

Essay Marking Grid – The New Testament

		F	D	C	B	A
Writing	30%	The paper is effectively unreadable due to major problems in grammar and style.	Many errors in spelling or grammar (more than 10 per page). Style is poor. Both grammar and style often interfere with the reader's understanding.	Frequent errors in spelling or grammar (3-10 per page). Style may be quite awkward in places. Format does not follow MLA guidelines consistently. In a few places these problems interfere with the reader's understanding.	Only a few errors in spelling or grammar (1-2 per page). Style may be awkward in places, but is generally readable. Only a few errors in formatting.	No errors in spelling or grammar. Style flows smoothly. Correct MLA format is used throughout. A pleasure to read.
Research	30%	Less than 3 good-quality academic sources. The student has no grasp of the material read. This grade is also reserved for papers which only provide citations for direct quotes.	Less than 6 good-quality academic sources. The student's understanding of the sources and the topic is poor. Bibliographic format is consistently wrong. References or citations are often missing. Page numbers are not provided in citations. Frequent factual errors.	At least 6 good-quality academic sources. Some sources are not reliable or are not relevant to the topic. Sources are not balanced to represent a range of scholarly views. Some sources are not used significantly in the paper or are not understood. Understanding of the sources and subject is superficial. Some important scholarly views or aspects of the subject are missed. Some factual errors. Frequent errors in bibliographic format.	At least 8 good-quality academic sources. At least 1 is a journal article or bible dictionary entry. The research has been understood well and all sources are used in the paper. In places sources may simply be repeated without critical engagement. Only a few errors in bibliographic format.	At least 10 good-quality academic sources. At least 3 are journal articles. At least 1 is an entry from a bible dictionary. Research is well understood and integrated thoughtfully into the paper. Proper bibliographic format is used throughout.
Argument	30%	The paper contains no argument at all, and betrays no significant understanding of the topic.	No focussed question and/or thesis. The central points of the paper may not be supported by any significant evidence. No over-arching argument. There is evidence, however, of some significant familiarity with the topic and the sources. Key objections go unacknowledged.	Question and/or thesis may be unclear. Some of the main arguments in support of the thesis are not supported with sufficient evidence. Some significant problems with the logic of the argument. Scholarly opinions may be cited uncritically and not supported by evidence from the biblical text or historical record. No significant attempt to address possible counter-arguments.	Clear question and thesis. Thesis is supported with some good evidence from the biblical text or historical record. Some of the evidence used is weak. Shows some attempt to address possible counter-arguments, but these responses are not always successful.	Clear question and thesis (1-sentence answer to the question). Answer (thesis) is well supported by evidence from the biblical text or historical record. The argument for the answer is logically coherent. Possible objections are anticipated and countered.
Creativity and Interest	10%	The level of interest and/or creative thought is impossible to judge because the argument or writing are incoherent.	A poor presentation. Major problems with the writing and/or argument make it difficult to understand the paper. Thought seems confused.	A pedestrian presentation. Little evidence of independent thought.	Some evidence of independent thought. The presentation is fairly interesting.	Evidence of significant independent thought. An interesting topic presented in an engaging way.