you will learn in this course .....	1
Course Aims .....	2
Course Objectives .....	2-3
Working Through This Course .....	3
Course Materials .....	3
Study Units .....	3-4
Set Textbooks .....	4-5
Assignment File .....	5
Presentation Schedule .....	5
Assessment .....	6
Tutor Marked Assignments .....	6
Final Examination and Grading .....	6-7
Course Marking Scheme .....	7
Course Overview.....	7-8
How To Get The Most From This Course .....	8
Reading Section .....	8-9
Tutors and Tutorials .....	10
Summary .....	10-11

## **Introduction**

CTH 608: Critical Introduction to New Testament is a one-semester 2-credit unit course. It will be available to all students as a course in post-graduate diploma in theology. The course is also suitable for anybody who is interested in the theological study of Christian faith.

The course (will consists) of 15 units which involve the fundamental issues in New Testament criticism (like inspiration, relationship between authority and inspiration and the effects of criticism on these and canonization), an overview of the New Testament, the history of New Testament criticism, Lower criticism (which includes the history of textual criticism, methodology, an examination of available manuscripts for the textual critics and a brief study of electronic textual criticism) and Higher criticism (which includes historical, form, source, redaction and grammatical criticism).

There are no compulsory pre-requisites for this course. The course guide tells you briefly what the course is about, what you are expected to know in each unit, what course materials you will be using and how you can work your way through these materials. It also emphasizes the need for tutor-marked assignments. Detailed information on tutor-marked assignments is found in the separate file, which will be sent to you later. There are periodic tutorial classes that are linked to the course.

## **What You Will Learn In This Course**

The overall aim of CTH 608: Critical Introduction to the New Testament is to introduce you to the basic issues in New Testament and the criticism of the New Testament. These topics will be studied through historical and contemporary analysis of the methods involved and the significance of these criticisms to the study of the New Testament. The Bible is the major source to formulate and study Christian theology and it is also the basis by which the Christian life is judged. As a result, it becomes important to know how the New Testament was formed and the various issues involved in its critical examination.

Your understanding of Critical Introduction to the New Testament will equip you to explain the seeming discrepancies in the various versions of the Bible and it will also lead you to begin the Bible critically and this will ultimately lead you to an enriched study of the Bible.

## Course Aims

The aim of this course is to give you an understanding of the books of the New Testament are arrived at, and also the various issues that are related to the authorship and the formation of these books. It is aimed among others to:

- Introduce you to the canon of the New Testament
- Lead you to examine how the current versions of the Bible were arrived at through an extensive study of Textual or Lower criticism.
- Expose you to some of the manuscripts of the New Testament that form the raw materials for the textual critics
- Highlight the various types of scribal errors that have crept in to the Bible in the process of transmission of the New Testament
- Introducing you to the process of textual criticism like eclecticism, stemmatics, copy-text editing and cladistics.
- Lead you to appreciate the issues involved in the current criticism of books of the New Testament along the line of authorship and date among others.
- Explain to you the various aspects of Higher criticism like historical, form, source, redaction and grammatical criticism.

## Course Objectives

To achieve the aims set out above, there are set overall objectives. In addition, each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are always included at the beginning of a unit. You should read them before you start working through the unit. You may want to refer to them during your study of the unit to check on your progress. You should always look at the unit objectives after completing a unit. In this way you can be sure that you have done what was required of you by the unit.

Stated below are the wider objectives of this course as a whole. By meeting these objectives, you should have achieved the aims of the course as a whole.

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Define canonization
- Explain the relationship between inspiration, authority and New Testament criticism
- Explain the doctrine inerrancy and infallibility and the credibility of these doctrines in the face of New Testament criticism.
- Narrate the formation of the text of the New Testament as we have it today

- Discuss the history of New Testament textual criticism
- Discuss historical criticism and its importance to New Testament studies
- Discuss form criticism and its importance to New Testament studies
- Discuss source criticism and its importance to New Testament studies
- Discuss redaction criticism and its importance to New Testament studies
- Discuss grammatical criticism and its importance to New Testament studies

## **Working through this course**

To complete this course, you are required to read the study units, read recommended books and read other materials. Each unit contains self-assessment exercises, and at points in the course you are required to submit assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of this course is a final examination. Below you will find listed all the components of the course and what you have to do.

## **Course Materials**

Major components of the course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study Units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignments File
5. Presentation Schedule

In addition, you must obtain the materials. Obtain your copy. You may contact your tutor if you have problems in obtaining the text materials.

## **Study Units**

There are fifteen study units in this course broken into 3 modules of 5 units each. They are as follows:

### **Module 1 General Introduction**

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Unit 1 | Fundamental Issues in New Testament Criticism |
| Unit 2 | The Canon of the New Testament                |
| Unit 3 | An Overview of the New Testament I            |
| Unit 4 | An Overview of the New Testament II           |
| Unit 5 | History of New Testament Criticism            |

## Module 2 Lower Criticism

Unit 1	Introduction to Textual Criticism
Unit 2	The History of New Testament Textual Criticism
Unit 3	The Manuscripts of the New Testament
Unit 4	Types of Scribal Errors in the New Testament Manuscripts
Unit 5	The Process of Textual Criticism

## Module 3 Higher Criticism

Unit 1	Historical Criticism
Unit 2	Source Criticism
Unit 3	Form Criticism
Unit 4	Redaction Criticism
Unit 5	Grammatical Criticism

The first five units examine the basic issues in New Testament Criticism and the various reactions to the issue of criticism. The next five units address textual criticism that is also known as lower criticism. This is so because without the text there is nothing to criticize. The last five units discuss higher criticism which has to do with issues like authorship, date of composition, sources, form, redaction (the theology of the writers) and grammatical criticism.

Each unit contains a number of self-tests. In general, these self-tests question you on the material you have just covered or require you to apply it in some ways and, thereby, help you to gauge your progress and to reinforce your understanding of the material. Together with tutor-marked assignments, these exercises will assist you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual units and of the course.

## Set Textbooks

These textbooks are recommended. The first one is compulsory for your study of this course.

R. Abba (1958). *The Nature and Authority of the Bible*, London: SU Press

D. A. Carson and J. Woodbridge (eds.) (1983) *Scripture and Truth*, Leicester: Inter Varsity Press.

\_\_\_\_\_ (1986) *Hermeneutics, Authority and Canon*, Leicester: Inter Varsity Press.

N. Geisler (ed.) (1979) *Inerrancy*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans.



Cecil B. Murphey (1989) *The Dictionary of Biblical Literacy*, Nashville: Oliver-Nelson Books.

N. R. Peterson (1978) *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics* Philadelphia: Fortress Press

Edgar Krantz (1975) *The Historical-Critical Method* Philadelphia: Fortress Press

W. G. Kummel (1972) *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its Problems*, trans. S. McLean Gilmour and H. C. Kee. Nashville: Abingdon Press

N. Perrin (1969) *What is Redaction Criticism?* Philadelphia: Fortress Press

Murray Krieger (1964) *A Window to Criticism* Princeton: Princeton University Press

Roman Jakobson (1974) *Main Trends in the Science of Language* New York: Harper and Row

### **Assignment File**

In this file, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain from these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignments will be found in the Assignment File itself and later in this Course Guide in the section on assessment.

### **Presentation Schedule**

The Presentation Schedule included in your course materials gives you the important dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and attending tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignments by the due date. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

## **Assessment**

There are two aspects to the assessment of the course. First are the tutor-marked assignments; second, there is a written examination. In tackling the assignments, you are expected to apply information and knowledge acquired during this course.

The assignments must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the Assignment File. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count for 30% of your total course mark. At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final three-hour examination. This will also count for 70% of your total course mark.

### **Tutor Marked Assignments**

There are fifteen tutor-marked assignments in this course. You need to submit all the assignments. The best four (i.e. the highest four of the fifteen marks) will be counted. The total marks for the best four (4) assignments will be 30% of your total course mark.

Assignment questions for the units in this course are contained in the Assignment File. You should be able to complete your assignments from the information and materials contained in your set textbooks, reading and study units. However, you are advised to use other references to broaden your viewpoint and provide a deeper understanding of the subject.

When you have completed each assignment, send it, together with TMA (tutor-marked assignment) form to your tutor. Make sure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline given to the Assignment File. If, however, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is done to discuss the possibility of an extension.

### **Final Examination and Grading**

The final examination of CTH 608 will be of three hours' duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the type of self-testing, practice exercises and tutor-marked problems you have come across. All areas of the course will be assessed.

You are advised to revise the entire course after studying the last unit before you sit for the examination. You will find it useful to review

your tutor-marked assignments and the comments of your tutor on them before the final examination.

### Course Marking Scheme

This table shows how the actual course marking is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignment 1-4	Four assignments, best three marks of the four count at 30% of course marks
Final Examination	50% of overall course marks
Total	100% of course marks

Table 1: Course Marking Scheme

### Course Overview

This table brings together the units, the number of weeks you should take to complete them, and the assignments that follow them.

Module 1	Title of work	Week's Activity	Assessment (end of unit)
Unit	Course Guide	1	
1.	Fundamental Issues in New Testament Criticism	1	Assignment 1
2.	The Canon of the New Testament	2	Assignment 2
3.	An Overview of the New Testament I	3	Assignment 3
4.	An Overview of the New Testament II	4	Assignment 4
5.	History of New Testament Criticism	5	Assignment 5
<b>Module 2</b>			
Unit			
1	Introduction to Textual Criticism	6	Assignment 6
2	The History of New Testament Textual Criticism	7	Assignment 7
3.	The Manuscripts of the New Testament	8	Assignment 8
4.	Types of Scribal Errors in the New Testament Manuscripts	9	Assignment 9
5	The Process of Textual Criticism	10	Assignment 10

<b>Module 3</b>			
Unit			
1	Historical Criticism	11	Assignment 11
2	Source Criticism	12	Assignment 12
3	Form Criticism	13	Assignment 13
4.	Redaction Criticism	14	Assignment 14
5	Grammatical Criticism	15	Assignment 15
16	Revision	16	
17	Examination	17	

Table 2: Course Overview

## How to Get the Most from This Course

In distance learning the study units replace the university lecturer. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suit you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to a lecturer. In the same way that a lecturer might set you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read your set books or other material. Just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise, your study units provide exercises for you to do at appropriate points.

Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. You should use these objectives to guide your study. When you have finished the units you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If you make a habit of doing this you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources.

## Reading Section

Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need help, don't hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly.
2. Organize a study schedule. Refer to the 'Course overview' for more details. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you chose

to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates for working on each unit.

3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything you can to stick to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to Unit 1 and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need for a unit is given in the 'Overview' at the beginning of each unit. You will almost always need both the study unit you are working on and one of your set books on your desk at the same time.
6. Work through the unit. The content of the unit itself has been arranged to provide a sequence for you to follow. As you work through the unit you will be instructed to read sections from your set books or other articles. Use the unit to guide your reading.
7. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study material or consult your tutor.
8. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can then start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
9. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also on what is written on the assignment. Consult your tutor as soon as possible if you have any questions or problems.
10. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in this Course Guide).

### **Tutors and Tutorials**

There are 8 hours of tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials,

together with the name and phone number of your tutor, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group.

Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must mail your tutor-marked assignments to your tutor well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone, e-mail, or discussion board if you need help. The following might be circumstances in which you would find help necessary.

Contact your tutor if:

- you do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings,
- you have difficulty with the self-tests or exercises,
- you have a question or problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face to face contact with your tutor and to ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussions actively.

## **Summary**

CTH 608 intends to introduce you to the criticisms of the New Testament. Upon completing this course, you will be able to answer questions such as:

- What is canonization?
- What does the concept of inerrancy and infallibility mean?
- When did New Testament criticism begin?
- What is textual criticism?
- How many forms of manuscripts do we have for the New Testament?
- Describe the process involved in textual criticism.
- Give an example of scribal errors in the New Testament?
- What do you understand by intentional and unintentional error?
- What is higher criticism?

Of course, the questions you will be able to answer are not limited to the above list. Christian theology is an exciting study. We wish you success with the course and hope that you will find it both interesting and useful.