SYLLABUS FOR B.A.R. DEGREE
BI414--Introduction to Hermeneutics
B.M.A. Theological Seminary Spring Semester 2011
Professor--Dr. Greg W. Parsons

I. Course Description
As a basic orientation to understanding the Bible according to its literary and historical-cultural contexts, the course will introduce the student to various literary genres (such as narrative, prophecy, law, poetry, wisdom literature, parables, epistles, and apocalyptic writings) and suggest guidelines for understanding and communicating the message of a passage according to its specific literary type. The question of how to discern timeless principles in contrast to culturally-bound teachings will be addressed as a part of the process of learning to apply the Bible in a valid way.

II. Objectives
1) To introduce the student to the concept of hermeneutics and the need for it.
2) To illustrate a hermeneutical process (including specific steps) for doing valid Biblical interpretation and relevant application so as to communicate God's Word—not human opinion. Each BI414 student must be able:
   a) To learn and utilize a proper hermeneutical approach to the Scriptures—namely, understanding each specific passage or verse in light of both historical-cultural and Biblical context including doing key word studies.
   b) To identify guidelines for determining timeless principles [those true to the original context and yet relevant to ourselves and our modern society] versus culturally bound teachings.
   c) To begin to apply these guidelines in preaching/teaching of primarily the New Testament.
3) To orient the student to the various literary genres (literary forms or types) in the Bible including narrative, prophecy, law, poetry, wisdom literature, parables, epistles, and apocalyptic writings. Each BI414 student must be able:
   a) To identify specific hermeneutical guidelines for each literary genre to promote an accurate interpretation of each type of literature.
   b) To utilize these guidelines in Bible study and teaching/preaching.
   c) To begin to apply these in preaching/teaching primarily a New Testament passage.

III. Requirements (for BI 414)
A. Use of textbooks

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1 This syllabus (1-06-2011) is tentative and may be revised, if needed.

Reports on required reading assignments (including the portions read from the Bible) must be recorded and turned in weekly on standardized reading slips obtainable from the seminary office. Students are theoretically responsible for a quiz at any time.

B. **Term paper and report**

Each B.A.R. student is responsible for a 10-to-16-page double-spaced paper consisting of an exegetical summary of some passage in the Bible (preferably a passage in Genesis, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, Daniel, Matthew, Acts, 1 Corinthians or Revelation) followed by an expository sermon or lesson. Utilizing the textbooks and two or three commentaries, the student must summarize the passage and trace the argument (i.e., the flow of thought) in light of the literary context and its historical/cultural context. This should include an exegetical outline (summarizing preferably in complete sentences the exact thought of the Bible text) with a brief commentary on each verse which expresses your research into the text. Then the sermonic portion of the paper should bring out the biblical teaching and timeless principles which find valid application for today.

**Notes:** Be sure to observe the following rules: (a) To follow the suggested guidelines for interpreting the particular literary genre involved; (b) To discuss (in the last part of the paper) how the doctrine (or theology) of the text impacts our modern society; (c) To document your research by author's last name and the page number placed within parentheses in the text (or by footnotes) with a bibliography at the end.

The term paper will normally be due the same day on which that section of the Bible dealt with in the paper is scheduled for class discussion (especially if that literary genre is scheduled for March 29 or later). An oral report of about 15 to 20 minutes must be presented at that time. [Be sure to turn in a finished copy of the term paper to the professor before the oral report.]

Here is the basic process for studying your passage and doing the paper:

I. Study

A. Read the passage (normally about 10 to 15 verses) carefully, if possible in several different English versions (note esp. the NASB (esp. NASU1995); NIV; and HCSB as well as the TNIV, ESV (or NRSV). Less helpful are the NKJV or KJV.

B. Look at the context: what is going on before and after the passage?

C. Look at the structure of the passage to find the development of its argument.

D. Look at words and phrases which may be hard to understand.

E. Do the different English translations suggest any places where there might be

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5 Remember the basic guidelines in Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, chaps. 1 and 13. Also see Ross, *Creation and Blessing* especially 46-48 for the concept of an expository outline and timeless principles. Furthermore consult Walter Kaiser's *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981) especially chapter 7 for tips on seeking to glean timeless principles from the text.

6 Going beyond the time limits without prior permission or failing to turn in a finished report will be penalized.

difficulty about the meaning?

F. Use an English (or Greek or Hebrew) concordance and the online interlinears (see bibliography below) to look up any especially interesting or difficult words.

II. Learn from Others

A. Use a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia to look up any especially interesting or difficult concepts (see recommendations in Glynn chap 13+).

B. Read at least three commentaries on the passage (see bibliography below) to see what other scholars think about it (see recommendations in Glynn, chap. 4—see note 8).

III. Decide

Make up your own mind about what the passage is saying. Seek to combine respect for others who have studied the passage with your own independent judgment.

IV. Write

A. On the basis of the notes you have taken, write an initial draft. Write as well as you can, paying attention to spelling, grammar, and style. Be sure to include reference to any source you have used. You may cite the source in the text simply with a reference to author's last name and page number in parenthesis in the text.

B. Include an introduction of a paragraph or so in which you situate the passage in its context and deal with any necessary preliminary matters.

C. The body of the paper should contain a verse-by-verse explanation of what you think the passage means. Include comments on specific words and phrases; but don't get lost in the “forest” by spending all your time on the “trees”; make sure you help the reader see how the text is moving along, commenting on the transitions between verses and so on. In this part, do not merely summarize each verse (or paragraph) or re-state the obvious. Do comment on the flow of the argument or story-line from verse to verse (or paragraph to paragraph), including addressing why certain things may be stated in a particular way, why certain statements are included where they are, or why omissions of expected materials occur. Comment as needed on important theological words or ideas. Notice where else in the book or in other biblical books certain words or ideas are found. Concordances or theological wordbooks may be helpful here (see bibliography below). As you comment on the text, be sure to indicate other views of significant points that you have uncovered in your study. Also try to explain why you have chosen the view you have and have rejected other views.

D. Include a conclusion of a page to a page and a half. The conclusion should briefly summarize what you think the key idea of the passage is and spell out its significance for 1) your thinking about the issue or about the faith in general; and 2) what action you may need to take as a result of your study.

E. A bibliography of all the books and articles consulted should conclude the paper.

F. Rewrite the initial draft to correct errors in grammar or style, improve the flow of the argument, and correct the substance.

C. Exams

The nature of the two exams (see class schedule below) will be explained later.

D. Grading guidelines

Exams 25% each; term paper--25%; daily grade 25% (including 20% for weekly exercises and reading [as well as any quizzes?] documented on reading slips); 1% for the oral report on term paper, and 4% divided equally (2% each) between class participation and class attendance.

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IV. Class Schedule (BI 414—2011)

Jan. 25  
(1) Brief review of syllabus. (2) Introduction to the concept and need of hermeneutics. (3) Some basic definitions. (4) Prerequisites for the Bible interpreter. (5) Brief summary of various historical approaches to Bible interpretation. (6) Two important axioms of general hermeneutics:  
  a) The Bible is like any other book.  
  b) The Bible is unlike any other book.  

Feb. 1  
(1) Brief reemphasis on the importance of historical-cultural and Biblical contexts including an orientation to basic hermeneutical steps.  
(2) Bridging the historical-cultural gap.  
(3) Possible preliminary guidelines for determining transcultural versus culturally-bound teachings.  
Assignment: Read at least half of Zuck, 76-97; Fee/Stuart, 71-86 (2nd ed.,61-76); Duvall and Hays, 98-116 (1st ed. 95-112) and do assignment #5 on Nehemiah, J18(114).  

Feb. 8  
Bridging the language gap (i.e. grammatical/lexical analysis of biblical context). Emphasis on How to Basic Greek or Hebrew word studies.  
Assignment: Read at least half of Zuck, 98-122; Fee/Stuart, 33-53 (2nd ed. 28-44); and Duvall/Hays, 28-39(both eds.) & do assignment #3 on p. 42; also 132-152 (=1st ed. 128-148) & do concordance assignment #1 on 153(=148); also read preface to Wm. Mounce, ed. Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words,xiii-xxv.  
Extra credit, Duvall/Hays, 157-171a(=150-164).

Feb. 15  
Bridging the literary gap. Introduction to various literary genres. Possibly brief introduction to relationship of Old Testament to New Testament??  
Assignment: Read all of Ruth and Lamentations & 3 John; at least half of Zuck, 123-142; Fee/Stuart, 99-102 [2nd ed.86-90] & review preface 11-16 [9-11]; Duvall and Hays, 119-130(1st ed. 115-126) & do assignment #1 on 1 Cor. 11 & Acts 1 (p. 131[127]).

Feb. 22  
Prose and Narrative.  
Assignment: Read whole books of Judges and Acts. Read Fee/Stuart, 89-125 (2nd ed. 78-93, 94-112)& Duvall and Hays, 265-280, 305-325a(1st ed. 255-270; 293-313) & 1) fill in handout—basic outline on Judges??; and 2) do substitute assignment on Judg. 10:6--11:11 by answering questions on top of 327(=315); & 3) do assignment on p.281(=270) ---Acts 2:42-47 only. Also review at least half of Zuck, 126-30

March 1  
Epistles and letters. Deadline for BAR: choice of passage Assignment: Read whole books of 1 Corinthians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon, 1 John, & 2 John. Read at least half of Zuck, 221-26 plus review 134 & 141-42; Fee/Stuart, chaps. 3-4 [55-87 (2nd ed. 45-77)]; Duvall and Hays, 45-58, 227-242 (1st ed. 45-58; 217-233); do assignment #1 on Phil 2:1-4 (p. 59) & do word study procedure on Greek word translated “worry” in Matt. 6:25 in Duvall/Hays, rev. ed. 154-155 #8.2).

March 8  
Legal genre (laws). Deadline to choose probable word(s) to study in passage. Relationship
of O.T. law to the N.T. (+brief look at theological analysis?). Brief review for exam. **Assignment:** Read all of Deuteronomy. Read Fee/Stuart, chap. 9 [163-180 (2nd ed. 149-164); Duvall/Hays, 328-343(1st ed. 316-31) & do assignment #4 on Deut. 22:8 (345[333])]; review Zuck, 127.

March 15  **MID-TERM EXAM**

March 22  *Preliminary work due for Biblical passage: one mini-word study; exegetical outline of passage; basic observation and initial commentary with bibliography.*


April 5  Introduction to Prophetic and Apocalyptic literature. Prophecy & typology. **Assignment:** Read Isaiah 1-14, 24-53. Read at least half of Zuck, 169-84, 227-49; Fee/Stuart, 181-204(2nd ed.165-86); Duvall and Hays, 368-386(1st ed. 356-74) & do assignment on Isaiah 1:10-20 as substitute using instructions on 386(=374).

April 12  No class. Spring Break. BMAA meeting

April 19  Apocalyptic literature. *Latest due date for papers not covered in class. **Assignment:** Read whole books of Daniel and Revelation plus Matthew 24. Read at least half of Zuck, 185-93 and review 136, 247-49. Read Fee/Stuart, chap. 13 (249-264 =2nd ed.,231-245)); read Duvall/Hays, 282-300(271-89) & do assignment #2 on 7 churches (301[289])? or chart handout from GWP??

April 26  Gospels and use of parables. **Assignment:** Read all of Matthew & John. Read at least half of Zuck, 194-221; Fee/Stuart, chaps. 7-8, 127-62 [2nd ed.,113-34, 135-48]; Duvall and Hays, 65-78, 244-262(1st ed. 65-77; 235-253) & do assignment #1 on Matt. 24-25 (263[=253]). For extra credit, (B.A.R.) read Klein, Blomberg, & Hubbard, 399-418 (1st ed. 323-43)
May 3
(1) Application of the biblical text. (2) Guidelines for determining transcultural applications. Review for exam. Fill out evaluation forms (if applicable).
Assignment: Read at least half of Zuck, 260-72, 278-92, & review 90-97; Duvall and Hays, 213-223 (1st ed. 203-13) & do assignment #3 on I Tim. 6:10a (224/214).
Extra credit, (B.A.R.) read Klein, Blomberg, & Hubbard, 477-504 (1st ed. 401-26).

May 10 FINAL EXAM

V. Selected Bibliography: Hermeneutics and Word Study Tools


Word Study Tools
Basic Word Study Tools: Selected Wordbooks and Concordances


**Lexicons and additional Wordbooks**


*http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/nas* BDB correlated to NASB (keyed to Strong’s #) +keyed to Harris- Archer-Waltke, TWOT.

*http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek* NT Grk lexicon based Thayer+ & keyed to Strong’s.

**Interlinears**


*http://www.biblestudytools.com/interlinear-bible* outstanding interlinears search English words and find verses in NASB or KJV and then words are clickable to open up lexicons + keyed to large Kittel and TDNT

Websites for Word Study and Exegetical tools

http://www.biblestudytools.com Excellent source of keyword or verse searches for Bible in several versions in English or other languages.

http://biblos.com interlinear & lexicons + other bible study tools

**http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/nas** BDB correlated to NASB (keyed to Strong’s #) +keyed to Harris- Archer-Waltke, TWOT

*http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek* NT Grk lexicon based Thayer+ & keyed to Strong’s

**http://www.biblestudytools.com/interlinear-bible** outstanding interlinears search English words and find verses in NASB or KJV and then words are clickable to open up lexicons + keyed to large Kittel and TDNT

*http://interlinearbible.org/genesis/1-1.htm* based on KJV (with parallel trans NASB ) from biblos.com site Strong’s # clickable to NASB exhaustive concordance

http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/how-to-do-a-word-study NT Greek word study procedure by Sam Storms

http://www.studylight.org/lex/ Heb and Greek lexicons keyed to Strong's # and other sources

http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk Greek lexicon using an English word, Greek word or Strong's number

http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=3309 Interlinear study bible Strong# _merinao_ (verb)

http://www.preceptaustin.org/Greek_to_Me.htm Word study tools for Grk. & Heb. plus several in-depth Greek word studies already done using Strong’s #, Vine’s, & Wuest’s (older method)

http://unbound.biola.edu/index.cfm?method=multilex.showSearchForm Greek & Heb. lexical searches in English, Spanish & French (+Strong’s lexicon link)

http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/essential-tools-for-exegesis

http://www.lionelwindsor.net/language_tools_hebrew.html