



TRUTH IN LOVE BIBLICAL  
TRAINING CENTER

*CERTIFIED BIBLICAL COUNSELOR PROGRAM*

**MODULE BC03**

HERMENEUTICS: BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION  
*RULES OF ENGAGEMENT*

**SYLLABUS**

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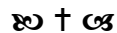
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# HERMENEUTICS: BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

## *RULES OF ENGAGEMENT*

All Scripture *is* God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfected, thoroughly furnished to every good work.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17 (MKJV)*



“Every man who attaches a meaning to a text of Scripture, so far acts as an interpreter of Scripture. And in an age when almost all can read, and when, it may be hoped, many more than at any former period, are seriously occupied with the study of the Word of God, it cannot be considered as a useless undertaking, to endeavour to fix some Principles of Biblical Interpretation. And when the character of the times is such, that every sober Christian must daily come in contact with schemes of doctrine which to him are perfectly new, and hear them supported by texts of Scripture which he has been accustomed to understand in a very different sense; under such circumstances, he must be desirous of obtaining some rules, whereby he may account, not merely to an opponent, but still more to his own conscience, for believing that these texts mean one thing- rather than another.”

Translator’s Preface, *PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION*,  
*TRANSLATED FROM THE INSTITUTIO INTERPRETS OF J. A. ERNESTI*, 1761  
By Charles H. Terrot, D.D., 1865



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# HERMENEUTICS: BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

## *RULES OF ENGAGEMENT*

### *SYLLABUS*

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This 12-week module is a basic course in Biblical Hermeneutics. It is a required module of the *Certified Biblical Counseling, Commissioning, and Diploma Programs*, and is also offered as an elective for other programs.

This course integrates both general and specific principles of biblical interpretation and the inductive method of Bible study, with the primary emphasis being on the grammatical-historical-literary method of interpretation. The course will provide the student with a complete methodology that can be used to study any book of the Bible.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Define hermeneutics, exegesis, theology, and historical and literary criticism methods.
2. Determine the presuppositions and prerequisites of biblical interpreters.
3. Describe briefly the major historical and modern approaches to biblical interpretation.
4. Discover common exegetical, hermeneutical, and logical fallacies in order to improve hermeneutical skill and avoid mistakes often made by interpreters.
5. Distinguish between primary and secondary, warranted and unwarranted, and general principle versus situation-specific applications of a given text to real-life situations.
6. Dialogue with other interpreters and other interpretations of specific texts.
7. Demonstrate interpretive strategies (commonly referred to as “rules of interpretation”), which will assist you in dealing with various genres of biblical literature.
8. Develop a passion for the careful study of the Word of God, which has as its end a life transformed by the wisdom of God through proper interpretation and consistent application.

## TEXTS

### Required Texts:

- **Duvall, J. Scott and Hays, J. Daniel.** *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible. Fourth Edition.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020.
- **Bibles**
  - **Translations we will be using:** New American Standard (NASB), Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB), and the New English Translation (NET) Bibles (Biblegateway.org has free access to all of these translations, as well as most others.)

### Other Required Information:

There is a Study Guide provided for the course. Basic mastery of the information provided is essential to the successful completion of this course. There are four (4) Appendices included that are also required reading.

### Honors Reading:

For honors credit, read any **one or more** of the following and submit a brief précis for each book read and submit **at or before the last class**:

- Bruce, F. F. *The Canon of Scripture.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988.
- Carson, Donald A. *Exegetical Fallacies.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.
- Dockery, David S. *Biblical Interpretation Then and Now.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1992. (Intermediate)
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993.
- Grudem, Wayne, C. John Collins, and Thomas R. Schreiner; Editors. *Understanding the Big Picture of the Bible: A Guide to Reading the Bible Well.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012.
- Kaiser, Walter and Silva, Moisés. *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning (Revised and Expanded Edition).* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007
- Kruger, Michael J. *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012

- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation (Revised and Expanded)*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1970.
- Wallace, Daniel B; Editor. *Revisiting the Corruption of the New Testament: Manuscript, Patristic, and Apocryphal Evidence*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2011.
- Wegner, Paul D. *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004.

**Attendance:** Students are required to attend at least nine of the twelve sessions of the course. There is no better method of getting the class information apart from attendance. You are welcome to review the videos of the course. We will make access to those videos available within the next day or two following class. A great deal of information is covered in each session, so attendance is vital to the learning process. While attending the sessions is required for all Certificate students, it does not apply toward your grade and you cannot receive credit without it.

### Grading Criteria

1. **Reading:** Various reading assignments will be given during the twelve-week period. Each student will be expected to read the material according to the twelve-session schedule provided in the syllabus. Part of the reading requirement is “Pre-Reading;” reading to be completed **prior to** the first class session. Completing the reading assignments will help you to effectively participate in the class discussions and assist you in grasping the concepts being taught in each session. While not everything in the course textbook is assigned reading, reading the entire textbook will greatly enhance the learning experience.
2. **Worksheets/Textbook Exercises:** Part of the “Reading & Assignment Schedule” (page “ix”) includes worksheets and/or exercises from the textbook to be completed each week. The links for these are provided for each session’s assignment.
3. **Participation:** A major principle of *Truth in Love Biblical Counseling & Training Center* is “doing theology in community”. This being so, one of the primary criteria for students to receive a grade is their participation in class discussions for the course.
4. **Practicum:** There is one practicum for this course, which is due at the last class session. This practicum provides you, the student, with the opportunity to apply what you have learned from the course and to demonstrate your grasp of the information. This project is designed to assist you in applying hermeneutical strategies to a specific passage that various Bible interpreters have understood differently. The aim of this

project is to integrate various hermeneutical concepts and exegetical methods to help you become a skilled Bible interpreter.

At the first session, each student will be assigned a separate passage of Scripture that Bible interpreters have historically interpreted differently. Your task will be to:

1. Interpret the passage utilizing what you have learned and avoiding the exegetical fallacies covered in the course;
2. Synthesize the hermeneutical principles that lead you to your interpretation;
3. Summarize the major views from commentaries, journals, and dictionary articles;
4. Support your conclusion by explicitly naming the hermeneutical strategies that lead you to your conclusion. You must use and articulate your use of at least three (3) strategies/rules.

Show why your view is to be preferred over other views. Use logic, not just masses of material from people who already agree with you. If you quote commentaries or other sources, be sure to include the appropriate citation information - **this is required**. If you are not sure how to do this, see your professor or the course TA.



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# COURSE REQUIREMENTS

## *Summary of Requirements*

- Attend weekly lectures; participate in discussions.
- Worksheets/Textbook Exercises
- Practicum
- Course evaluation paper

### *Weekly Discussion Activities (20%)*

Each week, one or more Discussion Questions will be posited to the class. The goal is to elicit group interaction with the material.

### *Practicum (50%)*

There is one practicum for this course, which is due for presentation at the last class session. Details are below.

### *Course Evaluation Paper (10%)*

One, two-page evaluation of the course (due three days following last session).

### *Workbook Exercises (20%)*

There is a series of online worksheets and exercises are listed and the links provided in the table labeled, "Reading & Assignment Schedule," on page "x" of the Syllabus.

### *Assignments*

The practicum is due the last day of the course. The Course Evaluation paper is due 1 week following the last class. All assignments are to be submitted via Google Docs with an invitation to comment for the professor. For those who find writing and typing to be over-burdensome, the professor may grant permission to submit assignments in video format instead of Google Docs. Extensions must be pre-approved prior to the relevant due date.

**Practicum:** There is one practicum for this course, which is due for presentation at the last class session. This practicum provides you, the student, with the opportunity to apply what you have learned from the course and to demonstrate your grasp of the information. This project is designed to assist you in applying hermeneutical strategies to a specific passage that various Bible interpreters have understood differently. The aim of this project is to integrate various hermeneutical concepts and exegetical methods to help you become a skilled Bible interpreter.

## ***Honors***

**Honors Reading:** Read any Recommended Reading list item. Submit a two- to four-page précis (summary/analysis) of the work.

**Honors Project:** Submit an original research paper on any approved topic. Topic must be taken from the lectures, the required reading, or the recommended reading.

## ***Final Course-Grade Meanings***

A with Honors = You far exceeded expectations and completed an Honors Project or Reading.

A = There were dimensions to your work that went above the requirements.

B = At TILBCC, a “B” means that you successfully fulfilled the requirements.

C = You missed some important facets of the material or the assignment.

## ***Contact Information***

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## COURSE OUTLINE

**Session One:** Introduction & Syllabus; Bible Translations; The Interpretive Journey; The Historical-Cultural Context

**Session Two:** The Search for Meaning: What Do We Bring to the Text; Who Controls Meaning; Levels of Meaning

**Session Three:** The Literary Context; Word Studies; How to Read the Book (Sentences/Paragraphs)

**Session Four:** How to Read the Book (Discourses); Hermeneutical Fallacies

**Session Five:** Literary Genres (Part 1) – Old Testament Narrative; Acts

**Session Six:** Literary Genres (Part 2) – Old Testament Law

**Session Seven:** Literary Genres (Part 3) – Old Testament Poetry

**Session Eight:** Literary Genres (Part 4) – Old Testament Prophecy; Revelation

**Session Nine:** Literary Genres (Part 5) – Old Testament Wisdom Literature

**Session Ten:** The Gospels & The Epistles

**Session Eleven:** Responding to the Text: The Role of the Holy Spirit

**Session Twelve:** Tying it All Together; Practicum

**Appendix 1:** Interpreter's Tools

**Appendix 2:** The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics

**Appendix 3:** A Reformed Confession Regarding Hermeneutics

**Appendix 4:** The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

## READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

SESSION	READING	Assignment	DUE
<b>PRIOR TO 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS</b>	*GGW: Through Chapter 2; Chapter 6 <i>Appendix 1</i>	Worksheet #1 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet1">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet1</a>	<b>Session 1</b>
	GGW: Chapters 7, 10 & 11	Worksheet #2 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet2">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet2</a>	<b>Session 2</b>
	GGW: Chapters 8 & 9, 3 & 4	Worksheet #3 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet3">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet3</a>	<b>Session 3</b>
	GGW: Chapter 5 <i>Appendix 2</i>	Quiz Session #4 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsQuiz4">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsQuiz4</a>	<b>Session 4</b>
	GGW: Chapters 18 & 16 <i>Appendix 3</i>	Worksheet #5 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet5">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet5</a>	<b>Session 5</b>
	GGW: Chapter 19	Worksheet #6 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet6">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet6</a>	<b>Session 6</b>
	GGW: Chapter 20	Worksheet #7 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet7">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet7</a>	<b>Session 7</b>
	GGW: Chapters 21 & 17	Worksheet #8 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet8">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet8</a>	<b>Session 8</b>
	GGW: Chapter 22	Quiz Session 9 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsQuiz9">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsQuiz9</a>	<b>Session 9</b>
	GGW: Chapters 14 & 15	Worksheet #10 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet10">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet10</a>	<b>Session 10</b>
	GGW: Chapters 12 & 13 <i>Appendix 4</i>	Worksheet #11 <a href="http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet11">http://tiny.cc/HermeneuticsWorksheet11</a>	<b>Session 11</b>
<b>SESSION 12</b>		<b>Practicum Presentation</b>	<b>Session 12</b>

Be prepared to work reading assignment information into the class discussion during the next week's Session following the week listed.

Note that several items on the Reading schedule are not in sequence, and that not all material in the textbook is included in the **required** reading. It is still recommended that all of the content of the textbook be read for your own benefit.

Assignments can be found and submitted online following the link in the class email you receive two weeks prior to the first session.

\*GGW = Grasping God's Word, Fourth Edition