



Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics (BSHM5310)

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Biblical Studies Division

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I. SEMINARY MISSION

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment through the local church and its ministries.

II. SEMINARY CORE VALUES:

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. This course supports these five core values of the seminary. *The core value emphasis for the 2015-2016 academic year is Mission Focus.*

1. *Doctrinal Integrity:* We believe, teach, proclaim, and submit to the Bible as the Word of God. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically by equipping students to understand and gain ability to articulate biblical, theological, and historical truths.
2. *Spiritual Vitality:* We emphasize both personal spirituality as a worshipping seminary family gathering together for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in his Word. Spiritual Vitality is addressed by challenging students to grow in spiritual and moral integrity through biblical study and spiritual and ethical practices.
3. *Mission Focus:* We purpose to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandment through the local church and its ministries. This course addresses Mission Focus by helping students understand the biblical foundations for fulfilling the Great Commission and Great Commandment.
4. *Characteristic Excellence:* We aim for characteristic excellence to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Characteristic Excellence is addressed by preparing students to excel in their ability to understand and interpret Scripture, which is foundational to effective ministry.
5. *Servant Leadership:* We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us. Servant Leadership is modeled by classroom deportment and lifestyle patterns.

III. COURSE PURPOSE

This purpose for this course is to discover the principles and methods of sound interpretation of the biblical text and make application in written assignments.

IV. CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES:

The Seminary has seven curriculum competencies: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Discipleship Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership,

Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. This course addresses six competencies directly.

1. *Biblical Exposition*: by preparing students to understand, interpret, and communicate the Bible accurately.
2. *Christian and Theological Heritage*: by reminding students of the heritage of interpretation of the Old and New Testament
3. *Discipleship Making*: by modeling the principles of discipleship through classroom deportment.
4. *Interpersonal Skills*: through interaction among students in the class and in small group activities.
5. *Servant Leadership*: by modeling and reflecting the attitude of Christ in the life of a disciple.
6. *Spiritual and Character Formation*: through discussion and modeling of spiritual disciplines as a normal part of class discussion and activity.

V. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is a study of the principles of biblical interpretation, an introduction to the major resources available for biblical interpretation, and an exegetical study of selected passages from the various types of biblical literature. The major focus of the course is practical—the course goal is that the student would develop sound methods of exegesis and application of biblical texts.

VI. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Knowledge

Students who complete this course successfully should:

- Understand the significance of hermeneutics for biblical exposition
- Know the basic methods of biblical interpretation that have been practiced throughout history
- Know basic principles of grammatical-historical interpretation that lead interpreters to discover the meaning intended by the biblical author
- Know the major genres of scripture and the hermeneutical principles that should be applied to each genre
- Know the important tools that may be useful in the study of the biblical text
- Know principles that guide modern preachers and teachers in applying biblical truths to our contemporary context

Attitudes

Students who complete this course successfully should:

- Appreciate the complexities of the exegetical task
- Recognize the importance of sound exegesis
- Be more confident in interpreting biblical texts

Skills

Students who complete this course successfully should be able to:

- Contextualize New Testament texts within their ancient historical, cultural, social, and literary settings for the purpose of interpretation
- Prepare word studies that lead the interpreter to understand better the biblical author's usage of special vocabulary significant to the exegetical task

- Write a formal paper using required form and style guidelines that integrates learning activities of the course into the sound exegesis of an assigned passage
- Derive timeless truths from the biblical text and show how these should affect the beliefs and behavior of contemporary Christians

VII. TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

- Class sessions will consist of presentations overviewing units of study followed by general discussion. Readings and lectures are central to covering the knowledge base needed for the course. Small group discussions allow for student interaction with the material presented. Multimedia technology, including video, audio, graphics, and presentation media, are incorporated into classroom activity to enhance the learning process. Biblical texts are used as examples to illustrate hermeneutical principles discussed in class. The combination of reading, lectures, multimedia, class discussions, and small groups should help build appreciation for sound exegesis of the Bible.
- Class preparation will consist of textbook readings according to the syllabus schedule, book reports, and execution of written assignments. That is, the student's skills as an exegete are developed further through written assignments related to word studies, background studies, and an exegetical paper.
- Class units presented are: five units on hermeneutical models, two units on general rules with library practicum, integrity, and outline of Romans, and eighteen units on exegesis of the text of Romans.

VIII. REQUIRED TEXTS:

- The Bible: any modern committee translation, such as RSV, NRSV, NIV, NASB, etc.
- Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003 (= FS)
- Klein, William, Blomberg, Craig, and Robert Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Revised edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004 (= KBH)

IX. OTHER RESOURCES:

- *Dr. Stevens's DrKoine Website:*

<http://www.drkoine.com>

This website is for students in classes taught by Dr. Stevens. The site has a three-fold purpose: (1) to provide personal information to get to know the professor beyond the classroom in the areas of background, family, music and photography, (2) to provide professional information to get to know the professor within the academic guild in the areas of publications, presentations, and sermons, and (3) to provide educational information in support of his teaching career in the areas of classes, travel, and museums.

- To go straight to the Classes page for information about any of Dr. Stevens's classes, use the following link:

<http://drkoine.com/classes/index.html>

- To go straight to the Hermeneutics course page with a brief course description, introductory video, syllabus, textbooks used, and related course files, use this link: <http://drkoine.com/classes/hermeneutics/index.html>
- For NOBTS assistance with technology issues, call ITC (504-816-8180) or consult the following websites.
 - For online registration, financial account, online transcript. etc.:
selfserve.nobts.edu (email: selfserve@nobts.edu)
 - For Blackboard Learning Management system:
nobts.blackboard.com (email: blackboardhelpdesk@nobts.edu)
 - For general technical questions and support requests:
www.nobts.edu/itc/ (email: itcsupport@nobts.edu)

VII. REQUIREMENTS IN THE COURSE:

A. *Pre-Workshop Assignments (Due Beginning of Workshop):*

1. **Textbook Reading.** *Students are required to read both textbooks prior to the beginning of the workshop (FS and KBH). This requirement is crucial to the student's ability to absorb lecture material presented during the workshop.*
2. **Textbook Reading Report (15%).** *Students will compile a reading report to be submitted at the beginning of the workshop. The report will be single-spaced, 12 point Times or Times New Roman, with one-inch margins. Do not use plastic or cardboard covers or binders of any kind. Simply staple the report in the top left corner. The report will have the following three parts:*
 - 2.1 *Reading Percentage:* *The student will indicate in a statement the estimated percentage of required reading they completed prior to the beginning of the workshop. The student will provide a signature for this statement.*
 - 2.2 *History of Interpretation:* *Briefly summarize in a good paragraph the major ideas for each historical period of interpretation presented in chapter 2 of KBH and conclude with one important question raised by the reading for each period. These seven historical periods are:*
 - Jewish Interpretation
 - The Apostolic Period
 - The Patristic Period
 - The Middle Ages
 - The Reformation
 - The Post-Reformation Period
 - The Modern Period
 - 2.3 *Genre Guidelines:* *The student will summarize guidelines derived from both texts for interpretation of the major genres of biblical literature (see KBH, chs. 9-10; FS *passim*). The summary for each genre should be no more than one page single-spaced. These nine major genres are:*
 - Narrative
 - Law
 - Poetry
 - Prophecy
 - Wisdom
 - Gospel
 - Acts
 - Epistles
 - Revelation

B. Workshop Assignments (Due During the Workshop):

1. **Class Participation (10%).** The student will prepare for each class by reviewing the material in the two textbooks for the assigned topics for the day. The student may be asked to prepare some material in a class handout, or to participate in some activity outside of class. Class participation will be observed each session.
2. **Background Study (15%).** The student will compile a background study about the historical and cultural context for an assigned passage. Students will be given a guide for completing this assignment. The study will be single-spaced, 12 point Times or Times New Roman, with one-inch margins. Do not use plastic or cardboard covers or binders of any kind. Simply staple the study in the top left corner. An example of the background study format is given at the end of this syllabus. *The background study is due at the beginning of class Friday.* Late penalty is five points after the beginning of the class hour of the due date, then five points per each subsequent day. A New Testament background study guide in pdf format can be downloaded at:

<http://www.drkoine.com/Home/HermDocs.html>

C. Post-Workshop Assignments (Due After the Workshop):

1. **Word Study (25%).** The student will compile a word study for an assigned passage. Students will be given a guide for completing this assignment. The study will be single-spaced, 12 point Times or Times New Roman, with one-inch margins. Do not use plastic or cardboard covers or binders of any kind. Simply staple the study in the top left corner. An example of the word study format is given at the end of this syllabus. *The word study is due the first Friday after workshop.* Email the Word or pdf file *directly to the grader*—not the professor! Late penalty is five points per day. A New Testament word study guide in pdf format can be downloaded at:

<http://www.drkoine.com/Home/HermDocs.html>

2. **Exegetical Paper (35%).** Building on the prior background study and word study, the student will write an exegetical paper on an assigned topic, using tools discussed in the course. The paper should build upon, not simply repeat, earlier assignments. The study should be Turabian style, sixteen to eighteen double-spaced pages, plus a bibliography. Do not use plastic or cardboard covers or binders of any kind. Simply staple the paper in the top left corner. *The paper is due the second Friday after workshop.* Email the Word or pdf file *directly to the grader*—not the professor! Late penalty is five points per day. A paper illustrating Turabian formatting in pdf format (245 K) with bookmarks to discussions of Turabian form can be downloaded at:

<http://www.drkoine.com/Home/HermDocs.html>

Required Outline. The paper's required outline is given in detail below:

Introduction—Build interest; indicate the purpose for the paper, the general nature of the passage being studied, and the exegetical promise of the passage

Chapter 1: Text and Historical Background

Provide the translation for the assigned passage. Include results of your word study and background study, along with other background to the document under study.

- (1) *Text*—Provide your translation with verse numbers and paragraph divisions. If an English exegesis, provide the text of the English version you are using, and footnote the bibliographic data of this publication.
- (2) *Word Study*—Summarize in a concise and condensed form your previous word study of a theologically significant term in the passage.
- (3) *Historical Background*— Summarize in a concise and condensed form your previous background study of a key topic in the passage. Give historical background material pertinent to the specific document and author and the particular passage being studied.

Chapter 2: Exegetical Analysis

Provide the basic exegesis of this biblical passage. This exegesis should be focused on the principal literary context of the passage or topic at hand, as well as a literary analysis of the material.

- (1) *Literary Context*—Overview the literary context of your particular passage in terms of its placement in the immediate and larger outline of the document.
- (2) *Literary Analysis*—Indicate the internal structure of the logic and argument of the passage and an exegetical outline, with critical commentary of the verses.
- (3) *Conclusion/Central Theme*—Conclude by summarizing the main results of the research, what has been learned from the historical background and exegetical analysis. Finally, state the central theme of the passage in one concise sentence as supported by the exegetical analysis, and then expand on the idea. Indicate a central biblical truth supported by the passage to guide teaching and preaching.

Chapter 3: Practical Application

Anticipate an application of this passage in a ministry setting. This application is your choice, and could be a bible study, a sermon, a women's conference, a retreat, or some other ministry setting.

- (1) *Title*—Give a title for the application that either invokes a key idea or teases the audience with an interesting angle (not trite, though, such as silly puns or simplistic play on words).
- (2) *Truth*—State the central bible truth or Christian living key from this passage, derived directly from the theme indicated above.
- (3) *Objective*—Provide a clear, concise statement of a.) the desired lesson or sermon outcome and b.) an appropriate audience response.
- (4) *Outline*—Not the same as the exegetical outline, which follows grammar and logic flow, this outline is based upon the exegetical work but is developed *topically* or *logically* for teaching or preaching the passage.

- (5) *Development*—If a bible study, this would include your opening attention getter or illustration or activity, and a fleshing out of the outline with points and appropriate illustrations; if a sermon, this would be your opening attention getter or audience rapport device, and a fleshing out of your sermon outline with points and appropriate illustrations.
- (6) *Conclusion*—If a bible study, this would include your final illustration, activity, or teaching aid that reinforces the focal truth; if a sermon, this would be your specific conclusion and challenge for response (illustration, story, etc.).

D. Extra Credit. (up to +3 points on final average) Review one of the following books (2 to 3 pages), *due by the first Friday after workshop*.

- Corley, Lemke, and Lovejoy. *Biblical Hermeneutics*
- Crenshaw, James. *Trembling at the Threshold of a Biblical Text*
- Dyrness, William. *How Does America Hear the Gospel?*
- Felder, Cain Hope, ed. *Stony the Road We Trod*
- Kaiser, Jr., Walter C. and Moises Silva. *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*
- Silva, Moises. *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*
- Sire, James W. *The Universe Next Door*
- Stein, Robert H. *Playing by the Rules: A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible*
- Webb, William J. *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*
- Wright, Christopher J. H. *Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament*

E. Grading. Average of class participation (10%), reading report (15%), background study (15%), word study (25%), and paper (35%), plus extra credit.

VIII. ASSIGNMENTS:

Monday: Introduction, Models, Canon

Session 1—2:00–5:00 PM

- 1st Hr: Introduction and Components of a Model (FS: 17–31; KBH: 3–21)
 2nd Hr: Ancient Jewish Models (KBH: 23–31)
 3rd Hr: Ancient Christian Models (KBH: 31–45)

Session 2—6:30–9:00 PM

- 1st Hr: Reformation, Post-Reformation Models (KBH: 45–52)
 2nd Hr: Modern, Post-Modern Models (KBH: 52–102)
 3rd Hr: Canon, Trans., Tools (FS: 33–53; 265–75; KBH: 103–31; 505–43)

Tuesday: Interpreter, Prose and Poetry, OT Narrative

Session 1—8:30–11:30 AM

- 1st Hr: Museum of Bible and Archeology
 2nd Hr: Interpreter, Goal, and Application (KBH: 135–209; 477–504)
 3rd Hr: General Rules—Prose (KBH: 213–72)

Session 2—1:00–4:00 PM

- 1st Hr: General Rules—Poetry (KBH: 273–319)
 2nd Hr: Interpreting OT Narrative (FS: 89–106; KBH: 323–41)
 3rd Hr: Library Practicum

Wednesday: Law, Prophets, Gospels*Session 1—8:30–11:30 AM*1st Hr: Interpreting OT Narrative (FS: 89–106; KBH: 323–41)2nd Hr: Interpreting OT Law (FS: 163–80; KBH: 341–51)3rd Hr: Interpreting OT Law (FS: 163–80; KBH: 341–51)*Session 2—1:00–4:00 PM*1st Hr: Interpreting OT Prophecy (FS: 181–204; KBH: 359–87)2nd Hr: Interpreting OT Prophecy (FS: 181–204; KBH: 359–87)3rd Hr: Interpreting OT Psalms (FS: 205–23; KBH: 351–59)**Thursday: Wisdom, Gospels, Parables, Narrative, Epistles***Session 1—8:30–11:30 AM*1st Hr: Interpreting OT Wisdom (FS: 225–48; KBH: 387–98)2nd Hr: Interpreting NT Gospels 1: (FS: 127–48)3rd Hr: Interpreting NT Gospels 2: (KBH: 399–418)*Session 2—1:00–4:00 PM*1st Hr: Interpreting NT Parables (FS: 149–62)2nd Hr: Interpreting NT Narrative: Acts (FS: 107–125; KBH: 418–26)3rd Hr: Interpreting NT Epistles 1 (FS: 55–87)**Friday: Epistles, Apocalyptic***Session 1—8:30–11:30 AM—Background Study due*1st Hr: Interpreting NT Epistles 2 (KBH: 426–40)2nd Hr: Interpreting NT Apocalyptic 1 (FS: 249–64)3rd Hr: Interpreting NT Apocalyptic 2 (KBH: 440–49)**Post-Workshop Due Dates:**

- (1) Extra Credit: First Friday post workshop
- (2) Word Study: First Friday post workshop
- (3) Exegesis Paper: Second Friday post workshop

XI. Bibliography:Achtemeier, Paul. *An Introduction to the New Hermeneutic*. Westminster, 1969.Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. Basic Books, 2011._____. *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. Basic Books, 2011.Barton, John. *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*. Cambridge University Press, 1998.Beale, G. K. *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Text? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994Beale, G. K. and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. G.R.: Baker, 2007.Berding, Kenneth, et al. *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*.Berkhof, Louis. *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.Black, David, and David S. Dockery. *Interpreting the New Testament*. Nashville: B&H, 2001._____. *New Testament Criticism and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.

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