Writing Tips:

No long quotes, use own words

Cite Bible verses

A quotation is not a sentence, format it into a phrase using commas or colons

Provide context or briefly summarize but do not give a play-by-play

Use sign-posting: intro, thesis statement, preview statement, transitions, and conclusion

Define terms at the outset

*Instead of copying and pasting large sections like this:*

The Great Commission as conveyed by the author of Matthew entails many duties for the disciples: “In describing this restricted mission, Jesus gives the disciples plenty to do. The disciples were to speak to their fellow Jews— friends, relatives, and other members of the people Israel. They would proclaim, “The kingdom of heaven has come near” (Matthew 10:7). Then they would demonstrate the legitimacy of their claim by curing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing those suffering from leprosy, and exorcising demons (Matthew 10:8). Compared to Mark’s version of the missionary instructions, Matthew gives the disciples a major upgrade in terms of what they are to do. Mark reports that Jesus sent them out “two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits” (Mark 6:7). According to Mark, the disciples— who begin their message with the proclamation that all should repent—“cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them” (Mark 6:13). No raising the dead here. Luke depicts a mission of seventy, who are sent to cure the sick. The seventy report back to Jesus, “Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!” (Luke 10:17)” (Levine, 55)

*Please summarize and cite where the idea originates:*

The Great Commission as conveyed by the author of Matthew entails many duties for the disciples, such as informing their fellow Jews of the coming kingdom, performing healing miracles, and exorcising demons. Compared to the Commission in the other Synoptic Gospels, this is “a major upgrade in terms of what they are to do” (Levine, 55).

Levine, Amy-Jill. *The Difficult Words of Jesus: A Beginner’s Guide to His Most Perplexing Teachings*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2021.

*Instead of plopping a full quoted sentence down on its own:*

Judith and Henry have a secret half-brother, Charles. “And Henry came in and the old man said ‘They cannot marry because he is your brother’” (Faulkner, 293). Because of this, Charles already being married, and Charles being part-Black, and due to the prohibition against incest, bigamy, and miscegenation, he is driven away and Judith is forbidden from marrying him.

*Use a comma, colon, or blended sentence to insert your quotations:*

[Comma] William Faulkner’s *Absalom Absalom!* can be viewed as an extended Midrash on the themes and events found in 2 Samuel 13-18, where David cries, “O my son, Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!” (2 Samuel 18:33).

[Colon] Indeed, one recognizes a loose correlation between Thomas Sutpen’s David and Henry Sutpen’s Absalom, and from Charles Bon’s Amnon to Judith Sutpen’s Tamar: “The father who decreed and forbade, the son who denied and repudiated, the lover who acquiesced, the beloved who was not bereaved” (Faulkner, 295).

[Blended] By conjecturing, expanding, and adopting the positions and motivations of different actors in the narrative through long tracts of dialogic supposition, “both thinking as one, the voice which happened to be speaking the thought only the thinking become audible, vocal; the two of them creating between them, out of the rag-tag and bob-ends of old tales,” Quentin and Shreve attempt to fill in the gaps of information in a saga that has been told non-chronologically from multiple, and often competing, simultaneous perspectives (Faulkner, 90).

Faulkner, William. *Absalom, Absalom!* New York, NY: Random House, Inc., 1936.

*Instead of a play-by-play:*

Elijah prepared and slaughtered a bull, and he cut it into pieces, and he put the pieces on a fire but he did not light it (1 Kings 18:24). The four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal prepared and slaughtered a bull, and cut it into pieces, and put the pieces on a fire but did not light it. Then they called out to their god, Baal, to ignite the sacrificial fire, but nothing happened, and they continued calling for hours and hours, becoming more and more desperate (1 Kings 18:28). Yet when it was Elijah’s turn to call upon the God of Israel to light his fire, he also made an altar out of twelve stones, doused the wood in water to make it harder to light, and built a moat around it all (1 Kings 18:31-35). Despite this, the God of Israel easily consumed the entire assortment of materials with hot fire when called upon and proved God’s might (1 Kings 18:38). Elijah had all four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal put to death (1 Kings 18:40).

*Please summarize:*

Elijah and the prophets of Baal had a contest to see whose god was more powerful, where Elijah not only won on behalf of the God of Israel, but made his burden of proof more difficult than his opponents’ and then had them slaughtered once the contest was over (1 Kings 18:20-40).

*Your first paragraph should preview the entire rest of the paper:*

At the close of her paper on the polarization of gender roles and their conceptualization as ideological complements due to shifting socio-political-economic conditions in 19th century Germany, Hausen reflects on the broader social implications of these developments. From the nature of housework to the degree of romantic love in marriage relationships, these effects are wide-reaching and long-lasting. The last result Hausen lists is the socialization of children within the family, with an emphasis on the sex of the primary care-giving parent, which leads, almost inevitably, to Freud and psychoanalysis. With a view to Freud’s theories as they impinge on anthropology, religion, and psychiatry, the normalizing influence that German bourgeois family structure and its attendant social consequences come to have on academic discourse results in a false and disturbing perennial philosophy that is difficult to eliminate in religious studies even today.

Hausen, K. “Family and Role-Division: The Polarisation of Sexual Stereotypes in the Nineteenth Century- An Aspect of the Dissociation of Work and Family Life” in *The German Family: Essays on the Social History of the Family in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Germany* [Richard J. Evans & W.R. Lee, editors]. London, UK: Croom Helm, 1981.

*Your conclusion should reiterate your thesis and revisit a few powerful points. If nothing else, write, “In conclusion, [reword thesis]. This was seen through [review sub-topics together in one chronological sentence].” DO NOT JUST STOP WRITING AFTER YOUR LAST EVIDENCE PARAGRAPH!*

*Calvary* works as a religious allegory precisely because it is not too heavy-handed. Father James is allowed to be flawed but still virtuous, the audience can both empathize with Jack and wish he had not killed Father James, and one can be moved with the final shot of Fiona and Jack about to speak to each other over the prison phone while avoiding a presumption of cheap forgiveness. Jack's insistence that sometimes justice is not possible, comes too late, and/or is not enough applies just the same to the bereft Fiona. The complementarity of the opening and closing scenes— the former involving two characters exchanging words but not seeing each other’s faces, with a barrier dividing them along the sagittal plane; the latter involving two characters seeing each other’s faces but not exchanging words, with a barrier dividing them along the coronal plane— emphasizes the ripple effects of systemic abuses, while the constant tension between Gestas and Dismas, between excusing and taking responsibility, reinforces the ambivalence with which all priests now are perceived. This complexity and tension between hope and despair makes what would otherwise be a hokey (holy) metaphor not only palatable but powerful.

*Calvary.* John Michael McDonagh, director. Momentum Pictures, 2014.