

COS 121—Bible I, Introduction

Course Description: Goals and Objectives

The course introduces biblical interpretation. Attention will be given to the inspiration, formation, the function of the canon, and to the development of a methodology of interpretation consistent with the nature of scripture. Attention will also be given to the Bible as a witness to the life and faith of ancient Israel and earliest Christianity.

Students will begin to—

1. **Articulate the place and meanings of scripture stories** in the life of the Israelites and the early Church, as well that of the life of the present faith community.
2. Understand and begin to **apply historical, literary, theological, and pastoral approaches** to various types of literature in scripture **using Genesis, Hosea, Amos, Mark, Philippians**, and other selected scriptures.
3. Begin to **become comfortable with** using commentaries and work with a method of exegesis and hermeneutics in studying Biblical texts and stories.
4. Become more comfortable with articulating the meanings of faith stories, as well as **connecting those stories** to the present faith community's task in the culture and community of today.

Textbooks

REQUIRED TEXTS—

1. Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth, 3rd Edition*, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 2003; 9780310246046.
2. Hayes, John and Carl Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*, Westminster Press, Louisville, 2007; 9780664227753.
3. Anderson, Bernhard Anderson, *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2006; 9780800635602.
4. *The Interpreters One-Volume Commentary*, Ed. Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Petersen, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2010; 9780687334117.
5. Powell, Mark A., *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary: Revised and Updated*, Harper Collins, New 2011; 9780061469060.
6. Harrelson, Walter J., *The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2003; 9780687278329.

REFERENCE AND RECOMMENDED OPTIONAL RESOURCES—

1. *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary in Twelve Volumes (Volume 1, 7, and 8 OR Interpretation--A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*; James Mays, series editor. (Commentaries on *Genesis and Mark*)
2. Goff, Bob. *Everybody Always: Becoming Love in a World of Setbacks and Difficult People*; Nelson Books 2018; 9780718078133

COS 121 Preparation Before Class Times

- **Assigned readings are essential and necessary for the student to complete prior to class.**
- **Pay particular attention to the scripture readings in each assignment.** Use commentaries to help you understand the historical and cultural setting of the time the scripture was written. **Ask the following questions, always:** what audience was the writer speaking to? What did the writers want to say about God, life, and the faith community? What would this then say to us now, today?
- **After (AND ONLY AFTER) reading and studying, write out** your answers to questions using Microsoft Word with Times New Roman font with 12 point size and **number each page and include your name and class session on each page.** Use the Modern Language Association (MLA) format.
- **Please e-mail a copy of your answers for questions 1 through 5 (of the September session only) to Mark Jarrett logosian1@gmail.com by August 16, 2019.** As the writing coach, Mark will evaluate your writing and composition and then will provide feedback as it pertains to grammar, structure, proper formatting, etc. He will return your paper with comments and recommendations to help you with further written work. This exercise is intended to expose you to writing tools and to aid in the crafting of a higher quality of written work. **Revise your paper, as needed.**

Important!

- **Have the originals marked and in a file folder with your name on the outside of the file to be turned in during class session.**
- **Include a self addressed and pre-stamped 9 x 12 manila envelope for papers to be returned to you**
- **Please make copies for your reference and discussions during our class sessions.**

COS 121 Session Readings and Assignments **2019 Fall, September 20-22 Class Session**

Instructor and Contact Information

David Erenrich
21601 O' Toole Drive
Hagerstown, MD 21742

301-824-9018
derenrich@outlook.com

READING assignments for September 20-22

- *The Bible*, Genesis, Hosea, and Amos
- *Biblical Exegesis*, Hayes and Holladay, **chapters 1 through 7**
- *Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, Bernhard Anderson, **chapters 1 through 4**
- *Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, **ALL Biblical lessons associated with each of the chapters' readings**
- *Everybody Always: Becoming Love*, **One chapter a day as a devotional**

WRITTEN assignments for the September 20-22

(1 page in length with the exception of numbers 7 and 9 with the * notations)

- 1)** After reading the Genesis creation accounts go out and 'engage yourself, involve, and embrace' creation in some manner and experience. Share your experience; did you learn and/or perceive anything new or different? What and where?
- 2)** What is the task of exegesis and hermeneutics and why should a pastor be concerned about this in preparing lessons or sermons?
- 3)** What is the difference of 'history in the text,' and history of the text'?
- 4)** Discuss the "truth" of what the Biblical account of creation seeks to convey and that of the "truth" of the scientific research of our world and cosmos. Be careful here to make sure you have read material and then spent some time reflecting on this difference!
- 5)** After spending some time with the assigned readings and commentaries with Genesis 1, 2, and 3 give the meaning of Sin. Is Sin different than sins? Make note that the word "sin" does not appear in the stories.

- 6) Does it make sense in our time to say that “God acts in history?” What meaning does Exodus 3: 7-8 have for the oppressed and exploited people today who see no intervention on their behalf?
- 7) There is a widely held view that religion belongs in one sphere, the spiritual; and the political, social, and economic issues of our communities belong in yet another. Would Jeremiah and others you have begun reading agree with this? Give reasons for your answer and include what this may say about your role as a pastor in the community you serve. ***Please take up to 2 pages for this answer.**
- 8) After reading Hosea and Amos, as well as relevant chapters in the text books, describe your understanding of the interplay of judgment, grace, and responsiveness to grace as seen in the prophets’ message.

9) **STRETCH question!! Take the time and effort on this one* take up to 4 pages for this question**

Pick one (1) of the following passages to reflect on and study. Read not only the Bible passages, but also commentaries and dictionaries. Then and then only, share what the story is about; **why** was this story written; **what** is the story seeking to convey about God, about humankind, about human nature, about our place in God’s creation? AND then, **how and in what ways** do you see this story being “played out” in people’s lives and/or in our communities today? **Give examples, take this question seriously and stretch!**

- Genesis 3, Adam and Eve, the fall from paradise
- Genesis 4, Cain and Abel
- Genesis 6, 7,8, 9 Noah and the Flood
- Genesis 11, Tower of Babel
- Genesis 39-45 Joseph stories

COS 121 Session Readings and Assignments

November 15-17, 2019 Class Session

David Erenrich
21601 O Toole Drive
Hagerstown, MD 21742

301-824-9018
derenrich@outlook.com

READING assignments for the November 17-19 session:

- *The Gospel of Mark* and the letter of *Philippians*
- *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible*, chapters 5,6,7,8
- *How to Read the Bible for All its Worth*, chapters 3,4,7,8,9,10
- Any scriptures as noted in the reading assignments and chapters above
- *Everybody, Always: Becoming Love*; One chapter a day as a devotional

WRITTEN assignments for the November 15-17 session: (each answer should be thought out responses which is reflective of and demonstrates that the student has done the reading assignments as sited above; 1 page in length with the exception of #5 and #6 which has the * notation.

NOTE---The assignment for the readings and answers to questions 1 through 6, should be e-mailed to me at derenrich@outlook.com no later than November 1, 2019.

NOTE---Please make special notice: #7 * will take the bulk of your time, study, and reflective work. Treat it accordingly. As you begin to work on this assignment bring your work to class on November 15th so you can refer to it in class. The finished work must be sent to me by and no later than November 25th at derenrich@outlook.com Please make your selection and begin working on it prior to class and have some of the commentary readings and notes with you at that time.

1. Psalm 1 would seem to imply, or at least strongly suggest, that people who obey the will of God will enjoy security, prosperity, and a long life. Give some reflection to this. Is it true, or not true? Has it been misused, how and why? You might want to compare this to Luke 13: 1-9.

2. In the Hebrew Scriptures one will often read that the “fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” See from your reading chapters above Proverbs 9:10, 15:33, Job 28:28, Psalm 11:10. What is this “fear” mean and seeking to communicate?
3. How was the cross a scandal and offensive to those DURING Jesus’ time? How and why is the cross scandalous today, **if at all anymore**? In what ways?
4. Do you think the breaking down of the “wall of separation” referred to between Jew and Gentile has any significance any implications for our present time for the church in the midst of today’s social changes? From readings and reflection: How and in what ways?
5. * From your readings, what does it mean for the Church to be in mission to the world today? Where does this start and how does it happen? What does it mean for the pastor and church to seek God’s “Shalom” of the community? Is there risk involved? Seek to be specific and give examples. ***Take up to 2 pages as needed.**
6. *From your readings, why is it important to understand that the entire New Testament was written within the framework of eschatology? What does this have to do with the “Kingdom of God” as understood in Jesus’ day and the early Church? What does it mean for us in the Church today? ***take up to 2 pages as needed**

+++++

7. *** NOTE:** This question will take extra study of the Bible text with use of commentaries and Bible dictionaries. Length of answer 6-8 pages.

Remember that exegesis is involved so you will want to discover who is writing the text you are studying; WHAT issues seem to be vital AT THAT time; ARE THERE social, cultural, or historical matters impinging on the community; WHAT does the author want to see happen OR what is his goal (s) here in this selection, text, or story?

Then, and only then, will you reflect and do the hermeneutical work (Bridging) to the present time. With what I have learned from study, reflection, and prayer, what does this text say NOW to me and to the congregation I am serving? How do the key elements of this text/story speak to and challenge our lives and the church today? Is there something that is being asked of us?

Choose one (1) selection from the listings below.

Do an exegetical study and review of the selection. Share a summary of your learning’s and findings. Then move on to the hermeneutical “Bridging” as discussed and illustrated in class. Remember that it sometimes helps to “see” the text within the context of the author’s writings both prior to or after the text itself.

Mark 1: 9-20 Baptism and Call of Disciples

Mark 4: 1-20 Sowing Seeds

Mark 4:35-5:13 Storm at Sea and Crossing to the Other Side

Mark 6:30-44 Teaching and Feeding

Mark 10: 17-31 Rich Young Ruler

Mark 14: 66-72 Disowning Jesus

Mark 16: 1-8 Mark's Resurrection Story