

NAME: ISIEBUE VALENTIN N.

REG. NO: DI/920

**COURSE: THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT
EXAMINATION**

QUESTIONS ANSWERED:

***Question no.1: The New Testament Theology is the title of some
academic syllabi (courses). Does it exist?***

AND

***Question no. 2. F: The Essential Aspects of the Eucharist in the New
Testament?***

DATE: FEBRUARY 4TH, 2021.

ANSWER TO QUESTION 1

INTRODUCTION: Considering the question of the existence of the New Testament theology, we shall give our answer by firstly admitting that there is an existence of such academic syllabi as New Testament Theology. The reason, being that such title as ‘the theology of the New Testament’ as some refer to it, basically has a prospective place within the New Testament studies. I hope to answer this question by offering the definition of the concept of ‘New Testament theology’ and then by exposing some biblical scholar’s views.

THE DISCIPLINE OF NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY: According to Donald Arthur Carson, the New Testament is above all a theology; it is a discourse about God. For Christians it is discourse about God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, about His character, nature, and self-disclosure, about His acts, of His creation, providence and redemption, about his people, origin, circumstance salvation and destination. It is all we have to know about God, it is a theology not a religion.¹ This is true in line with the position of John Ashton who said that, New Testament theology means “an interpretation of the NT designed to be religiously significant to present-day readers”².

SCHOLARS’ AFFIRMATION : Despite the fact that there has being a lot of arguments by different Biblical scholars concerning New Testament Theology, Donahue J.R pointed out that even though it is routinely pronounced dead. Yet, new journals and series of books emerge dedicated to the study of biblical theology. Comprehensive NT theologies continue to be produced, and monographs appear on particular aspects of NT theology. Donahue narrated that surveying a number of theologies produced in the last 40 years, there are more works written by

¹ Cf. Donald Arthur Carson, An Article on “New Testament Theology”, in Dictionary of the later NT and its Development, 1997, p. 805-806

² John Ashton, "History and Theology in New Testament Studies", in The nature of NTT (2006), p. 2

Catholic and protestant scholars on NT theologies.³ Also Peter Balla, defended the discipline of NTT, by clarifying that the historical study does not exclude the study of theology if the definition of theology is understood broadly enough; for him, NT Theology is a descriptive, historical enterprise that deals with the canonical writings of the NT. It is not a normative discipline, nor should it try to prove the claims of the NT. One need not be a believer to practice it.⁴

CONCLUSION: Our affirmation of the existence of ‘New Testament Theology’ hinges on the fact that the New Testament Theology has a definition, history, nature, task and method. In line with the testimonies of some scholars, like: Donahue J.R, Peter Bella and Wendel Sun who spoke positively on the existence of the discipline of the New Testament theology.

ANSWER TO QUESTION NO. 2, F.

INTRODUCTION: The Church draws her life from the Eucharist. This truth does not simply express a daily experience of faith, but recapitulates the heart of the mystery of the Church, in a variety of ways. she joyfully experiences the constant fulfillment of the promise. “Lo, I am with you always, till the close of the age.”⁵ The essential aspects of the Eucharist would be randomly explained in this discourse.

ESSENTIAL ASPECTS: Jesus instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his body and blood at the Last Supper in order to perpetuate the Sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until he would come again.⁶ Paul narrates the institution of the Eucharist⁷ in much the same way as did St. Luke. He also teaches that the Eucharist is the sacrifice, far beyond and incompatible with pagan sacrifices, and that the victim in the Eucharist was prefigured in the victim in Old

³ DONAHUE J. R., “The changing shape of New Testament Theology”, *Theological Studies* 50 (1989), p. 315-317

⁴ Bella Peter, *Challenges to New Testament Theology: A n Attempt to justify the Enterprise*, (WUNT 2.95. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), p 4

⁵ Mt. 28:20

⁶ Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, (December 4, 1963). P. 47.

⁷ see 1 Cor. 11:23-25.

Testament oblations (1 Cor. 10:14-22). Really partaking of the body of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25; Mark 14:22-24; Matthew 26:26-28). Following the command of Jesus, the first Christian community celebrated the memory of their Lord in a meal (cf. Acts. 2 42; 20:7111). This celebration is still an essential part of the Church's life.

In the writings of Paul, we are offered an insight into the New Testament's treatment of Eucharist in the Christian community which is presented in 1 Cor. 10:16-17. St. Paul stresses the communication nature of the celebration of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:17-14) and the reason is clear, the Passover meal has always been a community act, and it is the Christian community that celebrates the Eucharist.⁸ St. Paul is saying when he speaks of the Eucharist as a participation in the sacrificed meal of the Lord; the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? the bread which we break is it not a participation to the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread (1 Cor. 10:16-17).⁹ The new covenant community he says has not only been established through Christ's death. It also persists through it. Many share in the new covenant not only because Christ died for them, but also because this participation finds realization in their sharing in Christ's vicarious death and so living in Christ both as individuals and as a community. Being a Christian means to be in Christ, and this is realized and experienced in baptism and the Eucharist.¹⁰

CONCLUSION: From the foregoing, it is very clear from the various accounts that the breaking of bread was a community affair done with all sense of sacredness and thanksgiving. It draws the community into unity with one another and with God.

⁸ Gerardo Bekes, *The Eucharist Makes the Church: The Ecclesial Dimension of the Sacrament*, (USA: Paulist Press, 1989), p. 355

⁹ Cf. Gerardo Bekes, *The Eucharist Makes the Church: The Ecclesial Dimension of the Sacrament*, p. 355.

¹⁰ Cf. Ulrich Wilekens, "The Eucharist and Church Unity" in *Theology Digest*, vol. 28 # 3 p. 228