

ACTS

Associated Canadian Theological Schools
BIE 505Journey: CONTEXT IS KEY
Introduction to Biblical Interpretation

Dr. Brian M. Rapske
Spring, 2011
3 Credit Hours
Prerequisite: BIE 500

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January 27-29, 2011 Edmonton, AB
Times: Thursday 5:30 pm – 9:30 pm
Friday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Saturday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

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 aims to help you 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]

G. 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

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

A. Reading & Participation (20%)

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. KBH and Camery-Hoggatt amount to 776 pages. An 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 expository 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 assignments) ÷ 976 = %. Your reading report, attached to the final examination sheet, will simply require you to indicate, “I have completed ____% of the assigned reading.”

2. Participation (10%)

Punctuality, personal preparation and intelligent participation in informal and organized discussions ensure that you obtain the greatest benefit from this course. These are course requirements and will be graded by the professor with your assistance.

Self-Evaluation Due: Jan 29/11

B. Written & Presented Work (80%)

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. 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. **NOTE: In any event, ensure that all electronically submitted work carries on the title page your name and preferred email address for assignment returns.**

1. 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 six (6) typewritten and double spaced pages total.

2. **Expositional Paper (35%)**

Content. Provide an expositional 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

C. **Final Examination (25%)**

The final examination will be of the “take home” variety. Details concerning its content will be discussed on the last day of classes.

NOTE: All assignments are due 45 days after the last class of the course; that date is **March 15TH, 2011**. All submissions should be posted to the course website as indicated above,

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

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.]

or if there is a problem, sent as email attachments to the professor any time up to midnight on the due date.

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.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Material Covered & Readings</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
<i>Jan. 27 pm</i>	<i>Introduction</i> The Need for Hermeneutics <i>Reading – KBH: xxi-xxvii, 3-21</i> Introduction to Historical-Grammatical (H-G) Method – Corley's <i>"Cubing the Text"</i>	
<i>Jan. 28 am</i>	<i>Foundational Issues</i> A. Authority, Hermeneutics and Method B. Interpreter and Spirit <i>Reading – KBH: 503-543</i> C. The Goal of Interpretation D. Text, Canon and Translation <i>Reading – KBH: 103-131, 135-209</i>	
<i>Jan. 28 pm</i>	<i>Cube Faces 1 & 2</i> 1. Setting – The Matter of Historical Context <i>Reading – KBH: 78-87, 229-240</i> 2. Style i. – OT Literary Types & Genres – Prose <i>Reading – KBH: 323-398</i> Style ii. – OT Literary Types & Genres – Poetry <i>Reading – KBH: 273-319</i>	
<i>Jan. 29 am</i>	Style iii. – New Testament Literary Types & Genres <i>Reading – KBH: 399-448</i> <i>Cube Faces 3 & 4</i> 3. Semantics – Word Meanings 4. Syntax – How Words Work Together <i>Reading – KBH: 240-272</i>	

Jan. 29 pm *Cube Faces 5 & 6*

Self Evaluation Due

5. Summation – The Big Idea of a Passage

6. Significance – What it Means to Me

Reading – KBH: 213-229, 451-503

The History of Interpretation

Reading – KBH: 23-62

Other Methods & Approaches 1

Literary and Social-Scientific Approaches

Reading – KBH: 63-78

Other Methods & Approaches 2

Gender, Socio-Economic, Global &
Denominational Perspectives

Reading – KBH: 87-101

March 15

***Review & Critique
Expositional Paper
Final Exam & Reading
Report Due***

October 2010

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.