



WESTERN SEMINARY

portland ■ san jose ■ sacramento

Western Seminary

Portland, Oregon

DBS-506b LEARNING TO INTERPRET SCRIPTURE

Wednesday 8:00am -12:00pm

Fall Semester, 2010

Jan Verbruggen, Ph.D., Instructor

jverbruggen@westernseminary.edu

(503) 517-1871

SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course you will study the foundational principles and interpretive procedures of the grammatical-historical method of biblical interpretation. You will also apply these principles and procedures in actual Bible study, using the English Bible.

COURSE GOALS

Understanding of the Word of God is fundamental to the life and ministry of both the individual Christian and the church. To achieve this understanding, you must know how to interpret and apply biblical texts accurately. To do this you must:

1. Know and be able to apply the fundamental principles of biblical hermeneutics;
2. Know and be able to apply basic methods of inductive/exegetical Bible study.

The purpose of this course is to provide the theoretical foundation and basic skills for accurate interpretation of the Bible.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After this unit, you should be able to:

- List and explain the five steps in the process of special revelation in Scripture.

- Define and identify examples in Scripture of the different kinds of literary genre as provided in class.
- List and practice the steps in the process of biblical interpretation as presented in class.
- Identify levels of context (immediate, chapter, book, and dispensation) in a passage of Scripture.
- Implement a strategy for moving from the identifying the meaning of a text to application and developing a teaching and preaching outline for a biblical passage.
- Demonstrate understanding of English Bible hermeneutics by systematically studying a passage of Scripture utilizing the critical areas of hermeneutics identified in class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance:

You are responsible to attend regularly and to participate in class lectures and discussions.

Reading:

“Federal law now requires institutions to provide the ISBN numbers and retail prices for all required books. Western Seminary encourages students to visit our campus bookstore, Windows Booksellers, in order to obtain these titles at a reduced rate.”

You will read the following:

- Ray Lubeck, *Read the Bible for a Change* (Authentic Media, 2005), ISBN: 978-1932805369 Retail: \$ 19.99
- William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, revised and updated edition, (Thomas Nelson, 2004), ISBN: 978-0785252252 retail: \$ 39.99, (selected portions)
- Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry*, (Crossway Books, 2010), ISBN: 978-1433515088 retail: 16.99
- Paul D. Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations* (Baker, 2004) (selected portions) ISBN: 978-0801027994, retail: \$ 36:99
- Walter C. Kaiser and Moisés Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*, Revised and Expanded edition(Zondervan, 2007) (selected portions) ISBN 978-0310279518, retail: \$34.99

Reading assignments are listed on the course calendar. To aid in discussion and understanding of the material, each reading assignment shall be completed prior to the class session listed. A reading log (attached) will be turned in at the end of the term where you will have recorded your progress through the reading assignments.

Assignments:

The purpose of the homework assignments is to systematically lead you through the interpretive procedures discussed in class. Written work on these occasions will be submitted as stipulated when details of the assignments are given in class.

Examinations:

Two examinations will be given. These will be based upon the reading and class presentations. The final exam will be comprehensive in scope.

COURSE POLICIES

Course Grade Structure:

Reading and Participation	15%
Assignments	45%
Exams (20% each)	40%

Grading and Late Assignments:

The basic grading scale adopted by the faculty of Western Seminary is:

99-100% = A+	95-98% = A	93-94% = A-
91-92% = B+	88-90% = B	86-87% = B-
84-85% = C+	81-83% = C	79-80% = C-
77-78% = D+	74-76% = D	70-73% = D-.

Borderline grades will be determined on the basis of class participation and pattern of improvement. To receive audit credit, you must attend at least 80% of the class sessions and report that fact to the instructor by the day of the final.

Assignments must be turned in at the *beginning* of the class period on which they are due. Due dates may be varied to allow for your demanding schedule. If you need to make such arrangements, please do so well in advance and formalize them in writing. If prior arrangements have not been made, the penalty for a late assignment is a 10% reduction for each week that the assignment is late (5% if turned in within one week of the due date). The maximum deduction for a late assignment is 25%. Unless you qualify for an incomplete as defined in Western's catalog, all assignments must be turned in by 5:00 PM of the day of the final examination.

Absence Policy:

In the event that you are unable to attend class, you should make arrangements to get notes from a colleague. You may make arrangements in advance with a colleague to tape a session you know you will miss, but that tape is for private use only.

Assignment Format:

Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must meet the following criteria:

1. 1 " margins on the left, right, top, and bottom
2. Double-spaced
3. 12 point font (Times New Roman or Arial)
4. A cover page that contains the assignment title, class title and number, your name, mail box number, and date
5. One staple in the top left corner

In-Class Assignment

(done under supervision and guidance of the teacher)

1. Background Study of Malachi
2. Synthetic Outline of Malachi
3. Observations on Mal. 2:10-16
4. Interpretative Questions on Mal. 2:10-16
5. Word study on "Divorce" in Mal. 2:16
6. Mechanical Layout of Mal. 2:10-16
7. Historical/Cultural Analysis of "marriage"
8. Theological Analysis of "Covenant" in Mal. 2:10-16
9. Application Project
10. Teaching/Preaching Outline of Mal. 2:10-16

Homework Assignments

1. Background Study of Colossians
2. Synthetic Outline of Colossians
3. Observations on Col 2:6-15
4. Interpretive Questions on Col 2:6-15
5. Word Study on "trespasses" in Col 2:13
6. Mechanical Layout of Col 2:6-15
7. Historical/Cultural Analysis of "Gnosticism"
8. Theological Analysis of "atonement" in Col 2:6-15
9. Application Project
10. Teaching/Preaching Outline of Col 2:6-15

COURSE CALENDAR

(Course Schedule is subject to change)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Course Topic</i>	<i>Preparation for Class</i>
9/1	Introduction The Process of Special Revelation Reading carefully: cleaning info from the text Historical Background Study of Malachi	
9/8	Where Does Meaning Lie? History of the English Bible Synthetic Outline of Malachi	Klein 3-62 Kaiser 15-65 Lawrence, p. 23-34
9/15	History of the English Bible, cont. The Question of the Canon Observations on Mal. 2:10-16	Wegner 75-118; 131-152 <i>Background Study Due</i>
9/22	Interpretation: A Survey of the Historical Schools The Goal of Interpretation Interpretive Questions on Mal. 2:10-16	Klein 135-209 Lawrence, 37-52 Lubeck 21-35 <i>Synthetic Outline Due</i>
9/29	The Goal of Interpretation, cont. Word Study "Divorce" in Mal. 2:16	Lawrence, 53-68 <i>Observations Due</i>
10/6	Hermeneutics Short Course Historical-Grammatical Interpretation	Lawrence, 69-84 Lubeck 37-55 <i>Interpretive Questions Due</i>
10/13	Historical-Grammatical Interpretation, cont. Word Meanings and Word Studies Mechanical Outline of Mal. 2:10-16	Lawrence, 85-111 Klein 213-272 <i>Word Study Due</i>
10/20	<u>Exam Number One</u> Implications of Genre Biblical Narrative Historical Cultural Analysis of "marriage"	Klein 323-341 Lubeck 9-20; 95-119; 143-162 Kaiser 123-138 Lawrence, 115-140
10/27	Law Prophecy Theological Analysis of "Covenant" in Mal. 2:10-16	Klein 359-387 Kaiser 191-209 <i>Mechanical Outline Due</i>
11/3	Typology Poetry Applications	Klein 273-319 Lubeck 121-132; 163-177 Kaiser 139-154 <i>Historical Cultural Analysis Due</i>
11/10	Figures of Speech Parables Teaching/Preaching Outline in Mal. 2:10-16	Klein 411-418 Lubeck 57-94 Kaiser 157-172 <i>Atonement Analysis Due</i>
11/17	Proverbs and the Wisdom Literature Epistles	Kaiser 173-188 Lawrence, 141-176
11/24	Apocalyptic The Role of the Holy Spirit and Application	Klein 387-398; 426-440 Lubeck 133-141; 179-189 <i>Application Due</i>
12/1	Perspicuity The "New Hermeneutic"	Klein 63-101; 451-504 Lawrence, 179-217 <i>Teaching/Preaching Outline Due</i>
12/8	<u>Final Examination</u>	

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alden, Robert L. "Malachi" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 7. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985.

Boice, James Montgomery, ed. *The Foundation of Biblical Authority*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978.

Bray, Gerald. *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.

Cotterell, Peter and Max Turner. *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1989.

Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.

Epstein, Louis M. *Legal Conception of Marriage in Ancient Israel*. 1923.

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

Frame, John M. *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987.

Geisler, Norman L., ed. *Inerrancy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980.

Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

Hill, Andrew E. *Malachi*. Anchor Yale Bible Commentary. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

Hirsch, E. D., Jr. *Validity in Interpretation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.

Horton, Michael S. *Covenant and Eschatology: The Divine Drama*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.

Hugenberger, Gordon P. *Marriage as a Covenant: Biblical Law and Ethics as Developed from Malachi*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.

Instone-Brewer, David. *Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible: The Social and Literary Context*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

- Kaiser Jr., Walter C. *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching & Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.
- Kaiser Jr., Walter C. and Moisés Silva. *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.
- Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. revised edition and updated. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004.
- Lints, Richard. *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.
- Lubeck, Ray. *Read the Bible for a Change: Understanding and Responding to God's Word*. Federal Way: Authentic Media, 1995.
- McComiskey, Thomas Edward, ed.. *The Minor Prophets. An Exegetical & Expository Commentary*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992
- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*. 3rd Rev. Ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970.
- Ryken, Leland. *How to Read the Bible as Literature*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.
- Smith, Ralph L. *Micha-Malachi*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 32. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984
- Stein, Robert H. *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible: Playing by the Rules*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.
- Taylor, Richard A. and E. Ray Clendenen. *New American Commentary Haggai, Malachi*. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2004.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *First Theology: God, Scripture & Hermeneutics*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002.
- _____. *Is There a Meaning in This Text?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.
- Verhoef, Pieter A. *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*. New International Commentary of the Old Testament series. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.
- Wegner, Paul D. *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
- Weyde, Karl William. *Prophecy and Teaching: Prophetic Authority, Form Problems, and the Use of Traditions in the Book of Malachi* (BZAW, vol. 288). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000.

