

Introduction to Interpretation

Fall Semester, 2024
Shepherds College
Hamilton, Ontario

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to Interpretation is a basic course on how to read, study, and understand the Word of God giving principles which will help assure a proper understanding of the text in its contextual setting.

COURSE RATIONALE

Correct reading, understanding, and application of the Biblical text is essential to Christian life and ministry. In order to escape subjective interpretation (“What the Bible means *to me*”), it is necessary first to know what the Bible *meant to its first readers*. It is the purpose and plan of this course to lead the student into correct methodology and theory for Biblical interpretation.

Goals and Objectives. By the end of the course, a student will understand:

1. What the Bible is and how it came to be.
2. What we mean when we describe the Bible as the Word of God: infallible, inerrant, sufficient, and authoritative.
3. How to read the Bible as ancient literature and will understand how the Bible is to understood in its ancient contexts, and then how to understand it today and apply it.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through participation in the learning experience of this course the student will have made substantial progress toward achievement of the following objectives:

1. By the end of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate a systematic method for Bible study.
2. By the end of this course, the student will be able to differentiate between Biblical and non-Biblical teachings.
3. By the end of this course, the student will be able to paraphrase the different steps to a systematic Bible study.
4. By the end of this course, the student will be able to understand and apply a Biblical text.
5. By the end of this course, the student will be able to compare various Biblical interpretations with Scripture.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Required

Bible. Each student is expected to read the Bible daily when in this course. The instructor will provide a Bible reading plan that may be followed, and the student may start at any point

in the plan. The student will sign a waiver at the end of the course indicating that he/she has done so. By daily Bible reading, regular participation is expected. It may be that one misses a day or two and makes it up. Furthermore, the Bible plan is only five days per week, with makeup time scheduled for the weekend. Acceptable Bible translations are: NIV, ESV, HCSB, NASV, NKJV, NRSV, RSV, ASV, KJV, NLT TEV. For the purposes of this course, “The Message” “The Amplified Bible,” etc., are not acceptable. Please speak to the instructor if you have any further questions.

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God’s Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. Fourth Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2020.

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God’s Word Workbook: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. Fourth Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020.

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God’s Word Laminated Sheet* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017 *if available in print*

Helm, David R. *Expositional Preaching: How We Speak God's Word Today*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2014.

Logos 10 free edition online at: www.logos.com . If this free offer has been rescinded at course time, the most basic version may be purchased.

INSTRUCTOR/STUDENT COVENANT

As instructor of this course, I covenant with each student that I will model Christ-like behaviour, value and respect each student as a fellow disciple/learner, be prepared for each class session, begin and end class on time, make appropriate assignments, grade all assignments fairly, return all graded assignments promptly, and be available for consultation outside of class. In return, I expect each student to model Christ-like behaviour, value and respect fellow students and me as the instructor, not engage in non-classroom activities in class (e.g. phone calls, online games, Facebook), be prepared for each class session, arrive and leave class on time, and complete assignments in ways that demonstrate your integrity.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students will answer and submit answers to the questions at the end of each chapter of *Grasping God’s Word*.
 2. There will be five assignments, covering the interpretation of five different Biblical genre. The outlines for each are attached to the syllabus. Each Small Group Preparation Worksheet can be expanded—please write your answers, outlines, etc., in the spaces provided. The instructor will email blank worksheets to each course member. Depending upon class size, each will present his/her findings in a five minute presentation. Please email copies to each class member prior to the start of class time.
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1. There is no paper required for this course.
 2. There are no exams or quizzes for this course.

3. Vocabulary Project: Throughout the course, the student will encounter terminology that pertains to interpretation. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the basic meaning of each term.\
4. Bible Readings: You'll be reading 30-40 chapters per week.

Assigned Books and Number of Chapters Contained	Week	□	Read Each Week	Read Daily
Galatians--6	Week 1		Read Psalms with the intent of finishing the entire book by the end of the course.	Each day complete your readings to finish the week's assignment.
Ephesians--6	Week 2			
Philippians--4	Week 3			
Colossians—4	Week 4			
1 Samuel – 2 Samuel – 55	Week 5-6		Keep in mind that this comes out to about 11.5 Psalms per week, but Psalm 119 is very long.	Each day read one chapter of Proverbs, <i>repeat each month.</i>
Isaiah 66	Week 7-8			
Romans 16	Week 9			
Matthew 28	Week 10			
Psalms 150	Daily		Medieval monks read through the entire book of Psalms every week.	
Proverbs 31	Daily			
366				

Reading schedule

Key:

GGW: Grasping God's Word

Chapter numbers are repeated accordingly.

EP: Expositional Preaching

Week	Reading	Exercises ¹	Assignments	In class
Week 1	Expositional Preaching 116			Introduction and expectations
Week 2	GGW, 1, 2	1-1; 1-2; 2-1; 2-2; 2-3		Lecture: Expositional Preaching Discuss exercises
Week 3	GGW, 3, 4	3-1; 3-2; 3-3; 3-4; 3-5 4-1; 4-2; 4-3; 4-4; 4-5	Assignment 1: Epistles	Discuss exercise Explain Assignment 1
Week 4	GGW, 5, 6	5-1; 5-2; 5-3		In-class presentations

¹ All exercises referred to are from Grasping God's Word and are at the end of each chapter, e.g., 1-1 is the first exercise at the end of chapter 1, etc. Students may type their responses only, if they wish, and not the actual questions, as long as the exercises are clearly labelled.

		6-1; 6-2; 6-3; 6-4; 6-5		
Week 5	GGW, 7, 8	7-1; 8-1; 8-2	Assignment 2: OT Narrative	Discuss exercises
Week 6	GGW, 9, 10	9-1; 9-2; 9-3; 9-4; 9-5; 10-1; 10-2; 10-3		In-class presentations
Week 7	GGW, 11, 12	11-1; 11-2 12:1; 12-2	Assignment 3: Parables	Discuss exercises
Week 8	GGW, 13, 14	13:1; 13-2; 13-3; 14-1; 14-2		In-class presentations
Week 9	GGW, 15, 16	15-1; 15-2; 15-3; 16-1	Assignment 4: OT Prophets	Discuss exercises
Week 10	GGW, 17, 18	17-1; 17-2; 17-3; 18-1; 18-2; 18-3		In-class presentations
Week 11	GGW, 19, 20	19-1; 19-2; 19-3; 19-4; 19-5 20-1; 20-2; 20-3	Assignment 5: Gospels and Acts	Discuss exercises
Week 12	GGW, 21, 22	21-1; 21-2; 21-3 22-1; 22-2		In-class presentations
Week 13	Inspiration, Canon, Inerrancy			
Week 14	Biblical Theology I			
Week 15	Biblical Theology II			
Week 16	Software for Bible Study			

Recommended

Theology and Practise of Hermeneutics

Beale, G. K. *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011.

_____. *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

*Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996.

Carson, D. A., and John D. Woodbridge. *Scripture and Truth*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992.

- *Geisler, Norman L., and William E. Nix. *A General Introduction to the Bible*. Rev. and expanded. Chicago: Moody Press, 1986.
- *Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.
- _____. *Gospel and Kingdom*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2012.
- Kaiser, Walter C., Jr., Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce, and Manfred T. Brauch. *Hard Sayings of the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996.
- Kaiser, Walter C., Jr., ed. *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008.
- _____. *The Old Testament in Contemporary Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973.
- _____. *The Promise-Plan of God: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.
- _____. *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001.
- Stott, John R. *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century*. Grand Rapids, Mich: W.B. Eerdmans, 1982.
- Zuck, Roy B. *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth*. Edited by Craig Bubeck Sr. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1991.

Tools

- Alexander, T. Desmond, and Brian S. Rosner, eds. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- *Day, A. Colin. *Collins Thesaurus of the Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2009.
- *Elwell, Walter A., and Barry J. Beitzel. *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988.
- Green, Joel B., Jacqueline E. Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, and Allen Verhey, eds. *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.
- *Manser, Martin H. *Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies*. London: Martin Manser, 2009.
- *Porter, Stanley E., and Craig A. Evans. *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Robertson, A.T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933.

*Swanson, James, and Orville Nave. *New Nave's Topical Bible*. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1994.

*Wood, D. R. W., and I. Howard Marshall. *New Bible Dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Greek Exegesis

Black, David Alan. *Using New Testament Greek in Ministry: A Practical Guide for Students and Pastors*. Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks, 1993.

Fee, Gordon D. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.

Hagner, Donald Alfred. *New Testament Exegesis and Research : A Guide for Seminarians*. Pasadena, California.: Fuller Seminary Press, 1999.

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

Moulton, James Hope, and Nigel Turner. *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: Syntax*. Vol. 3. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963–.

Moulton, James Hope, and Nigel Turner. *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: Style*. Vol. 4. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1976–.

Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.

Hebrew Exegesis

Laniak, Timothy S. *Handbook for Hebrew Exegesis*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010.

Putnam, Frederic Clarke. *Hebrew Bible Insert: A Student's Guide to the Syntax of Biblical Hebrew*. Quakertown, PA: Stylus Publishing, 2002.

Van der Merwe, Christo, Jackie Naudé, Jan Kroeze, Christo Van der Merwe, Jackie Naudé, and Jan Kroeze. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. Electronic ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

Advanced Hermeneutics

Carson, D. A., and John D. Woodbridge. *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon*. Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1986.

Nash. *The Word of God and the Mind of Man*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

Osborne, Grant. *The Hermeneutical Spiral*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991.

Thistleton, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with Special Reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.

Van Til, Cornelius. *The New Hermeneutic*. Phillipsburg, NJ: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1974.

Vocabulary

(note: this list may be expanded during the class)

1. Apocalyptic
2. Authority
3. Biblical Theology
4. Biography
5. Canon/canonicity
6. Chiasm/chiastic
7. Chronicles
8. Discourse
9. Drama
10. Epistemology
11. Epistle
12. Exegesis
13. Exposition/expository
14. Genealogy
15. General Epistles
16. Genre
17. Gospel
18. Hermeneutics
19. Historical Context
20. History
21. Imperative
22. Inclusio
23. Inerrancy
24. Infallibility
25. Inspiration
26. Interpretation
27. Intertextuality
28. Johannine Literature
29. Law
30. Literary Context
31. Lukan Literature
32. Narrative
33. New Testament
34. Occasion and Purpose
35. Old Testament
36. Oracle
37. Parable
38. Parallelism
39. Pauline Epistles
40. Pericope
41. Post-modern Interpretation
42. Presupposition
43. Prophecy

44. Propositional Revelation
45. Psalm
46. Reference
47. Revelation
48. Riddle
49. Septuagint/LXX
50. Sermon
51. Synecdoche
52. Thematic
53. Topical Bible
54. Translation
55. Transmission
56. Type
57. Wisdom

