



# Online Course Syllabus

## BIB 505 L1

### Biblical Hermeneutics

### Fall 2020

#### Contact Information

**Instructor Name:** Dr. Jim Larsen

**Instructor Email:** jlarsen@criswell.edu

**Instructor Office Hours:** Online Course

#### Course Description and Prerequisites

An advanced study of the transmission and translation of the Scriptures and of the principles and procedures of their interpretation and application. There are no prerequisites for this course.

#### Course Objectives

This course is designed to provide students with an advanced engagement with the aforementioned topics. While it will include documented lectures, it also will include reading, research, and interaction with fellow classmates. Furthermore, at the end of this course, students should demonstrate the ability to:

1. Outline a brief history of the formation of the English Bible, giving strengths and weaknesses of major modern translations in English.
2. Recognize and define the pertinent issues, fundamental terms, and theological categories that are used when discussing the process of biblical interpretation.
3. Explain historical movements, current trends, and controversial issues in hermeneutics.
4. Distinguish different genres of biblical literature and demonstrate proficiency in applying the basic rules that govern the interpretation of each kind.
5. Analyze a given passage of Scripture using the basic steps of inductive Bible study.

#### Required Textbooks

- \* *The Bible*: The professor typically uses the *New American Standard Bible* in written course lectures.
- \* Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996 (ISBN 9780801020865).
- \* Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012 (ISBN 9780310492573).
- \* Goldsworthy, Graeme. *According to the Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2002 (ISBN 9780830826964).
- \* Plummer, Robert. *40 Questions about Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010 (ISBN 9780805434983).

#### Course Requirements and Assignments

##### Textbook Reading Assignments (20%)

The approximately 1000 pages of required textbook readings are a crucial component of this course. As the class progresses, it is expected that students will read the assigned pages thoughtfully and according to the order given on the *Course Schedule*. The percentage of assigned reading completed will be reported weekly. To do so,

students will email the professor *no later than* 5 PM on Friday of the indicated week with the percentage completed of the total page count for that week. Failure to report reading completed by the deadline will result in a zero for that assignment.

### **Lecture Reading Assignment (10%)**

Students are required to read the written lectures that cover the topics of the class. A Link to specific weekly lectures may be found in the associated Canvas module. In addition to this syllabus, lecture reading requirements may be found in the *Course Schedule*, links to which are available both on this course's Canvas homepage and in the module titled *Course Information & Documents*. As with the textbook reading assignments, students are required to report the percentage completed of weekly lecture reading to the professor via email by 5 PM on Friday of the indicated week. Failure to report reading completed by the deadline will result in a zero for that assignment.

### **Discussion Board Participation (10%)**

Students will participate in four Discussion Board (DB) forums, each spanning a two-week period. On the odd numbered weeks, students will engage an initial forum post by way of a 400–500 word response post. This response must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM of the Sunday night of that associated week. Then, on the even numbered weeks, students must interact with the posts of at least two classmates (see guidelines below). These interactions must be completed by 11:59 PM on the Sunday night of that associated week (5 PM of Week 8). The discussion board schedule is as follows:

Week 1: DB Thread 1 (8/17–8/23)	Week 5: DB Thread 3 (9/14–9/20)
Week 2: DB Responses 1 (8/24–8/30)	Week 6: DB Responses 3 (9/21–9/27)
Week 3: DB Thread 2 (8/31–9/6)	Week 7: DB Thread 4 (9/28–10/4)
Week 4: DB Responses 2 (9/7–9/13)	Week 8: DB Responses 4 (10/5–10/9)

Specifics dealing with student participation in discussion board items are as follows:

- The professor will post an item for *discussion* on Canvas for which *all* students must provide an appropriate response. As indicated above, this post must be between 400-500 words in length, and must *critically and adequately engage* the professors initial post (see link in the *Course Information & Documents* module: *Grading Rubric - Discussion Board Posts*).
- Once the student has provided a response to the professor's post, he/she must then *interact* with the post of at least two other students as well as respond to comments relating to his/her own post. Keep in mind that these posts are intended to promote *discussion*, and thus grades for these discussions will reflect the quality and thoughtfulness of these interactions.
- Your interactions should reflect a) facts, b) logical reasoning, c) be related to the topic, d) be written well, and e) give other students adequate time to respond.
- While it is acceptable to disagree with the posts of either the professor or another student, disagreement *must be* civil and gracious. Remember: challenge the thought/idea, not the person.
- Interactions with other students need not be overly lengthy but should be adequate to answer questions raised or interact with comments provided. Remember, your interaction with the work of others needs to be more than simply "good job," "I agree," or similar short responses. You should phrase your interaction with others in a way that requires a response. For example, you might ask a question, or perhaps ask them to elaborate on a particular point raised in their post. Again, the goal of these interactions is *quality discussion*.

- When posting, be sure to present your thoughts and point of view clearly, concisely, and graciously. Try to avoid sharing your personal opinions if you cannot back them up biblically or by citing other appropriate sources (use parenthetical citations).
- Make sure and check discussion threads frequently enough to respond to those who interact with your posts.

## Quizzes (20%)

Quizzes cover material discussed in designated chapters of *Duvall/Hays* and course lectures as indicated below. Additional information related to quizzes is as follows:

1. Quizzes can only be taken in the weekly order listed in the course calendar and below. Quizzes will be available on the class Canvas website by way of links in the specified weekly modules. **Students are required to take each assigned quiz between the Monday (after 8:00 AM) and Sunday (before 11:59 PM) of each designated quiz week.**

Week 2 (8/24–8/30):	Quiz 1- Duvall/Hays Chp 6 & Lecture 4
Week 3 (8/31–9/6):	Quiz 2- Duvall/Hays Chp 10 & Lecture 8
Week 4 (9/9–9/13):	Quiz 3- Duvall/Hays Chp 12 & Lecture 11
Week 5 (9/14–9/20):	Quiz 4- Duvall/Hays Chp 18 & Lecture 14
Week 6 (9/21–9/27):	Quiz 5- Duvall/Hays Chp 20 & Lecture 17
Week 7 (9/28–10/4):	Quiz 6- Duvall/Hays Chp 14 & Lecture 18
2. Quizzes can only be accessed once. These are closed book quizzes, and thus must be taken without consulting notes, textbooks, or other helps. Once students begin each quiz, a set timer in Canvas commences which cannot be paused and will continue to run until the allotted time of thirty (30) minutes is complete.
3. Students are not allowed to disclose information regarding the content of quizzes to other students. Furthermore, when taking quizzes it is recommended that students use some form of a laptop or desktop computer as opposed to other electronic devices (e.g., ipad, iphones, tablets, etc.) to minimize the possibility of software that is incompatible with the Canvas platform. If problems beyond the control of a student are encountered during the taking of a quiz, contact the professor via email so that the student's current quiz attempt can be cleared and then retaken.

## Paper (40%)

Each student is required to write a 15-20 page research paper (*double-spaced*) that examines one of the following eight issues pertaining to the topics covered in this course. Options for a paper topic include:

1. Examine and discuss biblical passage that is heavily disputed among textual critics with respect to authenticity; e.g., Mark 16: 9-20; John 8:1-11, 1 Jn 5:7.
2. Examine the hermeneutical approaches of a major figure in Christian history; e.g., Origen of Alexandria, Augustine of Hippo, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, etc.
3. Address contemporary objections to a particular passage in the Torah pertaining to slavery, genocide, marriage, or uncleanness regulations. How should the passage of your choice be understood today in light of its original context.
4. Examine/engage an Old Testament that speaks about God "repenting" regarding decision He made or changing his mind in light of diverging circumstances. How should such a passage be interpreted?
5. Write an exegetical paper that examines the meaning of a parable that Jesus told in one of the gospels.
6. Examine/engage an account that is mentioned by all of the Synoptic Gospels and show how they can be harmonized exegetically.

7. Analyze the way a passage in the Old Testament is interpreted by a New Testament author.
8. Discuss the Old Testament background related to a specific image that is prominent in the book of Revelation; e.g., the woman clothed in the sun; the four beasts before God's throne; the slain lamb who makes war with the nations; Jesus coming in the clouds to judge the world; etc.

This assignment consists of three distinct phases as specified below. *Each phase is to be uploaded into Canvas in either Word or PDF format. No other formats will be accepted.* Templates are available by way of links in the *Course Information & Documents* module demonstrating how each assignment is to be properly structured and formatted.

1. **Phase One (Due by 11:59 PM on Sunday of Week 2): 15% of paper grade. Students must select a topic, with preliminary justification, to be submitted to the professor via email for approval.** Once a topic is approved, students will be required to create a preliminary bibliography. This bibliography must consist of a minimum of ten (10) academic sources that students will use in their paper. No Internet sources may be used other than online journals. This does not mean students cannot use the internet to find books, journals, and other materials. However, *all cited sources* must be *published academic* material. Popular level works (e.g., devotionals, study Bibles, lay level books, etc.) are not permissible. At least three (3) of these sources must be essays found in theological journals, anthologies, and/or dictionaries. [**Note:** The student's *full bibliography* (phase 3) must increase to at least twenty (20) sources when the research paper is completed.] Finally, this assignment, which must include a cover sheet, the approved topic, and preliminary bibliography, is to be submitted by way of the link entitled *Research Paper Phase 1: Research Topic and Initial Bibliography* available in the Week 2 module.
2. **Phase Two (Due by 11:59 PM on Sunday of Week 4): 15% of paper grade.** In phase 2, students will formulate a thesis for their paper. A thesis is a clearly articulated purpose statement that defines the intention of the paper. Here, students are to state the intended conclusion. For example, "The following project will provide an exegetical analysis of \_\_\_\_\_ [a biblical passage]. This analysis will demonstrate that traditional perspectives on this passage fail to address \_\_\_\_\_ [some aspect described in analysis]." Likewise, this phase is to include a subsequent outline that describes the major points that the paper will follow to support a student's argument. Once this assignment is submitted, it will be evaluated with recommendations for changes provided as necessary. Approval must be given before students begin writing their paper. This assignment is to be submitted by way of the link entitled *Research Paper Phase 2: Thesis Statement and Outline* available in the Week 4 module.
3. **Phase Three (Due by 5:00 PM on Friday of Week 8): 70% of paper grade.** The final phase is the completed paper including a full bibliography. It will be graded according to the criteria provided in the *Grading Rubric – Research Paper (Online Graduate Courses)* found via a link in the *Course Information & Documents* module. Additional information includes:

**Content:** The paper must engage the topic approved in Phase 1 and follow the structure as approved in Phase 2. It must be written in a logically coherent manner, which includes an introduction, a body of the paper in which the ideas are developed, and a conclusion.

**Research:** At least twenty (20) sources must be used (again including the required minimum of 3 articles as described in Phase 1) with proper citation given in footnotes and bibliography. **NOTE:** See section below regarding **Academic Honesty**.

**Form and Style:** The paper must be written using the correct format as well as proper grammar and spelling. If the paper contains excessive grammatical errors, misspellings, or typographical errors, it will receive a grade of a zero without the possibility of resubmission. Other formatting requirements include the following points:

- \* The text of the paper must be in Times New Roman, black, 12-point font. Italics, bolding, and upper-case lettering is only to be used as indicated in the *Criswell College Manual of Style*.
- \* All margins must be one inch.
- \* Paper must have an unjustified right margin.
- \* Paper must include properly formatted footnotes.
- \* Templates for the title page, research paper, and bibliography may be found via links in the *Course Information & Documents* module. All required formatting issues are addressed in *The Criswell College Manual of Style* (CCMS). A link to the most recent edition of the CCMS may be found in the *Course Information & Documents* module. **NOTE:** If students have questions not addressed in CCMS, they are encouraged to consult the most recent edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian.
- \* The research paper is to be submitted by way of the link entitled *Research Paper Phase 3: Completed Paper* available under the Week 8 menu. **Students must turn in a paper to receive a passing grade in the course.**

## Assignments, Quizzes, and Due Dates

Due to the nature of online courses, including the compressed timeline, students are expected to manage their personal schedules as necessary to meet *all* course requirements. Accordingly, assignments and quizzes *must be* completed/turned in by the due dates indicated in this syllabus, which are summarized in the *Course Calendar* posted in Canvas. Students are *strongly* encouraged not to wait until the last minute to work on and/or post assignments or take quizzes, as unforeseen circumstances may prevent meeting deadlines (power outages, computer problems, internet access problems, etc.). The professor *stresses* the importance of meeting assignment/quiz due dates. Unless there is an *extreme* circumstance involved (death in the family, hospitalization, etc.), **no late assignments or quizzes will be accepted.**

## Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to participate weekly during the weeks appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. Such participation may include the following: completing quizzes or exams; emailing faculty or class members as part of an assignment; discussion board posting or response; turning in an assignment; or other communication reflecting ongoing learning in the course. When unavoidable situations result in non-participation, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Instructors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual instructors may determine how participation affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether participation affects course grades.

## Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour

## Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the "I" will become an "F."

## Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

## Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college's academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student's course grade or academic standing at the college. Before

submitting a student's work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

## **Institutional Email Policy**

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

## **Identity Verification**

Students enrolled in Distance Education courses are required to present a photo ID to verify their participation in each course at the beginning of the term. Confirmation will occur through live-streamed meetings, video assignments, scheduled video conference calls, and/or another online video medium the instructor assigns.

## **Disabilities**

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

## **Resources and Support**

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at [studenttechsupport@criswell.edu](mailto:studenttechsupport@criswell.edu).

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or [studentservices@criswell.edu](mailto:studentservices@criswell.edu). Pastoral and certified counseling services are also

available to Criswell students. Appointments are scheduled through the Dean of Students, at [deanofstudents@criswell.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@criswell.edu).

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at [library@criswell.edu](mailto:library@criswell.edu). Offsite login information is available in Canvas in the “Criswell Student Training Course” under “Library Information.”

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence in any subject matter taught at the college. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203, or schedule an appointment by emailing [tutoringcenter@criswell.edu](mailto:tutoringcenter@criswell.edu) or by calling 214.818.1373.

## **Distance Education**

Students participating in courses through Distance Education, with or without live interaction, must complete the academic requirements for those courses with the integrity and commitment necessary to participate in and benefit from all of the exercises provided by the instructor for learning the subject matter of the course. Therefore, credit for Distance Education courses is the same as credit for courses taken on campus.



## Course Outline/Calendar

WEEK	LECTURE CONTENT	ASSIGNMENTS	READING
Week 1 8/17– 8/23	Lecture 1 (L1): Preliminaries L2: History of Interpretation L3: History of the English Bible	* Discussion Board (DB) 1 * Texts and Lecture Reading Report	<b>Plummer:</b> Chps 1-2, 8-11, 38-40 <b>Duvall/Hays:</b> Chps 2-5 <b>Goldsworthy:</b> Chps 1-5
Week 2 8/24– 8/30	L4: Textual Criticism L5: Bible Translation Strategies	* <b>Q #1: D/H, Ch 6 &amp; L4</b> * DB Response 1 * <i>Research Paper Phase 1: Research Topic and Preliminary Bibliography</i> * Texts and Lecture Reading Report	<b>Plummer:</b> Chps 5, 37 <b>Duvall/Hays:</b> Chps 1, 6-8 <b>Goldsworthy:</b> Chps 6-7
Week 3 8/31– 9/6	L6: Philosophy of Hermeneutics L7: Theological Commitments L8: Interpretive Challenges	* <b>Q#2: D/H, Chp 10 &amp; L8</b> * DB 2 * Texts and Lecture Reading Report	<b>Plummer:</b> Chps 3-4, 14-15 <b>Duvall/Hays:</b> Chps 9-11, Appendix 1 <b>Carson:</b> Preface/ Intro, Chps 1-3 <b>Goldsworthy:</b> Chps 8-17
Week 4 9/7– 9/13	L9: The Role of the Holy Spirit L10: Applying the Bible L11: Figures of Speech	* <b>Q#3: D/H, Chp 12 &amp; L11</b> * DB Response 2 * <i>Research Paper Phase 2: Thesis &amp; Outline</i> * Texts and Lecture Reading Report	<b>Plummer:</b> Chps 16, 21, 26-27 <b>Duvall/Hays:</b> Chps 12-13 <b>Carson:</b> Chps 4-5
Week 5 9/14– 9/20	L12: Role of Literary Genre L13: Biblical Narrative L14: Law Treaties	* <b>Q#4: D/H, Chp 18 &amp; L14</b> * DB 3 * Texts and Lecture Reading Report	<b>Plummer:</b> Chp 22 <b>Duvall/Hays:</b> Chps 18-19
Week 6 9/21– 9/27	L15: Poetry L16: Proverbs L17: Prophetic Literature	* <b>Q#5: D/H, Chp 20 &amp; L17</b> * DB Response 3 * Texts and Lecture Reading Report	<b>Plummer:</b> Chps 23-24, 28-31 <b>Duvall/Hays:</b> Chps 20-22
Week 7 9/28– 10/4	L18: Parables L19: Epistolary Literature L20: Apocalyptic Literature	* <b>Q#6: D/H, Chp 14 &amp; L18</b> * DB 4 * Texts and Lecture Reading Report	<b>Plummer:</b> Chps 25, 32-35 <b>Duvall/Hays:</b> Chps 14-17
Week 8 10/5– 10/9	L21: What is Biblical Theology? L22: Tools for Bible Study	* DB Response 4 * <i>Research Paper Phase 3: Final Paper</i> * Texts and Lecture Reading Report	<b>Plummer:</b> Chp 13, 17 <b>Duvall/Hays:</b> Appendix 2-3 <b>Goldsworthy:</b> Chps 18-26

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