

PTH221 Introduction to Hermeneutics

L.T.I

Summer 2011

Thursdays, 6:30-9:30pm

Instructor: Brad Copp, bcopp@pacificlife.edu , (604) 868-1162

Course Description:

This course presents specific principles, methodical guidelines, and skills training for in-depth study and interpretation of the Bible.

Course Objectives:

Upon completing this course, the student should be able to:

- identify grammatical and literary structural elements in a passage of Scripture,
- apply sound principles of interpretation to verses, paragraphs, and longer units to the various genres of Scripture,
- apply specific tools to the study of discourse, narrative and poetic material,
- determine word meanings within texts,
- demonstrate the proper use of specific Biblical resources to understand the historical cultural contexts of a passage.
- determine and apply the author's intended meaning from any Biblical passage using a flexible, yet integrated process that is appropriate to the nature of the passage.

Textbooks and Suggested Readings:

Textbooks

Holy Bible- You should have access to at least one formal equivalent and one functional equivalent translation, but the more translations you examine, the better.

Course Pack, L.T.I., 2011.

Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays, Grasping God's Word, Grand Rapids Zondervan, 2005.

Suggested Readings

Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth- Third Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

Fee, Gordon D. New Testament Exegesis- Third Edition. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.

Lubeck, Ray, Read the Bible for a Change, Waynesboro GA, Authentic Media, 2005.

Stuart, Douglas. Old Testament Exegesis- Third Edition. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

Course Requirements:

1. **Class attendance** – Student is to be present, to be on time, and to actively participate in class discussion.
2. **Reading of Course Textbook** – Students will complete scheduled reading before class in order to get the most out of classroom activities. Occasional quizzes over textbook reading may be given. Students will report on percentage of textbook reading completed for the Final Exam. **See course schedule for assigned reading.**
3. **Class Discussion and exercises** – Students will participate in classroom discussion and occasional in class exercises. These will vary for each session. Some of the exercises may be turned in for credit.
4. **Weekly Exegesis Exercises** – Students will complete weekly exegesis assignments. These are included in the course pack and due dates for each are included with the assignment. **Due Weekly (see course schedule)**
5. **Term Project** –
 - a. The Purpose of the assignment is for the student to gain a thorough understanding of your chosen passage through using a guided exegetical method.
 - b. The Goal of the assignment is for the student to work through the exegetical process until you have a thorough understanding of what Paul was communicating to the Philippians specifically in your chosen passage; and to demonstrate that understanding by communicating Paul’s message in your own words and showing how you arrived at that understanding. The paper is primarily like a commentary in that you should explain what Paul was saying to his first readers. The paper should also show your process in coming to that understanding insofar as it is necessary to show that your understanding is consistent with Paul’s words.
 - c. The paper will be in proper MLA format with citation. This is not a research paper, but an exegesis paper, so references are not required except as is necessary to aid exegesis. However, any references used should be documented.
 - d. The paper will be around 12-15 pages long (2500-3000 words) and have approximately the following proportions:
 - 1-2 pages describing the historical background, occasion and purpose
 - 3-4 pages describing the process and results of your exegesis that helped you understand the passage.
 - 4-5 pages describing the meaning of the passage in your own words – including the flow of thought and how it addresses the occasion and purpose.
 - 2-3 pages describing the intended application for the original audience and how this passage can be applied today
 - e. Many of the weekly exegesis assignments will be on the assigned passages, so this research will form the basis of the exegesis paper. However, the Project should be a synthesis and description of the passage, not just a reproduction of your research notes or exegesis assignments.
6. **Final Exam** - Students will complete a take home 110 minute exam covering the process and skills of Exegesis. A Study guide will be given to help students prepare for the Final Exam
Due Sunday August 7th.

Course Schedule

Week of	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Assignment
Wk. 1 May 19	Course Introduction Course Syllabus	The Nature of the Word	The Nature of the Word (cont.)	
Wk. 2 May 26	The Problem of Interpretation	General Exegetical Principles Historical Context	Exegetical Principles Communicating with Words	D&H chs. 1,5&9
Wk. 3 June 2	Exegetical Process First Steps	Word Meanings Word Studies	Grammar and the Function of Language	EE1 Due D&H chs. 2&6
Wk. 4 June 9	Flow of Thought Sentence Flow	Sentence Flow (cont.)	Sentence Flow (cont.)	EE2 Due D&H chs. 3&7
Wk. 5 June 16	Flow of Thought How Propositions are Related	How Propositions are Related (cont.)	How Propositions are Related (cont.) Arcing	EE3 Due D&H chs. 4&8
Wk. 6 June 23	Arcing (cont.)	Arcing (cont.)	Arcing (cont.)	EE4 Due D&H chs.10-11
Wk. 7 June 30	Arcing (cont.)	Narrative and Narrative Techniques	Narrative (cont.)	EE5 Due D&H chs.12-13
Wk. 8 July 7	NO CLASS – Brad on Holiday!			
Wk.9 July 14	Storyboarding	Storyboarding (cont.)	Storyboarding (cont.)	EE6 Due D&H Appendices 1-3
Wk. 10 July 21	Biblical Poetry Parallelism	Parallelism and Poetic Techniques	Poetic Symbolism and Imagery	EE7 Due
Wk. 11 July 28	Biblical/Theological Contexts Analogy of Faith	Reference Tools	Interpretive Virtues	EE8 Due
<u>Term Project and Final Exam Due</u> Sunday, August 7				

Course Evaluation

Attendance, Participation, In Class Exercises	5%
Textbook Reading and possible occasional Quizzes	5%
Weekly Exegesis assignments	35%
Term Project	35%
Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
	100%

Bibliography

- Adler, Mortimer J., and Charles Van Doren, How to Read a Book, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1972.
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- Broyles, Craig C. ed., Interpreting the Old Testament- A Guide for Exegesis, Grand Rapids MI, Baker Academic, 2001.
- Carson, D.A., Exegetical Fallacies, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1984.
- Carson, D.A. ed., Biblical Interpretation and the Church, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1984.
- Carson, D.A., and John D. Woodbridge eds., Scripture and Truth, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1992.
- _____, Hermeneutics, Authority and Canon, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1995.
- Dorani Daniel M., Putting the Truth to Work- The Theory and Practice of Application, Phillipsburg NJ, P&R Publishing, 2001.
- Fee, Gordon D., Gospel and Spirit, Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics, Peabody MA, Hendrickson, 1991.
- _____, Listening to the Spirit in the Text, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2000.
- _____, To What End Exegesis?, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2001.
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart, How to Read the Bible Book by Book, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2002.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme, Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics- Foundations and Principles for Evangelical Biblical Interpretation, Downers Grove, IVP, 2006.
- Green, Joel B. ed., Hearing the New Testament, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995.
- Hendricks, Howard, Living by the Book: The Art and Science of Bible Reading, Chicago, Moody, 2007.
- Kaiser, Walter, C. Jr., Toward an Exegetical Theology, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1981.
- Kaiser, Walter C., and Moises Silva, An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1994.
- Longman, Tremper III, Reading the Bible with Heart & Mind, Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1997.
- Marshall, I. Howard ed., New Testament Interpretation, Essays on Principles and Methods, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1977.
- McKnight, Scot ed., Introducing New Testament Interpretation, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1989.
- Osborne, Grant R., The Hermeneutical Spiral, Downers Grove IL, InterVarsity Press, 1991.
- Packer, J.I., Fundamentalism and the Word of God, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1958.
- Ryken, Leland, How to Read the Bible as Literature, Grand Rapids, Academie Books, 1984.
- Silva, Moises ed., Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation- Six Volumes in One, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1996.
- Sire, James W., Scripture Twisting, Downers Grove, InterVarsity, 1980.
- Sproul, R.C., Knowing Scripture, Downers Grove, InterVarsity, 2009.
- Stein, Robert H., The Method and Message of Jesus' Teachings, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1978.
- _____, A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible- Playing by the Rules, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1994.
- VanGemenen, Willem A. ed., A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, Grand Rapids MI, Zondervan, 1999.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J., Is There a Meaning in This Text?, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1998.
- Virkler, Henry A., Hermeneutics, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1981

Class Policies

In order to be fair to all students, to organize my workweek, and to be prompt with marking, the following policies will be adhered to. It is also an important aspect of preparation for real life that students should learn to plan and use their time effectively so as to meet deadlines, and learn also to work within the parameters set for assignments.

- All assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the date they are due. Assignments may be submitted via email. Assignments submitted via email must be sent *before* scheduled class time. Any assignment not submitted at the requested time will be considered late.
- Late work will receive a deduction of 10% per day late (excluding weekends) up to 50% deduction. You may submit a late assignment either in class, via e-mail or via the LTI director.
- Extensions for late work may be given for a short period when circumstances arise which in my view could not reasonably have been foreseen and which are sufficiently serious to warrant an exception to the rule.
- All work must be neat and legible. All work must be typewritten (excluding quizzes and exams).
- All assignments must be your own work. Work sharing and plagiarism are not acceptable.
- Because of the uneven quality of the information, Wikipedia and other similar information sharing resources are not acceptable reference for this class.
- Because of the limited number of exegesis tools available, I ask that you be considerate of others and not monopolize the resources.
- I expect all students to think critically and be willing to disagree with the texts, teacher, or each other. I am confident that all of you will do so in manner fitting Christian ministers and Bible students.

Helpful Information

- Your best resource for this course is the people around you. The instructor is willing and available to help you as much as my very busy schedule will allow. However, your peers are an invaluable source of insight. And you will be wise to share with other students outside of class and help each other explore and develop, meditate upon and apply the concepts of this course.
- I cannot read minds. If you don't understand something or are struggling, I want to help. But in many cases I won't become aware of the problem until it is too late. Please feel encouraged to take the initiative and approach me with questions or problems and I will do my best to help.
- In addition, I will put course material including study guides, reviews, and practice quizzes on my website. Go to my homepage and follow the appropriate link. The address is www.bradcopp.com. Please check back often as the website will be updated on a regular basis.
- Please realize that, at best, this course can only be an introduction to the art of interpretation and application. It is hoped that this course will give you a foundation upon which to launch a lifetime of study, devotion, teaching and preaching from the Scripture. Be encouraged to continue in this endeavor even after the course. The more you look at the details, the better you will see the big picture, and the better you see the big picture, the better you will see the details. I

- pray that God will give you the grace to preach and teach the plain intended meaning of Scripture to hungry people who will find that it just plain works.
- Finally, do not lose God in the process of education. Take advantage of the College Student Ministry and Discipleship. Take time to interact with Jesus about every part of your life. Specifically, invite the Lord to teach and lead you in the course material. The Bible was written as a record of God's work in His people, it comes from a life of prayer, worship, devotion and walking out God's rule in everyday life. It would be a tragedy and violation of this book if you treated this course as only an intellectual exercise. I also hope that you learn to rely on Him for the strength to learn and grow and fulfill all of the expectations placed on you at LTI. "Do not pray for easy lives; pray to be stronger people! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers; pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come to you by the grace of God." Phillips Brooks.

Course Presuppositions:

The motivation for teaching a course that introduces the skills for the careful extraction of the meaning that resides in the text of Scripture is rooted in our presuppositions and the implications of those presuppositions regarding the nature and function of God's Holy Word, the Bible. These introductory words will serve to articulate our core values concerning the Scripture and provide a framework for the task being learned and practiced.

Our presuppositions regarding the Scriptures cover the nature of the Bible, core values regarding the interpretation of the Bible, and the implication of the above for the church. In terms of the nature of Scripture we affirm the following:

- We affirm that “the Bible is a supernatural book, God’s written revelation to his people given through prepared and selected spokespersons by the process of inspiration.”¹
- We affirm that the Bible is God’s infallible, inerrant Word and is authoritatively true and is effectual in accomplishing its purpose.
- We affirm that “the Bible manifests unparalleled spiritual worth and a capacity to change lives. The Bible has the unique power to affect the reader spiritually.”²
- We affirm that the Bible is characterized by both unity and diversity. It is diverse in that it represents a variety of human authors, different languages, different cultures, and a variety of literary genre that comes to us over a vast span of time. It is unified in that the Bible possesses an inherent unity because ultimately it has one divine author.³
- We affirm “that the Bible is understandable; it is an accessible book. It presents a clear message to anyone willing to read it, and that is why people throughout history have understood its teachings.”⁴
- As spiritual descendants of the Great Reformation “we accept the 66 books of the canon as the entirety of God’s scriptural record to his people.”⁵

In terms of interpreting the Scripture we affirm the following:

- We affirm that truth and meaning are to be found in the text. We deny that truth and meaning are dependent upon the reader or the interpreter. Meaning is not to be imposed on the text, rather, the reader or interpreter will gain understanding by submitting to the authority of the Bible, applying sound interpretive technique, and heeding the presence of the Holy Spirit who brings understanding through illumination.

¹ Klein, Dr. William W. and Blomberg, Dr. Craig L. and Hubbard, Jr., Dr. Robert L. Introduction to Biblical Interpretation. Dallas, London, Vancouver, Melbourne: Word Publishing, 1993. (88)

² Ibid (91)

³ Ibid (91-92)

⁴ Ibid (92)

⁵ Ibid (92)

- We affirm that a text contains only one meaning, however, in some cases there may be many appropriate applications of a text to life.
- We affirm that proper interpretation must take into account issues of continuity and discontinuity in the relationship between the Testaments. This means that we recognize a promise/fulfilment motif with Jesus Christ being the ultimate fulfilment of God's redemptive plan.

These affirmations regarding the Scripture and its interpretation form the basis on which to place the techniques which will be learned in this course of study. It is of utmost importance that exegetical procedures be performed with these core values in mind. It is not enough, however, to merely learn responsible hermeneutical procedures without thinking of applying truth to the lives of God's people. In light of this we affirm the following in regards to God's church:

- We affirm that the church is in constant need of reformation.
- We affirm that sound theology based on biblical exegesis is one of the primary means God uses to bring reformation about.
- We affirm that the ideal for the Christian is a synthesis of intellectual excellence and a relational, passionate faith. Whenever reformation has occurred, the Church has been able to achieve something of this synthesis. This synthesis is accomplished through bringing all of life under the authority of God's Word, which is the goal of exegesis.
- We affirm that the health of the church depends on its use of the Scriptures. The authority of the Scriptures must be believed and practiced in every aspect of the life of the church. The mission of the church as salt and light is gauged in part by its' use and treatment of the Scriptures.

The presuppositions articulated in this prologue provide you, the student, with a frame of reference that reveals our positions on important matters regarding the nature and function of the Word of God. We have not attempted to defend our positions in this prologue. We have merely put them forward and we are committed to conducting ourselves in such a way that we will be faithful to these core values.