

COURSE SYLLABUS

SIBI

MBS517

COURSE TITLE: ADVANCED HERMENEUTICS

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This three-hour graduate-level course will focus on Hermeneutics: The branch of knowledge that deals with techniques of interpreting and applying ancient writings (specifically the Bible) to today. This course is one of the five required courses at SIBIGS. The course is aimed at accomplishing the following objectives:

1. Define Hermeneutics,
2. Review and establish effective exegesis,
3. Develop a workable hermeneutical practice for one’s ministry context,
4. To have opportunities to apply good Hermeneutics under instructor guidance and review

II. RATIONALE

Disciples are tasked with following the instruction of their teacher. In the case of Christians, we are obligated to follow the word of our teacher through the time span of thousands of years from an ancient document colored by different cultures, languages, immediate contextual issues, unique theological insights and then process what has been communicated in order to respond appropriately. How does one do that effectively? The answer is **hermeneutics**.

The task of correct biblical interpretation (hermeneutics) is a daunting one. Yet, it must be pursued. We must understand what biblical interpretation is. So, it must be defined. We must also be aware of the danger of poor interpretation and poor interpreter’s. So, we must acknowledge how one ought to approach the ancient text of the Bible. We must establish the best methods to biblical interpretation. So, we are obligated to become familiar with the common rules of interpretation. Finally, we must make application of our findings. So, we must understand how to cross the bridge of meaning to make application. We take our study and insight from then to now or as John Stott says, “Between two worlds,”

MBS517 is purposed to accomplish this task. Through this web based course guide, the student will be challenged to understand the principles in the assigned reading and then make application through the coursework given.

III. PREREQUISITES

It is the student's responsibility to make up any prerequisite deficiencies that would prevent the successful completion of this course.

IV. MATERIALS LIST

Fee, Gordon and Stuart, Douglas. *How To Read the Bible For All Its Worth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1982.

Klein, William W., Blomberg, Craig L., and Hubbard Jr., Robert L. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation (revised and expanded)*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc. 2004

Virkler, Henry A. *Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. First Edition 1981, Second Edition 2009 (either edition will suffice).

V. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Have full and robust appreciation of the art and science of hermeneutics.
- B. Have an historical understanding of the development of hermeneutics.
- C. Recognize the everyday use of hermeneutics in our language and living.
- D. Develop an approach to employ practical hermeneutics in one's ministry vocation.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

A variety of learning activities comprise the basic requirements for this class. These activities will be graded and those combined grades will constitute the student's score for the class. A student **MUST** complete all the assignments listed below in order to pass this course.

Overview of Assignments and Grade Values:

- 1. Reading (100 Points)
- 2. Critical Analysis (300 Points)
- 3. Research Project (300 Points)
- 4. Teaching Project (300 Points)

GLA 1: Reading and Participation (100 Points)

Students will read the sections of required text and answer the questions in the discussion board that facilitate synthesis of the material. The discussion board will also serve as an opportunity to interact with classmates and the instructor about the material.

- Read *How To Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, by Fee, in its entirety,
- Read *Hermeneutics*, by **Virkler**, in its entirety,
- Read the following chapters from *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*:
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7

GLA 2: Critical Analysis (300 Points)

Students will write a critical analysis for each assigned text. You will be doing the analysis on three books as per the reading assigned above. Two will be due at the midterm of the course and one will be due at the final. The student may turn them in ahead of time if they choose but will be penalized if the work is not done on time. ***If at any point there seems to be problem getting the work done on time, please exercise the spirit of Christ and finish your course.*** “Persevere my dear brethren.”-J.D. Morrison

Please Note: I want you to experience the joy and the confidence that comes from finishing an assignment that you thought you could not complete. I am in support of you and will celebrate that victory with you, but I do expect your best effort. ***Contact me immediately in the case of extreme unforeseeable cases that beset your ability to be like Jesus and finish the mission you have been given (Insert Smile).***

- The following is the break down for the papers:
 - **First two books due at midterm: 3-08-2017**
 - Fee, Gordon and Stuart, Douglas. *How To Read the Bible For All Its Worth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1982.
 - Virkler, Henry A. *Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. First Edition 1981, Second Edition 2009 (either edition will suffice).

- **Final book due at final: 4-19-2017**

- Klein, William W., Blomberg, Craig L., and Hubbard Jr., Robert L. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation (revised and expanded)*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc. 2004

Write no more than 5 pages per book.

1. **The basic structure of each and all of your critical analyses in the broad sense will be:** (Please use these **two Headings** on your papers)
 - A. **Critical Analysis** (narrow sense) of the particular authors argument, primary emphases, unpacking and, often, ‘teaching’/expositing what that author is trying to do in that particular section. At least 4/5(four-fifths) of the paper ought to be given to this task of ‘getting the author right’ (or understanding what is being argued).
 - B. **Critical Evaluation**, i.e. assessing and setting forth what the author did well—any why, and, too, and especially, what the author did not do well, or ought not to have done—and why not. These crucial negative evaluations of the author’s formulation ought to include brief correction, i.e. what should the author have done at the juncture in his

argument. No more than 1/5 (one-fifth) of the paper should be given to evaluation.

2. Further tendencies/problems to watch out for and so forth:

- A. **Do not** include any outside sources, references, quotes...or anything at all. It's just you and the author of the 'section' and nothing else. I want to observe and evaluate you fully and critically engaged with that author **THERE**, and no one else.
- B. **Do not** foist your own 'agenda', philosophical, political, etc., etc., on to your analysis and wrestling with (only) the author's argument in that section, as the 'two of you' (only) actively and critically engage his arguments and aims, unpacking and expounding deeply. Leave your 'agenda' elsewhere. It's all about that author. Keep your analytic, critical tools therein.
- C. **Do not**, absolutely do not include an 'annotated bibliography' (I already know all about each author and work) which is a total waste of space.
- D. **Do not** include an 'Introduction' to your critical analyses. Introductions too, as cursory overviews of what will again be given in the pages that follow in greater detail are another total waste of space. I assume that anyone who would include such has not read the section well at all, and so needs something vacuous and utterly wasteful, verbal fluff, to fill up the space. Anyone who has studied a section well would never lower themselves to useless 'introduction', but from 'word one' would be directly and intensely engaging in scholarly critical analyses only.
- E. **Do not** use footnotes. With one source and one source only (no outside sources!) it is beyond obvious who and what you are referring to. Where perhaps most proper (avoid quotations as a general rule, see below), **use only internal page reference, e.g. (359)**. No need to use up crucial 'analysis' space for anything else.
- F. As above, with rare exceptions, avoid quotations, and especially longer 'block quotes'. I'm grading your analysis of the author, not that author. (**Explanation of how to write the critical analysis borrowed from Dr. John Morrison**)

ALL CRITICAL ANALYSIS' ARE DUE AT THE LATEST: 4-19-2017

GLA 3: Research Project (300 Points)

Write one 15 to 20-page paper that entails the employment of the hermeneutical process for the following passage **of your choosing**: Galatians 3, Colossian 2, or 1Corinthians 2. You must email your choice of these three before you begin your paper.

This assignment should:

1. Include an accurate depiction of the historical background of the text,
2. The purpose and observations from the reading through the passage,
3. Any cultural uniqueness that contribute to the issues and context,
4. Proper word study and exegetical development,

5. Key theological implications from the context and it's harmony with Scripture,
6. An approach that outlines your findings and the commentary on the information,
7. A structured dissemination of the work using the following as a suggested outline:
 - a. Historical Background of the passage and recipients
 - b. Purpose and objective of the text
 - c. Mood and thematic observations
 - d. Commentary
 - e. Application of the teaching to the immediate audience
 - f. Application for today

RESEARCH PROJECT IS DUE: 3-22-2017

GLA 4: Teaching Project (300 Points)

A significant portion of the course is given over to preparing you to communicate the process of studying the ancient documents of Scripture (hermeneutics) to others.

- The teaching project will be an assignment that allows you to systematically develop what you understand in a way to communicate it clearly, competently, confidently, and convincingly!
- **In your own way, develop a hermeneutics course for your ministry.**
- For this assignment to be accomplished, the student will be required to develop a systematic presentation of hermeneutics. This assignment should be developed as you prepare a notebook of lessons that depicts the following:
 - What is hermeneutics?
 - How does one approach the Scripture?
 - The importance of reading the text.
 - The importance of context.
 - Genres of the Bible
 - How to do a proper word study.
 - How does one develop meaning?
 - The importance of application (immediate audience and today's audience).
- Your goal is demonstrating the significance of a usable hermeneutic process for the ministry context you are in. The eight sections described above is suggested language. You may title them however you would like. This project is a means for you to walk away with a practical application of your reading and writing for everyday service.

This assignment should:

1. Be a presentation that can be shared in a teaching setting;
2. Be clear enough to be summarized and communicated in a three minute "elevator speech" if need be. To that end, prepare a summary of each lesson as cover sheet for that lesson. For example:

Title: **What is hermeneutics?**

Summary of the lesson: *In this lesson the student will be introduced to the history and meaning of hermeneutics. The lesson will begin with key insights to define the term, and illustrations that show how*

hermeneutics is used in everyday life. The lesson will conclude with an overview of how this course will be developed to show the way one practices hermeneutics and its overall significance in Bible study.

3. Developed as one document to be saved in PDF and emailed as a final project for the course.

This assignment should include in each of the eight lessons:

1. Appropriate illustrations and examples;
2. Accurate explanation of terms and concepts;
3. Illustrations that facilitate connecting conceptual ideas;
4. Consistency in the structure of the project. In other words, don't start in word document and change to PowerPoint or vice versa.

TEACHING PROJECT IS DUE: 4-19-2017

VII. Grading Scale:

A = 940–1000	C = 780–819
A- = 920–939	C- = 700–779
B+ = 900–919	F = 699-below
B = 860–899	
B- = 840–859	
C+ = 820–839	

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY (RECOMMENDED TEXTS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER)

Carson, D.A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996

Davidson, Donald, 1984, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for all its Worth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982

Hendricks, Howard G. and William D. Hendricks. *Living By the Book*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1991

Klein, Dr. William W., Dr. Craig L. Blomberg and Dr. Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1993

Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1970

Ricoeur, Paul, 1981, "What is a Text? Explanation and Interpretation", in Paul Ricoeur,

Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences, John B. Thompson (ed. and transl.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.135–151.

Ryken, Leland. *How to Read the Bible as Literature*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There a Meaning in This Text?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998