

# *Biblical Interpretation*

**Course Facilitator: Keith E. Johnson, Ph.D.**

*Institute of Biblical Studies*

**June 21 – July 2, 2010**

**8:30-11:00 am**

## **Course Description**

Poetry. Letters. Stories. Laws. Prophecy. Faithfully interpreting God's Word requires understanding the various literary forms through which God has revealed himself, applying sound hermeneutical principles, and connecting every passage to God's redemptive message throughout the Scriptures that centers on Jesus Christ. Building on the foundation of Bible Study Methods, this course will introduce you to an interpretive process that will enable you to understand God's Word and encounter the living God more profoundly. You will have the opportunity to learn this process working in small groups with the aid of a mentor who will guide you to handle the treasure of God's Word faithfully and meaningfully.

Prerequisite: *Bible Study Methods*

## **Course Objectives**

1. That you would richly experience the grace and truth of the gospel this summer through your engagement with the Scriptures.
2. That you would learn to see every passage in light of the larger, redemptive story of the Scriptures that centers on Christ.
3. That you would gain greater understanding of and appreciation for the diverse literary forms through which God has revealed Himself in Scripture (particularly narrative, gospel, parables, poetry and prophets).
4. That you would develop greater confidence in your ability to hear from God through his Word.
5. That you would grow as a reader of Scripture by learning an interpretative process that can be applied to any passage.
6. That you would learn how to hear the music of the gospel by discerning the fallen condition and redemption solution in each passage.
7. That you would learn how to apply the resources of the gospel found in the Scriptures to the lives of broken people starting with yourself.
8. That you would apply sound hermeneutical principles to your reading, study and teaching of Scripture as a result of this class.

## **Required Texts**

*ESV Study Bible*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2008. (ISBN: 978-1-4335-0241-5)

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*, 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

Piper, John. *Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2001.

Roberts, Vaughan. *God's Big Picture: Tracing the story-line of the Bible*. Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

## Recommended Texts

- Bartholomew Craig G. and Michael W. Goheen. *The Drama Of Scripture: Finding Our Place In The Biblical Story*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004.
- Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.
- Doriani, Daniel M. *Getting the Message: A Plan for Interpreting and Applying the Bible*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub., 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Putting the Truth to Work: The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub., 2001.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Biblical-Theological Foundations and Principles*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.
- Pratt, Richard L. *He Gave Us Stories: The Bible Student's Guide to Interpreting Old Testament Narratives*. Phillipsburg: P & R Pub., 1993.
- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Revised and Expanded. Downers Grove: IVP, 2006.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., rev. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970.
- Russell, Walt. *Playing with Fire: How the Bible Ignites Change in Your Soul*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2000.
- Virkler, Henry A., and Karelynn Gerber Ayayo. *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

## Course Requirements:

1. **Reading:** You are expected to read carefully the assigned texts by the start of class on the day that they are due. The last day of class you will turn in a reading report indicating your completion of the assigned readings.
2. **Participation:** You will be expected to come to the daily workshops ready to discuss the course material. (Be sure to bring *God's Big Picture* to class each day along with other course materials.)
3. **Exegetical Worksheets:** The majority of work in this class will involve working directly in the biblical text. You will complete a series worksheets that will give you the opportunity to practice the specific skills on which we focus that day. Your work will be incorporated in your final paper.
  - a. Worksheet #1: Passage Selection and Observation (graded)
  - b. Worksheet #2: Context Analysis (graded)
  - c. Worksheet #3: Textual Outline and ABI (graded)
  - d. Worksheet #4: Draft of Explanation of ABI (feedback only)
  - e. Worksheet #5: Theological Analysis (graded)
4. **Exegetical Project:** The exegetical project will give you the opportunity to apply all the skills you have learned to a particular passage of Scripture. You will report the results of your study in an exegetical paper. The paper should be 7-9 pages in length.

## Course Assignments

Topic/Date	Reading Due	Worksheets and Project
<b>The Drama of Scripture</b> June 21		Select passage for exegetical project and make observations (Worksheet #1, graded, due 6/22)
<b>An Interpretive Model</b> June 22	Fee & Stuart, ch. 1 Roberts, pp.13-25 & ch. 1 <i>ESVSB</i> , 2567-2574 Piper, c1	<i>Turn in Worksheet #1</i> Complete Context Analysis (Worksheet #2, graded, due 6/23) Read “An Introduction to Commentaries” in the student notes. Read context discussion in commentaries
<b>Interpreting OT Narratives</b> June 23	Roberts, ch. 2 Piper, ch. 2	<i>Turn in Worksheet #2</i> Finish reading commentaries
<b>Interpreting the Gospels</b> June 24	Fee & Stuart, ch. 5 Roberts, ch. 3 Piper, ch. 3	Develop textual outline and Author’s Big Idea on your passage (Worksheet #3, graded, due 6/25)
<b>Interpreting Parables</b> June 25	Fee & Stuart, ch. 7 Roberts, pp. ch. 4 <i>ESVSB</i> , 1811-1813 Piper, ch. 4	<i>Turn in Worksheet #3</i> Write rough draft of explanation portion on your passage (Worksheet #4, for feedback only, due 6/28)
<b>Theological Analysis</b> June 28	Fee & Stuart, ch. 8 Roberts, ch. 5 Piper, ch. 5	<i>Turn in rough draft of explanation section (worksheet #4)</i> Begin the Theological Analysis section of your passage (Worksheet #5, graded, due 6/30)
<b>Christ-Centered Application</b> June 29	Roberts, ch. 6 Piper, ch. 6 <i>ESVSB</i> , 23-26 Dorani, “Reflecting on the Redemptive Thrust of Scripture” (online)	Complete Theological Analysis
<b>Interpreting Poetry</b> June 30	Fee & Stuart, ch. 11 Roberts, ch. 7 Piper, ch. 7 Johnson, “Hearing the Music of the Gospel”	<i>Turn in Worksheet #5</i>
<b>Interpreting the Prophets</b> July 1	Fee & Stuart, ch. 10 Roberts, ch. 8 Piper, ch. 8	Work on Final Paper
<b>NO CLASS</b> July 2	Turn in reading report	Exegetical paper due at 5:00p.m.

## EXEGETICAL PROJECT

### OVERVIEW

Your exegetical project is a 7-9 page essay that should be double-spaced and typed using a 12-point font and 1" margins. Your paper should be written in paragraph form and should contain the following clearly marked sections designated in bold below.

#### **I. SURVEY THE BIG PICTURE: CONTEXT ANALYSIS (1 ½ to 2 pages)**

1. **Historical context** (In no more than a couple sentences, briefly discuss the author, audience and setting [i.e., When and where did the events in your passage take place?] In greater detail, identify and describe "historical" or "cultural" background necessary to understand your passage.)
2. **Literary context** (What occurs immediately before and after your section? How does your passage relate to what comes immediately before and after? Is your passage part of a larger unit in the book? If so, how does it relate to that unit? How does this part fit into the whole book? Every book of the Bible contains literary themes. Which of these themes show up in your passage?)
3. **Redemptive context** (In what chapter of redemptive history is this story found? What do I need to know about this particular chapter in God's story to understand this passage properly? What major redemptive themes emerge in this passage and its broader context?)

#### **II. EXPLORE THE PASSAGE: CONTENT ANALYSIS (3-4 pages)** [*Sections II.1 and II.2 will be turned in Friday, June 25; a draft of section II.3 will be turned in Monday, June 28*]

1. **Textual Outline** (Textual outline [i.e., a summary of the dramatic pattern in the case of narratives] with specific verses and complete sentences)
2. **Statement of the Author's Big Idea (ABI)** (This should be one complete sentence.)
3. **Explanation of Author's Big Idea** (In paragraph form, unpack the author's big idea. Your discussion should be structured around your textual outline. Be sure to include headers from your textual outline and verse references for each section. You should explain what the author is teaching and how it contributes to the big idea. You should include appropriate interpretive insights gleaned from your personal study of the passage and engagement with the commentaries. This could include important observations, discussion of the meaning of key terms, explanation of certain practices, insights from your contextual analysis, etc. Remember that you will not be able to share everything you have learned. Select the most important insights that would help a reader understand the main points of the passage.)

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### EXEGETICAL PROJECT (*continued*)

#### III. THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS AND APPLICATION (2-3 pages) [*Sections III.1, III.2, III.3 and III.4 are due Wed., June 30*]

1. **Discontinuities:** (Describe any discontinuities in your passage related to cultural differences, personal differences, and redemptive history.)
2. **Continuities:** (Highlight continuities in your passage related to the nature of the triune God, the nature of humanity, and the redemption.)
3. **Statement of Theological Big Idea:** (Develop a one-sentence summary of the theological big idea using the criteria outlined in your notes)
4. **Explanation of TBI:** (Provide a one paragraph explanation of your theological big idea. This will involve identifying and explaining the key elements you have chosen to include in the TBI from the immediate passage and its broader redemptive context. Be sure to highlight key redemptive themes in your passage.)
5. **Application/Personal impact:** (Identify a fallen condition(s) of the original audience to which you can personally relate. How do you see this fallen condition played out in your own life? Describe the “redemptive” focus of this passage. What does this passage reveal about your brokenness that requires the redemptive work of Christ? How does this passage point you to Christ and the gospel? How has God used this passage in your life? Make it personal.)

#### IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY (1 page)

1. List any sources you consulted in the following format: Author. Title. City of publication: Name of Publisher, Date. Note: Within the body of your paper, simply use parentheses (and not footnotes) to cite works listed in your bibliography. For example: (Grudem, 124). You will find bibliographic information on the IBS website.

#### COURSE GRADE

Reading	10 % (Turn in reading report on Friday, July 2)
Exegetical Assignments	40 %
Exegetical Project	<u>50 %</u> (due by 5 p.m. Friday, July 2)
Total	100pts

#### Grading Scale:

94-100	A
92-93	A-
90-91	B+
84-89	B
82-83	B-
80-81	C+
74-79	C
72-73	C-
65-71	D
0-65	F

## Reading Report

(To be submitted with your paper on Friday, July 2)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Coach \_\_\_\_\_

Date Due	Assignment	Assigned Pages	# Pages Completed
June 22	Fee & Stuart, ch. 1 [16 pgs] <i>ESVSB</i> , "Reading the Bible" [8] Roberts, intro, ch. 1 [24] Piper, ch. 1 [6]	54	
June 23	Roberts, ch. 2 [11] Piper, ch. 2 [6]	17	
June 24	Fee & Stuart, ch. 5 [18 pgs] Roberts, ch. 3 [9] <i>ESVSB</i> , "Reading the Gospels" [3] Piper, Ch. 3 [5]	35	
June 25	Fee & Stuart, ch. 7 [22 pgs] Roberts, ch. 4 [29] Piper, Ch. 4 [6]	57	
June 28	Fee & Stuart, ch. 8 [14] Roberts, ch. 5 [16] Piper, Ch. 5 [7]	37	
June 29	Roberts, ch. 6 [13] Piper, Ch. 6 [6] <i>ESVSB</i> , 23-26 Doriani, "Reflecting on the Redemptive Thrust of Scripture" [15]	38	
June 30	Fee & Stuart, ch. 11 [20] Roberts, ch. 7 [13] Piper, Ch. 7 [6] Johnson, "Hearing the Music of the Gospel" [14]	53	
July 1	Fee & Stuart, ch. 10 [24] Roberts, ch. 8 [13] Piper, ch. 8 [8]	45	
July 2	None	0	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>336</b>	