

ACTS

Associated Canadian Theological Schools
BIE 505OL: INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

Dr. Brian M. Rapske
Fall, 2009
3 Credit Hours
Prerequisite: BIE 505

brian.rapske@twu.ca
604-888-7592 (#3868)
Format: On Line

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on the development of a systematic approach to the interpretation of Scripture. While various critical-interpretative systems and strategies will be considered, special attention will be given to the historical-grammatical method. The predominant literary genres of the Bible will be examined and relevant principles of interpretation highlighted. Emphasis will be 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. BIE 500 or its equivalent is a prerequisite to taking this course.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course assumes your complete participation in all communications, forums, readings, and assignments. If you carry through faithfully, you should be helped to:

- A. understand the historical developments that have shaped biblical interpretation;
- B. become familiar with the theological presuppositions and key issues involved in biblical interpretation;
- C. constructively explore, review, and evaluate the hermeneutical presuppositions and distinctives of various believers' church traditions;
- D. become familiar with the various literary genres of the Bible and the hermeneutical procedures that are relevant for each genre;
- E. establish the context and determine the textual meaning of biblical passages through the use of sound methodology in the practice of biblical interpretation;
- F. discover and be able to use the available tools and resources for biblical interpretation; and

- G. discern principles in formulating applications that are consistent with the original intention of biblical passages.

III. TEXTBOOKS

You will be expected to have to hand a reliable English translation of the Bible (not a paraphrase) such as *NIV*, *NRSV*, *NASV*, or *TEV*. Beyond this, the required textbooks for the course are:

W.W. Klein, C.L. Blomberg, and R.L. Hubbard, Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 1993; rev. and updated, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004. [543 pages; hereafter KBH]

J. Camery-Hoggatt. *Reading the Good Book Well: A Guide to Biblical Interpretation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007. [233 pages]

R.N. Soulen and R.K. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 3rd ed.; Louisville/London/Leiden: Westminster John Knox, 2001. [210 pages]

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Work Load and Grading: Typically, approximately 40 hours is required to complete the work necessary to earn 1 semester hour of credit—hence, 120 hours for a 3 credit course. Assignments must be completed and submitted on or before the deadlines noted in the syllabus in order to receive credit without penalty for this course. Should you experience a *significant* health/family crisis during the course, be sure to notify both the Registrar and the professor immediately. The professor marks to the following standard:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A+	97-100
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	85-89
B	80-84
B-	75-79
C+	70-74
C	65-69
C-	60-64
F	Below 59

Course Delivery Format: The mediated learning format of this course assumes that *all* enrolled students possess a computer that has the capability to access and otherwise manipulate large Microsoft Word files. All written assignments should be in *Microsoft Word 97* or higher (*Word 2000* is preferred). The professor cannot be responsible for delays and/or problems associated with hard or software incompatibilities or limited computer memory capacity. If you do not have an adequate computer and software or reliable access to same for the duration of this course, then you should not take the course

in its present delivery format. You are most strongly advised to consult with the university's *Global Learning Connection* center for further clarification in this regard.

Assignments and Due Dates: The course is set to finish on **December 17/09**. All assignments must have been submitted electronically by that date. Submit all written assignments by placing them into the appropriate assignment “dropbox” at the “workspace” link under the tab “course.” Toggle your personal assignment submissions for professor’s view only. As a precaution against the potential of a catastrophic loss of your work, it is most strongly advised that you *maintain current copies of all e-documents and/or keep hardcopies of all submitted assignments.*

A. Readings & Discussion Forums (40%)

1. Textbook and Research Reading (10%)

By the end of the course you should have read **both** required textbooks—KBH and Camery-Hoggatt—in their entirety. Together, they amount to 776 pages of reading. An additional 200 pages must be read for this course, reflecting the objectives of having consulted the Soulen and Soulen text and read commentary and other resources with a view to writing the expositional paper. ***Indicate by an attached note to your final examination, what percentage of the assigned reading you have done.*** Calculate thus: (Total pages read of KBH + Total pages read of Camery-Hoggatt + 200 additional pages, including Soulen and Soulen and to complete assignment) ÷ 976 = %. Your reading report, attached to the final examination sheet, will simply require you to indicate, “*I have completed ____% of the assigned reading.*”

At the beginning of each module, the appropriate sections of the required textbook and the notes for each unit of that module will be posted. Read the textbook and loaded lecture notes for the unit for that week. *Use the “Course Outline and Readings” below as your guideline.* You should limit yourself to working through one unit of work per week. Do not “read ahead” unless you have already completed the prior week’s work.

Please note that the course lectures and notes, PowerPoints, and forum materials loaded to the course website are the property of the professor and are available for your personal use only in the course. They are not to be reproduced or disseminated for other use.

2. Discussion Forums (30%)

You are **required** to engage in a public forum once per week, beginning on the Monday after the first module posting to answer questions that explore the content of the assigned readings and course notes and the issues raised. You will be assigned to one of several small forum discussion groups for the duration of the course. Forum questions will be found for each unit of a module when it is posted. *Keep the forum question in mind as you are doing the assigned reading.* Your contributions to the forum discussion group should be brief and very much

to the point. The goal of each forum is to engage the issues/questions in a way that fosters interaction with and mutual enrichment of colleagues who are also taking this course. You should aim to enter the forum discussion beginning on the Monday of each unit week, starting with **Forum 1** on **September 14th**. The professor will closely monitor these discussions beginning on Tuesday of each unit week. He will also, from time to time, give (re)direction to the discussion, and/or add his own observations/insights. *You must participate in the forums weekly, giving evidence that you have kept up with the readings and notes in your dialogue. Your grade for this part of the course will be based upon the fact, quality and number of your contributions.* Avoid long, “windy” monologues without connection to fellow student contributions.

B. Written & Presented Work (60%)

The grades for written work will be determined on the basis of strict compliance with the syllabus instructions, how logically your work is organized and how convincingly presented. Write with care to proper format, style and clarity of expression (see “Important Academic Notes from ACTS” attachment to this syllabus).

It is strongly advised that you keep copies of all submitted work. Submissions not made directly to the professor must be dated and signed by an ACTS office staff person on or before the due date. Undated/unsigned, indirect submissions will be considered late and penalized accordingly. A second option is to submit your work electronically. The preferred procedure in this instance is to upload your work into the appropriate file folder at the TWU *myCourses* website (<https://courses.mytwu.ca/>). Please remember that if you post to *myCourses* you should “toggle” your work for security. Only in the case of an emergency (e.g., if the *myCourses* website is down) should you post your work as an email attachment directly to the professor. *In any event, ensure that all electronically submitted work has been created in a .doc or .dox format and carries on its title page your preferred email address for assignment returns.*

1. Book Review & Critique (15%)

Review and critique G. Camery-Hoggatt’s, *Reading the Good Book Well*. The *review* portion, in which you will summarize the content and argument(s) of the book, should constitute no more than 2/3 of the project. The *critique* portion in which you assess, evaluate and appreciate the text should comprise 1/3 of the project. For samples and general format of a book review and critique visit the “Review of Biblical Literature” website.¹ The book review and critique should be approximately six typewritten and double spaced pages total. ***Due: Oct 08 /09***

¹ Review of Biblical Literature: <http://www.bookreviews.org/>

2. Expository Paper (30%)

Content. Provide an expository paper that thoroughly analyzes one passage from the OT or NT in accordance with the historical-grammatical method. Select **ONLY ONE** of the following for your paper:

OT: Deuteronomy 20; Numbers 17; Psalm 30; Ecclesiastes 4:1-12; Haggai 2:1-9.

NT: Mark 6:30-44; Acts 4:32-5:11; Colossians 1:1-14; Revelation 5.

Format. Your paper should have an outline/table of contents (the headings of which appear in the paper's body as well) and a bibliography of works consulted and cited. As a general rule of thumb, the introduction of your paper should be no longer than about 20% of the paper's length and cover matters *strictly relevant* to introduce your passage (here you identify your passage and its importance, "fix" the textual boundaries and discuss any text critical issues, lay out the passage structure, and give historical context). The main portion of the paper should constitute approximately 70% of the paper's length and exegete the *entire* passage, phrase by phrase, in an orderly and complete fashion (utilizing the earlier-noted structure as the framework). The conclusion should be no longer than about 10% of the paper's length (here you will summarize the message content of the text and indicate its contemporary application).

Length and Resources. The paper is to be well researched and properly footnoted, containing a body of not more than 3000 words in length (approx. 12 typewritten and double-spaced pages). *Beyond the assigned reading, consult at least five (5) current reference works (concordances, Bible dictionaries, atlas, theological dictionaries etc.), at least five (5) intermediate to advanced commentaries, and at least five (5) appropriate journal/periodical articles and relevant specialist studies.*²

Due: Dec 10/09

C. Final Examination (15%)

The final examination will be of the "take home" variety. It will be loaded to the course website with instructions on how it should be completed. **Due: Dec 17/09**

V. SCHEDULE

The professor has set readings and other assignments with the student's successful completion of the course in view. Earlier completion is the ideal.

² Search protocol to access TWU online periodicals: 1) www.twu.ca/library/ 2) choose "Article Indexes & Databases" 3) choose "Religious Studies" 4) choose "ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials" 5) Enter your username and password 6) Click "Scriptures" or "Keyword" → etc. [NOTE: Search protocols change from time to time. If you do not have success in your search, please consult a TWU Librarian for assistance.]

Module & Unit Material Covered & Readings Assignment Due

MODULE 1: September 10 – October 8

- Unit 1. Foundational Issues 1 - September 10 – September 17*
A. The Need for Hermeneutics
B. Authority, Hermeneutics and Method
Reading — KBH: xxi-xxvii, 3-21 **(Forum 1)**
- Unit 2. Foundational Issues 2 – September 17 – September 24*
A. Interpreter and Spirit
B. The Goal of Interpretation
Reading – KBH: 135-209, 503-543 **(Forum 2)**
- Unit 3. Text and Tradition 1 – September 24 – October 01*
Text, Canon and Translation
Reading – KBH: 103-131 **(Forum 3)**
- Unit 4. Text and Tradition 2 – October 01 – October 8*
History of Interpretation
Reading – KBH: 23-62 **(Forum 4)**
- Review and Critique Due – October 8***

MODULE 2: October 8 – November 5

- Unit 5. Historical-Grammatical Method 1 (October 8 – October 15)*
A. Introduction to Historical-Grammatical Method
B. PowerPoint – Corley’s “Cubing the Text”
C. Seven Concise Steps in Exegesis **(Forum 5)**
- Unit 6. Historical-Grammatical Method 2 (October 15 – October 22)*
Cube Face 1. Setting – The Matter of Historical Context
Reading – KBH: 78-87, 229-240 **(Forum 6)**
- Unit 7. Historical-Grammatical Method 3 (October 22 – October 29)*
Cube Face 2. Style i – OT Literary Types & Genres – Prose
Reading – KBH: 323-398 **(Forum 7)**
- Unit 8. Historical-Grammatical Method 4 (October 29 – November 5)*
Cube Face 2. Style ii – OT Literary Types & Genres – Poetry
Reading – KBH: 273-319 **(Forum 8)**

MODULE 3: November 5 – December 3

Unit 9. Historical-Grammatical Method 5 (November 5 – November 12)
Cube Face 2. Style iii – New Testament Literary Types & Genres
Reading – KBH: 399-448 (Forum 9)

Unit 10. Historical-Grammatical Method 6 (November 12 – November 19)
Cube Faces 3. & 4. Syntax and Semantics
Reading – KBH: 240-272 (Forum 10)

Please note that Dr. Rapske will be in New Orleans for ETS/SBL Conference meetings over the dates November 18-24.

Unit 11. Historical-Grammatical Method 7 (November 19 – November 26)
Cube Faces 5. & 6. Summation and Significance
Reading – KBH: 213-229, 451-503 (Forum 11)

Unit 12. Literary & Ideological Criticism (November 26 – December 3)
Literary and Social-Scientific Criticism
Gender, Socio-Economic, Global & Denominational Perspectives
Reading – KBH: 63-78, 87-101 (Forum 12)

Hermeneutics Paper Due – Dec 10/09

Final Exam & Reading Report Due – Dec 17/09

Supplement: Important Academic Notes from ACTS

Web Support – Student Portal <https://students.twu.ca>

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. Your student email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), MAX (850 AM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:30 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University's switchboard as well as on the website <http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>. The first announcement regarding a closure will cover the period up to 1:00 p.m. only. If classes are to be cancelled beyond 1:00 p.m., this decision will be announced by the same means before 11:00 a.m. that day. Students and faculty should assume that all night classes will continue to operate. If the emergency continues into the evening, students and faculty may check for a closure notice on the University's switchboard and website after 3:00 p.m. that day.

Paper Formatting

Students need to adhere to Turabian format except in counseling courses, for which APA format is used. Students are encouraged strongly to use RefWorks (available through the library home page www.twu.ca/library) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. They will need to be aware of the need to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples: <http://faculty.ucc.edu/egh-damerow/turabian.htm> or www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Note that in RefWorks the available formatting styles are those of Turabian (Notes), 6th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 5th edition. Counseling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information found at the following website. <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>. CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the “student” side. A hard copy is given to incoming students in the fall. **Please check with your professor to see which one he/she recommends you use!!**

Research Ethics

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/academics/research/ethics/> Those needing additional clarification may contact Dr. Bruce Guenther. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire TWU community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at TWU. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. TWU has a strict policy on plagiarism (see academic calendar 2008-09, pp. 37-38). Further details on this subject are contained in the ACTS Student Handbook in section 4.12. The handbook is available online on the ACTS webpage (www.acts.twu.ca) at the following link: www.acts.twu.ca/Handbook.html.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or used as flash (self running) tutorials of varying lengths from:

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf (8 minute flash tutorial)

Equity of Access

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.