

MOODY DISTANCE LEARNING

Course Number, Name, and Credit Hours

BI-5500 Hermeneutics, 3 credit hours

Course Description

This course introduces the best practice methods to interpret biblical passages in their historical, cultural, grammatical, and theological context. It includes a sound exegetical method based on English Bible textual criticism, syntactic analysis, genre issues and contextualization. Skill in the use of Bible study tools and Bible software will be developed. Prerequisite or co-requisite: Introduction to Theological Research and Digital Literacy.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, the student will be able to...

1. Examine one's presuppositions and prior assumptions when seeking to understand a biblical passage (Reflection and Critique)
2. Identify the general principles of biblical interpretation, translation theory and syntactic analysis (Knowledge and Understanding)
3. Interpret the Bible in its historical, cultural, grammatical, literary and theological context with appropriate utilization of Bible software and other resources (Performance and Action, Judgment and Design)
4. Demonstrate the ability to discover the theological principle intended by the biblical author and its specific application in well-articulated written form (Performance and Action)
5. Critique the validity of interpretations of specific biblical passages (Judgment and Design)

Course Textbook(s) and/or Supplemental Information

Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word*. 3rd edition Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.
Kaiser, Walter C. and Moises Silva. *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

Audio/Videos:

- **Kauk**, "Three Reasons People Change from KJV"
- **Kauk**, "Overview of Hermeneutics"
- **Kauk**, "Using Logos Bible Software to do Word Studies"
- **Kauk**, "Genre"
- **Kauk**, "Interpreting the Parables"
- **Kauk**, "Interpreting the Book of Revelation"
- **Kauk**, "Finding Commentaries and Journal Articles"

- **Kauk**, "Typology"

PDFs:

- Mounce, William D. "English Grammar: Verb Inflection." In *Greek for the Rest of Us*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.
- Guthrie, George. "Discourse Analysis." In *Interpreting the New Testament*. Edited by David Alan Black and David S. Dockery, 253-271. Nashville: B & H, 2001.
- Harris, W. Hall. "Apocalyptic Genre: Visions and Symbols." In *Interpreting the New Testament Text*. Edited by Darrell L. Bock and Buist M. Fanning, 241-254. Wheaton: Crossway, 2006.

Assignments (what student does for a grade)

Guideline for the Discussion Board: Post your initial response to the discussion question by mid-week (Friday, 11:59pm CST). Then read and respond to at least **TWO** of your classmates' initial posts by the end of the week (Monday, 11:59pm CST).

Standard for Written Papers: All papers must be in Turabian style. Each page should be approximately 300 words, 12-pt. Times New Roman font on double-spaced lines with 1" margins. (Therefore, a 2-page paper is approximately 600 words; a 3-page paper is approximately 900 words, etc.) Here is a guide to Turabian style: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html

1-1 Observation Paper: Select a Bible passage from the [list of Bible Passages](#). Make your selection carefully because you will be working with this passage for the rest of this course. **This week** your assignment is to use the list of "Things to Observe" in chapters 3, 4, and 5 of *Grasping God's Word* and make observations on the passage of your choice. See the example, "[Observations on Philemon 1-25](#)."

2-1 Historical Context Paper: In two pages, summarize the historical context of your exegetical passage. Answer the following questions from *Grasping God's Word*, pages 124-125.

- Who is the author?
- What was his background?
- When did he write? What was the nature of his ministry?
- What kind of relationship did he have with the audience?
- Why was he writing?
- What was the biblical audience?
- What were their circumstances?
- What was their relationship to God?
- What kind of relationship did they have with each other?
- What was happening at the time the book was written?
- Are there any other historical-cultural factors that might shed light on the book?

See the example, "[Historical Context of Amos](#)" in the Course Materials in the navigation bar.

2-2 Literary Context Paper: In two pages, summarize the literary context for your exegetical passage.

- Provide an outline of the book – compare at least 3 outlines from other sources in the preparation of your outline.
- Explain how your passage fits within this outline and how it relates to the argument of the book.
- Provide a detailed outline of your passage.

See the example, "[Literary Context of Amos 5:1-17](#)".

3-1 Word Study: Use the guidelines in *Grasping God's Word*, page 167, to select three words that are in need of more in-depth study (there may be more words you want to study for your Interpretation paper in week 6, but please only do three for this paper).

- Look for words that are crucial to the passage.
- Look for repeated words.
- Look for figures of speech.
- Look for words that are unclear, puzzling, or difficult.

Use Logos Bible Software to help you discover the semantic range of this word and the specific meaning it has in the context of your passage. Report your findings in a paper of 3 pages. See the example, "[Sample Word Studies](#)."

4-1 Working Bibliography: Construct a working bibliography of at least seven current scholarly sources that are relevant to your interpretation paper in week 6. This may include sources from the Moody Online Library, sources from Logos Bible Software, and other electronic and printed sources.

6-1 Interpretation Paper: In 6-8 pages, complete step one of the interpretive journey, "Grasping the Text in Their Town" according to *Grasping God's Word*. Provide a verse-by-verse interpretation of your passage that explains what the text says and what it means in context. It is not necessary to duplicate the historical context or literary context sections that were done in previous papers. Also, do not discuss application to the present in this paper. That will be next week's assignment. In this paper, focus on what this passage meant in its original context. See "[Interpretation of Psalm 1](#)" in the Course Resource Section.

7-1 Application Paper: In 2-3 pages, take the passage for your exegetical project through the final four steps in the interpretive journey as presented in *Grasping God's Word*, pages 238-241

- Measure the width of the river to cross. What are the difference between the biblical situation and today?
- Cross the principizing bridge. List the theological principles communicated by the passage.
- Consult the biblical map. How do these theological principles fit with the rest of the Bible?
- Grasp the text in our town. How should individual Christians today live out the theological principle?

See the example, "[Applications from Psalm 1](#)" in the Course Resource Section.

Assessments

Assessments (# in parentheses)	% of Total
Discussions (12)	36
Quizzes (7)	21
Observation Paper	5
Historical Context Paper	5
Literary Context Paper	5
Word Study Paper	5
Working Bibliography	5
Interpretation Paper	12
Application Paper	6

Total:	100%
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Letter grades are determined by the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent	Description
A	96 – 100	Exceptional work
A-	94 – 95	Excellent work
B+	92 – 93	Very good work
B	89 – 91	Good work
B-	87 – 88	Above average work
C+	83 – 86	Average work
C	79 – 82	Work needs improvement
C-	75 – 78	Minimally acceptable work
F	< 75	Unacceptable work

Course Resources

Online students have access to the Moody Library. Though students may wish to check out books via inter-library loan, the online database has a number of articles and reviews available for download. You can access the online database by logging into your account at my.moody.edu. If you have not previously accessed the library database you may wish to complete the database tutorial at <http://library.moody.edu>. Here are additional tutorials on how to use the Crowell Library:

- "Finding Resources in the Moody Online Library: **Overview**" - http://openaudiovideo.moody.edu/OSAM/OSAM/Video/wmv/Education/Courses-Blackboard/Video_Files/BI-5528_Koehler_Overview.wmv
- "Finding Resources in the Moody Online Library: **References**" - http://openaudiovideo.moody.edu/OSAM/OSAM/Video/wmv/Education/Courses-Blackboard/Video_Files/BI-5528_Koehler_Reference.wmv
- "Finding Resources in the Moody Online Library: **eBooks**" - http://openaudiovideo.moody.edu/OSAM/OSAM/Video/wmv/Education/Courses-Blackboard/Video_Files/BI-5528_Koehler_eBooks.wmv
- "Finding Resources in the Moody Online Library: **Articles**" - http://openaudiovideo.moody.edu/OSAM/OSAM/Video/wmv/Education/Courses-Blackboard/Video_Files/BI-5528_Koehler_Articles.wmv

In addition to the resources available at the Moody Library, you may wish to visit <http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk> or www.bible.org. These sites contain content on various topics written by competent biblical scholars

The final resource that deserves mention here is **iTunes University**. Apple has developed a platform for colleges and universities to post audio and video content. There are a number of lectures available on iTunesU from various schools such as Dallas Theological Seminary, Seattle Pacific University, Duke, Yale, Covenant Theological Seminary, and others that may benefit in your studies or understanding of this course.

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