LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

A Sample Paper for the Purpose of Correct Formatting

Submitted to Dr. <Insert Name>,

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of

<Insert Course Prefix and Number – Section Number>

<Insert Course Title>

by

<Insert Student Name>

<Month Date, Year Submitted>

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**Introduction (First-Level Subheading)**

Since most beginning students will have difficulty learning how to write papers and also format papers correctly using the eighth edition of Kate L. Turabian’s, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers*,[[1]](#footnote-1) this sample paper can be used as a template for inserting the correct parts. For the purpose of instruction, it will use second person, but third person must be used in student papers. You will notice that the first time Turabian’s name is written in the paper, her full name is given, but the second and subsequent uses of her name will be her last name only.

Though some written assignments will not require a table of contents, Liberty University School of Divinity (hereafter referred to as SoD) requires all research papers to have a table of contents and abide by basic Turabian rules.

Number all pages of this element with roman numerals. Label the first page *Contents* at the top of the page. If the table of contents is more than one page, do not repeat the title. Leave two blank lines between the title and the first listed item. Single-space individual items listed, but add a blank line after each item. Between the lists for the front and back matter and the chapters, or between parts or volumes (if any), leave two blank lines.[[2]](#footnote-2)

It is important to note that a table of contents does not list the pages that precede it, only those pages that follow it. Be sure that the first letter of each word is capitalized (other than articles and prepositions within the phrase).

The footnote can be inserted in the middle of a sentence, but preferably following some punctuation (i.e. semicolon, comma, etc.). The SoD prefers that students use superscripted footnotes; however, we know that Microsoft Word 2013 defaults to standard font size followed by a period for the footnote. The footnote below is the proper form for books. If you are going to create a footnote for a journal article, you would use a different format as shown below.[[3]](#footnote-3) The footnote below is a full footnote from a journal article found in Liberty’s online library using an American Theological Library Association (ATLA) search. You can use an abbreviation in the body of your paper once it has been defined (as above).

You are asked in the course, “Research, Writing, and Ministry Preparation,”[[4]](#footnote-4) to learn the proper formatting of your papers as well as to learn how to conduct research, plan the details of a paper or report, and write your paper in a manner that your professor and classmates will be able to understand. Usually, you will finish your introduction with a full thesis statement.

Do not confuse a purpose statement with a thesis statement. A purpose statement states the reason why the paper is written. For all practical purposes, the purpose statement introduces the thesis statement. An example of a purpose statement is, “The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that when one recognizes God’s freedom he/she can find biblical inerrancy defensible.” An example of a thesis statement is, “Biblical inerrancy is defensible in the context of divine freedom.” Remember, it is the purpose and thesis statements that determine the form and content of an outline.

The distinction between a purpose statement and a thesis statement is important. The purpose of this sample paper is to provide a template for the correct formatting of a research paper. The thesis is, “Students who use this paper as a sample or template are more likely to format their papers correctly in the future.”

**First Major Section (First-Level Subheading)**

You will notice that the title of the first major section heading is centered and bold type. Within each heading and subheading, all words must be capitalized unless it is an article (a, an, the), preposition (on, to, by, from, in with, etc.), or coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, not, for). There are two blank lines above the heading and one below.[[5]](#footnote-5)

This was accomplished by highlighting the title and changing the formatting for just those lines to single space in the “Paragraph” menu above. The footnote below is the proper form for using a source that has been used previously (commonly referred to as a “second reference”). The first footnote has complete information, and later footnotes use an abbreviated form.

First Subhead (Second-Level Subheading)

This section will be the first sub section of the first major section. Note that the second level subheading is centered with each word capitalized (except for articles and prepositions) and not bold. Notice again the additional blank space above (again two blank lines before a subheading and one after). This is done by writing the subhead and then beginning the paragraph. Then return to the subhead and highlight the entire row in which it appears. Using “Paragraph” above, it is possible to remove the indentation and make that row single space. Then you can return and move the subhead down one additional space as well as add one space below.

This sample paper generally uses one paragraph per subhead. It is important to understand, however, that subheadings in a research paper must have at least two paragraphs. As a paragraph is a group of sentences that express one main idea, most sections (subheads) need more than a single paragraph to support their proposition.

Second Subhead (Second-Level Subheading)

Remember that you must always have at least two subheads per level.[[6]](#footnote-6) You cannot have just one subhead at any particular level. If this occurs, then divide the information into at least two sections at that level or simply remove the subhead altogether. When having to cite the same source in immediate sequence, use Ibid. (note the second footnote on page one). Avoid too many uses of *ibidem* (abbreviated Ibid.) by making use of multiple sources. It is also important to note that Ibid. cannot be used as the first footnote entry on a page (see footnote number six at the bottom of this page). As an abbreviation, the term Ibid. must be followed by a period even if used in the middle of a sentence.

Any number used in the text that is under one hundred and any whole number of hundreds should be spelled completely within the body of the paper (one hundred, two hundred, etc.).[[7]](#footnote-7) Generally, if the number can be written with two words, it should be spelled completely. For numbers written with more than two words (i.e. 108, 210, etc.), the numerals should be used. However, you should never mix the styles. If any number used has to be written with numerals, then all should be in the same style (i.e., 98, 108, 210, 300; not ninety-eight, 108, 210, three hundred). Of note here is an exception that when writing percentages in the text, you would write 98 percent or 100 percent, and so forth; always using the numeral, but writing out “percent.”

**Second Major Section (First-Level Subheading)**

First Subhead (Second-Level Subheading)

The title of a heading cannot be left alone at the bottom of a page. If there is not enough room on the previous page for both the heading title and at least the first two lines of the paragraph, you must begin a new page. You can have two headings in a row as above separated by one blank line (but again, not alone at the bottom of the page).

**First Subsection Subhead (Third-Level Subheading)**

Note that the third-level subheading subhead is flush-left in bold type, but the same spacing above and below is maintained. This is true of the second subhead that follows. Though the margins and the type (bold or regular) changes, the spacing remains constant.

**Second Subsection Subhead (Third-Level Subheading)**

This is the second subhead because it is always necessary to have at least two items at every level. This is an important clarification. There must be a second major section (level one) for every first major section (level one). There must be a second subhead (second level) for every first subhead (second level). There must be a second subsection subhead (third level) for every first subsection subhead (third level), and so forth.

Second Subhead (Second-Level Subheading)

This is the second subsection of the second major section. Once again it is centered but in regular type. When writing a paper, organize your outline first so that you are able to plan how you will make your argument and then give your reasoning and evidence to support your thesis statement. Your first paragraph of each section should explain how this will fit into your reasoning and then each section will end with a summary of how the evidence has shown your reasoning to be correct. Also, transitions are very helpful at the end of each major section so that the reader anticipates how the next section is connected to the logical progression of the reasoning you use to support your thesis.

Most graduate research papers will be no longer than twenty pages and generally do not have long and detailed outlines or subheadings beyond the third level. Details that would be appropriate for the fourth or fifth heading level tend to distract the reader’s attention from the overall thesis within a short essay. Even if a fourth level is unavoidable, a fifth level is discouraged.

**Examples of Citing the Bible (First Level)**

Many students struggle with the proper formatting in citing the Bible. When citing biblical passages, there are some general guidelines to follow that are important. It is not necessary to write out full citations of verses or paragraphs from the Bible since your readers can find the references that you cite. Citations are written in full when the author needs to make a specific observation, such as when he/she chooses to follow Luke’s example in his message to Theophilus; “so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught” (Luke 1:4).[[8]](#footnote-8) You will notice in the footnote below that only a single footnote is needed when identifying the Bible version, providing the paper cites from only one translation. All the following biblical references are given in the text of the paper, not in the footnotes, unless content in the footnote requires biblical references. If you use multiple translations or versions of the Bible, then you would have to use one footnote for each new version and use a system of abbreviations in the text, but only within parentheses (NASB, KJV, NIV, etc.). The writing is simplified if you choose one version of the Bible and use it exclusively. Then you can provide a disclaimer footnote to that effect as stated in footnote number eight.

In the actual text of a paper you need to follow proper grammatical and style requirements. Here are some correct examples of how to cite references or allusions from the Bible. Luke wrote to Theophilus in verse four of his first chapter so that his patron would have a more exact understanding of the details of the salvation offered also to the Gentiles. Luke claims that he wrote his Gospel, “in consecutive order,” after having “investigated everything carefully from the beginning” (Luke 1:3). In verse one of chapter one, Luke seems to be aware of previous Gospel accounts, but in Luke 1:2, he claims that he has information from eyewitnesses. You will note in the previous example that you are permitted to use standard biblical references like Luke 1:2 within a sentence as long as you introduce it as a biblical reference rather than as part of your text.

The abbreviations for the books of the Bible can be used only in parentheses within the text or in footnotes.[[9]](#footnote-9) For example, you may make a reference to Romans 1:16, but if you state that Christians should not be ashamed of the gospel (Rom 1:16), then you should use the abbreviation within parentheses. The following examples are all correct: Paul, in verse sixteen of chapter one of his Epistle to the Romans, states that he is not ashamed of the gospel; Paul states that he is not ashamed of the gospel (Rom 1:16); and in Romans 1:16, Paul states that he is not ashamed of the gospel.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Finally, when citing multiple chapters or multiple verses, certain expectations exist. If you choose to cite several consecutive chapters, then use a dash (3-em dash) such as Romans 1–5, which is equivalent to Romans chapters one through five. If you choose to cite several consecutive verses, use a normal hyphen (-) such as Romans 3:21-26. If the verses are not in consecutive order, then use a comma, such as Romans 3:21, 23, and 26. Finally, when chapters are not in consecutive order, they are separated by semicolons (;), such as Romans 1; 3; 5; and 8. The following sentences are an example of how to use semicolons. Not only does Jesus possess supernatural knowledge, but his prophecy of the future destruction of Jerusalem also reflects his knowledge of Old Testament prophecies concerning past destructions of Jerusalem (Isa 9:3; Jer 6:6; 22:8-9; 23:38, 40; and Ezek 4:2). Additionally, since Matthew writes as if the temple is still standing (5:23-24; 12:5-7; 23:16-22; and 26:60-61), good evidence exists that he wrote before AD 70 and that Jesus actually historically predicted the fall of Jerusalem.[[11]](#footnote-11)

**Conclusion**

The conclusion to your paper should reiterate the thesis (though not necessarily verbatim) and provide your readers with a concise summary of your major points. A well written conclusion defends your thesis and provides a clear perspective of the topic. Its importance cannot be overstated as the conclusion frames your closing thoughts and should provide a lasting impression.

The bibliography that follows starts on a new page even though a great deal of room may be left on a final page. If you hold down the “Ctrl” key and then “Enter,” you will go to an entirely new page in order to start the bibliography. You will note that the bibliography begins with the title centered in bold type followed by one blank line. The bibliography is single-spaced but with a blank line (or 12-pt line space after) inserted between each entry.

**Bibliography**

Thornhill, Anthony C. “The Resurrection of Jesus and Spiritual (Trans) Formation.” *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2012): 243-56.[[12]](#footnote-12)

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

1. Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations,* 8th ed., rev. Wayne C. Booth, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., 380. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Anthony C. Thornhill, “The Resurrection of Jesus and Spiritual (Trans) Formation,” *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2012): 243. Notice that the footnote identifies the exact page number of the citation that is used in the text (the example given is from page 243) whereas the bibliographic entry (in the bibliography) must include the inclusive numbers for the entire article (i.e. 243-56). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Notice the comma was placed inside the quotation marks when the course title “Research, Writing, and Ministry Preparation” was written. Soft punctuation (such as a comma or a period) is always inserted inside the quotation mark whereas hard punctuation (such as a question mark, exclamation point, colon, or semicolon) is placed outside the quotation mark. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Turabian, *Manual for Writers*, 393. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Turabian, *Manual for Writers*, 329. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The exception is within a footnote where all numeric numerals can be used (e.g. 100, 200, etc.). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the *English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. When abbreviating books of the Bible, do not use the Turabian recommended list; consult the LBTS Writing Guide, Appendix A. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Notice the word “gospel” is not capitalized when referring to the evangelical message (i.e. “good news”). It is capitalized when referring to one of the first four books of the New Testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Years before Christ use the abbreviation BC (Before Christ) or BCE (Before the Common Era) after the year, as in 100 BC or 100 BCE. Years after the birth of Christ use AD (*Anno Domini*; lit., In the Year of our Lord) before the year as in AD 70. If CE (Common Era) is used in lieu of AD then the abbreviation follows the year as in 70 CE. Do not use periods after each letter (BC, not B.C. and AD, not A.D.). The SoD is more likely to use BC and AD rather than BCE and CE, but students will find both systems used in scholarly materials. Additionally, small caps (uppercase characters set at same height as surrounding lowercase letters) are often used for AD (ad) and BC (bc). The SoD allows the student to use regular large caps or small caps. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. There are numerous rules about inclusive numbers. See Table 23.2 in Turabian, *Manual for Writers*, 325. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)