Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics

*05NT524*



**Open my eyes, that I may behold**

**wondrous things out of your law.**

**--Psalm 119:18**

Reformed Theological Seminary - Houston Campus

Professor Glodo

*Spring 2016*

Course Schedule

All assignments are due by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday evenings unless indicated otherwise. Be sure to take note of any adjustments to this schedule which might be announced in class.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Wk. | Date | Topics (may vary) / Assignments Due | Related Reading[[1]](#footnote-1)\* |
| *1* | *Jan 29-30* | *Introduction & overview**Foundations for biblical interpretation**General principles for biblical interpretation**The biblical metanarrative**A fundamental hermeneutical model**An overview of biblical genres* | Chicago StatementGreidanus 1-68Pratt 1-104RobertsVanhoozer[Swain] |
|  | Feb 6 | Lecture/reading review questions for week 1 |  |
|  | Feb 13 | No assignment due – start paper research |  |
|  | Feb 20 | Exegetical worksheets set 1 |  |
|  | Feb 27 | No assignment due – continue paper research |  |
| *2* | *Mar 4-5* | *Interpreting Old Testament narratives**Interpreting biblical poetry**Interpreting the prophetic writings**Interpreting biblical wisdom* | Pratt 107-128[Pratt 129-305] |
|  | Mar 12 | Lecture/reading review questions for week 2 |  |
| *3* | *Mar 18-19* | *New Testament use of the Old Testament**Interpreting New Testament narratives**Interpreting epistles* | Carson & Beale |
|  | Mar 26 | Lecture/reading review questions for week 3 |  |
|  | Apr 2 | Exegetical worksheets set 2 |  |
|  | Apr 9 | Exegetical worksheets set 3 |  |
|  | Apr 16 | No assignment due – start paper writing |  |
| *4* | *Apr 22-23* | *Applying scripture**The history of biblical interpretation**Christological interpretation* | Greidanus 69-278OrtlundPratt 309-402[Greidanus 279-318] |
|  | Apr 30 | Exegetical worksheets set 4 |  |
|  | May 7 | No assignment due – continue paper writing |  |
|  | May 14 | Exegetical paper due |  |

05NT524 – Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics

*Spring 2016*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Instructor*: | Michael Glodo, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, RTS Orlando |
| *Contact information:* | Professor Glodo: mglodo@rts.edu, 407.278.4476Administrative Assistant Joyce Sisler :jsisler@rts.edu), 407.278.4552 |
| *Class* *meeting*s: | 6:30-9:30 p.m. Fridays and 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Saturdays on the weekends of January 29-30, March 4-5, March 18-19 and April 22-23. |
| *Course web page:* | The link to course web page will be available on Canvas by two weeks before the start of the semester. If you have not previously registered as a Canvas user, you must do so first. |

# Course Description.

This course focuses on approaches to the interpretation of Scripture. Various critical-interpretive systems are considered and special attention is given to the historical-grammatical method. Emphasis is placed on understanding the original, intended meaning of Scripture in its canonical context as the basis upon which to prepare expositions and make appropriate contemporary applications. (3 credits)

Getting Acquainted.

If this is your first course with me, please complete the student-to-professor introduction on the course web page.

# Course Objectives.

Students successfully completing the course will

1. Learn the basic skills of biblical interpretation and be able to implement them effectively.
2. Understand the history of biblical interpretation and its relevance to contemporary interpretation.
3. Grasp the general obstacles to biblical interpretation and be able to address them both cognitively and spiritually.
4. Develop a reliable pattern of biblical interpretation and be able to apply it with specific biblical texts.
5. Develop an awareness of the sub-genres of scriptures and the particular principles of interpretation which apply to them.
6. Become familiar with a basic set of reference resources which will support the pattern of interpretation presented.
7. Develop a greater sense of the excellence of scripture so that they will desire greater scope and depth of understanding essential to a growing Christian life.
8. See how all parts of scripture relate to the person and work of Christ.
9. Be able to present the results of their biblical interpretation to lay learners in a way that increases understanding of scripture and of God.

# Course materials.

Course materials will be available on the course web page on Canvas. If you have not previously signed up for Canvas, please do so. Note that Canvas will be used principally for distribution of course materials and submission of assignments using the Home page for the course. Students should rely primarily upon the above schedule for assignments, schedule and due dates.

Lecture handouts may include Hebrew and Greek using the SBL Hebrew and SBL Greek fonts. These are downloadable free fonts at <http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/BiblicalFonts_SBLHebrew.aspx> and <http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/BiblicalFonts_SBLGreek.aspx>, respectively. These fonts will be used frequently in other courses throughout your program of study.

# Course Requirements.

Following is a summary of the course requirements with percentage of final grade indicated. Assignme

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Lecture/reading review questions (3 sets) | 30% | *(10 % each)* |
| Exegetical worksheets (4 sets) | 40 |  |
| Short-form exegesis paper | 30 |  |
| Total | 100% |  |

# Required Reading

Items marked † will be provided on the course web page. Selected questions on the required reading will be included in the lecture/reading review questions.

†Carson, D. A., and G. K. Beale, eds. “Introduction.” In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. xxiii – xxviii. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007. Isbn 978-0801026935. If you use Logos software, you may wish to consider that format since it is a reference tool dealing with all uses of the OT in the NT.

†Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. Available at <http://www.etsjets.org/files/documents/Chicago_Statement.pdf>.

Greidanus, Sidney. *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999. Isbn 978-0802844491. Pp. 1-278.

†Ortlund, Dane C. “Christocentrism: An Asymmetrical Trinitarianism?” *Themelios* 34, no. 3 (November 2009): 309–21. <http://s3.amazonaws.com/tgc-documents/journal-issues/34.3/themelios-34-3.pdf>.

Pratt, Jr., Richard L. *He Gave Us Stories: The Bible Student’s Guide to Interpreting Old Testament Narratives*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1993. Isbn 978-0875523798. Pp. 1-128, 309-402.

Roberts, Vaughan. *God’s Big Picture: Tracing the Storyline of the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003. Isbn 978-0830853649. Pp. 13-156.

†Vanhoozer, Kevin J. “Introduction: What Is Theological Interpretation of the Bible?” In *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, edited by Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Craig G. Bartholomew, Daniel J. Treier, and N. T. Wright, 19–31. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005. Isbn 978-0801026942.

Recommended Reading

Greidanus 279-318.

Pratt 129-305.

Swain, Scott R. *Trinity, Revelation, and Reading: A Theological Introduction to the Bible and Its Interpretation*. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2011. Isbn 978-0-567-26540-1. 139pp.

Lecture/Reading Review Questions

Each weekend class meeting will be followed with a set of review questions for the lectures and the required reading (no questions on the recommended reading). For the average student who has taken good notes and done the reading, these review questions should take at most 2 hours. Each student must complete these questions on his/her own.

Exegetical Worksheets

Exegetical worksheets will be short assignments implementing the skills taught in the lectures. Most steps will require the use of research sources such as dictionaries, encyclopedia and commentaries. Students may work together to share resources, but must complete the work on their own. Discussion forums and file sharing options will be set up to facilitate this. The skills implemented in these worksheets will be applied in the short-form exegesis paper. For the average student, these worksheets will take an average of 2-3 hours each.

Short-form Exegesis Paper

Each student will write a short-form exegesis paper on an assigned passage applying the learnings from the class. I will give instructions during class time about the research and format required. The final paper will be 10-12 pages (double-spaced) in length.

Do not attempt to do the research while you are in the writing phase of paper. Do your research as a separate phase prior to starting your writing.

This paper is to be submitted by the deadline indicated on the schedule using Canvas and must be in Word format or Rich Text Format (no PDFs).

Class recordings

Students are welcome to record class lectures for themselves. I typically record lectures and upload them to the cloud. I will give semester-long access to these recordings for students 1) for whom English is a second language or 2) who have a diagnosed learning disability. Other students who are providentially hindered from attending particular lectures may request the recordings for those lectures by providing a legitimate excuse for his or her absence.

# Computers in Class.

Computers are powerful and helpful learning tools which can also be great hindrances. Computer use in class is allowed for class purpose such as taking notes, coordinated Bible software research and referencing topics which arise. Other uses are not allowed since they degrade your attention to class, break down your ability for sustained and reflective thought, present distractions to your fellow students and don’t reciprocate to the professor the same kind attentiveness he affords you. Many students find hand writing notes the most effective way for learning.

# Note Taking.

Whether typing or writing notes by hand, remember that merely capturing information is not the same thing as taking notes. While it can be good to take a lot of notes, be sure not to stop listening while you write/type. Knowledge, in contrast to information, involves understanding the relationships between pieces of information. Critical listening requires you to understand the prioritization and connections of things you read and hear. The printed handouts are only guides to follow the lecture and are not comprehensive notes.

Greek and Hebrew Fonts.

Lecture handouts may include Greek and Hebrew words. These will be in the SBL Hebrew and SBL Greek fonts which are used by Logos and other software and which may be downloaded for free at <http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/biblicalfonts.aspx>.

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: 2NT508 (Gospels)

Professor: Michael J. Glodo

Campus: Orlando

Date: Spring 2015

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes***In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.* *\*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.* | **Rubric*** Strong
* Moderate
* Minimal
* None
 | **Mini-Justification** |
| **Articulation**  **(oral & written)** | Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.  | Strong | Lecture/reading review question, exegetical worksheets and especially the exegesis paper require clear written communication |
| **Scripture** | Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.) | Strong | All lectures, reading and other assignments focus on the content and interpretation of scripture and are presented with a methodology which integrates various ways of reading scripture. |
| **Reformed Theology** | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.  | Moderate | A confessional view of scripture undergirds the overall approach as well as a confessional hermeneutic. A redemptive-historical hermeneutic is one of the major perspectives utilized throughout the course. |
| **Sanctification** | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification. | Moderate | Personal sanctification is one of the goal integrated into the hermeneutical method presented. Application (personal and corporate) is the end goal of the course. |
| **Desire for Worldview** | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. | Moderate | A redemptive-historical and ecclesiological reading of scripture is directed toward providing an all-encompassing worldview. |
| **Winsomely Reformed** | Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) | Moderate | The variety and unity of biblical theology will highlight the strengths and weakness of a variety of perspectives on scripture. |
| **Preach** | Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. | Strong | Biblical content provides corpus for preaching; application provided regularly to model application in preaching. |
| **Worship** | Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service. | None |  |
| **Shepherd** | Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide. | Moderate | The character and calling of a biblical shepherd is seen through the life and ministry of Jesus. The coming of the kingdom of God is presented as God’s mission in Christ and for the church. |
| **Church/World** | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Strong | Christ/culture paradigm arising out of the coming of the kingdom of God used to illustrate how to relate to broadening circles from church to world, including the mission of God as enacted in Jesus Christ. |

1. \* Recommended reading appears in [brackets]. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)