

**Master of Arts  
(Theological Studies)  
Degree**

**Program Guidelines**

**2011-2012**

Revised October 2011

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**MA Theological Studies  
Five-Year Calendar (Tentative)**

<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
Enrollment with Director	Before 8/22	Before 8/20	Before 8/19	Before 8/18	Before 8/17
Student Verification & Tuition Payment	7/25-8/22	7/23-8/20	7/22-8/19	7/21-8/18	7/27-8/24
Submission for Thesis Proposal for Spring graduation	9/29	9/27	9/26	9/25	9/24
Application for Thesis Defense-Fall Graduation	9/29	9/27	9/26	9/25	9/24
Submit copies of Thesis-Fall Graduation	10/13	10/18	10/17	10/16	10/15
Online Spring Course Selection	10/24-11/17	10/29-11/20	10/28-11/24	10/27-11/20	10/26-11/19
Thesis Defense Date-Fall Graduation	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Final Week of Classes	12/12-12/15	12/10-12/13	12/9-12/12	12/8-12/11	12/14-12/17

<b>Semester 2</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>
Enrollment with Director	Before 1/23	Before 1/21	Before 1/20	Before 1/19	Before 1/18
Student Verification & Tuition Payment	12/19-1/23	12/17-1/21	12/16-1/20	12/15-1/19	12/21 – 1/18
Application for Thesis Defense-Spring Graduation	3/1	2/28	2/27	2/26	2/25
Online Summer/Fall Course Selection	3/26-4/19	3/25-4/18	3/24-4/17	3/23-4/16	3/21-4/14
Submit copies of Thesis-Spring Graduation	3/29	4/4	4/3	3/26	3/24
Thesis Defense Date-Spring Graduation	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Submission for Thesis Proposal for Fall graduation	5/3	5/2	5/1	4/30	4/28
Final Week of Classes	5/7-5/10	5/6-5/9	5/5-5/8	5/4-5/7	5/2-5/5

## ADMINISTRATION

The administration of the program will rest in the hands of the following persons, appointed by the Dean of the Faculty:

1. Director of the MA(TS) degree program.
2. Registrar.
3. The MA(TS)/PhD Committee.

The responsibilities of the MATS/PhD Committee shall be:

- a. To consider applications for admission to the Research Track and to admit applicants it judges to meet the standards for admission.
- b. To approve faculty thesis directors for students admitted to the Research Track.
- c. To assist the degree director in deciding upon occasional applications for which the standard admissions criteria may be inadequate or inappropriate.
- d. To assist the degree director in handling issues of academic probation, reinstatement of a student in the program after probation, and possible extension of a student's course of study beyond the stated maximum time allowed for completion of the degree.
- e. To assist the degree director in conducting ongoing evaluation and assessment of the program, and to suggest strategies and methods for strengthening and improving it.

## PURPOSE

The MA(TS) degree exists for two specific groups of students as represented by its two "tracks," the **General Academic Track** and the **Research Track**. The **General Academic Track** is designed for students who do not intend to enter full-time ministry or to serve as professional clergy, but who desire familiarity with the major theological disciplines and to deepen their understanding of Christian faith. The **Research Track** is designed for students who intend to pursue doctoral studies or other further study in a theological discipline. It is designed to provide students with specialized knowledge in their chosen area of study and advanced research and writing skills necessary for doctoral-level graduate work. The Research Track has two concentrations: **Biblical Studies** and **Christian Thought and History**.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the MA(TS) curriculum is the personal and educational development of students through participation in the worshipping and learning community of the seminary in such a way as to deepen their understanding of the God of Christian faith and the life and mission of the Church, and further prepare them for Christian service.

### GENERAL ACADEMIC TRACK

1. Students will develop a comprehensive knowledge of the major theological disciplines and their interrelationships.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to use the theological disciplines to reflect on and engage the world as informed, thinking, Christian persons.

### RESEARCH TRACK

1. Students will gain specialized knowledge in designated theological disciplines as a basis for further graduate studies.
2. Students will develop skill in academic research and writing as a basis for further graduate studies.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to do theological research, critical theological reflection, and graduate-level academic writing by producing and successfully defending a written thesis.

## DURATION

The MA(TS) degree can be completed in two years – especially the General Academic Track. The Research Track involving the writing of a thesis may require a longer period of time, but this can vary considerably, depending upon each student’s personal situation. The **maximum** time allowed for the completion of the program is **eight calendar years** from the date of enrolling in the first course taken in the program. A candidate for this degree must complete a total of forty-eight (48) semester credit hours. No more than sixteen (16) semester hours may be transferred toward this degree. At least twenty-four (24) semester hours must be completed in residence and at least thirty-two (32) semester hours must be taken from NTS. Cognate courses taken at area universities *may* be considered part of the fulfillment of the residency requirement.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

All applicants must satisfy the admission requirements as stated in the NTS catalog (see “Criteria for Admission”). In addition to these basic requirements for admission, the following criteria apply to applicants to the MA(TS) program:

1. Admission to the program is selective and is open to students whose undergraduate record indicates above average academic ability, as evidenced by a GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale. Students who do not possess this undergraduate GPA may apply based on a 3.0 GPA earned in nine hours of coursework that would apply to the MA(TS) General Academic program.
2. There is no provisional admission to this degree program.

## TRANSFERRING INTO THE MA(THEOLOGICAL STUDIES)

It is possible to transfer into the MA(TS) program from another NTS or non-NTS master’s program. It is also possible to pursue the MA(TS) degree after the completion of another NTS master’s degree.

- ◆ Transfer from another institution is made according to the general procedures for applying to NTS as stated in the NTS catalog.
- ◆ Transfer from another NTS master’s program requires that a student: a) make formal application (forms available in the Registrar’s Office); b) meet all entrance requirements; c) have the application approved and signed by the MA(TS) degree director.
- ◆ Pursuing the MA(TS) degree as a second NTS degree requires that a student: a) make formal application to the program; b) upon acceptance follow a curricular plan approved by the MA(TS) degree director and the Registrar. Completion of the degree in this manner will require a minimum of twenty-four (24) semester hours of course work.

## GENERAL PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

1. All students admitted to the MA(TS) degree program will be admitted *initially* to the General Academic Track. Students intending to pursue a concentration within the Research Track and the writing of a thesis will be eligible to *apply* to the MA(TS)/PhD Committee for acceptance into the Research Track **upon the completion of eighteen (18) hours of credit with an overall GPA of at least 3.5**. Students may apply by Oct. 1 and March 1 of the semester they will complete 18 credit hours and be accepted pending credit hours and GPA at the end of the semester.
2. An applicant to the Research Track must submit a best sample of graduate academic writing to the proposed thesis director and to the MA(TS)/PhD Committee. The writing will be evaluated by the teaching faculty of the Committee. The evaluation of the applicant’s work by this group of faculty

readers will be taken into account, together with the student's GPA and the thesis director's recommendation, in admitting a student into the Research Track.

3. To be accepted into the Research Track, a student must secure: a) the written approval of an NTS faculty member who has agreed to serve as thesis director; b) the subsequent approval of the MA(TS)/PhD Committee.
4. Students in both the General Academic and the Research tracks are required to complete MTS810, Seminar in Theological Method and Research.
5. In addition to MTS810 and MTS881, students in the General Academic Track are required to complete **an additional 3 hours** in MA(TS)-specific courses (i.e., courses carrying a number designation in the 800s). Students in the Research Track are required to complete **an additional 9 hours** in MA(TS)-specific courses (3 hours of which will be MTS885, Thesis).
6. The culminating event in the General Academic Track is enrolling in and successfully completing MTS881, Comprehensive Theological Integration.
7. The culminating event in the Research Track is the writing and successful defense of a thesis. The topic of the thesis must be approved by the student's thesis director and the director of the MA(TS) degree program.
8. Language requirements:
  - There is no specified language requirement for the General Academic Track.
  - Students admitted to the MA(TS) Research Track are subject to a language requirement. Students intending a concentration in **Biblical Studies** are required to demonstrate proficiency at the intermediate level as determined by the NTS Biblical Studies faculty in Greek or Hebrew prior to admission into the Research Track. Students intending a concentration in **Christian Thought and History** are required to demonstrate language skills necessary for their thesis research prior to enrolling in MTS885, Thesis.
9. All students admitted into the MA(TS) program are required to take the Bible Content Exam and to satisfy the Bible competency requirement (through taking BIB515, Reading the Biblical Story if necessary.)

#### **AN AVERAGE OF "B" OR HIGHER**

A candidate for the MA(TS) degree must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale for those in the General Academic Track and 3.4 or higher on a 4.0 scale for those in the Research Track over the entire program in order to qualify for graduation. If at any point a student falls below this GPA, s/he will be placed on probation and may be dropped from the program.

## **PREGRADUATION ASSESSMENT**

1. General Academic Track students must satisfactorily complete MTS881, Comprehensive Theological Integration.
2. Research Track Students must complete a research thesis and successfully defend it in an examination. The topic of the thesis must be approved by the student's thesis director and the director of the MA(TS) program.
3. See #3, General Program Regulations and Guidelines.

## **Approval of the Faculty**

A student who has completed all the academic requirements for the MA(TS) degree must receive the approval of the faculty before the degree is conferred. NTS reserves the right to withhold the conferring of the degree if a student's basic moral and ethical conduct is unbecoming a Christian worker.

## **COURSE OPTIONS**

The policy at NTS on course options is described in the Admissions Information section of the NTS catalog. Students entering the MA(TS) degree program will be informed by the Registrar's Office, after careful evaluation of their transcripts, whether they are eligible for course options.

## **THE MA (THEOLOGICAL STUDIES) DEGREE AND COGNATE FIELDS OF STUDY**

MA(TS) students are permitted, with the approval of the director of the program, to include a limited number of courses in cognate fields of study in their degree program when this is appropriate. Courses in such fields as anthropology, psychology, sociology, political science, literary studies, classics, and religious studies may be taken at NTS (as available) or at area universities. NTS courses falling outside the "classical" theological disciplines, but approved by the MA(TS)/PhD Committee for credit in the MA(TS) degree program, with the approval of the director of the MA(TS) program, include the following:

MSS530: CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

MSS540: RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

MSS740: ISLAM AND ITS ENCOUNTER WITH CHRISTIANITY

MSS745: FOLK RELIGIONS

MSS755: SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

## **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

The MA(TS) degree director is the academic advisor to all students in the program, and will serve as students' guide and reference point throughout their time in the program. All MA(TS) students must consult with the degree director prior to registering for each semester. Students, in consultation with the degree director, will complete the Advised Program of Study form, which the degree director must sign. Students then take this form to the Registrar's Office for formal registration.

## **MA (THEOLOGICAL STUDIES) AND ORDINATION**

The MA(TS) degree program is **not** designed to fulfill the ordination requirements of the Church of the Nazarene.

**MA (THEOLOGICAL STUDIES) GENERAL ACADEMIC TRACK COURSE OF STUDY  
(48 HOURS REQUIRED – 27 HOURS PRESCRIBED, 21 HOURS ELECTIVE)**

The General Academic Track presupposes no prior study in theological disciplines. This track is designed to provide exposure to all major academic disciplines in the study of theology. Failure to pass the Bible Content Exam will mean BIB515, Reading the Biblical Story will be required *in addition to* the degree program requirements.

**PRESCRIBED COURSES**

LNG510 Introduction to Biblical Languages	3 hours
CHS515 Critical Developments in the History of Christianity	3 hours
THE515 The Christian Faith & the Apostles' Creed	3 hours
BIB550 Biblical Hermeneutics	3 hours
THE610, 620 Integrative Theology 1 & 2 <b>OR</b> CHS660, 670 History of Christian Doctrine 1 & 2	6 hours
THE640 Doctrine of Christian Holiness	3 hours
PHL610 Philosophy of Religion <b>OR</b> THE760 Christian Ethics	3 hours
MTS810 Seminar in Theological Method and Research	2 hours
MTS881 Comprehensive Theological Integration	1 hour

**ELECTIVE COURSES WITH ADVISEMENT**

OTL Old Testament Exegesis	3 hours
NTL New Testament Exegesis	3 hours
Theology/Philosophy of Religion/Christian Ethics/History of the Christian Church	6 hours
Program Electives	9 hours

**CULMINATING COURSE FOR GENERAL ACADEMIC TRACK**  
**MTS881, Comprehensive Theological Integration**

1. The culminating event in the General Academic track is MTS881, Comprehensive Theological Integration. This final evaluation of the MA(TS) General Academic track provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate ability to integrate the knowledge gained from study in the various theological disciplines in critical reflection on significant issues arising in human society, thought, and culture. The course culminates with a major integrative essay.
2. The comprehensive limits for MTS881 will be determined mainly by the courses the student has taken.
3. A committee of three faculty members – one each in biblical studies, theological/philosophical studies, and historical studies – will be appointed by the degree director to evaluate each integrative essay.
4. Students receiving “Unsatisfactory” for the course may retake the course one additional time.

**MA (THEOLOGICAL STUDIES) RESEARCH TRACK COURSE OF STUDY  
(48 HOURS REQUIRED – 36 HOURS PRESCRIBED, 12 HOURS ELECTIVE)**

The Research Track presupposes prior study in theological disciplines, preferably an undergraduate degree in religion. The Research Track provides for advanced specialized concentration in either Biblical Studies or Christian Thought and History. This form of the MA(TS) is designed primarily to provide solid foundation for doctoral-level graduate studies.

**CONCENTRATION IN BIBLICAL STUDIES**

**Required Prerequisites:** A basic grounding in biblical introduction is needed for the MA(TS) Research Track with a concentration in Biblical Studies. Students intending to enter this track must meet the expectations for proficiency in biblical languages (see “General Program Regulations and Guidelines”) as well as pass the Bible Content Exam or its equivalent (see “General Program Regulations and Guidelines:” -- if BIB515, Reading the Biblical Story is required, course credit will not apply to the degree program). Credit for beginning languages will not apply to the degree program.

**PRESCRIBED COURSES**

Biblical Exegesis (At least 6 hours in each testament; at least 12 hours in original languages)	18 hours
Biblical Theology (1 Old Testament, 1 New Testament)	6 hours
Biblical Studies Elective	3 hours
THE640 Doctrine of Christian Holiness	3 hours
MTS810 Seminar in Theological Method and Research	2 hours
MTS885 Thesis	4 hours

**ELECTIVE COURSES WITH ADVISEMENT**

Theology/Philosophy of Religion/Christian Ethics/History of the Christian Church	6 hours
Program Elective	6 hours

## CONCENTRATION IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND HISTORY

**Required Prerequisites:** A basic grounding in systematic theology and the history of Christianity is needed for the MA(TS) Research Track with a concentration in Christian Thought and History. Students intending to enter this track must pass a competency exam in these areas, or complete the courses CHS515, Critical Developments in the History of Christianity and THE515, The Christian Faith and the Apostles' Creed. (Credit for these courses will not apply to the degree program.)

### PRESCRIBED COURSES

THE610, 620 Integrative Theology 1 & 2 <b>OR</b> CHS660, 670 History of Christian Doctrine	6 hours
THE640 Doctrine of Christian Holiness	3 hours
MTS810 Seminar in Theological Method and Research	2 hours
MTS885 Thesis	4 hours
Theology/Philosophy of Religion/Christian Ethics/History of the Christian Church	21 hours

### ELECTIVE COURSES WITH ADVISEMENT

Biblical Studies	6 hours
Program Electives	6 hours

## MA (THEOLOGICAL STUDIES) THESIS GUIDELINES

### The Nature of the Project

The purposes of the MA(TS) thesis are: 1) to provide students intending to pursue doctoral level graduate education the opportunity to conclude their Master's level work by integrating and focusing their academic interests through research and the writing of a substantial scholarly paper; and 2) to demonstrate that students have acquired the ability to do theological research, critical theological reflection, and graduate-level academic writing.

The thesis should be well researched, clearly written, and represent a significant act of intellectual engagement. Normally, it will be in the range of 50-75 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 point font); however the appropriate length for each thesis, individually, will be determined by the faculty thesis advisor and the student in consultation.

### Procedures for Writing the Thesis

The thesis normally is written during the student's final year in the program and generally is submitted and defended during the student's final semester of study.

1. The thesis process begins in the required course MTS810, Seminar in Theological Method and Research (taken early in the course of study). In this course, all MA(TS) students are introduced to methods and resources for doing theological research and are encouraged to begin to conceptualize possible thesis topics.
2. The thesis process continues in the various courses in which students are required to write research papers. Such research papers should aid a student in identifying areas of interest and possible thesis topics, and perhaps provide preliminary research for the thesis.
3. Each student is responsible for securing the agreement of a faculty member to serve as thesis director. Applicants will not be admitted to the Research Track of the MA(TS) program until they have secured a faculty thesis director. The director should have considerable expertise in the area covered by the student's proposed thesis.
4. The student should work closely with the faculty thesis director to shape the precise topic of the thesis and establish a plan of research.
5. Each student must submit a written thesis proposal (see "SAMPLE PROPOSAL" in this handbook) to the thesis director and the MA(TS) degree director no later than the date specified in the Five Year Calendar. A form for approving the thesis proposal (obtainable from the NTS website or copies from this Handbook) signed by the thesis director should be submitted to the degree director together with the written proposal. No student who is on academic probation may submit a thesis proposal.
6. The student should work closely with the faculty thesis director in conducting research and in writing the thesis. The process generally works best when student and director confer on a regular basis and the student submits drafts of work in progress to the thesis director for evaluation and feedback throughout the thesis preparation period. The thesis director will read submitted material within a reasonable amount of time and supply the student with ample evaluation of the content, methodology, and form of the work.
7. The completed thesis is to be submitted to the MA(TS) degree director no later than the date specified in the Five Year Calendar for the semester in which the student intends to graduate. The student is to provide the degree director with three copies of the thesis. Under extenuating circumstances a

student may petition for an extension, with approval of the thesis director, to the MA(TS)/PhD Committee. The committee must receive the application in time to review it in a regularly scheduled meeting prior to the deadline and may approve or reject the petition. Permission to extend the thesis due date will be made only in extraordinary circumstances.

8. The thesis shall be defended in an oral examination (thesis defense) conducted by a committee of three faculty members consisting of the thesis director and two others selected by the degree director in consultation with the thesis director. The thesis director shall serve as chair of the defense. Applications for a thesis defense (forms available in the Dean of the Faculty's Office or on the NTS website) must be made no later than the date specified in the Five Year Calendar for the semester in which the student intends to graduate. Upon receipt of such application, the degree director shall form a defense committee for the student and set an appropriate date for the defense. Students residing in North America are expected to be present in person for the defense. Use of distance technology will be an option only for students living abroad who have successfully petitioned for this in advance of their presentation.
9. The defense will normally last about one-and-a-half (1 ½) hours. At the end of the defense the thesis will be evaluated as "Pass with Distinction," "Pass," "Pass with Conditions," or "Unsatisfactory." A thesis judged "Unsatisfactory" may, at the discretion of the thesis director and defense committee, be revised and re-examined a maximum of one additional time within one year of the original thesis defense date. The decision of the committee upon reexamination will be final.
10. All thesis revisions, including both editorial and form/style revisions, must be completed within one calendar year of the original thesis examination date. Failure to complete revisions will result in permanent assignment of "Unsatisfactory" as the grade for the thesis. The student will be discontinued from the MA(TS) Research Track; should s/he desire to complete the MA(TS) degree, s/he will be redirected into the MA(TS) General Academic Track. The student can be reinstated into the MA(TS) Research track only through successful petition to the MA(TS)/PhD Committee; normally, this would require the writing of a new thesis. The timeline for completion of the MA(TS) degree will continue to apply.
11. Upon successful defense, two final copies of the thesis shall be deposited with the Director of Library Services for binding.
12. Students failing to complete the thesis in the semester in which they are registered for MTS885, Thesis must enroll in MTS886, Thesis Continuation (no credit) and must pay a continuation fee of \$75.00 in addition to any registration and service fees, each semester until all required thesis revisions are completed and approved.

## Rubric for the Evaluation of MA Theses at Nazarene Theological Seminary

Category	1	2	3	4	5	Comment
Introduction Clarity of Thesis and Methodology	Lacks appropriate introduction; thesis not clearly stated; methodology unclear	Appropriate introduction of the theme, but lacks clear statements of thesis and methodology	Appropriate introduction of the theme, but lacking a clear statement of either thesis or methodology	Appropriate introduction with clear statement of thesis and methodology	Appropriate introduction with clear statements of thesis and methodology and a clear rationale for the outline of the paper	
Development of the Argument, Coherent Structure and Theme	Lack of clear outline and/or transitions to enable following the flow of argument	A general outline but argument lacks continuity and transitions	A logical outline that develops the argument but lacks adequate transitions to help follow the flow	A logical outline with clear transitions supporting the argument showing critical insights	A logical outline with clear transitions supporting the argument with independent thought and critical evaluation	
Comprehensive and Appropriate Use of Sources	Lack of adequate sources or inappropriate use of sources	Uses secondary (summary) or tertiary (overview) sources, but lacks appropriate primary sources	Includes some primary sources in a limited manner and/or neglects relevant secondary sources	Includes appropriate primary, secondary and tertiary sources	Includes appropriate primary, secondary and tertiary sources with nuanced analysis	
Presentation	Major grammatical errors (e.g. sentence fragments, subject-verb disagreement); lacks correct spacing, headings and pagination	Frequent grammatical and composition errors; wrong use of spacing, headings and pagination, lacked proofreading	Grammatical errors are infrequent and minor enough to not distract; adequate form and style in the body, but not in footnotes and bibliography	Minor errors of grammar, spelling, and style, accurate form and style throughout, need of minor copy editing	Excellent form and style throughout, virtually no errors of spelling or grammar; document appears professional quality in presentation	
Significance and Contribution	No indication of how the paper fits in the larger fields of theological and general study	Incorrect analysis of how the paper fits in the larger fields of theological and general study	Limited, but accurate awareness of how the paper fits in the larger field of either theological or general study, but not the other	Appropriate expression of how the paper fits in the larger fields of both theological and general study	Outstanding insight into how the paper fits in the larger fields of both theological and general study	

# SAMPLE THESIS PROPOSAL

## I. Statement of Problem

The Revelation of John holds a peculiar position in the New Testament canon. Ever since its appearance it has experienced a jaded history of interpretation:

We have deemed it esoteric poetry, to be put aside as inherently obscure and impractical by definition; or we have regarded it, somewhat apprehensively, as a diary of psychedelic visions inappropriately appended to the rest of Scripture; or else we have suffered the arrogant pietism of itinerant evangelists preaching quaint damnation from fragments of the book and acquiesced to their boast that *that* is what Revelation is about.<sup>1</sup>

These categories do by no means exhaust the range of interpretation that have been given to Revelation-yet serve an illustrative function. Jacques Ellul noted speaking about Revelation, “there never has been a book provoking more delirium, foolishness, and irrational movements, without any relationship to Jesus Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

Certainly one must recognize that in spite of its rocky canonical history, this book was found useful and edifying enough to be included in the church’s documents of faith. This suggests that to some degree this text has been found useful for the church from the first century on (not simply when the “end times” started sometime after the founding of the Israelite nation in 1948).

This is not an attempt to suggest that Revelation is in no means prophetic, but to suggest that perhaps something theologically significant may have been passed over in the exegetical circus surrounding the book. The rich symbolism of Revelation communicates a high Christology and an early Trinitarian doctrine through images, sounds, and taste, presenting the theological themes in different accoutrements than its New Testament companions. Revelation is also a politically and ethically charged text. William Stringfellow noted

Whatever reasons can be assigned for it, Americans fail to comprehend Revelation as an ethical literature concerning the character and timeliness of God’s judgment...Revelation is manifestly the most political part of the New Testament.<sup>3</sup>

In light of these assertions one might suggest that a doctrine of Christian ethics could be discerned through the bizarre and colorful imagery of Revelation concomitantly with its theology. The need for an “ethic” of Revelation arises, in part, in response to the

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<sup>1</sup> William Stringfellow, *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*, (Waco: Word Books, 1973)p. 27

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Ellul, *Apocalypse: The Book of Revelation*, trans. George W. Schreiner, (New York: Seabury Press, 1977)p. 9

<sup>3</sup> Stringfellow, p. 27

ethical norms that have arisen from previous and current interpretations. For example, in the pre-dispensationalist millennial view war is a necessary sign of the coming kingdom. As a result those seeking “peace” are often viewed as in league with evil as they attempt to block the coming kingdom. Michael Maudlin quips of Lahaye/ Jenkin’s *Left Behind*, “the peace-loving, smooth-talking, hope-giving new president of Romania, Nicolae Carpathia...proposes worldwide disarmament... (oh-oh)”<sup>4</sup> This view tends toward a type of fatalism, which is incompatible with a Wesleyan perspective on grace. It also tends to profound anthropocentrism as contemporary interpretations say more about popular American culture than eschatology.

These brief examples demonstrate the possible ethical and theological consequences of such interpretations. Yet in popular Christianity it is precisely this type of interpretive structure that dominates literature and consciousness. We must ask (1) is this text useful in the interpretation of the doctrine of Christ and the Christian life? (2) What ethical norms for the Christian community are communicated in Revelation? (3) In what ways are such ethical statements authoritative on the Christian community? In particular, the problem addressed by this proposal seeks to discern the view of Revelation on the ethical issue of war and violence.

## **II. Hypothesis and Rational**

In this essay I will demonstrate a reasonable and powerful warrant for Christian non-violence arising from the symbolism of the Revelation of St. John. First, I will briefly explore the methodology of Christian ethics as related to Christian narrative and theology. Second, I will defend a doctrine of non-violence as the best view of war/pacifism arising from proper exegetical usage of symbols in the text. Third, I will briefly outline the significance of this interpretation and its authority on the contemporary Christian community.

## **III. Methodology**

To accomplish this end, I will use the new Yale school of theology as my primary methodological framework. Thus, I will suggest that when the symbols of Revelation are

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<sup>4</sup> Michael G. Maudlin, “The Bible Study at the End of the World,” *Christianity Today*, 41:10, 1997, p. 22-25

properly understood they add significant color and understanding to the scriptural witness and make a significant contribution to the narrative of God interactions with God's community. As the language of Revelation is understood as not only predictive, this language ought to be formative for the Christian community that affirms Revelation as a part of the New Testament witness.

I will argue this position largely through the writings of Hans Frei, George Lindbeck, Stanley Hauerwas, and David Kelsey. For my exegesis and concomitant theology of Revelation I will use the methodology and arguments of Richard Bauckham among other contemporary Revelation scholars.

This essay will be methodologically dialectic. I will attempt to hold in tension the empirical facts of human existence and the truth of the revelation. It is my belief that this tension may curb many of the abuses of this text in past interpretations.

#### **IV. The State of Current Scholarship**

In my research I have found that this specific discussion represents a "hole" of sorts in Christian theology. While studies in Revelation abound (both good and bad) it seems that very few at best have attempted to intentionally do work in ethics from this text, although as my bibliography suggests, my argument is not entirely new.

Ethics and Revelation were most common companions in the 1970's when it became popular as a tool of American political and social criticism. These arguments also tend to do ethics from Revelation in a theological vacuum looking more toward humanity than to the doctrine of God for their ethical maxims.

As suggested before, contemporary studies in Revelation are not difficult to find. I will use authors who share my presumptions that Revelation is not only a "predictive" book. I find kinship with Eugene Boring, Richard Bauckham, and others in this regard. Texts that take the theology of Revelation seriously are available and I will continue to try to flow this on going debate over interpretation.

The discussion of Biblical authority and the relationship between ethics and theology are also current discussions that this paper will briefly address in order to make the argument of non-violence from a Biblical interpretation. This current discussion will

be represented by such recent works from the new Yale school of theology as noted above.

#### V. Preliminary Bibliography

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Eugene M. Boring, *Revelation in Interpretation*. (Louisville: John Knox, 1989)

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Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*, (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996)

Wes Howard-Brook & Anthony Gwyther, *Unveiling Empire: Reading Revelation Then and Now*, (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000)

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Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation in The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989)

Eugene H. Peterson, *Reversed Thunder: The Revelation of John and the Praying Imagination*, (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1988)

David R. Plaster, "The Christian and War: a matter of personal conscience," *Grace Theological Journal* 6 no. 2, Fall 1985

Schubert M. Ogden, *On Theology*, (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1928)

William Stringfellow, *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*, (Waco: Word Books, 1973)

John H. Yoder, *Preface to Theology: Christology and Theological Method*, (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2002)

Gordon Zerbe, "Pacifism and Passive Resistance in Apocalyptic Writings: a critical evaluation," *The Pseudepigrapha and Early Biblical Interpretations*, ed James Charlesworth & Craig A. Evans, (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993)

**NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
PROCEDURES, STYLE, AND PHYSICAL FORM STANDARDS  
FOR RESEARCH PAPERS, PROJECTS, AND THESES**

The following standards have been adopted by the NTS faculty:

1. The student is responsible for delivering the required copies of their thesis/project after its approval by advisor and reader(s), to the Library Director five business days prior to graduation.  
The following number of copies is required:  
M.A. thesis – 2 copies  
M.Div. thesis – 2 copies  
D. Min. project – 3 copies
2. The library director will review the manuscript and copies for adherence to these standards. Any deficiencies noted must be corrected by the student and corrected copies accepted by the library director prior to graduation.
3. Except as noted herein, the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of Kate L. Turabian's Manual for Writers is to be the style manual for all papers, projects, and theses.
  - a. Thesis and projects submitted for M.A., M.Div., and D.Min. are to use footnote documentation style (cf. Chapter 16 Manual for Writers).
  - b. The attached uniform title and approval page templates are to be used. A sample title page for each program is provided.
4. The original typescript must be clearly produced on 11 x 8.5 inch unruled white 20 lb. acid free paper OR white 20 lb. paper with a rag (cotton) content of 50% or more.
5.
  - a. Times New Roman 12 type font is recommended.
  - b. The text must be in black print. Graphics may appear in color as long as all copies contain color graphics.
  - c. Copies are to be on laser printers
  - d. Occasional non-roman alphabet terms may be done by hand in black ink.
  - e. The leaves (pages) of the copies are not to have binder holes or other alterations.
  - f. The left margin is to be 1 ½ inch. Top, bottom and right margins are to be 1 inch.
  - g. Footnotes should be single-spaced, with a double space between entries.
6. The decision/recommendations of the library director are final, subject to appeal to the Educational Delivery & Policies or D.Min. Programs committees as appropriate.

**SAMPLE APPROVAL PAGE TEMPLATE**

AN EXPLORATION OF AN ECCLESIOLOGY  
FOR THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Approved by:

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Chair

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Date

**SAMPLE TITLE PAGE TEMPLATE**

NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A STUDY OF HOLINESS MOTIFS  
IN THE BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF  
RUDOLF BULTMANN

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Seminary Faculty  
In Partial fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By  
Barb Lynn Sample

Kansas City, Missouri  
September 17, 2002

# FORMS

**Master of Arts (Theological Studies)**  
**General Academic**  
 48 credit hours  
 Catalog 2011

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Undergrad School, Degree, and GPA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Admission Competency: Bible Content Exam (75 or better) \_\_\_\_\_ or BIB515 \_\_\_\_\_**

<b>Prescribed Courses 27 credit hours</b>			<b>Hrs.</b>	<b>Option Courses</b>	<b>Transfer Courses</b>
	MTS810	Seminar in Theological Methods & Research	2		
	MTS881	Comprehensive Theological Integration	1		
	LNG510	Introduction to Biblical Languages	3		
	BIB550	Biblical Hermeneutics	3		
	CHS515	Critical Developments in the History of Christianity	3		
	THE515	The Christian Faith & the Apostles' Creed	3		
	CHS660 or THE610	History of Christian Doctrine I or Integrative Theology I	3		
	CHS670 or THE620	History of Christian Doctrine 2 or Integrative Theology 2	3		
	PHL610 or THE760	Philosophy of Religion or Christian Ethics	3		
	THE640	Doctrine of Christian Holiness	3		
<b>Electives 21 credit hours (3 MATS/PhD Specific)</b>			<b>Hrs.</b>		
	OTL	Old Testament	3		
	NTL	New Testament	3		
		CHS/THE/PHL	3		
		CHS/THE/PHL	3		
		Electives with Advisement	3		
		Electives with Advisement	3		
		Electives with Advisement	3		

**Master of Arts (Theological Studies)**  
**Biblical Studies**  
upon completion of 18 credit hours and GPA of at least 3.5  
48 credit hours  
Catalog 2011

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Undergrad School, Degree, and GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Admission Competencies: Bible Content Exam (75 or better) \_\_\_\_\_ or BIB515 \_\_\_\_\_

Language Requirement (proficiency at intermediate level): \_\_\_\_\_

Prescribed Courses 36 credit hours			Hrs.	Option Courses	Transfer Courses
	MTS810	Seminar in Theological Methods & Research	2		
	MTS885	Thesis	4		
		Biblical Elective	3		
		OTL Exegesis	3		
		OTL Exegesis	3		
		NTL Exegesis	3		
		NTL Exegesis	3		
		Elective Exegesis	3		
		Elective Exegesis	3		
	BIB710	OT Theology	3		
	BIB750-760	NT Theology	3		
	THE640	Doctrine of Christian Holiness	3		
Electives 12 credit hours			Hrs.		
		Theo/Phil of Rel/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
		Theo/Phil of Rel/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
		Electives with Advisement	3		
		Electives with Advisement	3		

12 MATS/PhD Specific Hours Completed \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Completed \_\_\_\_\_

**Master of Arts (Theological Studies)**  
**Christian Thought and History**  
upon completion of 18 credit hours and GPA of at least 3.5  
48 credit hours  
Catalog 2011

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Undergrad School, Degree, and GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Admission Competencies: Bible Content Exam (75 or better) \_\_\_\_\_ or BIB515 \_\_\_\_\_  
CHS515 or equivalent: \_\_\_\_\_ and THE515 or equivalent: \_\_\_\_\_

Prescribed Courses 36 credit hours			Hrs.	Option Courses	Transfer Courses
	MTS810	Seminar in Theological Methods & Research	2		
	MTS885	Thesis	4		
	CHS660 or THE610	History of Christian Doctrine I or Integrative Theology I	3		
	CHS670 or THE620	History of Christian Doctrine 2 or Integrative Theology 2	3		
	THE640	Doctrine of Christian Holiness	3		
		Theo/Phil/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
		Theo/Phil/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
		Theo/Phil/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
		Theo/Phil/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
		Theo/Phil/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
		Theo/Phil/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
		Theo/Phil/Chr Ethics/Church History	3		
<b>Electives 12 credit hours</b>			<b>Hrs.</b>		
		Biblical Studies	3		
		Biblical Studies	3		
		Electives with Advisement	3		
		Electives with Advisement	3		

12 MATS/PhD Specific Hours Completed \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Completed \_\_\_\_\_

**Advised Program of Study  
Master of Arts (Theological Studies) Degree**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Semester \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Research Track \_\_\_\_\_

Course Number	Course Section	Course Title	Type of Credit	Credits

**Credit Types: CR = Credit, AU = Audit, TR = Transfer Credit**

Total Credits \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Degree Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

White Copy: Registrar      Yellow Copy: Academic Services Admin. Assistant      Pink Copy: Student

**Application for Acceptance into the Research Track  
MA (Theological Studies) Degree**

All students admitted to the MA (Theological Studies) degree program are initially admitted to the General Academic Track. Students intending to pursue a concentration within the Research Track and the writing of a thesis must apply to the MA (Theological Studies) Committee for acceptance into the Research Track **upon the completion of 18 hours of credit with an overall GPA of at least 3.5**. Applicants must also submit what the applicant considers to be his/her best sample of graduate academic writing to the proposed thesis director and the MATS/PhD Committee.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Projected Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Degree Track: \_\_\_\_\_ Biblical Studies \_\_\_\_\_ Christian Thought and History

Requested Thesis Director \_\_\_\_\_

Students must submit a paragraph about their thesis topic in order to determine the appropriateness of the thesis director.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Director's Signature

If approved by the MATS/PhD/PhD Committee, I agree to serve as thesis director.

***Below this line completed by the Registrar***

\*\*\*\*\*

GPA \_\_\_\_\_ Hours Completed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registrar's Signature

***Below this line completed by the Degree Director***

\*\*\*\*\*

Action of the Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Director's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**\*\*After completing your section of this form, please return to the Dean's Office Assistant for MATS/PhD Program.**

**Application for Thesis Proposal  
MA Theological Studies (Research Degree)**

Application and approval of Thesis proposal must be signed by the Thesis Director and submitted to the Director of the Program by the student no later than **the date specified in the Five Year Calendar**. This deadline is approximately five months prior to student's application for Thesis Defense.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Projected Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Attach Thesis Proposal according to the guidelines in the MA (Theological Studies) Program Guidelines.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Director's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Degree Director's Signature

Below this line completed by the Registrar prior to submission to Thesis Director

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GPA \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Hours Completed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registrar's Signature

**Application for Thesis Defense**  
**MA Theological Studies (Research Degree)**

Application for a thesis defense examination must be made no later than ***the date specified in the Five Year Calendar*** for the semester in which the student intends to graduate. It is expected that the student is present in person for the defense.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Projected Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Director: \_\_\_\_\_

*Below this line completed by the Registrar*

---

GPA \_\_\_\_\_

Hours Completed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registrar's Signature

*Below this line completed by the Degree Director*

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Examiners: \_\_\_\_\_  
Degree Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Defense Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director's Signature

**\*\*After completing your section of this form, please return to the Dean's Office Assistant for MATS/PhD Program. \*\***

**MA Theological Studies (Research Track)  
Thesis Defense Exam Report**

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Examiners' Action:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Pass with Distinction                      \_\_\_\_\_ Pass with Conditions  
      \_\_\_\_\_ Pass    \_\_\_\_\_ Unsatisfactory

Comments:

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2. \_\_\_\_\_ Re-Examination

Comments:

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3. Committee:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

4. Re-Examination Cleared:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_