GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, South Hamilton
OT/NT 517 Interpreting the Bible
Course Syllabus
July 27, 2105-August 1, 2015

Course Instructor: Professor Quonekuia Day
Teaching Assistant:

Class Meetings/locations: New York/New Jersey
Monday-Friday 6:00 PM—10:00 PM
Saturday, 8:30 AM—4:30 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course offers the student an introduction to the discipline of biblical interpretation. The student will become cognizant of the various methodologies and steps necessary in biblical exegesis of numerous literary genres and texts. He/she will be introduced the basic tools necessary for the proper use of Scripture in Christian life and ministry.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon the successful completion of this course the student shall:

1. Acquire skills necessary for the understanding of Scriptural texts in their original literary and historical context by the critical use of appropriate reference tools.
2. Acquire a deeper appreciation for the Christian Scriptures as s/he learns how to apply these texts to contemporary contexts without losing sight of the original message intended by the inspired writers.
3. Be introduced to the discipline of theological studies.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS
1. Bible in a modern language (NASB, NRSV, ESV)
2. D. Stuart and G. Fee, How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth. (Zondervan, 1993)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING
1. Read the assign textbooks in their entirety. Please note that we might not cover all the material in the textbooks in the class presentations; however the student is responsible for all the material in these books.
2. Attendance at all class sessions. Please bring to class your Bible and all assignments due for that session. Plan on contributing to class discussions regarding the tools and concepts introduced in the texts and in class.
3. **Assignments.** There are **ten (10) exercises** due by the conclusion of the course. Each of these will take an average of 2 hours to complete. Any less time will compromise your expertise in interpreting the Bible. They start out rather easy, but become more complex and time consuming as you move along the interpretative journey. Please do not work together on these assignments, they should be your individual effort. All assignments must be typed unless otherwise stated by the professor. For most of the exercises where research is expected, you should use at least two to three standard, recommended reference works which must be listed in the bibliography of your work. It is important that you use as many different reference works as possible as this is an important part of your learning. Assignments should demonstrate a cumulative grasp of the interpretive journey; therefore you will be asked to include previously learned steps in certain assignments. As you develop more skills, remember to continue doing original work, then consult resources. Please make sure that your assignments are properly identified.

4. A **final paper** based on the suggested assignments at the end of chapters 16, 19, 20, or 21. The paper is due **August 28, 2015**.

Ten Assignments: Below you will find the required assignments per chapter. It would be to your advantage to a] read the textbooks before we begin class presentations, and, b] that you do as many of the assignments as possible. The instructions for the assignments, and the necessary skills to do them, can be found in the textbook.

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<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>#1 and #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Choose 1, 2 or 3</td>
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<td>Chapter 4</td>
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<td>Chapter 13</td>
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**Final research paper**
The exegesis paper should incorporate all the steps outlined in the textbooks and highlighted during our class discussions. It should be about 10 pages long, typed, double spaced, etc. Choose one from the following chapters and do the exegesis assignment noted at the end of that chapter:
Chapter 16 or
Chapter 19 or
Chapter 20, assignment #3 or
Chapter 21.

Due Dates:
Highly recommended that students read Fee/Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, in its entirety before class begins. Also, you must have read to at least chapter 5 in Duvall/Hays, *Grasping the Word of God*.

July 27: Assignments on Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5. You must turn these assignments on day 1.

July 29: Assignments on chapters 6 and 7.

August 1: Assignments on chapters 8 and 13.

August 28: Final paper.
Sequence of presentations:

1. Hermeneutical-Exegetical process: getting from there and then to here and now.
2. Reading the Bible as the Word of God
3. Presuppositions in biblical studies
4. Bible Interpretation
5. On Bible Translations
6. How to study the Bible for Yourself
7. Reading paragraphs
8. Reading discourses
9. Survey the historical context in general
10. Establishing the boundaries of a text
11. Backgrounds and special introduction
12. Word study methodology
13. Discerning the author’s purpose
14. The exegetical idea
15. Interpreting the Gospels
16. Interpreting the Pauline Epistles
17. Jewish Background of the NT
18. Use of the OT in the NT, if time permits