



TYNDALE

• SEMINARY •

Course Syllabus

FALL 2018
BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION
BIBL M502 M1

MONDAY EVENINGS: NOV. 5 – DEC. 10, 2018
6:00 – 10:00 PM

INSTRUCTOR: PROF. FRANK KOVACS, PhD

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Office Hours: By appointment

Access course material at <http://classes.tyndale.ca/>

Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

[Learn how to access and forward emails to your personal account.](#)

The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A foundational course on biblical interpretation which will provide students with the basic exegetical tools required to interpret and appropriate the biblical text. The student will learn to recognize and work with the different literary genres of the Bible and will gain an overview of various hermeneutical approaches to Scripture. In the process, the student will be introduced to various research tools, methods, resources and practical skills for interpretation in order to appropriate the Bible well in our contemporary context.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Assess and apply a thoughtful process for reading and interpreting the Bible

2. Differentiate the major steps of the hermeneutical process
3. Quantify a renewed value for the wonderful diversity of Scripture
4. Reflect upon Scripture in light of crucial issues facing the contemporary church and society

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING AND TOOLS

Bible (a translation suitable for study, e.g., NIV, NRSV, NASB, ESV)

Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014. (abbreviation: FS)

Klein, William, Craig Blomberg, and Robert Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017. (abbreviation: KBH)

Longenecker, Richard. *New Testament Social Ethics for Today*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984.

STEP Bible - www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

B. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Twisted Scripture Case Study (10 %, 1-2 pages)

Recall an instance where you thought that the Bible was being misinterpreted or improperly applied. The instance of Scripture-twisting could be from a situation in church, at home, in the workplace, or in the media. The case study should have two distinct, but related elements: i) a retelling of the Scripture-twisting incident; ii) a summary of the reasons why you thought the Bible was being misused. To help you formulate your reasons please use the interlinear function of STEP Bible to compare a few popular English translations and also to identify words or phrases that may present challenges for readers.

Due November 12

2. Inductive Outline (20%, 1-2 pages)

Reading and analyzing a book of the Bible contextually is an essential skill for biblical interpretation. In this assignment, you should read the *Letter to the Galatians* through several times in order to become aware of the flow of the text. Reflecting a careful reading of the letter, you then create an inductive outline of *Galatians* by dividing the letter into thought units. Each “thought unit” should have a title that summarizes its main idea. Finally, develop a brief, but precise, statement of the letter's theme. Use STEP Bible’s “Analysis” by “Vocabulary

or Subject” of “Book” in the side-panel to assist in identifying main concepts from the word cloud. Then by selecting the relevant concepts, STEP Bible will provide you with basic information that may assist you in constructing your outline.

Due November 19

3. Apocalypse Now Study (20 %, 3-4 pages)

The underlying assumption of contemporary biblical hermeneutics is to interpret the Bible in light of what it meant in its original context. But how should we handle the book of Revelation? Read the book of Revelation and the material from the textbooks (FS, Chapter 13; KBH, 558-567) and suggest a possible application of the book's message for our modern world in light of its historical and literary context.

Due Nov 26

4. Household Codes, Then and Now (20 %, 3-4 pages)

How are we to understand, interpret and apply the words on marriage in Ephesians 5:21-33? In response to this question you are to read and respond to Andrew Lincoln's analysis of Ephesians 5:21-33 (*Ephesians*, WBC, pp. 385-94). Your response should do the following:

- Describe a few of the significant exegetical points raised in his analysis.
- Describe Lincoln's view of the relationship of this passage to its surrounding culture.
- Summarize Lincoln's application of this passage to the contemporary world.

Do you agree or disagree with his conclusions? Why or why not?

Due December 3

5. Reflection Paper on Longenecker (30 %, 4-5 pages)

Read, review and reflect upon Richard Longenecker's book, *New Testament Social Ethics for Today*. This book is based on a series of talks that he gave at Wycliffe on the relevance of NT social ethics and as such it deals directly with the application of the Bible. Specifically, the book addresses the important question of what role the NT should play in the formation of Christian social ethics today. The intent of this assignment is *not just to review or summarize* but *also to offer an assessment* of Longenecker's ideas. You should consider the following questions. Do you agree with Longenecker's "developmental hermeneutic" (pp. 16-28)? Do you think he offers a helpful way of applying the NT for today? Do you agree with his focus on Galatians 3:28 as a foundational passage for Christian social ethics? Did his book have an impact on the way you think about NT social ethics?

Due December 10

C. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services.

Current students must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Twisted Scripture Case Study	10 %
Inductive Outline	20 %
Apocalypse now study	20 %
Household Codes	20 %
Reflection paper on Longenecker	30 %
Total Grade	100 %

E. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

In every class I am asked by students, "What must I do to get a good mark?" Tyndale Seminary has a clear grade rubric on pages 147-148 of the Academic Calendar 2018-2019. All students should carefully study this rubric in order to determine the standards that are expected.

All written assignments must be: typewritten hardcopies, double spaced, with adequate margins, in 12 point size. Write in full and grammatically correct sentences. Consult W. Strunk and E.B. White [*The Elements of Style*](#), 3rd ed. (New York: MacMillan, 1976) regarding proper academic writing. For proper citation style, consult the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#) (same as Turabian style) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially [ch. 14](#). For citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.46 to 10.51](#) and [14.253 to 14.254](#). Papers need to be thoroughly proofread in order to reduce errors of grammar, spelling or logic. Style, grammar, and spelling are important elements of your work, demanding as much attention as the research itself.

Assignments are due on the dates indicated at the **beginning** of class. Extensions may be granted only at the discretion of the professor but not "beyond the last day of exams for the semester." Typically, extensions will only be given for sickness or family emergencies. In addition, students must make their extension request no less than three days from before the due date. Late assignments will be penalized according to Tyndale policy, "... papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof ..."

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on

tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

Students are encouraged to consult [writing resources](#).

Students should also consult the current Academic Calendar for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System. The Academic Calendar is posted at <http://tyndale.ca/registrar/calendar>.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you borrow ideas or distinctive phrases, you must acknowledge your sources properly. If you are ever in doubt, it is better to acknowledge your source.

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Office (Room B302; aau@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

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E. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

1. Week One (Nov. 5): The Nature of Scripture and the Nature of Interpreters

Class Readings: FS, 21-35; KBH, 39-65; 226-243

2. Week Two (Nov. 12): The Importance of Context

Class Readings: FS, 57-73; KBH, 293-312

Assignment Due: Twisted Scripture

3. Week Three (Nov. 19): Literary Genre and Interpretation

Class Readings: FS, 93-273; KBH, 417-567

Assignment Due: Inductive Outline of Galatians

4. Week Four (Nov. 26): The Language of the Bible

Class Readings: FS, 36-56; KBH, 324-360

Assignment Due: Apocalypse Now Study

5. Week Five (Dec. 3): Historical Context and Our Context

Class Readings: FS, 74-92; KBH, 312-324

Assignment Due: Lincoln on the Household Codes

6. Week Six (Dec. 10): The Bible for Today

Class Readings: KBH, 571-601; *Wright, 21-69

Assignment Due: Longenecker Book Review

* Christopher Wright's book is listed in the bibliography and it is not a textbook for this course, so this reading is optional.

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Tyndale Library supports this course with [e-journals and e-books](#). See the [Library FAQ page](#).)

(See also the Tyndale's [Biblical Interpretation and Application Online Reading Room](#))

Danker, F. W. [Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study](#). 3rd Rev. ed. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003.

- Fee, Gordon. [*New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*](#). 3rd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2002.
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.
- Long, Thomas, G. *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1989.
- Longenecker, Richard. [*New Testament Social Ethics for Today*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984.
- McKnight, Scot, ed. *Introducing New Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989.
- Osborne, Grant, [*The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*](#). Rev'd ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006.
- Stuart, Douglas. [*Old Testament Exegesis: A Primer for Students and Pastors*](#). 3rd ed. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 2001.
- Tate, W. Randolph. [*Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach*](#). Rev. ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008.
- Wald, Oletta. [*The New Joy of Discovery in Bible Study*](#). Rev. ed. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2002.
- Wright, Christopher. [*The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*](#). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006.