

Course Descriptions



Biblical Hermeneutics

Biblical Hermeneutics is the study of the principles of interpretation applied to Scripture passages in light of their special nature. The field of hermeneutics is concerned with how we derive and assign meaning to communication. Biblical Hermeneutics investigates not only general principles and models of interpreting meaning, but also the special nature of the written Word as God-inspired communication, the history of how God's people have interpreted Scripture, the impact of biblical literary genre on interpreting meaning, and the present significance of its meaning to Christian individual, corporate, and societal life, and to the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom to the nations.

Learning Outcomes/Course Goals

Completion of this course should result in:

- A growing ability to more accurately determine what God is saying in Scripture so that its truth can be trusted, and transformation can be experienced.
- An increased ability to research, analyze, and apply the truth in a way that shapes how the gospel is advanced.
- Exposure to the world of Biblical scholarship that can inspire diligent study.

Course Format

Weekly online video instruction coordinated with textbook reading and online forum reflections/discussions. Workload: approximately five to seven hours per week.

Required Reading

- Kaiser, Walter C., Jr., and Moisés Silva. *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*, 2d edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007. ISBN 978-0-310-27951-8

Highly Recommended Resources

- Grenz, Stanley J., David Guretzki, and Cherith Fee Nordling. *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*. Downers Grove, Ill." InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- Patzia, Aruthur G., and Anthonie J. Petrotta. *Pocket Dictionary of Biblical Studies*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

Recommended Reading

- Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996.
- Goldingay, John. *Models for Interpretation of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995; Ontario: Clements Publishing, 2004. [Specific insights into interpreting and communicating different types of biblical material]
- Hendricks, Howard G., and William D. Hendricks. *Living by the Book*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1991. [Section on basic notions of interpretation] • Jasper, David. *A Short Introduction to Hermeneutics*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. [Historical and current practices for interpretation]
- Klein, Dr. William W. *Handbook for Personal Bible Study: Enriching Your Experience with God's Word*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2008. [Bible study methods, with sections on the nature and text of the Bible and biblical interpretation]
- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991. [Advanced material]
- Porter, Stanley E., and Beth M. Stovell. *Biblical Hermeneutics: Fives Views*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2012. [Advanced material]

Assignments

("Satisfactory" evaluation required for completion of the course)

1. Weekly online posts and participation in online forum related to video instruction, class notes, and textbook reading
2. Final essay (3–5 pages) that demonstrates the integration of course content with a contextual personal or ministry issue of biblical interpretation

Syllabus Overview

1. INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

Objectives, approach & guidelines, definitions & outlook, 4 gaps that make Biblical Hermeneutics necessary

2. BIBLIOLOGY – IMPLICATIONS FOR BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

General vs. Biblical Hermeneutics, the special nature of the Scriptures, models of interpretation, meaning as intention, hermeneutical assumptions.

3. A HISTORY OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Ancient Jewish exegesis, patristic exegesis, medieval exegesis, monastic/scholastic exegesis, Reformation exegesis, post-Reformation exegesis

4. THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT

Concepts related to context, historical contexts, cultural contexts

5. COMPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS

Definitions, language distinctions, Culture, geography, religions, philosophies, geo-political context

6. LITERARY/GENRE ANALYSIS 1

Interpreting narratives, poetry, wisdom literature

7. LITERARY/GENRE ANALYSIS 2

Interpreting the Law, prophecy

8. LITERARY/GENRE ANALYSIS 3

Interpreting the Gospels (narrative, parable, allegory, simile), the epistles, apocalyptic literature

9. CANONICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The role of Biblical Theology and the unity of Scripture, “principlization” – guidelines for questions outside the Bible

10. PRESENT SIGNIFICANCE

Devotional use of the Bible, approaching the Bible relationally, Homiletics