Course Syllabus
BIB 505 O1
Biblical Hermeneutics
Fall 2026

Class Information

Day and Time: Tues / Thurs 8:00–9:15 A.M.
Room Number: E208

Contact Information

Instructor Name: James W. Knox, PhD, MDiv
Instructor Email: jknox@Criswell.edu
Instructor Phone: 214-887-5287
Instructor Office Hours: Mon-Fri, 10-4 at Turpin Library (DTS), Room 107

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.

Course Objectives

A. Critique the historical transmission, canonicity models, and translation theories from an advanced theological framework.
B. Evaluate exegetical methods, syntax structures, and semantic ranges at an advanced research level.
C. Analyze and contrast how shifting literary genre rules relate to authorial intent.
D. Defend modern theological applications against contemporary philosophical critiques.

Required Textbooks

1. Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. (978-0-310-52417-5)
2. Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Rev. ed. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006. (978-0-830-82826-5)
3. Thiselton, Anthony C. *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. (978-0-802-80006-0)

Course Requirements and Assignments

A. **Participation (10%) —** The classroom experience is an essential element of the learning process. This includes engaging with the instructor, class materials, and fellow students. As such, it is expected and required that the student attends and participates. Failure to perform (e.g., through unexcused absences) will result in a reduction in the participation grade.

B. **Reading Sheets (10%) —** Beginning with Week 2, the student is expected to fill out a reading sheet for that week's assigned reading. The sheet will include summarizing the relevant material as well as brief assessments on why the material is helpful and how it can be applied. There are 14 weeks (excluding the 1st). The student must fill out at least 12 (2 may be dropped).
C. **Quizzes (10%) —** There are 7 online quizzes dispersed throughout the semester. Since they are online, they may be open book. However, they are not group assignments. The student must complete them on his/her own without additional assistance. The Quiz' content will correspond to the material derived from that section's reading (so not cumulative). The quizzes will contain 12 questions with 2 questions being optional. 1 entire quiz may be dropped. The quizzes are marked on the Course Calendar.
D. **Hermeneutic Papers (40%) —** The graduate student will be required to write 4 (double-spaced) papers related to each section of the course (the due date for each paper is marked on the Course Calendar).
    a. 1st Paper (10%) — 4–6 pages discussing the epistemological foundations of hermeneutics
    b. 2nd Paper (10%) — 6 pages performing an advanced historical-grammatical & lexical analysis on a selected passage.
    c. 3rd Paper (10%) — 6 pages comparative genre analysis and authorial intent on the same selected passage.
    d. 4th Paper (10%) — 6 pages explaining hermeneutically how to faithfully apply the same selected passage into our modern cultural context.
E. **Hermeneutical Assessment Paper (30%) —** The graduate student will select one of the hermeneutical systems outlined in Thiselton's *The Two Horizons* and write a 12–16-page, double-spaced research paper analyzing and critiquing the system.

Classroom Policies and Information

Submission Policies

- Completed Reading Sheets must be uploaded to the assigned reading sheet tab in Canvas prior to the start of class for that respective due date.
- Quizzes must be completed on Canvas prior to the start of class for that respective due date.
- Exams will be conducted physically in class without any assistance (e.g., textbooks or notes) or distractions present (e.g., phones).

Late Submissions

Late submissions will be accepted but with a penalty. 5% will be deducted per day once the due date has passed. After one week, the assignment will no longer be accepted with an automatic Ø registered for the assignment. Exams cannot be taken late except for emergencies.

Video Recording

To ensure FERPA compliance when a course is live-streamed or recorded, students can opt out of video recordings by requesting seating in a designated area off camera. Students who sit outside of this area are giving implicit permission to be recorded.

Class Attendance:

Students should only enroll in courses they are able to attend regularly.

- **On-campus** students are expected to attend class **in person** according to the course syllabus.

- Students enrolled in the **online section** must pay any applicable online course fees.
- Online students are expected to attend class **synchronously** at the scheduled time via the designated video conferencing platform, Zoom, found in the left-hand global menu in Canvas.
- Online students must have their **cameras turned on with sound muted** during class, and actively participate in discussions and activities. In order to be properly identified, students must upload a picture ID to their Canvas Account Profile *prior to the first online meeting.* For instructions on how to upload a profile picture, click here.

Missed Classes:

- Each instructor may decide how attendance impacts your grade and learning objectives. Details are provided within the course syllabus.
- Students are responsible for catching up on any material missed due to absence or tardiness.
- Instructors are **not required** to allow make-up work for missed classes.

Attendance & Financial Aid:

- Students receiving **grants, loans, or scholarships** must meet participation requirements set by the college.
- It is the student's responsibility to:
  - Review relevant sections of the Academic Catalog.
  - Contact the **Financial Aid Office** for details on how attendance affects aid.
  - Understand the consequences of non-participation.

Census Period Attendance Requirement:

- Though Criswell College does not officially take attendance, it must verify that students **begin their courses** to meet federal aid regulations.
- **During the census period** (first two weeks of a 16-week semester or first week of shorter terms), students must participate in **academically related activities**, or they may be dropped from the course.

Examples of Qualifying Activities:

- Attending class in person or via live video with the instructor present
- Submitting an assignment, quiz, or exam
- Taking part in assigned tutorials, study groups, or discussion boards
- Having documented communication with the instructor about course content

Important Note:

Simply logging into Canvas or a Zoom session without participating (e.g., camera off, no interaction) **does not count** as attendance.

Canvas:

- Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based Learning Management System (LMS).
- **For online courses** at Criswell College, instructors use Canvas to:
  - Organize course content on a module basis using organizational tools within Canvas

- Control the timing of course requirements through module control or assignment due dates to ensure that students are engaged for the full length of the semester or term
- Accept assignments from students only inside the Canvas course (emailed assignments are not acceptable)
- Provide written feedback on assignments only within Canvas, preferably through Speedgrader
- Use the Announcement or e-mail feature in Canvas to communicate with the students rather than by broadcasting to a class email listserv outside of canvas
- Use Zoom in Canvas for all "live" (synchronous) class sessions

Important Note:
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.

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

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)

While the use of Generative AI is recommended for the *editing* of your own work (e.g., spellcheck, Grammarly, etc.), the reliance on programs (e.g., ChatGPT, Grok, etc.) for *research* purposes is discouraged. Furthermore, the use of Generative AI for the *creation* of content is prohibited. The purpose of all assignments is for the student to develop the skills necessary for the creation of original scholarship.

Examples of AI-related functions you **may not use** without permission:

- Text Generation – You may not use AI to generate text for use in an assignment.
- Outline Generation – You may not use AI to generate an outline for an assignment.

AI-related tools you **may use** without permission:

- Spellcheck and grammar – built into Word, Pages, and Google Docs

- AI re-writing tools – tools that take what you've written and help make it clearer, such as what Grammarly offers. However, you must cite Grammarly or other sources in your assignment/paper and submit both original draft of paper and the final paper.
- AI research and summarize – tools that help you find sources to cite, such as the new AI tools built into Logos Bible Software.)

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 a wide range of academic resources and receive research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, located on the second floor of the Education Building.

- Login credentials for accessing the library's databases are emailed to students near the beginning of each semester.
- For more information or assistance, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu or visit www.criswell.edu/academics/wallace-library/.

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to enhance their skills and build confidence. All tutors are recommended by faculty to ensure they are qualified to support the student body. To meet with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly at https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter. The Tutoring Center is located in room E203 of the Education Building.

- ➢ For questions, email tutoringcenter@criswell.edu.

Course Calendar

Week		Class Topic	KBH	Osborne	Additional
	Section I: Foundations of Interpretation				
1	Tu–Aug 18	Introduction, Syllabus, & What is Hermeneutics?	Ch. 1		
	Th–Aug 20	From Where does Authority Derive?	Ch. 5		
2	Tu–Aug 25	The History of Biblical Interpretation	Ch. 2		
	Th–Aug 27	Modern, Post-, & Metamodern Hermeneutics • Due: Quiz 1	Ch. 3		
3	Tu–Sep 1	Inspiration & Canonicity			Harris
	Th–Sep 3	Validity of Translations ❖ Due: Paper 1	Ch. 4		

	Section II: Mechanics of Interpretation				
4	Tu–Sep 8	What is Context?	Ch. 6		
	Th–Sep 10	Historical and Literary Contexts • Due: Quiz 2	Ch. 7		
5	Tu–Sep 15	Introduction to Linguistics			Cotterell & Turner
	Th–Sep 17	Introduction to Philology			Vanhoozer
6	Tu–Sep 22	Exegetical Fallacies			Köstenberger & Patterson
	Th–Sep 24	The Historical-Grammatical Method • Due: Quiz 3			Blomberg
7	Tu–Sep 29	Old Testament Intertextuality			Swale
	Th–Oct 1	How the New Testament Uses the OT ❖ Due: Paper 2		Ch. 14	
	Section III: Forms of Interpretation				
8	Tu–Oct 6	OT Genre: Myth & Allegory			Knox & Longman
	Th–Oct 8	OT Genre: Narrative • Due: Quiz 4	Pp. 420–38	Ch. 7	
9	Tu–Oct 13	OT Genre: Law	Pp. 438–50	Ch. 6	
	Th–Oct 15	OT Genre: ANE History			Merrill & Walton
10	Tu–Oct 20	OT Genre: Wisdom & Poetry		Chs 8–9	
	Th–Oct 22	OT Genre: Prophecy • Due: Quiz 5	Pp. 462–93	Ch. 10	
11	Tu–Oct 27	NT Genre: Gospels	Pp. 510–32	Ch. 12	
	Th–Oct 29	NT Genre: Greco-Roman History & Bios	Pp. 532–41		Hemer
12	Tu–Nov 3	NT Genre: Epistles	Pp. 541–58	Ch. 13	
	Th–Nov 5	NT Genre: Apocalyptic Literature • Due: Quiz 6 ❖ Due Paper 3	Pp. 558–67	Ch. 11	
	Section IV: Integration of Interpretation				
13	Tu–Nov 10	Moving Beyond Exegesis			Doriani
	Th–Nov 12	Canonical Coherence			Kaiser & Silva
14	Tu–Nov 17	Biblical & Canonical Theology		Ch. 15	
	Th–Nov 19	Systematic & Dogmatic Theology • Quiz 7		Ch. 16	
15	Tu–Nov 24	**Fall Break and Thanksgiving**			
	Th–Nov 26				
16	Tu–Dec 1	Interpretation in Praxis	Ch. 11		
	Th–Dec 3	Interpretation in Application	Ch. 12		
Final Exams		**Due: Paper 4 & Hermeneutical Assessment Paper**			

Selected, Classified, and Annotated Bibliography

Introduction to General Hermeneutics

Grondin, Jean. *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Translated by Joel Weinsheimer. Yale Studies in Hermeneutics. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994. — An accessible overview that traces the historical development of philosophical hermeneutics from ancient roots to modern thinkers, offering a clear narrative introduction that is more chronological and student-friendly than the broader companions.

Keane, Niall, and Chris Lawn, eds. *The Blackwell Companion to Hermeneutics*. Blackwell Companions to Philosophy. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016. — This comprehensive volume provides short, expert essays on key figures, concepts, and traditions in hermeneutics, useful as a broader reference resource.

Malpas, Jeff, and Hans-Helmuth Gander, eds. *The Routledge Companion to Hermeneutics*. Routledge Philosophy Companions. London: Routledge, 2015. — A wide-ranging collection of essays covering both philosophical and interdisciplinary dimensions of hermeneutics, offering greater global and contemporary scope than Grondin's historical focus.

Schmidt, Lawrence K. *Understanding Hermeneutics*. Understanding Movements in Modern Thought. London: Routledge, 2006. — This concise guide focuses on major modern thinkers (from Schleiermacher to Gadamer), providing clear beginner-level explanations of core philosophical ideas.

Thiselton, Anthony C. *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. — This advanced survey critically evaluates a wide range of philosophical, literary, and socio-critical hermeneutical theories while demonstrating their potential (and limitations) for biblical interpretation.

Zimmermann, Jens. *Hermeneutics: A Very Short Introduction*. Very Short Introductions. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. — This brief, highly readable overview introduces key concepts across philosophy, theology, and literature, making it the most compact and accessible starting point.

Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics

Bartholomew, Craig G. *Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Framework for Hearing God in Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015. — This substantial evangelical textbook offers a holistic, theology-rich framework for biblical interpretation that integrates philosophy, history, and praxis.

Broggi, Joshua D. *Sacred Language, Sacred World: The Unity of Scriptural and Philosophical Hermeneutics*. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016. — This work explores the deep unity between scriptural and philosophical hermeneutics, providing a more integrative philosophical-theological perspective than standard biblical hermeneutics texts.

Carter, Craig A. *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: An Evangelical Recovery of Theological Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. — This work offers a robust evangelical case for recovering pre-modern theological interpretation, distinguishing itself by its strong critique of modern historical-critical methods and emphasis on the "Great Tradition."

Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006. — This foundational evangelical work centers

biblical interpretation around gospel theology and Christocentric reading, offering a more explicitly redemptive-historical approach than general or philosophical texts.

Kaiser, Walter C., Jr., and Moisés Silva. *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2007. — A clear, practical evangelical introduction emphasizing authorial intent and grammatical-historical principles, more method-focused and accessible than broader theological or philosophical works.

Porter, Stanley E., and Beth M. Stovell, eds. *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views*. Spectrum Multiview Books. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012. — This multiview volume presents and critiques five distinct approaches side-by-side, making it uniquely helpful for understanding interpretive diversity compared to single-perspective textbooks.

Plummer, Robert L. *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2021. This question-and-answer format book addresses common interpretive issues in a clear, concise, and evangelical manner, functioning as a highly practical reference tool that differs from the others by its accessible, FAQ-style structure ideal for quick consultation.

Provan, Iain. *The Reformation and the Right Reading of Scripture*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017. — This work offers a substantial historical and theological defense of Protestant interpretive principles rooted in the Reformation tradition, providing a robust evangelical counterpoint to modern philosophical and critical approaches.

Thiselton, Anthony C. *Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. — A broad, reliable survey of hermeneutical theory and practice with strong biblical application, serving as a more comprehensive bridge between general philosophy and biblical interpretation than narrower works.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. — This work provides a sophisticated evangelical response to postmodern literary theory, defending authorial intent and textual meaning more philosophically than other titles.

———. *Mere Christian Hermeneutics: Transfiguring What It Means to Read the Bible Theologically*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2024. — This recent work articulates a “mere Christian” theological hermeneutic that emphasizes drama, doctrine, and discipleship, offering a fresh, constructive proposal distinct from his earlier defense of meaning.

Introduction to Exegetical Method

Beale, G. K. *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Intrepretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012. This specialized handbook equips students with advanced tools for analyzing how New Testament writers interpret the Old Testament, offering detailed methodological guidance on typology, fulfillment, and intertextuality that complements general hermeneutics works.

Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996. — This classic book warns against common interpretive mistakes with sharp, practical examples, making it a unique diagnostic tool rather than a general method book.

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God’s Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020. — A highly practical, step-by-step undergraduate textbook with clear methods and exercises.

Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. This classic, accessible guide offers practical, genre-sensitive principles for reading and interpreting the Bible, serving as an approachable entry-level resource that is straightforward and pastorally oriented.

Köstenberger, Andreas J., and Richard D. Patterson. *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology*. 2nd ed. Invitation to Theological Studies. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2021. — This evangelical guide emphasizes the interplay of historical, literary, and theological dimensions, offering more structured methodological depth than simpler how-to books.

Richards, E. Randolph, and Brandon J. O'Brien. *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012. — This engaging book highlights cultural assumptions that distort interpretation, providing practical cultural awareness that complements the more technical method-focused works.

Silva, Moisés, ed. *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretations: Six Volumes in One*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996. — A collected reference set covering language, history, literary approaches, and more, functioning as a broader foundational resource rather than a single streamlined textbook.