

Biblical Interpretation

Course Facilitator: Jeff Lark, ThM.
Institute of Biblical Studies
June 20-July 18, 2018
Rollins College
1000 Holt Ave.
Winter Park, FL 32789
Archibald Granville Bush Science Center

Course Purpose

The Institute of Biblical Studies exists to help develop Christ-centered missionaries who possess the biblical and theological competencies they need (head, heart, and hands) to live out the Great Commandment and help fulfill the Great Commission through the ministry of Cru. As an organization, we are passionate about connecting people to Christ. To fulfill our global missionary mandate, we need to be growing in our understanding and experience of the good news about Christ revealed in the Scriptures, increasing in our understanding of people (as created, fallen and redeemed), and growing in our capacity to communicate Christ to people in their brokenness from the Scriptures. It is also essential that we can contextualize scriptural teaching for ethnically and culturally diverse audiences. Biblical Interpretation exists to help you grow in your capacity to read and apply the Scriptures in a Christ-centered way.

Course Description

Poetry. Letters. Narrative. Laws. Prophecy. Faithfully interpreting God's Word requires understanding the various literary forms through which God speaks to us, applying sound hermeneutical principles, and connecting every passage to God's redemptive message throughout the Scriptures that centers on Jesus Christ. Building on the foundation of Bible Study Methods, this course will introduce you to an interpretive process that will enable you to understand God's Word and encounter the living God more profoundly. You will have the opportunity to learn this process working in small groups with the aid of a coach who will guide you to handle the treasure of God's Word faithfully and meaningfully.

Prerequisite: *Bible Study Methods*

Learning Outcomes

Cognitive (Knowledge and Thinking Skills)

1. Discover tools that can help you better understand and apply four literary forms through which God speaks to us in Scripture: OT narrative, NT narrative, parables, and poetry.
2. Better understand the grand story of Scripture and why it is important that we relate every passage to this larger story that culminates in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

3. Grow in your awareness of how culture shapes our reading and application of Scripture as well as the importance of listening to believers in other cultural contexts to understand what God is saying to us in his Word.

Affective (Attitudes, Motivation and Character)

1. Grow as a disciple of Jesus who joyfully submits to the authority of God's Word and who builds movements of disciples who "truly follow Jesus" by embracing his Word in their lives.
2. Develop greater confidence and humility in your ability to understand and apply God's Word.
3. Be motivated to apply sound interpretive principles to your future reading, study, application and teaching of Scripture.

Behavioral (Personal and Ministry Skills)

1. Grow in your ability to ask good questions as you read, study, and apply the Scriptures.
2. Grow in your aptitude to read and apply the Scriptures in a Christ-centered way by discerning how Scripture exposes your brokenness/rebellion and points your heart to find true life in Christ.

Required Texts

(There are Kindle versions of these books available. The ISBN is for the print versions)

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*, 4th ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. ISBN-13: 978-0310517825 [To rightly read Scripture, we must pay careful attention to the genre (literary form) through which a biblical writer communicates. This book provides a helpful introduction to the different genres through which God reveals himself in Scripture. It complements presentations you will hear in the lectures. While we will not discuss it extensively in class, it is foundational. If you are reading ahead, start by reading this book. NOTE: *Make sure you buy the fourth edition.*]

Roberts, Vaughan. *God's Big Picture: Tracing the story-line of the Bible*. Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 2002. ISBN-13: 978-0830853649 [Another key to rightly reading Scripture is seeing how a passage fits into the larger story of God. In 150 pages Roberts provides a helpful overview of the story-line of the Bible organized around the theme of the kingdom of God. We will discuss this book in class.]

Chapell, Bryan. *Unlimited Grace: The Heart Chemistry That Frees From Sin and Fuels the Christian Life*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-4335-5231-1 [The book is broken up into three sections. You will read part 1 for Biblical Interpretation which covers the foundation of the gospel and grace. This material may feel like it is old news, but let it be good news as you seek to read it with fresh ears. You will then read Part 2 and 3 for Biblical Communication as Chapell spends the second half of the book dealing with how we communicate the grace of the gospel to others].

Georges, Jayson and Mark D. Baker. *Ministering in Honor-Shame Cultures*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2016. ISBN-978-0-8308-5146-1 [We will only be reading three chapters from this book. But the entire book is extremely helpful to learn how to minister to those who come from an honor/shame context.]

Tripp, Paul. *New Morning Mercies* Wheaton: Crossway, 2014. ISBN-978- 1433541391 [This book contains 366 meditations on grace and the gospel. We will discuss several them in class. We recommend that you wait to read this until the night before we discuss each chapter.]

ESV Study Bible. Wheaton: Crossway, 2008. ISBN-13: 978-1433502415. The ESV Study Bible is one of the most helpful single-volume resources for studying the Bible. It contains a wealth of notes and articles addressing everything from the meaning of individual verses to the big picture of God's story. [NOTE: When you buy the print version, you also get free online access to the ESVSB. If you don't want a print version of the ESVSB, you can simply buy one of the electronic versions available at esv.org.]

Recommended Texts

Bartholomew Craig G. and Michael W. Goheen. *The Drama Of Scripture: Finding Our Place In The Biblical Story*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004.

Doriani, Daniel M. *Getting the Message: A Plan for Interpreting and Applying the Bible*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub., 1996.

_____. *Putting the Truth to Work: The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub., 2001.

Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Biblical-Theological Foundations and Principles*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.

_____. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

Kostenberger, Andreas and Richard Patterson. *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011.

Richards, E. Randolph. *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2012.

Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Revised and Expanded. Downers Grove: IVP, 2006.

Learning Tasks:

1. **Reading:** You will engage with four books in this class. (1) *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* provides a great overview of the various literary forms we find in the Bible and will supplement the lectures. (2) *God's Big Picture* traces the entire story of the Bible in 150 pages. We will discuss *GBP* in our coaching groups. (3) *The ESV Study Bible* is a great resource for studying the Bible. It's a resource you will continue to consult long after the class ends. (4) *New Morning Mercies* will help us think about how the gospel relates to our lives as believers. We will discuss several chapters in class. (5) Section 1 of *Unlimited Grace* is a great refresher on the gospel and the positional truths related to who we are in Christ. (6) *Ministering in Honor-Shame Cultures* is a wonderful introduction to a biblical theology of honor and shame. The last day of class you will submit a reading report to your coach indicating how much of the required reading you completed.
2. **Preparation for the First Class:** There is reading that needs to be completed prior to the first class session. See "Course Assignments" below.

3. **Participate in a Coaching Group:** Much of the learning in this class will take place in a small group context. You will be assigned to a coaching group with eight to ten of your peers. You will have a chance to practice the skills you are learning under the watchful eye of a coach.
4. **Study a Passage:** You will complete four worksheets which will give you the opportunity to practice the specific skills on which we focus that day. You will be able to incorporate all of your work into your final exegetical paper. The worksheets are all in Google Drive in one Google Doc. You will do a worksheet and then share (or comment) the file with your coach to let them know you completed it. As you continue to work through the worksheets, you will have all of your work in the one Google Doc:
 - a. Worksheet #1: OT Narrative – 2 Samuel 9 (15 points)
 - b. Worksheet #2: Parable – Luke 15 (15 points)
 - c. Worksheet #3: Theological Analysis (10 points)
 - d. Worksheet #4: Application (10 points)
5. **Write and Exegetical Paper:** You will communicate what you have learned from studying your passage in an exegetical paper.

COURSE GRADE

Reading	15 % (Turn in the reading report to your coach)
Exegetical Assignments	50 %
Exegetical Project	35 %

Total 100pts

Grading Scale:

94-100	A
92-93	A-
90-91	B+
84-89	B
82-83	B-
80-81	C+
74-79	C
72-73	C-
65-71	D
0-65	F

Course Assignments

Pre-Class Work

Prior to the first class, you need to read the following:

- Roberts, *God's Big Picture*, pp. 13-152 (Introduction and chapters 1-8)
- Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, chapters 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11
- Read Johnson, "Hearing the Music of the Gospel" (NOTE: We will discuss this article in the first class session.)
- Chapell – Part 1 [60 pages]
- Georges and Baker – Part 2 (chapters 4 and 5) [50 pages]

Course Schedule

Note: *We will be discussing several chapters from Tripp. We will read them together in our coaching groups. So, no need to read them before class.*

Topic/Date	Reading Due	Worksheets/Project due
Redemptive Storyline/Introduction Wednesday, June 20	*Johnson, "Hearing the Music of the Gospel" (Note: We will discuss this article the first day of class)	none
An Interpretive Process Thursday, June 21	*Tripp, Dec. 11 *Appendix 1 (back of lecture notes)	none
Interpreting OT Narratives Friday, June 22	*Tripp, July 6	none
Interpreting NT Narratives Monday, June 25	*Tripp, June 10 *Appendix 2 (back of lecture notes)	none
Interpreting Parables Tuesday, June 26	*Tripp, May 9	Turn in Worksheet #1 (OT Narrative – 1 st Island) by 9am
Interpreting Poetry (Psalms) Wednesday, June 27	*Tripp, Feb. 4	none
Theological Analysis Thursday, June 28	*Appendix 3 – The Structure of the Psalms	Turn in Worksheet #2 (Parable – 1 st Island) by 9am
Theological Analysis (Con't) Friday, June 29	*Tripp, Sept 1 *Appendix 4 (back of lecture notes)	none
Christ-Centered Application Monday, July 2	*Commentaries on your passage *Dorani, <i>Putting the Truth to Work</i> , pp. 44-48, 81-96 (Google Drive)	Turn in Worksheet #4 (Theological Analysis – 2 nd Island) by 9am
Application of the Class Tuesday, July 3	*Appendix 5 (back of lecture notes) *Appendix 6 (back of lecture notes) *Appendix 7 (back of lecture notes) Submit your reading report to your coach electronically	Turn in Worksheet #5 (Application – 3 rd Island) by 9am Exegetical paper due Wednesday, July 4 th by 9am

Daily Schedule

Wednesday, June 20

9:00-11:30am

Lecture #1: Redemptive Storyline/ Introduction

Discuss *Hearing the Music of the Gospel*

Exercise #1: Foundational Principles

Thursday, June 21

9:00-11:30am

Lecture #2: An Interpretive Process

Discuss Tripp, Dec. 11

Exercise #2: Context exercise (1 Samuel 16)

Friday, June 22

9:00-11:30am

Lecture #3: Interpreting OT Narratives

Discuss Tripp, July 6

Exercise #3: 1 Sam 16 narrative model

Assign: Worksheet #1 – Context, Observation, Textual Outline and ABI for 2 Samuel 9 (Due: Tuesday, 9am)

Monday, June 25

9:00-11:30am

Lecture #4: Interpreting NT Narratives

Discuss Tripp, June 10

Exercise #4: Mark 4 narrative model

Answer any questions about Worksheet #1 (2 Samuel 9) (Due: Tuesday, 9am)

Tuesday, June 26

9:00-11:30am

Lecture #5: Interpreting Parables

Discuss Tripp, May 9

Exercise #5: Matthew 18:23-33

Due: Worksheet #1 (2 Samuel 9)

Assign: Worksheet #2 – Context, Observation, Textual Outline and ABI for Luke 15 (Due: Thursday, 9am)

Wednesday, June 27

9:00-11:30am

Lecture #6: Interpreting Poetry (Psalms)

Discuss Tripp, Feb. 4
Exercise #6: Psalm 46

Thursday, June 28

9:00-11:30am

Lecture #7: Theological Analysis

Discuss Genesis 38 (Into the Word)
Exercise #7: Theological Analysis 1 Samuel 16
Due: Worksheet #2 (Luke 15)
Assign: Worksheet #3 - Theological Analysis (Due: Monday, 9am)

Friday, June 29

9:00-11:30am

No lecture – Come straight to your coaching group

Discuss Tripp, Sept. 1
Exercise #8: Theological Analysis of Matthew 18:23-33; Psalm 8
Answer any questions on Worksheet #3 (Theological Analysis)
Orient: Final Paper (Due: Tuesday, 9am)

Monday, July 2

9:00-11:30am

Lecture #8: Christ-Centered Application

Discuss Lecture
Exercise #9: Application
Orient: Worksheet #4 – Application (Due: Tuesday, 9am)

Tuesday, July 3

9:00-10:30am

No lecture – Come straight to your coaching group

Exercise #10 – Applying the class
Answer Questions about the paper (Due: Wednesday, 9am)

EXEGETICAL PROJECT

OVERVIEW

Your exegetical project is an essay you will write on the passage you have studied. Your paper should be written in paragraph form and contain the following clearly marked sections designated in bold below. It should be 9–11 pages in length, double-spaced, written using Times New Roman, 12 point font and 1-inch margins. Within the body of your paper, simply use parentheses (not footnotes) to cite works listed in your bibliography. For example: (Grudem, 124). You will find a sample version of the paper posted on the IBS website that will help you with the formatting.

I. SURVEY THE BIG PICTURE (2 pages)

1. **Historical context:** Begin by discussing the author and original audience. Then discuss the specific historical-cultural setting for your story including location and a possible date for the events. (Note: *Any elements in your passage that require some historical or cultural background information to understand their significance to the original audience should be incorporated into the explanation of the passage.*)
2. **Literary context:** Discuss the literary context of your passage. Begin by describing how the book is structured. Next, explain how your passage fits into the book. Is it part of a larger unit? If so, how does it relate to that unit? What occurs in the passages immediately before and after your section? How does your passage relate to what comes immediately before and after?
3. **Redemptive context:** Discuss the redemptive context of your passage. In what chapter of redemptive history is this story found? Describe the key features of this chapter in God's story. What is important to understand about this particular chapter in God's story to understand this passage properly? What is unique to this chapter as it relates to God's people, God's place, and how God is blessing/ruling his people? (To answer these questions, you will need to consult the appropriate chapter in *God's Big Picture*).

II. EXPLORE THE PASSAGE (4-5 pages)

1. **Textual Outline:** Present your textual outline with specific verses and complete sentences. It should include clearly marked sections: For example, in a narrative: Setting, Tension, Turning Point, and Following Actions/Lessons. Your outline for the psalm would follow the structure related to its type – For example: Psalm of praise – summons to praise, reason to praise, summons to praise repeated. This is the only part of your paper that you will be write in outline form.
2. **Statement of the Author's Big Idea (ABI):** This should be one complete sentence summarizing the big idea of your passage. You should write your ABI in the *past* tense (reflecting the examples in class).
3. **Explanation of the Passage:** In paragraph form, you will explain the flow of the passage. You should structure your explanation around your textual outline. Be sure to include headers from your textual outline and verse references for each section. You should explain what the author is teaching in each section and how it contributes to the big idea. You should include appropriate interpretive insights gleaned both from your study of the passage and engagement with the commentaries. This could include important observations, discussion of the meaning of key terms, explanation of the historical or cultural significance of certain practices or events, insights from your contextual analysis that shed light on the passage, etc. Remember that you will not be able to share everything you have learned. Select the most important insights that would help a reader understand the main ideas of the passage.

EXEGETICAL PROJECT (*continued*)

III. THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS (2–3 pages) – DRAWS ON WORKSHEET 3

1. **Discontinuities:** In paragraph form, describe any discontinuities in your passage related to cultural differences and changes in redemptive history. First, concisely describe your own culture. Then, describe the discontinuities between your culture and the culture represented in your passage. Particularly, describe the chapter of God's story in which your narrative takes place and how that chapter is different than our present chapter (the proclaimed kingdom).
2. **Continuities:** In paragraph form, explain the continuities in your passage concerning the triune God, the nature of humanity and redemption. Rather than simply listing topics in each category, explain how the topics are expressed in the passage and how they are timeless truths, even today. For example, in 1 Samuel 16, God graciously provided a king after his own heart to lead his people. That king points forward to God's gracious provision of the ultimate King to rescue and rule his people and whose reign would be eternal. OR, just as God chose David to lead because he looked at David's heart, and not his appearance, God still is more concerned about the hearts of people he chooses for his purposes than about external factors.
3. **Statement of Theological Big Idea (TBI):** Develop a one-sentence summary of the theological big idea following the criteria outlined in your notes. It should be written in the *present* tense.
4. **Explanation of TBI:** In one page or less, explain and defend your theological big idea. First, explain the essential elements you have chosen to include in the TBI. Then tell your reader *why* you believe these elements should be part of the TBI. To defend your TBI, you will need to show that these elements in your TBI are both rooted in your ABI and represent continuities in the passage.

IV. PERSONAL APPLICATION (1-2 pages)

1. **Application/Personal Impact:** Identify a fallen condition(s) of the original audience to which you can personally relate. Try to focus on the primary fallen condition of the passage. How do you see this fallen condition played out in your own life? What does this passage reveal about your brokenness that requires the redemptive work of Christ? What are one or two specific examples of how this brokenness is expressed in your life? Describe the redemptive focus of this passage. What's the good news? How does this passage point you to Christ and the gospel? How has God used this passage in your life? *Make it personal.*

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY (1 page)

1. List any sources you cited in the following format: Author's last name, author's first name. *Title of the volume.* Title of the commentary series. City of publication: Name of publisher, date. You will find bibliographic information on the IBS website.

Reading Report

(To be submitted to your coach)
Can be found on the last page of your google worksheets

Date Due	Assignment	Assigned Pages	# Pages Completed
Prior to the first class	Roberts, <i>God's Big Picture</i> , (Introduction and chapters 1-8) [139] Fee and Stuart, <i>How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth</i> , ch. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 [108] Chapell – Part 1 [82] Georges and Baker – Part 2 (ch. 4 and 5) [47]	376	
Wednesday, June 20	Johnson, <i>Hearing the Music of the Gospel</i> [14]	14	
Thursday, June 21	Appendix 1, “Tracing Redemptive Themes” [2]	2	
Friday June 22			
Monday, June 25	Appendix 2 – Intro to Commentaries [2]	2	
Tuesday, June 26			
Wednesday, June 27			
Thursday, June 28	Appendix 3 – Structure of the Psalms	5	
Friday, June 29	Appendix 4 – Identifying the TBI [1]	1	
Monday, July 2	Read commentaries on your passage [count as 20pp]	20	
Tuesday, July 3	Appendix 5 – Understanding the Fallen Condition Focus of Scripture Appendix 6 – Developing an Application Big Idea Appendix 7 – Drilling down on your Application	11	
	TOTAL	429	