



BTS Mission:

Providing sound Biblical and practical theological training to equip leaders for Christ's Church.

2200 Briarwood Way • Birmingham, Alabama 35243 • (205) 776-5650

Semester:	Fall 2020
Day & Time:	Tue. 5:30-7:30 pm
Professor:	Thad James, Jr. Ph.D.
E-mail:	tjames@briarwood.org

Course:	ST3550 Bible Interpretation
Room:	V/C
Credits:	2 Hours
Phone:	(M) 205-746-7356 (O) 205-776-5386

COURSE DESCRIPTION

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 LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Describe and articulate the basic principles and prerequisites of Bible Interpretation.
2. Exegete and rightly divide Scripture in its original historical and cultural context.
3. Understand the presuppositions at work in Scripture and in the interpreter to formulate the development of a Biblical Worldview.
4. Construct methods of studying God's Word for preaching, teaching, and personal improvement.
5. Critically evaluate commentaries, sermons, teachings, and articles presented from the Bible.
6. Build the skills of applying Scripture in a truthful application to contemporary contexts.
7. Expand their consciousness of tools available for Biblical study.
8. Conduct self-disciplined study habits and develop the ability to meet deadlines.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS

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/>)

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS

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

Justin Holcomb *Know the Heretics*

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

OTHER SUGGESTED READINGS

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 New York, NY 2014 ISBN 978-0-671-21209-4

Third Millennium *He Gave Us Scriptures* <https://thirdmill.org/seminary/course.asp/vs/HGB>

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

All work must be submitted on the prescribed due dates. Carefully **proofread** your work before submitting, all submissions must be error free.

This class will meet weekly students are expected to set aside a minimum of 2-3 hours each week in preparation for the 2-hour class time. That figure includes readings, writing assignments, and work on your final paper. Note that each lesson may not require the same amount of time designated for coursework. Read the syllabus thoroughly; Proper Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance

Submit a 400-word essay describing your personal expected learning outcomes from this course. Begin with identifying and explaining your current understanding of cross-cultural communication. This is due the **second week of class**. Email as a word attachment.

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 discussions and have a better understanding of the lectures. The lectures are intended to fill in misunderstandings and bring clarity to your readings and studies.

Course assignments and /or self-studies at the end of each chapter in the course study guide are designed to **strengthen** your understanding of the material. **Read the syllabus carefully each for assignments**. All assignments are due by 5:30 pm CST on the date -3-point daily penalty.

There will be one exam, a mid-term from your readings and lectures. **Your workbook is the study guide for your mid-term**. Send the proctor's email info the day of the mid-term

Complete the **Signature Page**, confirming that you have read and understand the responsibilities of successfully completing this course of the syllabus due 9/15

Book Critique: a critique is much more than a summary or a book report it is an assessment of your understanding of the materials and your personal growth. (2-3 pages)

Follow the steps below to evaluate the books strengths and weaknesses

- Begin your critique with **the bibliographic information** (Title, author, publisher, place, and date of publication) of the book.
- Write a **brief summary** of the **main** theme and any **major secondary themes** of the author. Provide enough detail to show that you have read and digested the material.
- Include your **analysis** of the arguments the authors set forth. Your analysis should be focused upon how faithfully **you think** the authors have interpreted and applied the Scripture.
- **Evaluate** how the authors 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.
- **Explain** why you agree or disagree with their conclusion(s), using the Scriptures to support your views.
- Conclude with a paragraph that states what you have gained **personally** and **professionally** from reading this book.

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.

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.

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, **follow the format 100%** 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. 1 John 1:1-4 | D. 1 Peter 2:9-10 | F. Romans 5:7-9 | H. 2 Timothy 4:3-5 |

GRADING WEIGHT & COMMENTS

COURSE REQUIREMENT	GRADE WEIGHT	COMMENTS
Class readings and preparedness	20%	Class participation is a vital assessment
Book Critique	20%	
Midterm	25%	
Final Paper	35%	
Total	100%	Send in the last page signed with your personal learning objectives

COURSE SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	AGENDA / TOPIC
Tuesday	9/8	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Introductions • Review Syllabus and Workbook • PowerPoint Introduction <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the syllabus prior to class • Be prepared with questions concerning class content & requirements
Tuesday	9/15	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worldview PowerPoint • <i>Journey</i> chapters 1 & 4 <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send in via word e-mail attachment 400-word personal learning objectives. • Describe and articulate the basic principles and prerequisites of Bible Interpretation.
Tuesday	9/22	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part I: Presuppositions and Principles • PowerPoint • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 1-3 <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you previously given thought to your Worldview or presuppositions? • What are the results of these faulty interpretations personally and corporately? • What was the effect of Modernity upon the American culture?
Tuesday	9/29	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part I: Presuppositions and Principles • PowerPoint cont'd • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 4-6 <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the effect of Postmodernism, Millennialism, Gen x and Gen Z upon today's culture? • How did Existentialism lead to Postmodernism? • What are the positives and negatives of Dogmatism? • What are the presuppositions at work in Scripture and in the interpreter to formulate the development of a Biblical Worldview?
Tuesday	10/6	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part II: Guidelines and Skills – Human Authorship: Application • PowerPoint cont'd • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 7-8 • <i>Journey</i> chapters 5-6 <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Faulty Approaches Assignment (WB 17- 18)</u> • What is the importance of proper exegesis and rightly dividing

		<p>Scripture in its original historical and cultural context?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the importance of communication and understanding?
Tuesday	10/13	Assignments Fall Break
Tuesday	10/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term Send proctor information via e-mail
Tuesday	10/27	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part II: Guidelines and Skills – Human Authorship: Application • PowerPoint cont'd • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 9-10 • Read <i>Journey</i> chapters 10 <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Revelation and John 4 Assignment (WB22)</u> • Why are words troublesome, why do word studies? • What do you do when you do not understand the thought structure?
Tuesday	11/3	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part II: Guidelines and Skills – Human Authorship: Application • PowerPoint cont'd • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 11-12 • Read <i>Journey</i> chapters 2-3 & 8 <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Word Study – Perfect (WB24)</u> • Why did the Apostle John use “Word” instead of “Jesus” in John 1? • What is the importance of context? Why is context King? • Why figurative language? What is the struggle in interpretation? • Who controls the meaning?
Tuesday	11/10	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint cont'd • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 13-14 • Read <i>Journey</i> chapter 14-15 <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why parables? What is the struggle in interpretation? • What must we understand about Hebrew poetry for meaning? • Why must we understand the emotions and circumstances of the author?
Tuesday	11/17	<p>Readings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Divine Authorship: Interpretation</u> • PowerPoint cont'd • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 15-16 • Read <i>Journey</i> chapters 9 & 11 <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Things of God Assignment (WB 30)</u> • What is the importance of discovering the unity of Scripture? • What is the difference between a theological principle and a practical

		application? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should you read the Book of Acts? • What is the battle with truth & application to contemporary contexts?
Tuesday	11/24	Readings and Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u><i>Divine Authorship: Interpretation</i></u> • PowerPoint cont'd • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 17-18 • Read <i>Journey</i> chapters 12-13 Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should the Book of Revelation be read? • How do you grasp the Old Testament journey? • Scripture and Science – are there discrepancies? • Why must there be humility in reading prophecy?
Tuesday	12/1	<u>Readings and Materials</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u><i>Divine Authorship: Application</i></u> • Read <i>McQuilken</i> chapters 19-20 <u>Assignments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Book Critique</u> • What is the importance of knowing the recipients/audience? • God desires faith and obedience – what does this mean and require?
Tuesday	12/8	<u>Assignments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exegetical paper – emailed • Open discussion – be prepared

BTS FORMAT, STYLE, AND WRITING STANDARDS

BTS has adopted Turabian as the standard form and style for writing formal papers, #12 font Times New Roman. However, professors retain discretion in determining how “formal” a paper must be. Students should reference Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 9th Edition*. A Turabian Supplement is available through the seminary. Students should also refer to the BTS Student Handbook on academic integrity/plagiarism. Below is a Paper Grading Rubric for formal papers:

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	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries

are appropriately used, cited, and clearly supports main argument	are appropriate but need more depth and use of critical thinking	are inadequate for main argument and do not reflect understanding	are improperly used, overused, 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>

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to demonstrate punctuality and attend all class sessions. Any absences should be communicated to the professor and/or seminary office prior to the absence. In the absence of professor approval, a student will be permitted two absences per semester in a course. Tardiness may be recorded and three unexcused tardies will be counted as one unexcused absence. Unexcused absences and tardies exceeding the allowance may result in the student being dropped from the course with an "F" grade.

CLASS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Refer to Student Handbook:

<https://bts.education/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Student-Handbook-2016-Current.pdf>

ANNOTATED SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arthur, Kay and David Arthur and Pete DeLacy *The New How to Study Your Bible* Harvest House Publishers ISBN 0736926829

Berkhof, Louis *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950.

Bray, Gerald *Biblical Interpretation Past and Present*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Bullinger, Ethelbert William. *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*. London; New York: Eyre & Spottiswoode; E. & J. B. Young & Co., 1898.

Carson, Donald A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984.

Dockery, David S. Kenneth A. Mathews, and Robert B. Sloan, eds. *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation: A Complete Library of Tools and Resources*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994.

Dyck, Elmer (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.

Easton, M.G. *Easton's Bible Dictionary*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996,

c1897.

Fee, Gordon D. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

Geisler, Norman L. *Explaining Hermeneutics: A Commentary on the Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics*. Oakland, California: International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, 1983.

Hayes, John H. and Carl R. Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: a Beginner's Handbook*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987.

Kaiser, Walter C. *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Kaiser, Walter C. and Moisés Silva, *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

Kaiser, Walter C. *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1985.

Klein, William W. Dr. Craig L. Blomberg and Dr. Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. W Publishing Group: Nashville 1993

MacArthur, John, Jr. *How to Study the Bible. John MacArthur's Bible Studies*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996,

Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1991.

Packer, James I. "Infallible Scripture and the Role of Hermeneutics," in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. by D.A. Carson and J.D. Woodbridge. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

Ryken, Leland *How to Read the Bible as Literature* Grand Rapids Zondervan

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.

Virkler, Henry A. *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Zuck, Roy B. *Basic Bible Interpretation*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1991.

Zuck, Roy B. *Rightly Divided: Readings in Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids Kregel Publications 1996

Thomas, Robert L. *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries : Updated Edition*. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981.



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STUDENT SIGNATURE

Your signature below indicates that you have read this syllabus, understand it, and willing accept the requirements and responsibilities for successfully completing this course.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____