



ST3550 Bible Interpretation
Professor: Thad James, Jr. Ph.D.
Class Hours:2 Spring 2020

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Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an introduction to the theory and practice of Biblical Interpretation or Hermeneutics. To assist students in gaining the skills and knowledge necessary to determine the meaning of any passage of Scripture and to apply it authentically to the contemporary context.

Course Objectives

1. To introduce students to basic principles and prerequisites of Bible Interpretation.
2. To enhance the students ability to exegete Scripture in its original historical and cultural context.
3. To refine the students understanding of presuppositions at work in Scripture and in the interpreter. Thus enhancing the development of a Biblical Worldview.
4. To introduce students to the development of methods of studying God's Word for preaching, teaching and personal improvement.
5. To critically evaluate commentaries and articles written on the Bible
6. To sharpen the students skill in applying Scripture in a responsible manner to contemporary contexts.
7. To broaden the students awareness of tools available for Biblical study.
8. To learn self-disciplined study habits and the ability to meet deadlines.

Course Texts

Required Texts:

McQuilken, Robertson. *Understanding and Applying the Bible: Revised and Expanded* (All)
Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays *Journey Into God's Word* (**Required for Masters Students Only**)

Zodhiates, Spiros *Greek-Hebrew Key Study Bible* (**Required Certificate Students Only**)

Vine, W. E. *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testament Words: With Topical Index (Word Study)* – Used editions are acceptable (**Required for Certificate Students Only**)

Logos Bible Software - **Libronix Digital Library System (Required for Masters Students Only)** (See <http://bts.education/logos-bible-study-software/>)

Books for Book Critique (Choose one): Required for all students

O. Palmer Robertson *The Final Word: A Biblical Response to the Case for Tongues & Prophecy Today*

Sproul, R. C. *Knowing Scripture: Revised Edition*

Richards, Randolph E. and Brandon J. O'Brien *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes*

Recommended: not required

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London

Vyhmeister, Nancy J. *Quality Research Paper* Zondervan, Grand Rapids (2nd or 3rd Ed.)

Adler, Mortimer J. and Charles Van Doren *How to Read A Book* Touchstone Publishing

ThirdMill – *He Gave Us Scripture* <http://thirdmill.org/seminary/course.asp/vs/HGB>

Course Requirements

1. **Plan your time wisely** for weekly assignments, book critique, Mid-term and your exegetical paper. Do not wait until the end of the semester. **Proper Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance.**
2. Submit a **400** word essay of your personal learning objectives, what you expect to learn and how this course may enhance your Christian service. Please think this through (**due week two, typed**)
3. **Course Study Guide** is in conjunction with McQuilken's and Duvall/Hays book and is **designed to assist you in your pre-class reading and study preparation.** In your pre-class readings **fill in the workbook prior to the corresponding course lecture** this will enable you to be prepared to participate in class and better understand the lectures. The lectures are intended to fill in the gaps and bring clarity to your readings and studies.
4. Course assignments and /or self-studies at the end of each chapter in the course study guide are designed to enhance your understanding of the material. **Read carefully for those to be turned in.**
5. Each critique is to be a **three page critique** of the book. Do not merely summarize the contents; rather evaluate the book's strengths and weaknesses. As you read, ask yourself and answer these questions, read **critically/analytically:**
 - ☞ Begin your critique with **the bibliographic information** (Title, author, publisher, place and date of publication) of the book you have chosen to critique.
 - ☞ Write a **brief summary** of the **main** theme and any **major secondary themes** of the author. I do not want a book review. I already know the content. Just give me enough to show you have read and digested the material.
 - ☞ Include your **analysis** of the arguments the author sets forth. Your analysis should be focused primarily upon **how faithfully you think the author has interpreted and applied the Scripture.**
 - ☞ **Evaluate** how they have either **succeeded or failed** in taking into account **all** of Scripture (in other words, is it a systematic argument or simply a use of some isolated proof texts?) **citing instances** from the book to support your evaluation.
 - ☞ Tell me **why you agree or disagree** with their conclusion(s), using the Scriptures to support any differing views you may hold.
 - ☞ Conclude with a paragraph that states **what you have gained personally AND professionally** from reading this book.
6. There will be one exam, a mid-term from your readings and lectures. **Your workbook is the study guide for your mid-term.**
7. **Exegetical Paper (Masters Students)** – interpret (exegete) the passage using the techniques and principles learned from the course. This paper will be 12-15 pages not including cover page, table of contents and bibliography. You should have a minimum of seven (7) **scholarly** references **other than your required texts**, along with proper citations of footnotes and bibliography. One (1) of the references must come from a **scholarly** journal; one (1) reference may come from a commentary **or** the internet; **50% of the references except the internet (if chosen) must come from Logos Bible Software. Wikipedia is not a scholarly resource.** No longer or no shorter than specified.

8. **Exegetical Paper (Certificate Students)** – interpret (exegete) the passage using the techniques and principles learned from the course. This paper will be **6-8** pages not including cover page, table of contents and bibliography. You should have a minimum of four (4) **scholarly** references **other than your required texts**, along with proper citations of footnotes and bibliography. One (1) reference may come from either a commentary **or** the internet. **Wikipedia is not a scholarly resource.** Use *Vine’s Dictionary and your Greek/Hebrew Study Bible* for the word study.
9. All - see **T.H.E. R.O.A.D.** and Guidelines for Exegetical Paper in your Course Study Guide for formatting and instructions pgs. 5-7) Choose one of the passages from the following:
- A. John 15:5-7 C. Hebrews 12:1-3 E. Ephesians 1:3-6 G. Philippians 4:8-9
 B. I John 1:1-4 D. I Peter 2:9-10 F. Romans 5:7-9 H. II Timothy 4:3-5

Course Grading

1. Class preparedness and Workbook assignments from study guide 20%
2. Book Critique 20%
3. Exegetical paper 35%
4. Mid-term 25%
5. All work must be submitted on the prescribed due dates. Carefully **proofread** your work before submitting, all submissions must be error free.

BTS Format and Style Standards

BTS uses the Turabian style of formatting as a standard for papers. However, students should regard individual professor preferences if they communicate any variance in outlining their requirements for papers, as in this class (see below). Professors retain discretion in determining how “formal” a paper must be. In this technological age, information is readily available; make sure that you understand about giving reference sources the proper recognition.

A to A-	B to B-	C to C-	D to D-
Correct spelling and grammar/punctuation	Minor errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation	Many errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation	Difficult to read due to English writing errors
Smooth writing that provides for effective and efficient reading	Writing is acceptable, but not as organized and coherent	Writing is not smooth, sometimes confusing and inconsistent	Writing lacks clarity, focus, structure, and is incoherent
Person and format are proper for assignment	Person and format are inconsistent	Person and format are not appropriate	Person and format are totally inappropriate
Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriately used, cited, and clearly supports main argument	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriate but need more depth and use of critical thinking	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are inadequate for main argument and do not reflect understanding	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are improperly used, over used, under used, or cited in error
Paper completely conforms to Turabian’s <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper generally conforms to Turabian’s <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper somewhat conforms to Turabian’s <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper does not conform to Turabian’s <i>Manual for Writers</i>

Reading Assignments

<u>Date</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
Jan 23	Class Introduction	Review Syllabus & Workbook (WB)
<u>Part I: Presuppositions and Principles</u>		
Jan 30	Worldview	Objectives Due McQuilken Chap.1-2 (Journey Chap 1 & 4)
Feb 06	McQuilken Chap. 3-4	
Feb13	McQuilken Chap. 5-6	
<u>Part II: Guidelines and Skills – <i>Human Authorship: Application</i></u>		
Feb 20	McQuilken Chap. 7-8 (Journey Chap 5-6)	Faulty Approaches Assignment (WB 17- 18)
Feb 27	Briarwood Missions Conference – No Class	
Mar 5	Book Critique – Revelation and John 4 Assignment (WB22) No Class	
Mar 12	McQuilken Chap. 9-10 (Journey Chap 10,13)	
Mar 19	Mid-Term	
Mar 26	McQuilken Chap. 11-12 (Journey Chap 2-3,8)	Word Study – Perfect (WB24)
Apr 2	McQuilken Chap. 13-14 (Journey Chap 13)	
<u>Divine Authorship: Interpretation</u>		
Apr 9	McQuilken Chap. 15-16 (Journey Chap. 9-11)	Maundy Thursday No Class
Apr 16	McQuilken Chap. 17-18 (Journey Chap 12-15)	Things of God Assignment (WB 30)
<u>Divine Authorship: Application</u>		
Apr 23	McQuilken Chap 19-20	E-mail Exegetical Paper

Additional Bibliography

- Louis Berkhof, *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950.
- Gerald Bray, *Biblical Interpretation Past and Present*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1996.
- Donald A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.
- David S. Dockery, Kenneth A. Mathews, and Robert B. Sloan, eds. *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation: A Complete Library of Tools and Resources*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994.
- Elmer Dyck (editor), *The Act of Bible Reading: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1996. Contributions by Gordon D. Fee, Craig M. Gay, James Houston, and J. I. Packer.
- Gordon D. Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.
- Norman L. Geisler, *Explaining Hermeneutics: A Commentary on the Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics*. Oakland, California: International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, 1983.
- John H. Hayes and Carl R. Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: a Beginner's Handbook*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987.
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- Leland Ryken *How to Read the Bible as Literature* Grand Rapids Zondervan
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- Roy B. Zuck, *Rightly Divided: Readings in Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids Kregel Publications 1996
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- Strong, James. *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Test of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. electronic ed. Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996.
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- MacArthur, John, Jr. *How to Study the Bible*. John MacArthur's Bible Studies. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996,
- Thomas, Robert L. *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries : Updated Edition*. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981.
- Arthur, Kay and David Arthur and Pete DeLacy *The New How to Study Your Bible* Harvest House Publishers ISBN 0736926829

