

Catholic Bible Institute – Research Paper 2009

Participants enrolled for “Certification / Credit” from Loyola Marymount University are required to write a longer paper for November, *instead of* the monthly one-page reflection paper. *Anyone enrolled in the Catholic Bible Institute for “Enrichment / Audit” does **not** need to write the longer paper, but should write the usual monthly one-page reflection paper for November.*

For your paper due in November, choose *one* of the following topics related to the Letter of JAMES:

- 1) *Wealth and poverty; rich and poor.*
- 2) *Speech and the use of the tongue.*
- 3) *Faith and good works.*
- 4) *Sickness and healing, sin and forgiveness.*

Do Your Research:

- First, reread the entire Letter of James, and find all the passages related to your chosen topic.
- Next, read any relevant introductions, footnotes, or supporting articles in your *Study Bible*.
- Then, reread any related sections of our main *textbook* (R. Brown, *Introduction to the NT*).
- Use at least *three other scholarly works* (Commentaries, Books, Articles, not just your Study Bible). Consult your public library, parish library, online sources, or share resources with other participants.
- But don't use too many other authors; rely *mostly* on *your own* careful readings of the *biblical* texts.

Reflect on your Topic and Plan your Paper:

- Don't form hasty opinions or read your own assumptions into the text, but ask yourself what *James* really says about your chosen topic, even if it may be contrary to your own prior ideas.
- Make your paper *both exegetical* (What was the original author trying to communicate to his first-century audience?) and *pastoral* (What do these texts still say to us today?).
- Formulate a concise **thesis statement**: Summarize in *one sentence* the *main point* you would like to make, which you will explain and illustrate in the rest of your paper.
- Sketch out a brief **outline** to organize your thoughts and to structure your paper well.

Write Your Paper:

- Papers should be *typed* on regular-sized (8½ x 11) white paper, **double-spaced**, using a 10-12 point font, with **one-inch margins** all around; staple all pages together.
- Write in standard *essay* format (Introduction, Thesis, Main Body, Brief Conclusion, Bibliography).
- Write *5-7 pages* of text (*not* counting your bibliography; put that on the bottom of the last page).
- To save paper, do not compose a separate title page, but include full identification in a **compact heading** on the first page (*your name, your site, and the date*); also include a creative **paper title**.
- Please **proofread** your paper, with special attention to spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- For *more tips on good writing*, see <http://www.catholic-resources.org/Courses/WritingTips.htm>.

Use Parenthetical Notes and Append Your Bibliography:

- If you **directly quote** from the *Bible*, cite the book name, chapter and verse number(s) right after the quotation (for proper format, see http://bellarmine.lmu.edu/~fjust/Bible/Biblical_References.htm).
- Back up some of your other claims about the Bible (even if you are not directly quoting it) with a few **biblical references** (in the body of your text itself, rather than using footnotes).
- If you **directly quote** from *non-biblical works* (modern textbooks, dictionaries, commentaries, etc.), give the brief reference in parentheses (author's name, page number) right after the quote.
- At the end of your paper, include a full **bibliography** of the sources you used in your research (not just those you directly quoted in your paper).
- For examples of all of the above, see the **back of this page**.

Examples of Bibliographical Format:

At the end of any research paper, include a *full bibliography* listing all books or articles you used and/or quoted.

- Include the *complete publication information*: name of **author** (and/or editor), **title** (and subtitle), publication **city-company-year**, and **page numbers** (only for chapter/articles, not for whole books).
- Use the *proper format for each type of publication*, as in the examples below; pay close attention to the *order* of the items, the use of *italics* or *quotation marks*, and any *other punctuation*.
- For more explanation and examples, see <http://www.catholic-resources.org/Courses/WritingTips.htm>.

Whole Book:

Boadt, Lawrence. *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.

Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Chapter or Essay within a Book:

Resseguie, James L. "John 9: A Literary-Critical Analysis." In: *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives* (edited by K.R. Gros Louis; Nashville: Abingdon, 1982) 2.295-303.

Article in a Journal or Magazine:

Poirier, John C. "'Day and Night' and the Punctuation of John 9:3." *New Testament Studies* 42 (1996) 288-94.

Article in a Dictionary or Commentary:

Dunn, James D.G. "Christology." *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (edited by David N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992) 1.979-91. [short for volume 1, pages 979-991]

On-Line Materials (list the author, title, web address, and the date you used it):

Goodacre, Mark. "The New Testament Gateway" [<http://www.ntgateway.com/>]. Accessed on 2/3/01.

Examples of Quotations and Parenthetical References:

Most of what you write in a research paper should be *your own thoughts* expressed in *your own words*. But you *also* need to *support* what you write with *short* quotations from other writings (ancient or modern texts):

- Copyright law (and common courtesy) requires that you at least briefly *identify the source* of your material (give credit where credit is due; would you want other people to use your words as they were their own?)
- If you *directly quote* someone else's words, you must use "quotation marks" (and cite the reference afterwards); if you don't quote exactly, but only mention someone else's ideas, you should still reference your source.
- Put the reference in parentheses, after the quotation, but before the sentence's closing punctuation (ref. here).

Direct Quote – Cite in parentheses the author's last name, an abbreviated title, and the page number:

"Matthew's extremely hostile critique of the scribes and Pharisees as casuistic (especially in chap. 23) is not untypical of the harsh criticism of one Jewish group by another Jewish group in the 1st centuries BC and AD – a criticism that at times crossed the borderline into slander" (Brown, *Intro NT*, 222).

Referencing a work without directly quoting – When you use ideas from other authors, even if you do not quote their exact words, you still need to give credit to your source; give the reference in the same format as for a direct quote:

The biblical authors of Genesis utilized the popular mythology of the region and time to illustrate to the readers the dangers and consequences of sin (see Boadt, *Reading the OT*, 122).

Biblical Citations – The Bible must also be properly referenced. If you say, "John says" or "Matthew writes," you need to back up your claim with a citation. If you refer to an event or a specific text, you need to give the exact biblical reference:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

In Matthew's Gospel, Joseph is warned in a dream to escape with Mary and the child Jesus to Egypt (Matt 2:13).

For more tips and examples of biblical references, see http://www.catholic-resources.org/Bible/Biblical_References.htm.