

ISSUES IN INTERPRETATION

GB-216-1

Spring 2011
Ozark Christian College
8:00 a.m. Tues, Wed, Thurs
3 Credit Hours

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Course Description: An examination of various approaches of biblical interpretation. The course begins with an historical survey and culminates with an array of contemporary approaches of current issues. Students learn to recognize, critique, and implement these current hermeneutical practices. Prerequisite: PI 215 Principles of Interpretation. (3 hours).

PROJECTS:

1. Using the Google Docs template provided through your OCC email, choose one of the major historical Bible interpreters and write a one page summary of his/her life and work. You will need to provide not only biographical and hermeneutical information on this figure, you will also have to provide (a) primary and secondary bibliographical material (books or journal articles about this person, at least one web resource about this person, a web link to their original work if available) and (b) three test questions that an informed student should be able to answer. In addition, each student will give a 5 minute class presentation on 2/9, 2/10, 2/16. You can choose a figure not on the list with the instructor's approval.
2. Critique one journal article for four of the following topics: Postmodernism; Deconstruction; Liberation Theology; Nationalism, Black, Feminist, Homosexual, Restoration, Islamic, Pentecostal or Catholic hermeneutics. Your articles may be either an example of the method applied exegetically, or an evaluation of the method itself. You will turn in your four articles for approval (2a). On the day the topic is covered in class you will turn in a *one page* critique (double spaced). They must include a clear description of the hermeneutical method, the dangers each presents, and the positive contribution each may make to proper interpretation.
3. Write a two page book report on *Return to Babel*. Your first sentence is to be a confessional statement of how much of the book you read. Then, list 3-5 dominant characteristics and methods of Asian, African, and Latin American Hermeneutics, citing specific page numbers the manifest these characteristics.
4. Write a thorough critique of a fiction piece (film or book) which deals with the return of Jesus. Identify the author's millennial position and presuppositions and critique his/her use of Scripture. Your critique must demonstrate a functional understanding of each of the major millennial positions as discussed in class.

TEXT BOOKS:

Clouse, Robert (Ed.). *The Meaning of the Millennium*. Downer's Grove, IL: IVP, 1977.
Montague, George. *Understanding the Bible*. New York: Paulist Press, 1997.
Pope-Levison, Priscilla & Levison, John. *Return to Babel : Global Perspectives on the Bible*. Louisville: John Knox, 1999.
Yarchin, William. *History of Biblical Interpretation: A Reader*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Date	Topic	Reading	Date	Topic	Reading
1/18	Introduction		3/15	Literary	Yar 307-19, 361-82
1/19	Critical Theories	Mont 1-7	3/16	Reader Resp.	Mont 163-74
1/20	Overview	Yar 236-275	3/17	Post-modernism	Yar 415-429
1/25	Rabbinic	Yar 3-28	3/29	Deconstruction	Project #2a
1/26	Numerology	Yar 111-48	3/30	Psychology	
1/27	Apostolic	Yar 31-85	3/31	Social Science	
2/1	O.T. in N.T.	Mont 28-48	4/5	Nationalism	
2/2	IFW		4/6	Liberation/Black	
2/3	Holy Spirit	NB 30-32	4/7	Feminist	Yar 383-97
2/8	Allegory	Terms Quiz	4/12	Homosexual	Project #3
2/9	Presentations		4/13	Restorationism	
2/10	Presentations		4/14	Catholic	Mont 201-32
2/15	Authoritative	Mont 49-67	4/19	Islamic	
2/16	Presentations		4/20	Emergent Church	
2/17	Scholasticism	Yar 93-108	4/21	Test #2	
2/22	P&T	Yar 184-207	4/26	Introduction	
2/23	P&T	Yar 218-35	4/27	Millennialism	Clouse 7-13
2/24	Reformation	Mont 68-95	4/28	Historic Premill	Clouse 17-59
3/1	Cult. vs. Univ.		5/3	Disp. Premill	Clouse 63-103
3/2	Problem Pass.	Project #1	5/4	Postmillennialism	Clouse 117-152
3/3	Enlightenment	Yar 320-32, 351-60	5/5	Amillennialism	Clouse 155-212
3/8	Modernism		5/10	Preterists	Project #4
3/9	Test #1		5/11	Test #3	
3/10	Herm. Shifts	Mont 129-62	5/12	Looking Ahead	

NB = *Class Notebook*; Mont = Montague; Yar = Yarkin; Lev = Levison

GRADES: Projects 40%; Tests 40%; Quiz 5%; Final 15%

ESSENTIAL READING IN HERMENEUTICS

By Mark Moore

Philosophical Issues:

Black, David & Dockery, David (eds). *New Testament Criticism and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991. (This volume is particularly helpful with higher criticism and modern hermeneutical developments).

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method*. New York: Seabury, 1975. (Argues philosophically that the reader brings himself to the text and rather than understanding the author, s/he fuses their "horizon" with his or her own.)

Osborne, Grant R. *Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity, 1991. (This is a weighty work showing the interplay between the text, author and interpreter in the process of interpretation).

Thistleton, Anthony. *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There a Meaning in This Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998. (A very powerful analysis of the challenge of Deconstruction. His response is a theology of hermeneutics based upon the person of God).

Historical Issues:

Bray, Gerald. *Biblical Interpretation Past and Present*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996. (Extremely thorough coverage of the history of interpretation. Especially helpful with names and bibliography).

Farrar, F. W. *History of Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker (reprint), 1886. (Probably the classic on the history of Bible interpretation. Very thorough, filled with great tidbits of information).

Grant, Robert M., and Tracy, David. *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. (Quite readable history of interpretation).

Lubac, Henri. *Medieval Exegesis*, 2 vols. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1959. (This two-volume set examines one of the most difficult and sparse periods of biblical interpretation).

McKim, Donald (ed). *Historical Handbook of Major Bible Interpreters*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1998. (This is a fabulous brief summary of the major players in hermeneutics historically).

Neill, Stephen and Tom Wright, *The Interpretation of the New Testament: 1861-1986*. Oxford: Oxford, 1988. (This is a survey of the major voices in modern biblical interpretation).

Silva, Moises. *Has the Church Misread the Bible? (The history of interpretation in the light of current Issues)* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987. (Clear demonstration of the contemporary importance of hermeneutics; somewhat dated now).

Yarchin, William (ed). *History of Biblical Interpretation: A Reader*. Peabody, MA: Hendrikson, 2004. (This reader is a treasury of original source material from major historical interpreters).

Sociological Issues:

Bailey, Randall (ed). *Yet with a Steady Beat: Contemporary U. S. Afrocentric Biblical Interpretation*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003. (Bailey's collection of essays demonstrates the hermeneutical methods and practical uses of Scripture among African Americans).

Gallagher, Robert (Ed.). *Mission in Acts: Ancient Narratives in Contemporary Context*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2004. (Gallagher has collected essays by practicing missiologists globally on nearly every pericope in the book with a heavy emphasis on practical application.)

González, Justo. *Santa Biblia: The Bible Through Hispanic Eyes*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996. (This little volume introduces the reader to the primary issues undergirding Hispanic hermeneutics).

Goss, Robert E. and Mona West (eds.). *Take Back the Word: A Queer Reading of the Bible*. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2000. (This is a radically pro-gay perspective on the Bible).

Khiok-khng, Yeo. *What Has Jerusalem to do with Beijing?* Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998. (This volume offers one perspective on the hermeneutical methods and concerns of Asia).

Levison, John R. and Priscilla Pope-Levison (eds.), *Return to Babel: Global Perspectives on the Bible*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999. (Five OT and five NT texts are examined by a Latin American, African, and Asian biblical scholar. The differences are marked).

Schüssler Fiorenza, Elisabeth (ed.). *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Introduction*. New York: Crossroad, 1993. (This collection of essays is a fair introduction to feminist perspectives on biblical interpretation).

Sugirtharajah, R. S. (ed.). *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. London: SPCK, 1991. (This collection of essays highlights the issues and concerns voiced by the majority Christians who live outside the western world and elite academy).

Webb, William. *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals: Exploring Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001. (He argues that if slavery and inequality of women were cultural issues approved by the bible but later dismissed by the church, so too might homosexuality be).

Yamauchi, Edwin M. *Africa and the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. (This is a helpful description of the cultural template used by Africans to interpret the Bible).

College Mission: The ultimate mission of Ozark Christian College is to glorify God by evangelizing the lost and edifying Christians worldwide. The immediate mission of Ozark Christian College is to train men and women for Christian service through an undergraduate Bible college education.

College Learning Objectives (CLO)

This course most directly addresses CLO 1, 3, and 4.

1. **Know sound doctrine from the Word of God. (*Biblical Doctrine*)**
2. Understand evidences for the basis of faith in Christ and the Bible. (*Apologetics*)
3. **Interpret the Bible to understand the author's intended meaning. (*Hermeneutics*)**
4. **Demonstrate an intellectual development for critical thinking and lifelong learning. (*Intellect*)**
5. Communicate effectively in written and oral forms. (*Communication*)
6. Display a personal growth in Christian character and fellowship with Christ. (*Devotion*)
7. Apply a variety of skills for leading others to Christ, helping them mature in Christ, and equipping them to serve Christ. (*Evangelism & Discipleship*)

General Studies Area Objectives (GSAO)

This course most directly addresses GSAO 2 and 5.

1. Practice the principles of clear thinking and effective written and oral communication.
2. **Demonstrate knowledge of the principles, methods and tools of interpretation that can be applied to the Bible and to any piece of literature.**
3. Manifest knowledge of the relationship of Christianity to the history of the western civilization.
4. Identify geographical locations important to an understanding of biblical history.
5. **Understand key contemporary worldviews and be able to explain and defend the Christian worldview.**
6. Develop proficiency in the use of Biblical languages so he or she can gain the best possible understanding of the word of God, provided the BTh program is elected.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify philosophic and methodological presuppositions behind a broad array of hermeneutical constructs through a historical survey of hermeneutics. (CLO 3, 4; GSAO 5)
2. Students will be able to evaluate the major current trends in hermeneutics and show how they affect and are affected by social, political and theological settings. (CLO 3, 4; GSAO 5)
3. To better understand the Holy Spirit's role in interpretation and to allow him to participate with us in exegesis and homiletics. (CLO 1, 3; GSAO 2)
4. Students will be able to augment the historical/grammatical method of interpretation with other methods which will broaden one's approach to and understanding of scripture and its contemporary application. (CLO 1, 3; GSAO 2, 5)

Course Policies and Expectations

- **ADA Accommodation:** If you have a disability and are requesting an accommodation, please contact the Executive Director of Admissions at 417-624-2518 Extension 2006 as soon as possible.
- **Attendance:** Absences over 6 will result in the failure of this course as outlined in the college catalogue (page 53-4). Four tardies will be counted as one absence. If a student arrives fifteen minutes after class or leaves fifteen minutes before class is over it will be counted as an absence.

- **Homework:** Late work is unacceptable. Assignments and projects are due at the beginning of the class period on which they are assigned. If you are absent, you are still responsible for having your work brought to class and turned in for you. All work is to be typed unless otherwise noted.
- **Tests:** Should you miss an exam you will take a different exam and you will have exactly one week to make it up from the class period on which it was given. You may take it at the testing center (L12) after paying a \$5 late fee in the business office.
- **Cheating/Plagiarism:** Cheating will result in a zero on the assignment in question and a mandatory meeting with the dean of students to determine further discipline which may include failure in the class or dismissal from the college. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using material from another student for tests, memory, or term papers, (2) not properly citing sources in papers and assignments so as to make it look original, (3) using cheat sheets – written or electronic – for tests or quizzes.
- **Information Literacy:** Ozark Christian College is committed to information literacy training. This training will be intentional, incremental, and missional. Students will learn to access, evaluate, and utilize pertinent information in their ministry preparation.