

Freedom Life School of Ministry Course Syllabus

Hermeneutics – How to Read and Understand the Bible

Pastor Bryanna Vega

bryanna.vega@freedomlifechurch.com

cell#: 757-303-2507

Course dates: Thursday, September 10th to October 29, 2020

Weekly Zoom Meetings Thursdays 6:30-8PM

Course Purpose:

Understanding how to read the Bible is foundational for all who profess a saving faith in Jesus. God speaks to us through His Word therefore we must approach this collection of ancient books with reverence and a deep sense of humility. We depend on the Holy Spirit to reveal God's truth to us so we can apply it to our lives. We will learn how to investigate the Bible's historical-cultural context, the literary context, literary styles, how to determine theological principles, and to be aware of what we bring to the text. This course presents a simple, systematic approach to read the Word of God with greater depth of understanding and to be able to teach others to do the same.

Required Texts: (*to be acquired by students prior to the first class)

Grasping God's Word: a Hands-on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible. By J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays. Third Edition. Zondervan. 2012. (**Note: we will NOT be using the workbook) - You may purchase the 3rd edition online for \$15-\$25 dollars. I also have copies available to loan ; (text or email me)

Online Resources:

blueletterbible.org

bibleproject.com

Books and videos by Kenneth Bailey, ThD

Course Objectives (How will we get there?):

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to articulate and apply the five steps of the Interpretive Journey to a passage of biblical text
2. Students will demonstrate the proper use of Strong's definition, Vine's Expository Dictionary, and a Greek and Hebrew Lexicon for word studies.
3. Though course assignments, quizzes, and the final paper, students will apply the principles of biblical interpretation and present their work to the instructor and other students.

Course Requirements and Grading:

1. Reading Assignments (20%) – Students are to complete the assigned reading material for the course. The reading is to be done by the module due date in which the material is presented, prior to the Zoom class meeting for the module so that the student is prepared for class discussions.
2. Lectures/Video Clips (20%) – Students are to view the associated lectures and video clips by the module due date in which the material is presented. This will be prior to the Zoom class meeting for the module. Transcripts of each video lecture are also provided for each module to

aid the student's note-taking. Students are welcome to read transcripts in lieu of viewing the lectures if they prefer.

3. Written Assignments/Quizzes (20%) – Each module includes questions for the student to answer based on the content presented in the readings, lectures and video clips. Students are to complete the questions prior to the Zoom class meeting for the module so that the student is prepared for class discussions.
 - a. Details on the assignments and questions for each module are contained in your online dashboard.
 - b. Students will be able to provide responses to assignments and questions via uploading them through the dashboard within the applicable module.
4. Zoom Meeting Participation (20%) – There will be a Zoom class meeting for each of the 8 weeks of the course. Students are to attend, and participate in, each meeting unless previously excused by the course instructor. Students are expected to join each meeting prepared for class discussions by having viewed assigned lectures/video clips and completed readings & written assignments for the applicable module.
 - a. Excused absences from Zoom class meetings are to be limited to emergency situations no more than two per student, if at all possible.
 - b. To receive an excused absence the student must submit a request to the course instructor via email at least 72 hours prior to the meeting (the preceding Saturday 6:30PM Eastern). If an emergency occurs (i.e., illness, family or ministry situation/crisis) less than 72 hours before class an explanatory email or text may be submitted to the course instructor.
5. Final Paper (20%) – The final paper will consist of 1-2 pages on the exegesis of a passage of Scripture. Students will be asked to choose one of four different passages in the Old and New Testament. All steps of the Interpretive Journey must be covered in detail. Students must cite at least three reliable, secondary sources such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries, Strong's concordance, or Bible history resources (in print or online) and include these in a reference list at the end of your paper in APA or MLA format.
6. Weighting of Course Requirements for Grading: This is a Pass/Fail course. To receive a passing grade the student must accomplish an accumulative total of at least 80% of the course requirements which are weighted as shown below:
 - Reading Assignments 20%
 - Lectures/Video Clips 20%
 - Written Assignments/Quizzes 20%
 - Zoom Meeting Participation 20%
 - Final Paper 20%

Course Modules:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Chapters Covered</u>	<u>Topics Covered</u>
1	Course Overview; Part 1: Basic tools	Bible translations, Interpretive Journey, Reading with attention to detail
2	Part 2: Contexts	Historical-cultural context; What we bring to the text

3	Part 2 (cont'd):	Literary context; Word studies
4	Part 3: Meaning/Application	Levels of meaning, Role of the Holy Spirit; Application
5	Part 4: New Testament	Letter & Gospels
6	Part 4: NT (cont'd)	Acts & Revelation
7	Part 5: Old Testament	Narrative & Law
8	Part 5: OT (cont'd)	Poetry, Prophets, Wisdom

Reading and Video Schedule:

***Please watch class lecture videos then complete reading assignments in your textbook prior to Zoom class on Thursdays**

Week

- 1 Watch Videos #1a Introduction & Overview AND Video #1b: Bible Translations, Interpretive Journey & How to Read in Detail;
Textbook: Skim Chapter 1 -Bible Translations; Study Chapter 2- The Interpretive Journey; Skim Chapters 3,4 &5 - How to read sentences, paragraphs, and discourses;
- 2 Watch Video #2- Historical-Cultural Context & What we bring to the text;
How to Read the Bible: What is the Bible? @ <https://youtu.be/ak06MSETeo4>
How to Read the Bible: Biblical Story @ https://youtu.be/7_CGP-12AE0
Textbook: Study Chapters 6 & 7-
- 3 Watch: Video #3 Literary Context & Word Studies;
How to Read the Bible: Literary Styles @ <https://youtu.be/oUXJ8Owes8E>
How to Read the Bible: Design Patterns @ <https://youtu.be/rkqsQpck8YU>
Textbook: Study Chapters 8 & 9
- 4 Watch: Video #4: Meaning and Application;
How to Read the Bible: Ancient Jewish Meditation Lit. @ <https://youtu.be/VhmIJBUIoLk>
Textbook: Read Chapter 10: Who Controls Meaning; Skim Chapter 11;
Read Chapter 12: Role of the Holy Spirit; Skim Chapter 13;
- 5 Watch: Video #5: Interpretive Journey - New Testament Letters & Gospels
How to Read the Bible: The Gospels @ https://youtu.be/xrzq_X1NNaA
How to Read the Bible: The Parables of Jesus @ https://youtu.be/XX-aAg4_U2Q
NT Letters: Historical Context @ <https://youtu.be/GZuceW7eh5M>
NT Letters: Literary Context @ <https://youtu.be/ZPZ2uABVMKA>
Textbook: Read Chapters 14 & 15

- 6 Watch: Video #6: Interpretive Journey - New Testament: Acts & Revelation
Acts Part 1 & 2 @ <https://bibleproject.com/explore/acts/>
(*Note: there is a longer series of videos on Luke/Acts- optional)
How to Read the Bible: Apocalypse @ <https://youtu.be/UNDX4tUdj1Y>
Textbook: Read Chapters 16 & 17,

- 7 Watch: Video #7: Interpretive Journey - Old Testament Narrative & Law
How to Read the Bible: Plot @ https://youtu.be/dLFCE8z_hw
How to Read the Bible: Character @ <https://youtu.be/0EQDGax19xk>
How to Read the Bible: Setting @ <https://youtu.be/7FuT8WtoAK0>
How to Read the Bible: The Law @ <https://youtu.be/Sew1kBlE-W0>
Part 5: Interpretive Journey- Old Testament; Read Chapters 18 & 19, Narrative and Law

- 8 Watch: Video #8: Interpretive Journey- OT Poetry, Prophets, Wisdom;
How to Read the Bible: Poetry @ <https://youtu.be/q9yp1ZXbsEg>
How to Read the Bible: Metaphor in Biblical Poetry @ <https://youtu.be/L9W5afjndtU>
How to Read the Bible: Psalms @ https://youtu.be/dpny22k_7uk
How to Read the Bible: Prophets @ https://youtu.be/edcqUu_BtNO
How to Read the Bible: Books of Solomon @ <https://youtu.be/WJgt1vRkPbl>
Textbook: (Optional) Skim through chapters 20-22,

Course Policies:

Development and Strengthening of Biblical Interpretation Competency:

- So that the student is aware of continuing evaluation and assessment, our faculty is using criteria for student competency that we are seeking in the area of biblical interpretation, as reflected in the paragraph below. Toward that end, we have specified competencies that the student will develop and demonstrate as a result of each course in the Theology core.
- **Biblical interpretation:** The student understands the Bible in its historical, literary, and theological contexts in order to apply and communicate the Scriptures.
 - Level 1 – The student is able to carry out inductive Bible study by means of observation, interpretation, application, and correlation.
 - Level 2 – The student is able to practice elements of biblical study that reflect sound hermeneutics.
 - Level 3 – The student is able to interpret the Bible and do biblical theology using a method that engages in the analysis and synthesis of Bible books and that reflects a broad knowledge of the content of the entire Bible, together with historical and theological influences.
 - Level 4 – The student is able to conduct exegetical and biblical theological research in from multiple literary genres, and is able to communicate its significance leading to spiritual transformation.

The Hermeneutics – How to Read the Bible course contributes to competency in Levels 1 through 3, depending on the baseline background level of biblical literacy each student brings to the course and provides a means and method for all students to progress to the next level of exegetical proficiency necessary for spiritual transformation.

The Presence of the Instructor:

You can expect your instructor to participate substantially in this course. In addition to producing the videotaped lectures for each module and reviewing all assignments, the instructor will participate in each Zoom class meeting for all eight modules of the course. Should students have questions about the course materials and/or assignments they may address them to the instructor via email.

Late Assignments:

No late assignments will be accepted unless due to an extreme emergency.

APPENDIX A
Supplementary Bibliography

- Adler, Mortimer J., and Charles van Doren. *How to Read a Book*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.
- Brown, Jeannine. *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.
- Dockery, David S. *Biblical Interpretation: Then and Now*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992.
- Dorani, Daniel M. *Putting the Truth to Work: The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2001.
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. Third Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.
- Goldingay, John. *Models for Interpretation of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006.
- Greidanus, Sidney. *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Hendricks, Howard G., and William D. Hendricks. *Living by the Book*. Chicago: Moody, 1991.
- Johnson, Elliot E. *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.
- Kaiser, Walter C., and Moisés Silva. *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Klein, William W., Craig Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Revised Edition. Dallas: Word, 2004.
- Köstenberger, Andreas J., and Richard D. Patterson. *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of history, Literature, and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011.
- Kuhatschek, Jack. *Applying the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.
- Lundin, Roger, Clarence Walhout, and Anthony C. Thiselton. *The Promise of Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans and Paternoster, 1999.
- Mickelsen, A. Berkeley, and Alvera M. Mickelsen. *Understanding Scripture*. Revised Edition. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1992.
- Morgan, Robert, and John Barton. *Biblical Interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1991.
- Porter, Stanley E., and Jason C. Robinson. *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpretive Theory*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970.
- Strauss, Mark L. *How to Read the Bible in Changing Times: Understanding and Applying God's Word Today*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.
- Tate, W. Randolph. *Biblical Interpretation*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1991.
- Terry, Milton. *Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985.
- Thiselton, Anthony C. *Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Traina, Robert A. *Methodical Bible Study*. Wilmore, Kentucky: Robert Traina, 1952.
- Virkler, Henry A., and Karelyne Ayayo. *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.
- Wald, Oletta. *The Joy of Discovery in Bible Study*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975.