

# *Biblical Interpretation*

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***Institute of Biblical Studies***

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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, apply, and be formed by the Scriptures in a Christ-centered contextualized way.

## **Course Description**

The biblical genre of narrative makes up roughly 40% of our Bible. 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, which 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 course is designed to facilitate your learning in a way that marries practical skills with deep learning. As such you will have daily opportunities to develop your skills through coaching groups as well as lectures. All of your learning will be in-person and face to face.

## **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. The students will 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.
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. Students will see the word of God as transformative as they joyfully submit 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.
4. Students will be invited to consider how several ancient spiritual practices can transform their character, motivation, and attitude towards God and his word.

### Behavioral (Personal and Ministry Skills)

1. Students will begin to be changed by the formative intent of the scriptures through the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Students will be exposed to interpretive tools and formative practices that will equip them to read, study, and apply the Scriptures individually and corporately.
3. Students will grow in their aptitude to read and apply the Bible in a way that exposes their brokenness/rebellion and points their hearts to find true life in Christ.

## **Class Interaction Assessments**

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

1. **FC/RS** – The students will work together and on their own to determine the main fallen condition and redemptive solutions for several passages and

eventually for both Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13. Students will receive feedback from their coach.

2. **ABI** – The students will work through a process in class where they develop several statements of the ABI for both Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13. Once the students develop the ABI, the coach will provide immediate feedback evaluating the quality of their ABI.
3. **Narrative Outline** – Students will work on their own and in groups to produce an outline for both Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13. This outline will be based on the narrative plot structure of the passages and will receive feedback from their coach.
4. **Theological Center** – Students will work together to determine essential elements to identify the theological center for both Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13, receiving feedback from their coach.
5. **Responses** – The students will work through a process in class where they develop a contextualized response for themselves and their community for both Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13. These contextualized responses will be presented to the group and evaluated with immediate feedback by the coach.

#### **Required Texts** (Can be physical or digital)

*NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible*: New International Version. Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan, 2018. [ISBN - 978-0310450405](https://www.zondervan.com/books/bible-study-bibles/niv-biblical-theology-study-bible)

#### **Required Articles and Chapters**

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

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

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

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

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

Read all of 2 Samuel

Read all of The Gospel According to Mark

Watch the following Bible Project Videos and take notes

[Literary Style](#)

[Ancient Jewish Meditation Literature](#)

[Plot](#)

[Character](#)

[Setting](#)

[Design Patterns](#)

[The Gospel](#)

[The Parables of Jesus](#)

[Mark Overview](#)

[1 Samuel](#) and [2 Samuel](#) Overviews

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

Here are the [Reading Journal](#) instructions and a [helpful checklist](#) for all of the pre-work.

### 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.
- First Nations Version (NT only). InterVarsity Press, 2021. [ISBN - 978-0830813599](#) (Kindle version available)
- Georges, Jayson and Mark D. Baker. *Ministering in Honor-Shame Cultures: Biblical Foundations and Practical Essentials*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2016. [ISBN-978-0-8308-5146-1](#)
- 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 Blindness 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.

*ESV Study Bible*. Wheaton, IL, USA: Crossway, 2008

## 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 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 Journal](#) for each reading included in the guide. You will also watch a [Context Lecture](#) and complete some initial work on the context of your passages ([Assignment 0: Context Pre-Work](#)). This [instructional video](#) will help you with this assignment. Here is a [helpful checklist](#) for all of the pre-work.
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. *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. **Assignment #0: OT and NT Context (Pre-Work)** This is the first part of a two-part assignment. In the Pre-Work assignment, you will survey four areas of context for an OT and NT passage: Reader's, Historical/Cultural, Literary, and Redemptive. This is due before class begins.
  - ii. **"X" Page Assignment:** Several times throughout the course you will work through our entire biblical interpretation model in a process we call the "X" Page. You will submit this for completion and feedback.
  - iii. **Assignment #1: Fallen Condition and Redemptive Solution** In this assignment, you will take the feedback from the in-class work to determine the primary fallen conditions and redemptive solutions for both Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13.
  - iv. **Assignment #2: OT and NT Observations** You will spend 30 minutes each in Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13 making observations using the observation chart provided in the Exegetical Guide.
  - v. **Assignment #3: OT and NT Context (Final)** Building on the work you did in Assignment #0 (Context Pre-Work), you will develop your thoughts into four paragraphs explaining the essential information for each aspect of Context necessary to understand Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13.

- vi. **Assignment #4: Plot and ABI** In this assignment, you will examine the narrative structures of Mark 4:35-41 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13. Based on how the biblical author develops the plot of the story, as well as your context work and observations, you will craft a statement of the Author's Big Idea (ABI) for each passage.
  - vii. **Assignment #5: Connect** Here you will consider discontinuities and continuities as you move from the world of the text to our world. You will reflect theologically on the main continuities in order to locate the Theological Center (TC) of the passage.
  - viii. **Assignment #6: Apply** In this final step of the assignments, you will articulate how God has moved in your own life to apply this passage. As you reflect on the fallen condition, redemptive solution and formative elements of the passage, you will consider how God is inviting you to respond.
5. **Write an Exegetical Paper:** Your exegetical project is a paper 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. All referenced works in your bibliography will also need to be cited in your paper. 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* select 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.*

### Grade Makeup

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

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Total	100 %
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### Grading Scale

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

**\*\*Note: You need a C- or better to pass the class. You can only miss two sessions and pass the class.**