



Syllabus for
GBIB 507—Biblical Hermeneutics

3.0 cr./6p

Fall 2017, Independent Study

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the problems and methods of biblical interpretation, including the factors of presuppositions, historical context, grammatical relationships, vocabulary, figurative language, and genre.

II. COURSE GOALS

The aims in this course will be to develop knowledge of the methods and tools, historical and modern, for fruitful study and interpretation of the Bible, to direct that knowledge toward an own life in and out of the Scriptures in life and ministry. The skills and perspectives needed for understanding the various kinds of material in the Bible will be put to the service of God's purpose to transform us by his presence and to empower us for his service.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a result of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- A. Give an overview over the history of Biblical Hermeneutics, including Jewish, Patristic, Reformation, and modern Hermeneutics.
- B. Understand and be able to discuss general hermeneutical issues pertaining to the Bible.
- C. Compare and evaluate various translations of the Bible.
- D. State and illustrate the importance of the literary and historical contexts of scriptural passages.
- E. Identify genres, figures of speech, symbols and symbolic actions in Scripture.
- F. Apply pertinent principles of interpretation to the various kinds of literature found in the Bible:
 - historical narratives in the Old and New Testament
 - Old Testament laws, including their relevance for today

- poetic material in the Psalms and elsewhere, with an awareness of the basic types of poetic parallelism
 - the Wisdom literature (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes etc.)
 - prophetic material, especially in the Old Testament
 - the four Gospels, their similarities and distinctives; parables and allegories
 - the epistles of the New Testament
 - apocalyptic texts (Daniel, the Book of Revelation, New Testament apocalypses).
- G. Employ principles of hermeneutics for the use of Scripture in personal life as well as in ministry.
- H. Get an overview of the main methods in exegesis.

IV. TEXTBOOKS

Required texts (selected pages according to instructions from teacher):

- A. Biblical text: own translation and English translation
- B. Stein, Robert H., *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible. Playing by the Rules*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997
- C. Bray, Gerald, *Biblical Interpretation. Past and Present*, Apollos/InterVarsity Press, 1996

V. COURSE PROCEDURES

A. Course Prerequisites: None

B. Evaluation Procedures:

1. Grading Scale
VG (High Pass)
G (Pass)
UG (No Pass)

2. Assignments

Thematic paper
Hermeneutical paper
Final test

C. Description of the assignments:

1. *Thematic paper.* Each student writes a 2 page reflexion paper, see separate instruction. The paper should be written on computer, printed and will treat a concrete issue in church life, using hermeneutics as part of the process.
2. *Hermeneutical paper.* The Hermeneutics paper should be a discussion of a problem of biblical interpretation based on (a) specific text(s) which is treated using the methods and thinking in the course e.g., the principles of interpretation given in the Study Guide.
Masters students will write a 10–12 page paper, double spaced; Bachelor students will write a 8–10 page paper, double-spaced, in both cases excluding front and back matter.
3. *Final test.* The Final test is an open book exam.

4. READING ASSIGNMENTS:

See Study questions

V. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

1. Internet/independent Study Policies

The student is expected to listen to all the internet lectures and participate in all activities unless administratively excused. Only administrative excuses, notice by e-mail or phone to the office or teacher, are accepted.