

Course Syllabus

I. Course description

This course is an introduction to Bible study methods, or more specifically biblical hermeneutics which is the science and art of biblical interpretation. It surveys the major interpretive approaches to the Bible, both historical and contemporary, and attempts to convey both general and special hermeneutics by examining parables, prophecies, poetry, and a great variety of figurative constructs. This course also elucidates the principles of normal, cultural, literary, and historical interpretation.

II. Course objectives

This course is designed to help each student:

- A. Learn the principles and methods of sound biblical hermeneutics
- B. Grow in the ability to exegete a text of Scripture by applying sound biblical hermeneutics
- C. Receive friendly, direct, correction and exhortation related to his biblical hermeneutics
- D. Move closer to, and grow more richly in, his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ

III. Course materials

- A. Professor's notes and handouts
- B. *Basic Bible Interpretation* by Roy B. Zuck (15.75 at amazon.com)
- C. *The Interpretation of Prophecy* by Paul Lee Tan (15.21 at amazon.com)

IV. Course requirements

- A. Attendance of and participation in all classes
- B. Book reviews

1. Read each of the two assigned textbooks and critique them chapter-by-chapter, evaluating the author's inclusion of his material into his argument for the book.
2. Write approximately 3 pages per review (certificate and bachelor students will read and review Zuck only).

C. Papers

1. Construct a rough and final outline of Genesis (instructions will be given under the "Macro exegesis" portion of the course –consult only a non-outlined Bible)
2. Construct final outline of Revelation (masters students only)
3. Choose 3 papers from the following list and write 6-8 page exegetical defenses. Masters students will outline Genesis and Revelation and choose 3 papers, bachelor students will outline Genesis and choose two exegetical papers, certificate students will outline Genesis and choose one exegetical paper. If the student would like to do a different passage from what is on the list, please discuss it with the professor.

- a. Isaiah 7:10-17 – Identify the virgin and her son in Isaiah’s prophecy
- b. Isaiah 53:6 – Are the sheep in this passage humanity in general or someone or some group more specific? In this context, what does it mean for the sheep to go astray?
- c. Ezekiel 37:1-14 – Determine whether this is a spiritual or literal resurrection
- d. Joel 2:1-11, 25 – Identify the nature of this army (literal or figurative)
- e. Acts 1:10-11 – From the context of Acts 1 are these verses referring to the rapture or Second Coming of Christ?
- f. Acts 2:14-21 – Is this event a fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy?
- g. Galatians 4:21-31 – Identify why Paul used allegory and determine whether it is or is not a legitimate use of our interpretation of the Old Testament today
- h. Revelation 11:3-14 – Identify the two witnesses
- i. Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21– Is Babylon historic Old Testament Babylon or is it representative of another city?
- j. Malachi 4:5-6 – From New Testament passages such as Matthew 11:12-15; 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13; Luke 1:17; and John 1:21, determine if John the Baptist fulfilled Malachi’s prophecy.
- k. Luke 21: 1-4 – Why does Luke insert this passage at this point?
- l. John 1:29; John 3:16 – Specifically, what does “world” refer to in these verses? How does John use the world “world” generally in his Gospel?
- m. John 12:32 – Who does “all” refer to in this verse?
- n. Ezekiel 3:16-21 – Can the watchman be more broadly applied to anyone else besides Ezekiel? If so, who?

Note: Book reviews and papers shall be 1” margins, double-spaced New Times Roman 14 font (or equivalent), each paper with a cover page. General guidelines for papers will be discussed in class. Only hard copies of book reviews and papers will be accepted. No email copies.

V. Course grading

Thirty-five percent of the grade will be based on class attendance and participation, 30 % on reading, 30 % book reviews, and 40 % percent on outlines and exegetical papers.

All late book reviews and papers will be reduced 1 letter grade per week.

Each absence will be counted as a one letter grade reduction on the final grade.

VI. Course schedule

1	Sep 30	Orientation, hermeneutics and exegesis resource books assigned, discussion of required papers, knowledge quiz
2	Oct 7	Lesson 1: Definition of hermeneutics and other related disciplines Lesson 2: Need for hermeneutics Papers selection due
3	Oct 14	Lesson 3: Qualifications and presuppositions for hermeneutics First outline of Genesis due

- Lesson 4: Bibliographical resources
Zuck reading and review due
- 4 Oct 21 Lesson 5: General hermeneutics: Presuppositional approach
General hermeneutics: Macro exegesis – identifying structural markers
First exegetical paper due for masters
- Lesson 6: General hermeneutics: Macro exegesis – identifying structural markers (continued)
- 5 Oct 28 Lesson 7: Hermeneutical systems: Chronological, eschatological, and theological
- Lesson 8 General hermeneutics: Macro exegesis – identifying the author’s theme and purpose
Bible translation evaluation – A Word About Translations
- 6 Nov 4 Lesson 9: General hermeneutics: Micro exegesis – special hermeneutics: translation, diagraming, context, proposition, subject-compliment, outlining, application
- 7 Nov 11 Lesson 10: General hermeneutics: Micro exegesis – special hermeneutics: genre and figures of speech
Second exegetical paper due for masters, first for bachelors
Final outline of Genesis due
- 8 Nov 18 Lesson 11: Special hermeneutics: Figures of thought – parables
Tan reading and review due
Final outline of Revelation due
Third exegetical paper due for masters, second for bachelors, first for certificate

Selected Bibliography

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- Virkler, Henry A. *Hermeneutic: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*: Baker, 1981.
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- Zuck, Roy B. *Basic Bible Interpretation*: Victor, 1991.