

## Course Syllabus

### I. Course description

This course is an introduction to principles of biblical interpretation, 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 2 papers from the following list and write 6-8 page exegetical defenses. Masters students will outline Genesis and Revelation and choose 2 papers, bachelor and certificate

students will outline Genesis and choose one exegetical papers. 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 (if you argue double meaning you have to defend your position)
- 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 word “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 by 1 letter grade per week.

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

## VI. Course schedule

- 1 September 11 Introduction: Orientation, hermeneutics and exegesis resource books assigned, discussion of required papers, knowledge quiz
- 2 September 18 Lesson 1: Definition of hermeneutics and other related disciplines  
Lesson 2: Need for hermeneutics

Papers selection due

- 3 September 25 Lesson 3: Qualifications and presuppositions for hermeneutics  
Papers selection due
- Lesson 4: Bibliographical resources
- 4 October 2 Lesson 5: General hermeneutics: Presuppositional approach  
General hermeneutics: Macro exegesis – identifying structural  
Markers
- Lesson 6: General hermeneutics: Macro exegesis – identifying structural  
markers (continued)  
First outline of Genesis due
- 5 October 9 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  
Zuck reading and review due
- 6 October 16 Lesson 9: General hermeneutics: Micro exegesis – special hermeneutics:  
translation, diagraming, context, proposition, subject-compliment,  
outlining, application  
First exegetical paper due for masters
- 7 October 23 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 October 30 Lesson 11: Special hermeneutics: Figures of thought – parables  
Tan reading and review due  
Final outline of Revelation due

## Selected Bibliography

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- MacArthur, John. *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*: W. Publishing Group. 1992.
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- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral*: Inter Varsity Press, 1991.
- Pentecost, J. Dwight. *The Parables of Jesus*: Zondervan, 1982.
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- Ryken, Leyland. *How to Read The Bible As Literature*: Zondervan, 1984.
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- Tenny, Merrill C. *Interpreting Revelation*: Eerdmans, 1957.
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- Traina, Robert A. *Methodical Bible Study*: Francis Asbury Press, 1980.
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- Virkler, Henry A. *Hermeneutic: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*: Baker, 1981.
- Walvoord, John F. *The Millennial Kingdom*: Zondervan, 1959.
- Zuck, Roy B. *Basic Bible Interpretation*: Victor, 1991.