

Biblical Interpretation

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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 and increasing in our understanding of people (as created, fallen, and redeemed). Biblical Interpretation exists to help you grow in your capacity to read and apply the Scriptures in a Christ-centered contextualized way.

Course Description

The biblical genre of narrative makes up roughly 40% of our Bibles. Faithfully interpreting God's Word requires understanding this literary form, 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 further develop an interpretive process that will enable you to understand narratives and experience 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 Environment

This will be a live-virtual learning environment using Zoom. The course will be approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ larger group lectures which will utilize online learning features to maximize learning engagement. This class will also spend $\frac{2}{3}$ of time in small coaching groups (no more than 11 students to one coach) to enhance student learning. The coaching groups will utilize online learning features (breakout rooms, chat, whiteboard, etc.) to help with dynamic student participation.

Learning Outcomes

Cognitive (Knowledge and Thinking Skills)

1. By focusing on narrative portions of Scripture, the students will discover tools that can help them better understand and apply the Old and New Testaments in a Christ-centered way.
2. Better understand the grand story of Scripture and why it is important that the students relate every passage to this larger story that culminates in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.
3. The students will grow in their awareness of how culture shapes 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 his people in his Word.
4. Students will better understand that all scripture is intended to form its readers in wisdom to be more like Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Affective (Attitudes, Motivation, and Character)

1. See the Word of God as transformative in the life of a disciple growing as a disciple of Jesus who joyfully submits to the authority of God's Word.
2. Students will develop greater confidence and humility in their ability to understand and apply God's Word.
3. Students will be motivated to apply sound interpretive principles to their future reading, study, application, and teaching of Scripture in community and personally.

Behavioral (Personal and Ministry Skills)

1. Each student will begin to be changed by the formative intent of the scriptures through the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. The students will grow in their ability to ask good questions as they read, study, and apply the Scriptures.
3. Students will grow in their aptitude to read and apply the Scriptures in a Christ-centered way by discerning how Scripture exposes their brokenness/rebellion and points their hearts to find true life in Christ.

Online Interaction Assessments

Within the virtual coaching groups (no more than 11 students to one coach) the coach will evaluate the following:

1. **AIMs** – The students will work through a process in class where they develop several statements of the AIM for both Luke 7:36–50 and 2 Samuel 9. Once the students develop the AIMs, the coach will provide immediate feedback evaluating the quality of their AIMs.
2. **Observations** – The students will work in groups to produce a detailed observation chart that will be presented to the rest of the group and evaluated by the coach giving immediate feedback on their chart.

3. **Responses** – The students will work through a process in class where they develop a contextualized response for themselves and their community for both Luke 7:26–50 and 2 Samuel 9. These contextualized responses will be presented to the group and evaluated with immediate feedback by the coach.

Required Texts

First Nations Version (NT only). InterVarsity Press, 2021. [ISBN - 978-0830813599](#) (Kindle version available)

NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible: New International Version. Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan, 2018. [ISBN - 978-0310450405](#) (Available on Kindle or [Olive Tree Bible Software](#))

Required Reading

Articles and Chapters

[Read Brown ch. 6 \(21pp\)](#)

[Read Padilla "The Interpreted Word: Reflections on Contextual Hermeneutics" \(12pp\)](#)

[Read Justo Gonzalez "Marginality" \(25pp\)](#)

[Read Olesberg "Curiosity" \(10pp\)](#)

[Read Tverberg ch. 5 \(20pp\)](#)

[Read Tan "Reading the Bible in Asian America" \(13pp\)](#)

[Read Kurvilla "Christocentric View" Section 1 \(7pp\)](#)

[Read Johnson "Hearing the Music of the Gospel" \(20pp\)](#)

Read chs. 4–5 in Georges and Baker - *Ministering in Honor-Shame Cultures*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2016. [ISBN-978-0-8308-5146-1](#) (Kindle version available) [We will only be reading three chapters from this book. But the entire book is immensely helpful to learn how to minister to those who come from an honor/shame context.]

Bible and Videos

Read Luke 4:14–9:50

Read 2 Samuel 1–10:19

Watch the following Bible Project Videos and take notes

[Literary Style](#)

[Ancient Jewish Meditation Literature](#)

[The Gospel](#)

[The Parables of Jesus](#)

[Poetry](#)

[Poetic Metaphor](#)

[The Book of Psalms](#)

[The Prophets](#)

[Apocalyptic Literature](#)

[Luke 7 Overview](#)

[1 Samuel and 2 Samuel](#) Overviews

Watch all 9 [God's Big Picture Videos](#)

Recommended Texts

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

Dorani, 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.

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2012.

Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Biblical-Theological Foundations and Principles*. Downers 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.

McCaulley, Esau. *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020.

Roberts, Vaughan. *God's Big Picture: Tracing the story-line of the Bible*. Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 2002. ISBN-13: 978-0830853649

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.

NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible: New International Version. Grand Rapids, MI, USA: Zondervan, 2018

Learning Tasks:

1. **Reading/watching:** You will engage with several chapters, articles, and videos that seek to give you a well-rounded perspective on biblical interpretation philosophy and methodology and an overview of various biblical genres and the redemptive storyline of scripture. Not all of the required readings will be discussed during the course, but each is required background material and needs to be completed before the first class. *You must complete at least 70% of the reading to pass the course.*
2. **Preparation for the First Class:** Before the first class you need to complete all required reading and videos. You will need to respond to the [reading guide](#) for each reading included in the guide. Complete “[Getting Acquainted with the Passage for Luke 7.](#)”
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 8–11 of your peers. You will have a chance to practice the skills you are learning under the watchful eye of a coach. These groups will happen online via Zoom. *You can only miss two coaching groups to pass the course.*
4. **Assignments:** You will complete six assignments which will give you the opportunity to practice the specific skills on which we focus that day. *Each assignment must be completed to pass the course.*
 - i. **OT and NT Context Assignments:** You will complete two assignments surveying four areas of context for your passage for an OT and NT passage: Reader’s, Historical, Literary, and Redemptive. You will present your summarized work in paragraph form.
 - iii. **OT and NT Plot Assignments:** You will provide an outline of both the assigned OT and NT passages and then, in paragraph form, you will summarize the plot observations related to the outline of the passage. You will develop a few summary statements of the AIMs of the passage, noting the theological developments in the passage.
 - iv. **OT and NT Analysis Assignments:** We will consider how an OT and NT passage in both its characters and in God's actions relates to you and your community and what God is doing and will do in this chapter of his story. We will do so by reflecting on the various continuities and discontinuities that exist in both OT and NT passages and considering the formative intent of the passages. You will write a prayer reflecting how God is inviting you and your community to respond to the passages.
5. **Write an Exegetical Paper:** Your exegetical project is an essay you will write on one of the passages you have studied. (The passage you choose will be the passage you carry

over into Biblical Communication.) Your paper should be written in paragraph form and formatted according to the example provided in the notes. 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: (Edwards, 124). Detailed instructions for the paper will be included in your student notes. *This paper must be completed to pass the course.*

- 6. Write a Scenario Response Paper:** Using the passage that you did not choose for your exegetical paper, you will choose two of the provided scenarios to address/answer. Your paper will show your practical engagement with the passage. *This paper must be completed to pass the course.*

Grading Scale

Reading	15 %
Exegetical Assignments	45 %
Exegetical Paper	25 %
Scenario Response Paper	15 %

Total	100 %
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Grading Scale:

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

****Note: You need a C- or better to pass the class.**