



Class Information

Day and Time: Monday: 4:45pm-7:15pm
Room Number: E207

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Everett Berry
Instructor Email: eberry@criswell.edu
Instructor Phone: N/A
Instructor Office Hours: N/A

Course Description and Prerequisites

(must mirror description from current *Catalog*) This course explores approaches to biblical interpretation used within the history of the Church, focusing on the variety of ways that Christians have understood the nature and relationship of texts, authors, readers, and divine agency. (Prerequisite: BIB 105)

Course Objectives

This course is designed to introduce students to the aforementioned areas of hermeneutics, biblical studies, and Christian theology. The class is based upon a mixture of lectures, class discussion, and research. Furthermore, at the end of this course, the student should demonstrate the ability to . . .

1. Defend the unity of Scripture by identifying major ways in which the two testaments fit together thematically, intertextually, and theologically.
2. Define fundamental terms that are used when discussing how Scripture should be interpreted holistically.
3. Explain key hermeneutical approaches that have evolved in the history of biblical interpretation.
4. Integrate the content of this course into one's own personal way(s) of interpreting Scripture.
5. Articulate how this course impacts local church ministry, especially pertaining to teaching and preaching.

Required Textbooks

- * John Goldingay, et al. *Five Views of Christ in the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022. ISBN: 9780310125518
- * Edward W. Klink III and Darian R. Lockett. *Understanding Biblical Theology: A Companion of Theory and Practice*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012. ISBN: 9780310492238
- * Gary Schnittjer and Matthew Harmon. *How to Study the Bible's Use of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2024. ISBN: 9780310142454
- * Kevin Vanhoozer, *Mere Christian Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2024. ISBN: 9780310234388

Course Requirements and Assignments

Textbook Reading Assignments (20%)

The approximately 900 pages of required reading 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 schedule given on the calendar. By noon on specified days of class, students are required to report the percentage of reading that has been completed. So, for instance, chapters 1-3 of Vanhoozer must be read by noon on February 10, chapters 1-2 of Klink/Lockett must be read by noon on March 10th, etc. To report-

1. Students are to click the links entitled *Reading Report* for each designated reading week. They are located on the Canvas Modules page.
2. After connecting to that site, students can click the *Reading Report icon* and then click the *Begin Button* to enter the *Reading Report* page.
3. Next, students can see the total chapters listed, record their total percentage of pages read in the response box, and finally click the *Save and Submit Button* to upload their answers for grade credit.
4. Also note that if all of the reading has not been finished, students will only receive credit for the completed percentage they report.

Interpretation Essay (15%)

Students must write a 4-5 page essay that provides a synopsis of interpretive observations about the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15. The insights provided in the essay will be the basis for class discussion about Luke 15 during the next to last week of class on 4/21 (by noon). Regarding the parameters for the paper, it must...

1. Address four contextual categories and offer at least two interpretive insights for each one. Those categories include...
 - * Textual-Literary- as it relates to interpretive significance, highlight features of the parable's structure as well as how it fits within Luke's gospel as a whole.
 - * Cultural/Historical- identify 1st-century dynamics (whether it be historical realities of the day or cultural praxis relevant to the account) that contributes to understanding the parable as a whole and/or select portions of it.
 - * Intertextual Connections- mention any OT or even 2nd temple themes, passages, or accounts that possibly connect with the prodigal son story.
 - * Canonical Harmony- show how the prodigal son story fits into the larger NT storyline of redemption in Christ and possibly interrelates with other NT passages outside of Luke's gospel.
2. Be typed in black with Times-New Roman font (size 12), include a cover sheet with the title of the paper and the date of submission. Also, quoting sources in this assignment is optional. But if any source is referenced, properly formatted footnotes are required.
3. Be written according to the guidelines found in Turbian Style Format. Students must also write the paper in accordance with the style templates (e.g., Title Page, Essay) that are provided in Canvas .
4. Be uploaded to the student's Canvas account-
 - * Click the link entitled *Interpretation Essay*, which is located on the Canvas modules page, and then...
 - * Click the link entitled *Interpretation Essay: Click here to Submit*.
 - * Next scroll down and click on "Browse My Computer."
 - * Then find the paper on your computer and click open/submit in either a *Word Document or PDF format*.
 - * You can write comments in the "comments" field and click "Submit."
 - * Note as well that because of these instructions, no hard copies will be accepted.

Exams (30%)

Two essay exams will be given in this course; the first one will cover material covered from 1/27 to 3/24 and the second over material from 3/31 to 4/28. Specifications for taking each exam include the following-

1. Exams will cover material from the lectures as well as content in the assorted reading assignments. Note that students are responsible to take their own notes for exam preparation as well.
2. Each exam will be available on the class Canvas website from Monday 12:01 AM to Friday 11:59 PM of each designated exam week.
3. They are taken by clicking on the link entitled *Exams* that is located on the Canvas homepage. Students can then click the available link on the site to take the necessary exam, which includes 8 essay questions. Students are required to choose 4 and answer them using 600-700 words for each one.
4. Students are permitted to use sources in preparation for taking the exams as well as when they are taking them as well. The only restrictions are that students cannot quote sources in their exam answers, no plagiarism is permitted, and not AI software is to be used in constructing essays. Note as well that no late exams will be permitted.
5. Students are not allowed to disclose information regarding the content of exams to other students. Furthermore, when taking exams, 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 losing an internet signal or not having software that is adaptable to Canvas programs.

Paper (20%)

Each student will be required to write a 9-10 page research paper (*double-spaced*) that examines one of the following seven issues pertaining to the topics covered in this course. Those topics include...

1. Examining how a NT passage quotes and/or appeals to a specific OT text (or texts).
2. Showing how an OT feature (e.g., the temple, Levitical system), event (e.g., creation, the flood, the exodus, the exile), or person (e.g., Moses, David) is interpreted typologically to point to the person of Christ.
3. Establishing a hermeneutical criteria for interpreting OT narratives Christologically and then providing one example of how it should be implemented.
4. Explaining how a NT account (whether it be in a gospel, Acts, an epistle, or Revelation) intermixes numerous OT accounts including quotations, allusions, and figures.
5. Showing how a specific OT passage should be interpreted messianically.
6. Defending a Trinitarian reading of a specific OT passage (or account).

Also, the paper must...

1. Accurately and judiciously represent the position that is explored.
2. Be typed in black with Times-New Roman font, font size 12.
3. Include a cover sheet with the title of the paper and the date of submission.
4. Be written according to the guidelines found in Turbian Style Format. Students must also write the paper in accordance with the style templates (e.g., Title Page, Research Paper, Bibliography) provided in Canvas .
5. Be uploaded to the student's Canvas account by the following instructions-
 - * Click the link entitled *Paper Assignment*, which is located on the Canvas modules page, and then...
 - * Click the link entitled *Paper Assignment: Click here to Submit*.
 - * Next scroll down and click on "Browse My Computer."
 - * Then find the paper on your computer and click open/submit in either a *Word Document or PDF format*.
 - * You can write any comments in the "comments" field and click "Submit."
 - * Note as well that because of these instructions, no hard copies will be accepted.

The paper will be evaluated according to the following criteria.

1. **Content:** The paper must be clearly defined and cover the material under consideration. It must be written in a logically coherent and readable manner, which includes an introduction, a body of the paper in which the ideas are developed, and then a conclusion. In addition, a bibliography of the works cited must be included at the end as well.
2. **Research:** At least 8 sources must be used and proper citation given. No Internet sources may be used. Likewise, at least 3 sources must be essays found in theological journals, anthologies, and/or dictionaries. Finally, be aware of the rules against plagiarism that are discussed below.
3. **Form and Style:** The paper must be written using the correct format as well as proper grammar and spelling. To see how the paper is to be formatted properly, students can reference templates for the title page, research paper, and bibliography under the *Paper Assignment* rubric, which again is located on the Canvas homepage.
4. **On Time:** Finally, one must turn in a paper to receive a passing grade in the course and no late papers will be accepted. Note that research papers are due by noon on 4/28.

Class Participation (15%)

A large portion of the course is based on discussion and interaction in three different contexts, those being...

1. Interaction about assigned textbook readings
2. Corroboration on the interpretation essay on Luke 15
3. A final defense that students must provide for their research papers

Students will be evaluated by how well they engage the pertinent materials in these different venues.

Due Dates and Late Assignments

As indicated on the Course Schedule, the Interpretation Essay Paper is due by noon 4/21 and the Research Paper is due by noon on 4/28. Note that none of these assignments will be accepted after the due dates.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

Class Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they (1) anticipate being able to attend every on-campus class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, or (2) participating in academically related activities as identified in online-course schedules including synchronous class sessions conducted remotely by video, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any missed information. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades. Professors apprise students of such information in course syllabi.

Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships must meet specified requirements of various departments at the college and should consult relevant sections of the *Academic Catalog*. To ensure such funds will not be forfeited, students are responsible for contacting the proper departments to ascertain any specific course participation requirements and consequences of not meeting such requirements. Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships should consult the Financial Aid office.

While Criswell College is a non-attendance taking institution, it nevertheless must demonstrate that students begin their courses in order to comply with Federal Aid regulations. Accordingly, students must participate in academically related activities during census periods. Failure to meet this requirement will result in students being administratively dropped from courses.

Academically related activity is defined as any course-related activity that may be used as evidence of attendance. Examples include:

- physical presence in a classroom during a class session with the instructor present,
- participation in a synchronous remote video class session with the instructor present,
- submission of an academic assignment, quiz, or exam,
- participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction,
- participation in a study group or discussion board that is assigned by the instructor,
- documentation showing that the student and a faculty member corresponded about the academic subject of the course.

NOTE: Logging into a Canvas course alone and logging into a Synchronous Online class session without active participation or with the camera off are not considered attendance.

NOTE: A census period begins on the first day of a semester/term and runs through the end of the last day to drop courses. During the census period, attendance data is collected in order to demonstrate compliance with Federal Aid regulations. There is no census period for winter terms since there is no last day to drop courses.

ATTENDANCE NOTE: For this course, missing more than fifteen (15) minutes at the beginning or end of a class period will count as one absence. Therefore, students who wish to depart early should clear it with the professor. Also, three instances of tardiness of fifteen minutes or less equals one absence. Finally, three absences will result in a full letter reduction of the final grade and absences exceeding four will result in failure of the course.

Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish

before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus's closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

Grading Scale

Letter	Percentage	GPA
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.

Course Policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

(Delete section if not needed or enter policies and/or information applicable to your course or classroom. Create relevant subheadings as desired.)

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.

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.

Research and Writing Standards

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

Resources and Supports

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.

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. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

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. Login credentials are emailed to students near the beginning of the semester.

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence. 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 schedule an appointment through Calendly (<https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>) or by visiting the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203. For questions, call 214.818.1373 or email at tutoringcenter@criswell.edu.

Course Outline/Calendar

The following course schedule is proposed but subject to change. Also, note that Reading Reports (RR) are due by noon on designated class days.

M	CONTENT	TEXTBOOK READINGS
Week 1 1/27	* Intro to Theological Hermeneutics (TH) * What is "Theological Hermeneutics"?	
Week 2 2/3	* What's Behind, Inside, & in Front of the Text? * Literalness, <i>Sensus Plenior</i> , and Allegory in the Early Church	
Week 3 2/10	* Modern Clashes in Hermeneutical Methodologies	RR for Vanhoozer: Chps 1-3
Week 4 2/17	* Surveying the Landscape of "Literal" Meaning	RR for Vanhoozer: Chps 4-6
Week 5 2/24	* Hermeneutics as a Way of Life	RR for Vanhoozer: Chps 7-9
Week 6 3/3	* The Historical-Grammatical Method & the Analogy of Faith * The Historical-Critical Method & Biblical Theology Movement	
Week 7 3/10	* Discussing Models of Biblical Theology (Part 1)	RR for Klink/Lockett: Intro, Chps 1-2
SPRING BREAK 3/17-3/21		
Week 8 3/24	* Discussing Models of Biblical Theology (Part 2)	RR for Klink/Lockett: Chps 3-5
* MID TERM 3/24-28 (Part of Week 8)		
Week 9 3/31	* Modern Discussions about TH: TIS, Intertextuality, NT use of the OT & Christological Typology	
Week 10 4/7	* How the Bible Interacts with Biblical Texts (Part 1)	RR for Schnittjer: Chps 2-4
Week 11 4/14	* How the Bible Interacts with Biblical Texts (Part 2)	RR for Schnittjer: Chps 5-7
Week 12 4/21	* Discussing Christological Interpretation (Part 1) * Interpretation Essay (by noon) * Interpretation Essay Discussion about Luke 15	RR for Christ in the OT: Chps 1-3
Week 13 4/28	* Research Papers Due (by noon) * Presentation & Discussion of Papers	RR for Christ in the OT: 4-5
Week 14 5/5	* Discussing Christological Interpretation (Part 2)	
* FINAL EXAM 4/28-5/1 (Week 13) OR 5/12-5/16 (Week 15)		

Selected Bibliography

- R. Michael Allen, ed. *Theological Commentary: Evangelical Perspectives*. New York: T & T Clark, 2011.
- Craig G. Bartholomew and Heath A. Thomas, eds. *A Manifesto for Theological Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.
- J. Todd Billings. *The Word of God for the People of God: An Entryway in the Theological Interpretation of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Craig Carter. *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: Recovering the Genius of Premodern Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.
- Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays, eds. *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Stephen E. Fowl, ed. *The Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997.
- Joel B. Green. *Practicing Theological Interpretation: Engaging Biblical Texts for Faith and Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.
- Werner G. Jeanron. *Theological Hermeneutics: Development and Significance*. New York: Crossroad, 1991.
- Walter C. Kaiser Jr., et al. *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- R. R. Reno. *The End of Interpretation: Reclaiming the Priority of Ecclesial Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2022.
- D. Christopher Spinks. *The Bible and the Crisis of Meaning: Debates on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture*. New York: T & T Clark, 2007.
- David L. Starling. *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship: How the Bible Shapes Our Interpretive Habits and Practices*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.
- Scott Swain. *Trinity, Revelation, and Reading: A Theological Introduction to the Bible and its Interpretation*. New York: T & T Clark, 2011.
- Daniel Treier. *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Kevin Vanhoozer, ed. *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
- Francis Watson. *Reading Scripture with the Church: Toward a Hermeneutic for Theological Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.