



WESTERN SEMINARY

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Western Seminary

Portland, Oregon

DBS-516b LEARNING TO INTERPRET SCRIPTURE

Wednesday 8:00am -12:00pm

Fall Semester, 2010

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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)
- Paul D. Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations* (Baker, 2004) (selected portions) ISBN: 978-0801027994, retail: \$ 36:99

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. Wordstudy 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. Observations on Col 2:6-15
2. Interpretive Questions on Col 2:6-15
3. Word Study on "trespasses" in Col 2:13

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
9/15	History of the English Bible, cont. The Question of the Canon Observations on Mal. 2:10-16	Wegner 75-118; 131-152
9/22	Interpretation: A Survey of the Historical Schools The Goal of Interpretation Interpretive Questions on Mal. 2:10-16	Klein 135-209 Lubeck 21-35
9/29	The Goal of Interpretation, cont. Word Study "Divorce" in Mal. 2:16	<i>Observations Due</i>
10/6	Hermeneutics Short Course Historical-Grammatical Interpretation	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	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
10/27	Law Prophecy Theological Analysis of "Covenant" in Mal. 2:10-16	Klein 359-387
11/3	Typology Poetry Applications	Klein 273-319 Lubeck 121-132; 163-177
11/10	Figures of Speech Parables Teaching/Preaching Outline in Mal. 2:10-16	Klein 411-418 Lubeck 57-94
11/17	Proverbs and the Wisdom Literature Epistles	
11/24	Apocalyptic The Role of the Holy Spirit and Application	Klein 387-398; 426-440 Lubeck 133-141; 179-189
12/1	Perspicuity The "New Hermeneutic"	
12/8	<u>Final Examination</u>	

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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