

Biblical Interpretation

Course Facilitator: Jeff Lark, ThM.
Institute of Biblical Studies
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Austin, TX

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

The Biblical genres of poetry and narrative make up roughly 75% of our Bibles. Faithfully interpreting God's Word requires understanding these 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 two key literary forms through which God speaks to us in Scripture: narrative (Old and New Testament) 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)

- Duvall, Scott J. and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-310-49066-1 [Duvall and Hays introduce you to a process of interpretation that closely resembles the process we teach in our class. While some of their language is different, the concepts are essentially the same. And, they walk you through the process using each of the major literary genres of the Bible. This book will get you well down the road in understanding our method in Biblical Interpretation. But, a word of caution: do not get "married" to their language. We will introduce you to language that we will use throughout Biblical Interpretation and Biblical Communication. NOTE: *Make sure you buy the third 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.]
- 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. *A Shelter in the Time of Storm: Meditations on God and Trouble*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2009. ISBN-978-1433541391 [This book contains gospel meditations on Psalm 27. We will discuss a handful of these chapters in class. We recommend that you wait to read this until the night before we discuss each chapter.]

Keller, Timothy. *Jesus the King: Understanding the Life and Death of the Son of God*. New York: Dutton, 2011. [The ultimate goal of biblical interpretation is seeing and savoring the glory of Christ. In this book, Keller unfolds the beauty of Jesus and the gospel in Mark. We will discuss several of these in our coaching groups. We recommend that you wait to read this till 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.]

NIV Zondervan Study Bible: New International Version. Grand Rapids, MI, USA: Zondervan, 2015 (I would recommend purchasing the digital version at <https://www.olivetree.com/store/product.php?productid=26449>. Or, you can purchase it on BibleGateway - <https://www.biblegateway.com>

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 five books in this class. (1) *Grasping God's Word* provides a great overview of the biblical interpretation process and various literary forms we find in the Bible and will be a good supplement to 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* and the *NIV Zondervan Study Bible* are great resources for studying the Bible. They are resources you will continue to consult long after the class ends. (4) We will use *A Shelter in the Time of Storm* devotionally and as a

complement to our times in the Psalms as this book will provide gospel-centered meditations on Psalm 27. We will discuss several chapters in class. (5) We will also use Keller's *Jesus the King* devotionally and will be a complement to our times in narratives. We will also be discussing a handful of chapters from this book. (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: Context (10 points)
 - b. Worksheet #2: Observations and Textual outline (10 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	20 % (Turn in the reading report to your coach)
Exegetical Assignments	40 %
Exegetical Project	40 %
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)
- Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*
 - Part 1 – Ch. 2-5
 - Part 2 – all
 - Part 3 – all
 - Part 4 – Ch. 15, 16
 - Part 5 – Ch. 18, 20
 - Appendix 1 – Inspiration and Canon
- Read Johnson, “Hearing the Music of the Gospel” (NOTE: We will discuss this article in the first class session.)
- Georges and Baker – Part 2 (chapters 4 and 5) [50 pages]

DAILY SCHEDULE/READING DUE/ASSIGNMENTS DUE

Note: *We will be discussing several chapters from Tripp. Because Tripp has short chapters, there is no need to read them beforehand. We will read them together in class. **But, for the Keller chapters, you will need to read them before class.***

Additional Note: *Because this class is being offered virtually, it can be tempting to try to maintain a normal (or limited) work schedule during this course. The pace will be demanding, so please clear your schedule so you can focus on this course. You will be glad you did.*

Monday, November 12

MORNING

Reading due: Hearing the Music of the Gospel

Assignment due: nothing

9:00-9:50am

Lecture #1: Introduction / Redemptive Storyline

10:00-11:30

Workshop #1

Discuss *Hearing the Music of the Gospel*

Exercise #1: Foundational Principles

Homework - nothing

AFTERNOON

Reading due: Appendix 1 (back of lecture notes)

Assignment due: nothing

1:00-1:30pm

Lecture #2 – The Interpretive Process

1:40-3:30pm

Workshop #2

Tripp – Ch. 1

Exercise #2: Working the interpretive process in each passage

Homework – pick your passage

Tuesday, November 13

MORNING

Reading due: Appendix 2 and 3 and begin reading your commentaries for your passage

Assignment due: nothing

9:00-9:40am

Lecture #3: Context - Poetry model

9:50-11:30

Workshop #3

Tripp – Ch. 5

Exercise #3: Context in Psalm 27

Homework – Worksheet #1 – Context – Due Saturday, Nov. 17 at 9:00am

AFTERNOON

Reading due: Keller, Ch. 2 (Be sure to read this before class)

Assignment due: nothing

1:00-1:30pm

Lecture #3 – Context - Narrative model

1:40-3:30pm

Workshop #3

Keller – Ch. 2

Exercise #3: Context in Luke 7:36-50

Homework – Worksheet #1 – Context - Due Saturday, Nov. 17 at 9:00am

Wednesday, November 14

MORNING

Reading due: Continue reading your commentaries for your passage

Assignment due: Worksheet #1 - Context

9:00-9:40am

Lecture #4: Context - Poetry model

9:50-11:30

Workshop #4

Tripp – Ch. 2

Exercise #4: Observation and Textual Outline of Psalm 27

Homework – Worksheet #2 – Observation and Textual Outline – Due Sunday, Nov. 18 at 9:00am

AFTERNOON

Reading due: Keller, Ch. 3 (Be sure to read this before class)

Assignment due: nothing

1:00-1:40pm

Lecture #4 – Textual Outline - Narrative model

1:50-3:30pm

Workshop #4

Keller – Ch. 3

Exercise #4: Textual Outline of Luke 7:36-50

Homework – Worksheet #2 – Observation and Textual Outline – Due Sunday, Nov. 18 at 9:00am

Thursday, November 15

MORNING

Reading due: Appendix 4 and continue reading your commentaries for your passage

Assignment due: Worksheet #2 – Observation and Textual Outline

9:00-9:40am

Lecture #5: Theological Analysis - Poetry model

9:50-11:30

Workshop #5

Tripp – Ch. 8

Exercise #5: Theological Analysis of Psalm 27

Homework – Worksheet #3 – Theological Analysis – Due Monday, Nov. 19 at 9:00am

AFTERNOON

Reading due: None

Assignment due: Nothing

1:00-1:30pm

Lecture #6 – Theological Analysis - Narrative model

1:40-3:30pm

Workshop #6

“Into the Word” Genesis 38

Exercise #6: Theological Analysis of Luke 7:36-50

Homework – Worksheet #3 – Theological Analysis – Due Monday, Nov. 19 at 9:00am

Friday, November 16

MORNING

Reading due: Appendices 5-8

Assignment due: Worksheet #3 – Theological Analysis

9:00-9:40am

Lecture #7: Application

9:50-11:30

Workshop #7

Tripp – Ch. 11

Exercise #7: Application of Psalm 27

Homework – Worksheet #4 – Application – Due Tuesday, Nov. 20 at 9:00am

AFTERNOON

Reading due: Keller, ch. 15

Assignment due: Nothing

1:00-2:30pm – no lecture – log in to coaching group only

Workshop #8

Keller – Ch. 15

Exercise #8: Application of Luke 7:36-50

Homework – Worksheet #4 – Application – Due Tuesday, Nov. 20 at 9:00am

Exegetical Paper – Due Wednesday, Nov. 21 at 9:00am.

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 in the google team drive for the class.

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: Beginning: Setting, Middle: Tension, Turning Point, and End: 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 and are true in our present chapter of God's story.

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] Duvall and Hays, <i>Grasping God's Word</i> [256] Chapell – Part 1 [82] Georges and Baker – Part 2 (ch. 4 and 5) [47]	524	
Monday, November 12	Johnson, <i>Hearing the Music of the Gospel</i> [14] Appendix 1, "Tracing Redemptive Themes" [2]	16	
Tuesday November 13	Appendix 2 – Intro to Commentaries [2] Appendix 3 – Structure of the Psalms Keller, Ch. 2	22	
Wednesday, November 14	Keller, Ch. 3	10	
Thursday, November 15	Appendix 4 – Identifying the TBI [1]	1	
Friday, November 16	Finish reading commentaries on your passage [count as 20pp] Appendix 5 – Understanding the Fallen Condition Focus of Scripture Appendix 6 – Developing an Application Big Idea Appendix 7 – Drilling down on your Application Appendix 8 – Heart longings Keller, Ch. 15	42	
	TOTAL	615	

WORKSHEET #1 Context

Name _____

Survey the Big Picture

Directions

You are NOT composing the context section of your exegetical paper in this assignment. You are gathering the information you need to write the context section of your paper. Most of this information will go in the context section of your paper although you could include some of it in other parts of your paper. This worksheet will guide you through the context analysis process for your passage. The primary outside resource you need to consult for this assignment is the *ESV Study Bible*. The commentaries we have posted discuss the details of your passage and not context. *You do not have to write complete sentences to answer these questions. Please type your responses to these questions. Be sure to include references when you are drawing on a particular resource—e.g., “(Davis, 234)”*.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1. Who is the author of this book and to whom was this book written?
2. When was the book written and why was the book written?

After you read through your passage a few times:

3. When did the events narrated in this passage take place? (Note: *We are not asking when the book was composed but roughly when the events in the passage occurred.*)
4. Where did the events recorded in the passage take place? What would be helpful for contemporary readers to understand about the geographical setting?
5. What historical or cultural elements in your passage require clarification for contemporary readers to understand them? (Note: *This information will go in the explanation portion of your paper.*)

LITERARY CONTEXT

6. Broader Context:
 - a. Your passage takes place in a larger unit in the book. What is it? (Note, the larger unit is the Roman Numeral the comes before your passage.
 - b. How does it relate to that unit?
 - c. How does this passage fit into the whole book?
7. Immediate Context:
 - a. What occurs immediately *before* your passage? (These are the smaller sections in the outline. It may be that you go back to the last capital letter in the outline and then take note of the lowercase letters

leading to your passage. Or, for the case of the Psalms, which psalms come immediately before and after your psalm?)

- b. What occurs immediately *after* your passage? (same as above, just apply it to what comes after)
- c. How does your passage relate to what comes immediately before and after? (For the psalms, is there any connection with these psalms and your passage?).

REDEMPTIVE CONTEXT

- 6. In what chapter of God's story do the events in this passage take place? (To answer this question, you will need to consult the chart in *God's Big Story* by Vaughn Roberts)
- 7. What is important to understand about this particular chapter in God's story (as it relates to God's people, God's place and God's rule and blessing) in order to rightly interpret this passage? (To answer this question, you will need to consult the appropriate chapter in *God's Big Picture*).
- 8. What redemptive themes emerge in your passage? (See the document entitled "Reading the Bible in light of the Whole Story: Tracing Key Redemptive Themes" in your appendix. Your commentaries will help you make some of these connections.)

**Worksheet #2 (For Psalms)
Observation and Textual Outline**

Observe the passage

Using the “Observation Key,” record observations about your passage below. Spend at least 30 minutes making observations. Disclaimer: There may not be observations for every category in your passage.

Structure	
Petitions	
Trust/Confidence	
Lament/Problem	
Reasons for God to Act	
Praise	
Images	
Proportion	
Parallelism	
Shift/Turn	
Repetition	
Cause/Effect Decision/Consequence	
Key Words/Phrases	
Connectives	
Contrasts Comparisons	

Observation Key for Psalms

Observation Key: Knowing What to “Look For”	
Structure	What kind of psalm is it? Lament, Trust, Thanksgiving, Praise/Hymn, Royal, Wisdom/Torah, Liturgy, Historical, Mixed, or unclear?
Petitions	Is the psalmist asking God to do something? Oftentimes, the petition is to be heard/or for God to answer his prayers. Sometimes it is for God to act on his behalf.
Lament/problem	Is the psalmist experiencing pain in this broken world? Is he lamenting the fact that he is not experiencing the promises of Psalm 1?
Trust/Confidence	While the psalmist may be experiencing pain and lamentation, does he express a confident trust in God acting on his and his people’s behalf?
Reasons for God to Act	Is there anything in the Psalm that would indicate why God would answer his prayers and act on his behalf?
Praise	Is the psalmist praising God or leading God’s people to praise him?
Images	Are there any images that the author is using (Similes, Metaphors, Indirect Analogy, Hyperbole, Personification/anthropomorphism/zoomorphism)
Proportion	Where is the majority of focus in the psalm - on praise, on lament, on confident trust, etc...?
Parallelism	Does the psalmist use parallelism - saying the same thing differently or saying something more in the second line? What kind of parallelism is being used?
Shift/Turn	Is there a shift in the psalmist’s perspective or in the general direction in the psalm?
Repetition	Are there repeated words or phrases? Are there repeated thoughts?
Cause/Effect Decision/Consequence	Is there a cause/effect relationship (if . . . then . . .)? Pay close attention to each decision and what results from it.
Key Words/Phrases	Look for words and phrases that are central to the meaning of the passage. Repeated terms or concepts may provide a clue.

Connectives	Connectives reveal important relationships. “For, because, or therefore...” often indicate a reason or cause. “But” often introduces a contrast. “So that, to, in order to...” often indicates purpose.
Contrasts Comparisons	How does the writer use contrasts, comparisons and illustrations to amplify the concepts he wants to communicate? Comparison is the association of similar things while contrast is the association of things that are different. “But,” “however,” “rather,” or “on the other hand...” indicate contrast. “Like” and “as” indicate a comparison. How is the beginning of the story (one state of affairs) compared or contrasted with the end of the story (the concluding state of affairs)?

Analyze the Structure

For your passage, create a Textual Outline and provide a statement of the Author’s Big Idea. Be sure to read the discussion of your passages in the recommended commentaries as you work on the outline.

1. Following the division breaks in the English bible, label the type of “elements” found in each section for the type of psalm you are studying (for example, Lament psalms include: Address to God, Petition, Trouble described, Reason for God to Answer, Assurance declaration/confidence or trust, Praise).
2. In a sentence or phrase, summarize each section using the elements that make up that psalm.

Textual Outline:

3. Develop a more detailed outline with points and subpoints to reflect the overall message of the Psalm.
4. Write a brief paragraph for each section describing the main point of each section.

Step 3 - Develop the Author’s Big Idea (ABI):

- One complete sentence summarizing the major components of the passage
- This could use specific names of the characters (of the author of the Psalm)
- This can tend to be a long sentence
- Should be in the past tense

**Worksheet #2 (For Narrative)
Observation and Textual Outline**

Using the “Observation Key,” record observations about your passage below. Spend at least 30 minutes making observations. Disclaimer: There may not be observations for every category in your passage.

Setting	
Characters	
Plot	
Tension	
Dialogue	
Geography	
Proportion	
Shift/Turn	
Repetition	
Cause/Effect Decision/Consequence	
Key Words/Phrases	
Connectives	
Contrasts Comparisons	

Observation Key for Narrative

Observation Key: Knowing What to “Look For”	
Setting	The setting is the location, time, and/or set of affairs prior to the tension that drives the story.
Characters	Who are characters in the story? How are they described/presented in the narrative? Are any physical details provided about them that may be significant? Sometimes the names of characters have special significance.
Plot	How does the story develop? Where does the story turn or shifts?
Tension	Every story has a tension. Define the nature of primary tension that drives the plot.
Dialogue	Dialogue is important. Take special note of what the characters say. Oftentimes the central message of the passage is given through a speech.
Geography	Pay attention to words that indicate location. Use a map to measure distances.
Proportion	Note shifts in the amount of space given to topics. Scripture gives more space to some events/people than others. Two ways to look at this is through wide lens vs. zoom lens and fast vs. slow speed. When the narrative slows down and zooms in, he is alerting you to pay attention to some of the most important elements in the passage.
Shift/Turn	Shifts or turns in the passage might indicate the beginning of tension, the escalation of tension, the resolution, or following actions/lessons.
Repetition	Are there repeated words or phrases? Are there repeated thoughts?
Cause/Effect Decision/Consequence	Is there a cause/effect relationship (if . . . then . . .)? Pay close attention to each decision and what results from it.
Key Words/Phrases	Look for words and phrases that are central to the meaning of the passage. Repeated terms or concepts may provide a clue.
Connectives	Connectives reveal important relationships. “For, because, or therefore . . .” often indicate a reason or cause. “But” often introduces a contrast. “So that, to, in order to . . .” often indicates purpose.
Contrasts Comparisons	How does the writer use contrasts, comparisons and illustrations to amplify the concepts he wants to communicate? Comparison is the association of similar things while contrast is the association of things that are different. “But,” “however,” “rather,” or “on the other hand . . .” indicate contrast. “Like” and “as” indicate a comparison. How is the beginning of the story (one state of affairs) compared or contrasted with the end of the story (the concluding state of affairs)?

Analyze the Structure

For the passage that you have selected, create a Textual Outline and provide a statement of the Author's Big Idea. You will only turn in the results of your work (typed). Be sure to read the discussion of your passages in the recommended commentaries as you work on the outline.

- (1) Insert your text into this document and simply hit "return" when you observe any of the following:
 - A change in location
 - A change in narration (not just an editorial insertion)
 - A change in main/significant characters
 - An obvious change in time
- (2) Once you have separated your passage by scenes, write a brief summary/description after each scene.

(3) Tension

Determine the tension that drives the story.

1. Where does it start? (label it in the passage)
2. Where does it end? (label it in the passage)
3. Describe what the tension is and why this is the tension that's driving this story. (describe it here).

(4) Turning Point

Identify the turning point in the climax and highlight it in the passage with a different color.

- (5) Once you have isolated the tension, gather the scenes into Beginning, Middle and End and label it in your passage:
 1. Beginning of the story (before the tension that drives the story starts)
 2. Middle (The tension and main turning point)
 3. End (Everything that comes after the main turning point)

Textual Outline:

- (6) Outline the pattern of dramatic flow writing a complete sentence for each of the elements.
 - Beginning
 - setting: sentence description (verse reference)
 - Middle:
 - Rising Tension: Sentence description (verse reference)
 - Climax/Turning Point: Sentence description (verse reference)
 - End
 - Following Actions / Concluding Lessons: sentence description (verse reference)
- (7) For each part of your outline, write a brief paragraph explaining the story and how that part of the outline is contributing to the overall development of the story.

Step 3 – Develop the Author’s Big Idea (ABI):

- One complete sentence summarizing the major components of the passage
- This will use specific names of the characters
- This can tend to be a long sentence
- Should be in the past tense

EXAMPLE - 1 Samuel 25

Textual Outline

- **Beginning**
 - **Setting:** While David was in the wilderness of Paran hiding from Saul, he heard that Nabal was sheering his sheep in Carmel (25:1-4).
- **Middle:**
 - **Rising tension:** Nabal dismissed David’s gracious request for help, which made David furious and resulted in Nabal’s wife, Abigail, hurrying to meet David after she discovered that he was coming with 400 men to kill them. (25:5-22).
- **Middle:**
 - **Climax/Turning point:** Abigail reminded David that God will care for him and fulfill his promise to establish him as king and urged him not to act foolishly, resulting in David accepted Abigail’s council as the Word of the Lord and abandoned his quest for vengeance (25:23-33).
- **End:**
 - **Following actions/Concluding Lessons:** David sent Abigail home in peace and Abigail became David’s wife after Nabal died (25:34-44).

NOTE: What isn’t included in this example is the brief paragraph explaining each section and how each section contributes to the overall development of the story.

Author’s Big Idea (ABI):

- While David was on his way to kill Nabal, Abigail reminded David that God will care for him and conquer his enemies, resulting in David accepting her council and abandoning his quest for vengeance.

WORKSHEET #3

Theological Analysis

This worksheet will guide you through the theological analysis process for your passage. As you reflect theologically on your passage, be sure to read the “Bridging Contexts” and “Contemporary Application” sections of the *NIV Application Commentary* for your passage. The Bridging Contexts section will help you identify continuities and discontinuities while the Contemporary Significance section will stimulate your thinking about your application.

1. Restate the author’s big idea (ABI)
2. Discern the theological discontinuity
 - a) Cultural changes:
 - b) Personal differences:
 - c) Redemptive developments - try to point out how your passage could be unique to that particular chapter of God’s story in contrast to our present chapter of God’s story (the Proclaimed Kingdom)
3. Affirm the theological continuity of the passage:
 - a) Triune God (character, conduct, concerns)
 - b) People (created, fallen and redeemed)
 - c) Redemption (be sure to consult “Redemptive Themes” following lecture 2)
 - d) Character/ethics (examples and commands)
4. Develop a theological big idea
5. In 200-300 words, explain and defend your theological big idea. First, explain the key 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 the key elements in your TBI are both rooted in your ABI and represent continuities in the passage. Also, include other references in Scripture that prove that these are indeed continuities that run through the storyline of the Bible and are in our present chapter of God’s story (the Proclaimed kingdom).

WORKSHEET #4 **Application**

Use appendices 5, 6 and 7 to help you in this process.

Directions: You might find it helpful to pray through the passage and ask God to show you how he wants you to respond to him through this passage.

You will come up your Application Big Idea and then develop one side or the other for the rest of your application.

FALLEN CONDITION

1. **What fallen condition(s) does your passage surface or address?** *(Note: for this question, you are simply listing all of the Fallen Conditions that you see in the passage).*
2. **What Fallen Condition(s) are closer to the center of the main idea of your passage?** *(for this question, you are simply narrowing down to one or two FC's that are prominent and driving your passage).*
3. **Determine the Fallen Condition in the passage that you most identify with.** *(Of the narrowed list of FC's that you identified in the question above, which do you most identify with?)*
4. **What false beliefs in you does your passage surface?** *(Note: you are beginning to dig beneath the surface of your FC. What false beliefs are driving that FC in your life?)*

REDEMPTIVE SOLUTION

5. **Brainstorm possible Redemptive solutions** *(like the first question above, you are simply listing possible RS's from your passage or the surrounding context).*

6. **Identify Heart Longings** (*using appendix #8, which heart longings does this passage surface – just list them*).

7. **Narrow your Redemptive Solution list to one or two RS's that are more prominent in your passage.**

8. **Identify an RS that answers the FC that you've identified.** (*based upon your one FC that you listed in #3 above*).

Add "Because" to your Redemptive Solution

Write out the redeemed opposite of your Fallen Condition

9. **Put the two statements together for your Response Big Idea.**

10. **Develop into a few sub-points one side or the other of your statement (either the "reason" side or the "to do" side).**

From Jonah 3 - Because God is compassionate and willing for none to perish but for all to come to repentance, I can praise him and proclaim him to the nations.

- I can praise him and proclaim him to the nations because God's compassion is fiercer than his anger.
- I can praise him and proclaim him to the nations because God doesn't "relent" forever - there will be an end to his mercy.
- I can praise him and proclaim him to the nations because God ultimately doesn't turn off his fierce anger, but poured it out on Christ.