Biblical Interpretation

**Course Facilitator: Jeff Lark, Th.M.**

## *Institute of Biblical Studies*

**June 29–July 10, 2020**

**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% or 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 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. By focusing on narrative portions of Scripture, you will discover tools that can help you better understand and apply Old and New Testament in a Christ-centered way.
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.
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. But, a word of caution: do not get “married” to their language. We will introduce you to language that we will use. NOTE: Make sure you buy the 3rd ed.]

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.]

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.]

## \*\* One additional text is forthcoming

## 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.

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 Grover: 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 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 supplement to the lectures. (2) God’s Big Picture are nine videos based off the book by the same title that traces the entire story of the Bible. You are required to interact with the material in the videos by filling out the note taking sheet. We will discuss GBP in our coaching groups. (3) The ESV Study Bible and the NIV Biblical Theology 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 have a daily devotional reading that will be a complement to our times in the narratives. (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 required work that needs to be completed prior to the first class session. See “Pre-Class 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 five assignments 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 assignments are all in Google Drive in one Google Doc. You will do an assignment and then share (or comment) the file with your coach to let them know you completed it. As you continue to work through the assignments, all of your work will be in the one Google Doc.
5. **Write an 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% (Instructions will be given during class)



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

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

**Pre-Class Work**

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

* Email [Clay.Harris@cru.org](mailto:Clay.Harris@cru.org) to get access to our class Google Drive. Note: When clicking some of the links below you will be asked to make your own copy of these documents.
* Fill out [Getting to Know You](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd2nOGf7F-HDQ8pmVT2fdtRcSxjWfQpOh5BzTYmRUX3_tdzcg/viewform?usp=sf_link) Google Form.
* Roberts, *God’s Big Picture* Videos [[Watch video](https://www.godsbigpicture.co.uk/watch) and fill out [note taking sheets](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1VO1Zc2DJCiPm0gruBMGaOgwiBIk70b1tXOVJzoI0ISM)]
* Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God’s Word*
  + Part 1 – Ch. 2-5 [65pp]
  + Part 2 – Ch. 6–8 [46pp]
  + Part 3 – 10–12 [32pp]
  + Part 4 – Ch. 15 [19pp]
  + Part 5 – Ch. 18 [18pp]
* Read Johnson, “[Hearing the Music of the Gospel](https://www.cru.org/content/dam/cru/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/hearing-the-music-of-the-gospel.pdf)” (NOTE: We will discuss this article in the first class session.)
* Georges and Baker – Part 2 (ch. 4 and 5)
* Complete [Assignment #1 (Observations)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uftJgugiGo2GrSE4BaftiDt-W2hr_Wbnc9bemik4evc/edit?usp=sharing) by Friday before class begins.
* You will upload Assignment #1 into a Google Doc that will be shared with you on the first day of class

Here is a link to a [Google Sheet Checklist](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10YlokW20fFsPTrusSaeI8mjawGzaCGk4wyJJqy3_usw/edit?usp=sharing) to help you. You will be asked to make your own copy.