

Associated Canadian Theological Schools of Trinity Western University

BIB 505: Biblical Interpretation

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Fall 2019

3 credit hours

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Course Dates: Mondays, Sep 4–Dec 3,
2019 Class times: 2:30 pm – 5:10 pm

Classroom: Fosmark 120

I. Course Description

This course focuses on the development of a systematic approach to the interpretation of Scripture. Although reference is made to various interpretative systems and strategies, special attention is given to the historical-grammatical method. The predominant literary genres of the Bible are examined and relevant principles of interpretation highlighted. Emphasis is 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.

II. Learning Outcomes

This course aims to help you to:

1. understand the historical developments that have shaped biblical interpretation;
2. become familiar with the theological presuppositions and key issues involved in biblical interpretation;
3. constructively explore, review, and evaluate the hermeneutical presuppositions and distinctive of various believers' church traditions;

4. become familiar with the various literary genres of the Bible and the hermeneutical procedures that are relevant for each genre;
5. establish the context and determine the textual meaning of biblical passages through the use of sound methodology in the practice of biblical interpretation;
6. discover and be able to use the available tools and resources for the study and practice of biblical interpretation; and
7. discern principles in formulating applications that are consistent with the original intention of biblical passages.

III. Course Textbooks

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

1. William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 2017; 3rd edition, Nashville: Nelson, 2004. [543 pages; hereafter KBH]
2. G. Camery-Hoggatt. *Reading the Good Book Well: A Guide to Biblical Interpretation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007. [233 pages]
3. R. N. Soulen and R.K. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 4th ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011. [258 pages]

IV. Course Requirements

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 of record immediately. The professor marks to the following standard:



Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A+	97–100	4.30
A	93–96	4.00
A-	90–92	3.70
B+	87–89	3.30
B	83–86	3.00
B-	80–82	2.70
C+	77–79	2.30
C	73–76	2.00
C-	70–72	1.70
F	Below 70	0.00

A. Reading & Participation (25%)

1. Reading (10%)

By the end of the course you should have read the required textbooks—KBH and Camery-Hoggatt in their entirety, and selections from Soulen and Soulen. Together, KBH and Camery-Hoggatt amount to 776 pages. And additional 200 pages must be read for this course. These 200 pages should reflect the objectives of having consulted the Soulen and Soulen text and to have read commentary and other resources with a view to the fulfillment of the course assignments—esp. the expositional paper. **Indicate by an attached note to your hermeneutical paper, 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 assignments) ÷ 9.76 = _____ %. Your reading report, attached to the final examination sheet, will simply require you to indicate, “I have completed _____% of the assigned reading.”

Due: Dec 4, 2019



2. Participation (15%)

Attendance and Class Participation.

The course has 12 days of class. Missing a class effects 1% deduction of one's overall grade. If a student miss more than 3 sessions (1/4 of the whole classes), s/he cannot pass the course. Consistent attendance, personal preparation and intelligent participation in informal and organized discussions in class ensure that you obtain the greatest benefit from this course.

Class presentation of Hermeneutical Research on a Biblical Text:

- Students will make class presentations (15-20 min. presentation + 5 min. QA) on a selected passage from Old or New Testament. Suggested passages for the hermeneutical research are listed under Expository Paper assignment.
- A good research note contains following components:
 - A selected passage and the historical-cultural context of the given passage
 - Literary/Biblical Context: Genre, Outline, Purpose, Focus, particular grammatical or syntactical structure or rhetorical markers, etc
 - Lexical Analysis
 - Exegetical and interpretational issues in dispute
 - Theological Analysis
 - Application: authorial/textual intent, possible implication to the contemporary
 - A template type of guidance will be given in the class.
- Individual presentation begins at the end of October. Presentation schedule will be set at the second class meeting.
- A presentation slide (Power Point, Keynote, Prezi, etc.) must be produced and submitted a day (or a week) before one's presentation day.
- A five-page-long exegetical note paper (presentation manuscript) should be submitted with the presentation slide. The exegetical note paper is not necessarily to be written in an essay form. (Point form is possible)
- This presentation will be the core research work for your Hermeneutical Paper.

B. Book Review & Critique (20%)

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 five to six typewritten and double spaced pages total.

Due Date: Sep 25, 2019

* A good book-review paper will have the following components:

Introduction (1 - 2 pages)

1. Give full bibliographical data at the top of the page
2. Author's educational (or scholarly) and ministry background, theological stance, which are relevant to the topic of the book in the first paragraph
3. Identify and describe the purpose of the book and the layout of the book

Body (3 - 4 pages)

- Summarize the content of the book (chapter by chapter) with reader's own words
- Identify and describe the points of argument that the author uses to persuade his readers
- Evaluate the author's arguments (or his explanation). Write the merits and demerits of the author's way of explanation
- Explain what were the most important and interesting point(s) in the book for you and why.
- Deal briefly with any aspect of the book with which you disapproved, giving clear and careful explanation.

Conclusion (1 page)

Conclude with an appraisal of your reading experience (this is the reflection part). What of personal value did you learn from it? What significant insights did you gain with reference to the subject?

C. History of Interpretation Paper (25%)

- (1) Research on the history of biblical interpretation and write a paper on it. The purpose of this assignment is to expand your understanding on various biblical interpretations in history by making an analytical reading on the history of interpretation on the Bible.
- (2) Read chapters 2–3 of KBH (pp. 66–164), relevant portions of Soulen and Soulen, and some other related scholarly resources.² Summarize and evaluate some of the representative biblical interpretational methods from your readings: (a) explain the distinctive interpretational elements of individual interpretational approaches; (b) expound the historical, social, or philosophical-theological circumstances that might be influential to the emergence of a particular way of interpretation; (c) evaluate the individual methods; comment merits and demerits of them.
 - Early Church and the 2nd Temple Judaism: “**Allegorical Interpretation**” (Alexandria-North African school), “**Literal Interpretation**” (Syria-Antioch school), “**Typology**,” and “**Eschatological Interpretation**.”

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

² Some of the titles that deal with related issues are as follows:

Yarchin, William. *History of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.

McKim Donald K. ed. *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

Kaiser, W. C. & M. Silva, *An Introduction Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

Goppelt, L., *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.

Ryken, L. *How to Read the Bible as Literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984.

Powell, M. A., *What Is Narrative Criticism?: A New Approach to the Bible*. London: SPCK, 1993.

Childs, B. S., *Biblical Theology in Crisis*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970.



- The church in the middle age: “**Traditional Interpretation**”
- The reformation: **Luther and Calvin**
- Modern Period: “**Historical-critical method**” “**Old-Literary criticism:** Documentary Hypothesis, Source Criticism, Form Criticism, Tradition History” “**Canonical criticism,**” “**New-Literary Criticism:** Narrative Criticism, Rhetorical Criticism,” “**Social-Scientific approaches**”

(3) Paper format

- The paper should demonstrate decent performance of research and be formatted properly with title page, table of contents, and bibliography.
- Use at least four resources which include KBH and Soulen and Soulen. (avoid internet blog, study bible, and unnamed commentaries)
- The paper should not exceed 2500 words (title page, table of contents, and bibliography are not included in this 2500 words)

Due Date: Oct 16, 2019

D. Hermeneutics Paper (30%)

Content. Provide an expositional paper (no more than 3500 words) that thoroughly analyzes one passage from the OT or NT in accordance with the historical-grammatical method. Select **ONLY ONE** of the following passages:

* OT: Genesis 23; Exodus 24:1-11; Numbers 25; Deuteronomy 20; Psalm 19; Ecclesiastes 4:1-12; Isaiah 6.

* NT: Matt 1:1–17; Mark 6:30-44; John 2; Acts 2:1–13; Hebrews 7; 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. Title page, Table of Contents, and Bibliography are **not** counted in 3500 words.

Contents. You will write a 3500 words paper in which you:

- a. identify the literary genre(s) of the passage;
- b. describe the hermeneutical process(es) involved in your analysis of it;
- c. discuss relevant biblical, historical, cultural or literary backgrounds which contribute to your understanding of the passage;
- d. outline the structure and describe the compositional flow of the passage;
- e. identify any key word(s), and explain why it/they are key and what it/they mean;
- f. explain any significant point(s)/idea(s)/theme(s) to which the preceding steps lead the person who studies this passage;



- g. suggest at least one specific, contemporary application/illustration that you would use to drive home this/these point(s) if you were expositing this passage in your home church congregation.

Length and Resources. The paper is to be well researched and properly footnoted, containing a body of not more than 3500 words in length. *Beyond the assigned reading, consult at least three (3) current reference works (concordances, Bible dictionaries, atlas, theological dictionaries etc.), at least five (5) intermediate to advanced commentaries,³ and at least four (4) appropriate journal/periodical articles and relevant specialist studies.⁴*

Due Date: Dec 4, 2019

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 the “Important Academic Notes from ACTS” attachment to this syllabus).

It is strongly advised that you keep copies of all submitted work. Submission should be made electronically. The preferred procedure in this instance is to upload your work into the appropriate “drop box” at the TWU *Moodle* website (learn.twu.ca) Please remember that when you post to *Moodle*, you should “toggle” your work for security. Only in the case of an emergency (e.g., if the *Moodle* website is not accessible) should you post your work as an email attachment directly to the professor. **NOTE: In any event, ensure that all electronically submitted work carries on the title page your preferred email address for assignment returns.**

³ In order to find suitable commentaries, please consult Tremper Longman III, *Old Testament Commentary Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007; TWU Library Call Number - BS1151.52 .L6652 2007) and D. A. Carson, *New Testament Commentary Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013; ebook is available at TWU Library website).

⁴ 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.]

V. Course Outline

Date	Material Covered and Readings	Notes
Wednesday Sep 4	Session 1: Introduction (1) Class Orientation / Syllabus (2) Hermeneutical Triangle / author-text-reader (3) Introduction to Historical-Grammatical (H-G) Method — Corley’s “Cubing the Text”	
Sep 11	Session 2: Need for Hermeneutics (1) The Need for Hermeneutics Reading — KBH: 27–38, 39–65 (2) Foundational Issues 1 a. Authority, Hermeneutics and Method b. Interpreter and Spirit Reading — KBH: 635–636 c. The Goal of Interpretation	
Sep 18	Session 3: Foundational Issues 2 (1) Text, Canon, and Translation Reading — KBH: 165–200, 201–292 (2) Textual Criticism	
Sep 25	Session 4: Cube face 1 / OT Setting (1) Setting — The Matter of Historical Context Reading—KBH: 134–143, 312–323 a. Isaiah 7 b. OT passage exegetical notes examples	- Book Review Due
Oct 2	Session 5: Cube face 1 / NT Setting a. Mark 1 and 8 b. Luke 17 c. John 7-8 d. Acts 2 e. Rev 3	
Oct 9	Session 6: Practical Guide of an Exegesis (1) Seven Concise Steps to an Exegesis	
Oct 16	Reading Break / No Class *A week earlier than ACTS regular reading break	- History of Interpretation Paper Due
Oct 23	Session 7: Cube face 2 / Style - Macro-Genres (Unit 8) (1) OT Literary Types & Genres: Prose Reading—KBH: 417–509 (2) OT Literary Types & Genres: Poetry Reading—KBH: 361–416	Class Presentation
Oct 30	Session 8: Cube face 2 / Style - Macro-Genres (Unit 8) (1) NT Literary Types: Gospel (2) NT Literary Types: Epistles	Class Presentation
Nov 6	Session 9: Cube face 2 / Style - Micro Genres/forms (Unit 9) (1) Genealogy (2) Treaties and Law (3) Parables	Class Presentation

Nov 13	Self Study Week	
Nov 20	Session 10: Cube Faces 3&4 / Semantics and Syntax (1) Semantics — Word Meanings (2) Syntax — How Words Work Together Reading—KBH: 324–360	Class Presentation
Nov 27	Session 11: Cube Faces 5 / Summation (1) Inner structure (2) Discourse Analysis	
Dec 4	Session 12: Cube Faces 6 / Significance (1) Reading in Context and Application of the Text (Theological Significance) (2) Summary of the Course (Has your reading been changed?)	- Hermeneutical Paper Due - Reading Report Due

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 or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the following radio stations: CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), STAR FM (107.1 FM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM). As well, an announcement will be placed on the University’s campus closure notification message box (604.513.2147) and on the front page of the University’s website (<http://www.twu.ca> – also see <http://www.twu.ca/conditions> for more details).



An initial announcement regarding the status of the campus and cancellation of classes will be made at 6:00 a.m. and will cover all classes that begin before 1:00 p.m. A second announcement pertaining to classes that begin between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. will be made at 11:00 a.m. A third announcement pertaining to classes that begin after 5:00 p.m. will be made at 3:00 p.m.

Paper Formatting

Students need to adhere to Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format except in counselling courses, for which APA format is used, and in CanIL courses.

Students are strongly encouraged to use EndNote Basic/Web (to create an account or log in, go to: <http://libguides.twu.ca/EndNote/>) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. It is free. The link to EndNote from the library home page provides detailed instructions. Students will need to be aware that it is necessary to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html or www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. In EndNote Basic/Web the available formatting styles are those of Turabian Bibliography, and APA 6th edition. For Turabian, there are two formats – Notes (Bibliography) and Reference List (a short format citation style). ACTS uses the Notes (Bibliography) format, not Reference List.

Counselling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information may be found at the following website: <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>.

For free online programs that will enable students to create properly formatted bibliography citations, go to <http://www.eturabian.com/turabian/index.html> or <http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/> (“Chicago” stands for “Turabian”).

CANIL students should consult with their own faculty on specific requirements.

Please check with your professor to find out which style he/she recommends you use!!

Course Evaluations



Course evaluations are important for improving teaching outcomes, faculty professional development, and the student learning context. Completion of course evaluations is, therefore, considered to be a course expectation. Professors will schedule time for students to fill out online course evaluations (20-30 minutes) on their personal laptops or a collegium computer during the last scheduled class of the semester. Students who are absent that day or who are otherwise unable to complete the online course evaluation during the last class will be expected to make every effort to do so by the last day of exams. Information about how to access online evaluation forms will be provided to the faculty and students prior to the last week of classes by the ACTS Administration.

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/research/research/research-ethics/default.html>. Those needing additional clarification may contact the ACTS Academic Dean's office. 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

Christian scholars at TWU regard academic integrity to be a core value. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and are required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship. This means that all members of the TWU academic community must avoid all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. ACTS uses the TWU Student Handbook as a guide for our seminary students. Though some features in the handbook are focused on the university's undergraduate population, it provides the essential student life information for ACTS students as well. It can be found online at: <http://www.twu.ca/studenthandbook/>.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource in this regard has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or can be viewed in flash (self-running) tutorials of different lengths:



<http://williambadke.com/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://williambadke.com/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial) http://williambadke.com/Plagiarism_Short.swf (8 minute flash tutorial)

Equity of Access

Students with disabilities who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and such documentation should include a statement regarding the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office outlined on the TWU website at <http://twu.ca/life/wellness/learningresources/disabilities-and-equity-of-access/steps-to-attaining-disability-services.html>.

Policy Information and Student Concerns

Information on academic and community life policies and procedures that affect students can be found in the ACTS *Academic Catalogue*, which is available on the ACTS website (www.actsseminaries.com) under the *Academics* tab. Students who wish to communicate concerns or to lodge academic appeals are welcome to contact the appropriate faculty or staff member directly, or to fill out and submit the relevant Concerns & Grievances or Appeals form found on the *Files & Forms* page of the *Current Students* section of the ACTS Website.