
Many introductions to the New Testament zero in on the historical contexts in which the New Testament literature was written. This introduction goes further—to give particular attention to the social, cultural, and rhetorical contexts of the New Testament authors and their writings.

Few introductions to the New Testament integrate instruction in exegetical and interpretive strategies with the customary considerations of authorship, dating, audience, and message. This introduction introduces students to a relevant facet of interpretation with each portion of New Testament literature. Recognizing that the New Testament itself—in its parts and as a whole—is a pastoral resource, each chapter closes with a discussion of implications for ministry formation.

First published in 2004, David A. deSilva’s comprehensive and carefully crafted introduction to the New Testament has been long established as an authoritative textbook and resource for students. This beautiful, full-color second edition has been updated throughout with new scholarship and numerous images. The pages of this integrative text brim with maps, photos, points of interest, and aids to learning, and separate chapters explore the historical and cultural environment of the New Testament era, the nature of the Gospels and the quest for the historical Jesus, and the life of Paul.

It is the first choice for those convinced that a New Testament introduction should integrate scholarship and ministry.

“An Introduction to the New Testament is an ideal textbook for seminary students as well as for pastors and is written by a reputable New Testament scholar who reveals decades of teaching wisdom on every page.”

— SCOT MCKNIGHT
Northern Seminary

“This excellent introduction, which I use for my New Testament introduction classes, meets a special need. . . . This welcome new edition takes this work to an even higher level.”

— CRAIG S. KEENER
Asbury Theological Seminary

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The New Testament as Pastoral Response

How did we get this collection of texts called the New Testament? To answer this question, we need to consider two distinct processes: first, the composition of each of the texts now included in the New Testament; second, the selection by the church of this group of texts to stand in a position of central importance and authority within the church as touchstones for faith and practice. Both processes can be understood in terms of response to pastoral exigencies. These texts would never have been written in the first place were it not for the kinds of concerns and challenges that early Christians faced. Each text was written to serve some specific pastoral needs and answer a range of important questions arising out of the life of the church. Because these texts answered those perennial questions so well, they continued to provide the basic point of reference for each successive generation of Christians in ever-widening circles from the texts’ places of origin. Faced with the same or new challenges, Christians kept turning to these texts to find guidance from the apostolic witness and, ultimately, from their Lord himself. Canonization was a long, natural, and largely consensual process by which the churches in every place throughout the Roman world came to recognize the indispensable value of these texts for their continuing life, nurture, and direction.

It must also be said that the process of arriving at consensus for each successive generation of Christians in this continuing life, nurture, and direction was a long, natural, and largely consensual process. Throughout the Roman world came to recognize the indispensable value of these texts for their continuing life, nurture, and direction. As Christian groups spread and grew, so did the need for written guidance. The church had to come to terms with new situations, new people, and new circumstances.sheet.

Issues in the First-Century Church

A bishop sent a vibrant, innovative minister to a dwindling United Methodist congregation in a big city in the hope that she would build up the congregation. One of the less conventional moves she made was to rent advertising space on buses. The side of a bus featured the likeness, adorned in Jewish garb, with a Bible tucked prominently under her arm and a caption that read: “When our new minister came, she brought the manual. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments function very much as the church’s ‘manual’ or ‘handbook’ (manual is derived from the Latin manus, meaning ‘hand’). These are the resources that give us our identity, vision, mission, and hope, and that orient us to our past, to the world around us, and to our future.” The early Christians, however, did not have access to such a manual. From the parent religion, they inherited the Jewish Scriptures (what Christians would come to call the Old Testament), which were foundational to the forging of the new group’s identity, but not in nearly the same way that they were for the synagogue. Gentile Christians were connected to these texts only on account of their connection with Jews. Jewish Christians were wholly reoriented to their Scriptures by the same. Both were called together into one new people, essentially separate copies as they cling to their own distinctive texts and the distinctive faith and practice they nurture.

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The parables of Jesus: Many Things in Parables

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- A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus: The Parables of the Kingdom, The Parables of the Kingdom


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- The Parables of Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables


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