Biblical Hermeneutics for Contextualized Ministry

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RTS Jackson, MS  
Days: M-F  
Date: January 19-23, 2015  
Time: 8:00AM-5:00PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is a study of the history of the English Bible, the goal of biblical interpretation, the presuppositions involved in the interpretation, the means of arriving at the meaning of ancient texts along with present-day implications, and the formation of the New Testament canon. The course will also discuss the reality of, the benefits of, and the disadvantages of various Ethnocentric readings of the bible.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
By the end of this course with the help of assigned reading, class discussions, exegetical exercises, a major research paper, and two exams, students will be able to do the following on a basic level in both verbal and written form:

1. Analyze, discuss, and define the discipline of Biblical Hermeneutics and selective vocabulary unique to Hermeneutics.
2. Analyze and discuss the history of the English Bible and English translations and translation theories.
3. Learn and develop skills and methods to aid both interpretation and application of ancient texts (especially biblical texts) and to aid a Christological Reading of the Bible.
4. Analyze, critique, and discuss ancient, modern, and post-modern hermeneutical methods, ethno-racial readings, and their various presuppositions.
5. Analyze and discuss the process of canonicity, especially New Testament canonicity.
6. Learn how to apply responsibly the Bible to one’s individual 21st century social setting.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Primary Literature Reading
A good translation of the Bible.

Secondary Literature Reading


**READING (1200 pts)**
Students are required and expected to complete all of the assigned readings by the assigned dates in the course schedule below. Since this is a graduate course, the professor expects every student to be prepared and to participate in class discussions each week. Students’ reading grades will be determined by the amount of their completed reading. Students will submit a reading report on April 4, 2015 no later than 11:59 PM EST approximately stating the percentage of the course reading that they have completed for each reading assignment (e.g. Schreiner, 80%, etc.). Please, provide an honest report.

**Note:** Per the syllabus, Plummer’s book should be read daily and Williams by the first day of class. The rest of the reading will be due April 4, 2015 by 11:59PM EST. Students will submit a note via email to the professor stating to him the approximate amount of each reading assignment completed.

**COLLOQUIA (100pts)**
Students will participate in daily colloquia (conversations). The point of the discussions is to get students talking, debating, and critically engaging the biblical text and course material and each other. Students will fail these colloquia if they refuse to talk. Each colloquium is worth 20 points. Each colloquium will begin as soon as class begins.

**1 EXAM (100pts)**
Students will take one comprehensive exam. The exam will be essay. Students must incorporate information from the lectures, assigned reading, and class discussions to do well on the exam. Students will be able to use their bibles to take the exam. The exam will be taken in class on Friday after lunch. Students will have approximately 1 hour to complete this exam. Students must only use their bibles.
BREAKDOWN OF EACH ASSIGNMENT
Reading (1200pts)
   Bradley (100pts)
   Bruce (100pts)
   Cleveland (100pts)
   Mathews (100pts)
   Plummer (200pts)
   Schreiner (400pts)
   Wegner (100pts)
   Williams (100pts)
(2) Exam (100pts)
(3) Colloquia (100pts)
Total=1400 pts

GRADING SCALE
95-100=A
90-94=A-
85-89=B
80-84=B-
75-79=C
70-74=C-
65-69=D
60-64=D-
59 and Below=F

FINAL GRADES
Final grades will be posted online. Please, do not email or contact the professor about your grade unless you identify a mistake.

COURSE AND SYLLABUS MODIFICATION (Disclaimer)
This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the learning objectives, instructional format, readings, activities, evaluation criteria, policies and procedures, and other information necessary for students to complete this course. The professor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus to maintain the integrity of the learning experience as a result of events and circumstances that may occur during the semester.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Assigned Reading</th>
<th>Other Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 1</td>
<td>1. Introduction to Syllabus</td>
<td>Plummer, 11-12, 79-93</td>
<td>Colloquium 1: Anything related to the lectures</td>
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<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>2. Prolegomena: What is the Discipline of Hermeneutics?</td>
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<td>3. Prolegomena: Presuppositions in Hermeneutics</td>
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<td>4. Prolegomena: Why Hermeneutics?</td>
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<td>5. History of Interpretation: Different Senses of Hermeneutics</td>
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<td>6. History of Interpretation: Hermeneutical Methods Emerging from the Three Senses of Hermeneutics</td>
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<td>Day 2</td>
<td>1. History of Interpretation: Hermeneutical Methods Emerging from the Three Senses of Hermeneutics</td>
<td>Plummer, 23-75</td>
<td>Colloquium 2: Anything related to the lectures, but especially ethno-racial identity’s impact on biblical interpretation</td>
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<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>2. Defining Scripture: What is It?</td>
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<td>3. How did We get Scripture?</td>
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<td><strong>Transmission and Reception of the Bible</strong></td>
<td><strong>4. How did we get Scripture in English? Translation Technique</strong></td>
<td><strong>5. How did We get A Canon? Canonicity</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Day 3 Jan 21</strong></td>
<td><strong>1. Reading the Genres:</strong> Basic Hermeneutical Principles**</td>
<td>Plummer, 95-196, 265-77</td>
<td><strong>Colloquium 3:</strong> Anything related to the lectures</td>
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<td><strong>2. Reading Biblical Narratives</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3. Reading Parables</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Day 4 Jan 22</strong></td>
<td><strong>1. Reading Biblical Poetry</strong></td>
<td>Plummer, 197-211, 219-262</td>
<td><strong>Colloquium 4:</strong> Anything related to the lectures</td>
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<td><strong>2. Reading Wisdom Literature</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3. Reading Prophetic Literature</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Day 5 Jan 23</strong></td>
<td><strong>1. Reading The Epistles</strong></td>
<td>Plummer, 213-18, 279-325</td>
<td><strong>Colloquium 5:</strong> Anything related to the lectures</td>
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<td><strong>2. Reading Apocalyptic Literature and Revelation</strong></td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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