



BL515 Hermeneutics: Principles of Interpretation  
Fall 2022

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Office Hours: By Appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of biblical interpretation. Students will consider the key theological and philosophical issues in biblical interpretation and the history of biblical interpretation. They will also develop sound exegetical practices for interpreting the Bible, which will incorporate matters such as literary and historical context, word and concept study, grammatical analysis, literary genre, the relationship between exegesis and systematic theology, and application to contemporary life.

### **COURSE OUTCOMES**

At the end of this course the student should be able to:

1. Articulate the key biblical, theological, and philosophical principles that are necessary for responsible biblical interpretation.
2. Use insights from the history of biblical interpretation for doing exegesis today.
3. Demonstrate sound exegetical practices.
4. Apply the Bible to the Christian life and Christian ministry today.

### **REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS**

The Bible.

Allen Michael, and Scott R. Swain. *Reformed Catholicity: The Promise of Retrieval for Theology and Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015.

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020.

Stanglin, Keith D. *The Letter and Spirit of Biblical Interpretation: From Early Church to Modern Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.

### **REQUIRED READINGS – ON RESERVE IN THE LIBRARY**

Ngewa, Samuel M. *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*. Africa Bible Commentary Series. Zondervan, 2009.

Steinmetz, David C. "The Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis." *Theology Today* 37 (1980), pp. 27-38.

Webb, William J. "A Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic: Encouraging Dialogue among Four Evangelical Views." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005), pp. 331-49.

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

### *Overviews of Biblical Interpretation*

- Bartholomew, Craig G. *Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Framework for Hearing God in Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015.
- Brown, Jeannine K. *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2021.
- DeRouchie, Jason S. *How to Understand and Apply the Old Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology*. Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 2017.
- Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2006.
- Gorman, Michael J., ed. *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017.
- Klein, William W., et al. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017.
- Naselli, Andrew D. *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology*. Phillipsburg: P & R Publishing, 2017.
- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral*. Rev ed. Downers Grove: IVP, 2007.
- Porter, Stanley E., and Beth M. Stovell, eds. *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2012.

### *Theology and Interpretation*

- Allen, Michael, ed. *Theological Commentary*. London: T & T Clark, 2011.
- Bartholomew, Craig G., and Heath Thomas, eds. *A Manifesto for Theological Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.
- Billings, J. Todd. *The Word of God for the People of God*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Boersma, Hans. *Scripture as Real Presence: Sacramental Exegesis in the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017.
- Carter, Craig A. *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: Recovering the Genius of Premodern Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.
- Gignilliat, Mark S. *Reading Scripture Canonically: Theological Instincts for Old Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019.
- Green, Joel B. *Practicing Theological Interpretation: Engaging Biblical Texts for Faith and Formation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.
- Keener, Craig S. *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in the Light of Pentecost*. Eerdmans, 2016.
- Levering, Matthew. *Participatory Biblical Exegesis: A Theology of Biblical Interpretation*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008.
- Meadors, Gary T., ed. *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology*. Zondervan, 2009.
- Seitz, Christopher R. *The Character of Christian Scripture: The Significance of a Two-Testament Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.
- Starling, David I. *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship: How the Bible Shapes Our Interpretive Habits and Practices*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.
- Swain, Scott R. *The Trinity and the Bible: On Theological Interpretation*. Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2021.
- Swain, Scott R. *Trinity, Revelation, and Reading: A Theological Introduction to the Bible and Its Interpretation*. London: T & T Clark, 2011.
- Thompson, Mark D. *A Clear and Present Word: The Clarity of Scripture*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2006.

- Treier, Daniel J. *Introduction to Theological Interpretation: Recovering a Christian Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J., ed. *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
- Ward, Timothy. *Words of Life: Scripture as the Living and Active Word of God*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2009.
- Webster, John. *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Whitaker, William. *Disputations on Holy Scripture*. Repr., Orlando: Soli Deo Gloria, 2005.
- Wright, William M, IV, and Francis Martin. *Encountering the Living God in Scripture: Theological and Philosophical Principles for Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019.

### ***Philosophy and Interpretation***

- Fish, Stanley E. *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method*. Rev. ed. Trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- Hirsch, E. D., Jr. *Validity in Interpretation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976.
- Thiselton, Anthony C. *Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Thiselton, Anthony C. *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Thiselton, Anthony C. *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.
- Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim that God Speaks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

### ***History of Interpretation***

- Aristotle. *De interpretatione (On Interpretation)*. Trans. J. L. Ackrill, pp. 25-38. In vol. 1 of *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*. Ed. Jonathan Barnes. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Augustine. *On Christian Teaching*. Trans. R. P. H. Green. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Bray, Gerald. *Biblical Interpretation: Past & Present*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2000.
- Bray, Gerald. *How the Church Fathers Read the Bible: A Short Introduction*. Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2022.
- George, Timothy. *Reading Scripture with the Reformers*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2011.
- George, Timothy, ed. *Reformation Commentary on Scripture Series*. 12 vols. Downers Grove: IVP, 2011-19.
- Gignilliat, Mark S. *A Brief History of Old Testament Criticism: From Benedict Spinoza to Brevard Childs*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.
- Harkins, Franklin T., and Frans van Liere, eds. *Interpretation of Scripture: Theory*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013.
- Hauser, Alan J., and Duane F. Watson, eds. *A History of Biblical Interpretation*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003-17.
- Kolb, Robert. *Martin Luther and the Enduring Word of God: The Wittenburg School and Its Scripture-Centered Proclamation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.

- Legaspi, Michael C. *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Levy, Ian Christopher. *Introducing Medieval Biblical Interpretation: The Senses of Scripture in Premodern Exegesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.
- McKim, Donald K., ed. *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2007.
- Meade, John D., and Peter J. Gurry. *Scribes and Scripture: The Amazing Story of How We Got the Bible*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2022.
- Muller, Richard A. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725 – Volume Two: Holy Scripture, The Cognitive Foundation of Theology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.
- Oden, Thomas, ed. *Ancient Christian Commentary Series*. 29 vols. Downers Grove: IVP, 2001-.
- Pak, G. Sujin. *The Judaizing Calvin: Sixteenth-Century Debates over the Messianic Psalms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Provan, Iain. *The Reformation and the Right Reading of Scripture*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2017.
- Sheehan, Jonathan. *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- van Liere, Frans. *An Introduction to the Medieval Bible*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Westerholm, Stephen, and Martin Westerholm. *Reading Sacred Scripture: Voices from the History of Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.
- Young, Frances M. *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

***Historical Background (see also Duvall and Hays pp. 513-15)***

- Arnold Bill T., and Brent A. Strawn, eds. *The World around the Old Testament: The People and Places of the Ancient Near East*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.
- Arnold, Clinton E., ed. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: New Testament*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019.
- Barnett, Paul. *Jesus and the Rise of Early Christianity: A History of New Testament Times*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1999.
- Burge, Gary M., and Gene L. Green. *The New Testament in Antiquity: A Survey of the New Testament within Its Cultural Context*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020.
- Evans, Craig R., and Stanley E. Porter, eds. *Dictionary of New Testament Background*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2000.
- Green, Joel B., and Lee Martin McDonald, eds. *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.
- Greer, Jonathan S., et al., eds. *Behind the Scenes of the Old Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.
- Hess, Richard S. *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.
- Jeffers, James S. *The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1999.
- Keener, Craig S. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Downers Grove: IVP, 2014.
- Provan, Iain, et al. *A Biblical History of Israel*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Louisville: WJKP, 2015.
- Walton, John H., ed. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.
- Walton, John H., et al., eds. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2000.

### ***Word and Concept Study (see also Duvall and Hays pp. 510, 512-13)***

- Alexander, T. Desmond, and David W. Baker, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2002.
- Arnold, Bill T., and H. G. M. Williamson, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Historical Books*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2005.
- Boda, Mark J., and J. Gordon McConville, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2012.
- Brown, Colin, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.
- Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.
- Green, Joel B., et al., eds. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Downers Grove: IVP, 2013.
- Hawthorne, Gerald F., et al., eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1993.
- Longman, Tremper, III, and Peter Enns, eds. *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry, and Writings*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2008.
- Martin, Ralph P., and Peter H. Davids, eds. *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1997.
- Mounce, William D. *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.
- Mounce, William D. *The Crossway Comprehensive Concordance of the Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2002.
- Silva, Moisés, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*. 5 vols. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.
- VanGemeren, Willem A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.
- [www.stepbible.org](http://www.stepbible.org).

### ***Grammar***

- Greenwood, Kyle. *Dictionary of English Grammar for Students of Biblical Languages*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020.

### ***Literary Genres or Sections of the Bible***

- Alexander, T. Desmond. *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.
- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. Rev. ed. New York: Basic Books, 2011.
- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. Rev. ed. New York: Basic Books, 2011.
- Bauckham, Richard. *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Blomberg, Craig L. *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Nashville: B & H, 2009.
- Estes, Daniel J. *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
- Fokkeman, J. P. *Reading Biblical Narrative: An Introductory Guide*. Louisville: WJKP, 1999.
- Fokkeman, J. P. *Reading Biblical Poetry: An Introductory Guide*. Louisville: WJKP, 2001.
- Hamilton, Victor P. *Handbook on the Historical Books*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.
- Hamilton, Victor P. *Handbook on the Pentateuch*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.
- Longman, Tremper, III. *The Fear of the Lord Is Wisdom: A Theological Introduction to Wisdom in Israel*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017.

McConville, J. Gordon. *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Prophets*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2002.

Nogalski, James D. *Interpreting Prophetic Literature: Historical and Exegetical Tools for Reading the Prophets*. Louisville: WJKP, 2015.

Pennington, Jonathan T. *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.

Schreiner, Thomas R. *Handbook on Acts and Paul's Letters*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019.

Wenham, Gordon. *The Psalter Reclaimed: Praying and Praising with the Psalms*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2013.

***Commentary Series (see also Duvall and Hays pp. 520-45)***

Anchor Bible (Doubleday; Yale University Press)

Ancient Christian Commentary (IVP)

Ancient Christian Texts (IVP)

Apollos Old Testament Commentary (IVP)

Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Baker)

Baker Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament (Baker)

Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Baker)

Expositor's Bible Commentary (Zondervan)

Hermeneia (Fortress Press)

International Critical Commentary (T & T Clark; Bloomsbury)

International Theological Commentary (Bloomsbury)

Interpretation (WJKP)

IVP New Testament Commentary (IVP)

New American Commentary (B & H)

New Covenant Commentary (Wipf and Stock)

New International Commentary on the New Testament (Eerdmans)

New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Eerdmans)

New International Greek Testament Commentary (Eerdmans)

New Interpreter's Bible (Abingdon)

NIV Application Commentary (Zondervan)

Paideia (Baker)

Pillar New Testament Commentary (Eerdmans)

Reformation Commentary on Scripture (IVP)

Story of God Bible Commentary (Zondervan)

Two Horizons New Testament Commentary (Eerdmans)

Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary (Eerdmans)

Tyndale New Testament Commentary (IVP)

Tyndale Old Testament Commentary (IVP)

Word Biblical Commentary (Word; Zondervan)

Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Zondervan)

Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament (Zondervan)

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

<p><b>1. Mid-Term Exam</b> (25% of grade) <i>Outcome(s) 1-2</i></p>	<p>This exam will be given in week 8 during the first half of the class period. It will be comprised of short-answer questions (requiring a response of 1-3 sentences) and 2 very short essay questions (requiring a response of 6-8 sentences). The exam will cover all that you have studied in weeks 1-7.</p>
<p><b>2. Reading and Attendance Report</b> (25% of grade) <i>Outcome(s) 1-4</i></p>	<p>This report must be submitted to the professor by email before the end of the class period in the final week of the semester. In the body of that email, you will simply tell the professor how many weeks you completed the assigned reading <u>on time</u>. In this case, “on time” means that you completed the reading for that week of class prior to the beginning of the class period. There are 13 weeks in which there is required reading. <b><u>Please send this reading report in the same email in which you submit your final paper (on which, see below).</u></b></p>
<p><b>3. Exegesis Paper</b> (50% of grade) <i>Outcome(s) 1-4</i></p>	<p>“Exegesis” is a commonly used term that refers to “leading out” or explaining the meaning of a biblical passage. This paper will provide an opportunity for you to apply all that you have learned about interpreting the Bible throughout the semester. Further instructions are provided below.</p>

## GRADING INFORMATION

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Points	Description
A+	100–97	4.0	
A	96–93	4.0	Excellent; superior achievement.
A-	92–90	3.7	
B+	89–87	3.3	
B	86–83	3.0	Good; commendable achievement.
B-	82–80	2.7	
C+	79–77	2.3	
C	76–73	2.0	Satisfactory; acceptable achievement.
C-	72–70	1.7	
D+	69–67	1.3	
D	66–63	1.0	Poor; marginal achievement.

D-	62–60	0.7	
F	59–0	0.0	Failure to advance in the course. No credit earned. Computed in GPA.

**SEMINARY ACADEMIC POLICIES**

All Seminary policies affecting student work, appeals, and grievances, as outlined in the Academic Catalog or Student Handbook will apply, unless otherwise indicated in this syllabus.

**Assignment Policies**

Assignments must be formatted and submitted according to the instructions provided in the syllabus and according to any supplemental instructions provided in class. Late assignments are subject to a grade reduction. If the student has a true emergency (e.g., severe health issue or death in the family) that will affect the student’s ability to submit an assignment on time, the student should email the professor as soon as possible.

**Courteous Use of Technology in the Classroom (phone, tablet, laptop)**

Students are expected to silence phones in class (airplane mode or turned off). If a student has an emergency situation (e.g., health issue in the family or imminent birth of a child), the student should step out of class to handle the situation. Students will be expected not to have laptops and similar devices out during the lectures and interaction in class. This is due to the fact that even the godly among us can succumb to the distractions that such devices provide. The aim here is to foster an environment characterized by attentiveness to God, Holy Scripture, and one another. Furthermore, taking notes by hand improves memory.



## COURSE SCHEDULE

*Course schedule, topics, evaluation, and assignments may be changed at the professor's discretion to meet the needs of this class.*

Date	Topic	Reading and Assignments
8/18	Reading in the Presence of God: Theological and Spiritual Elements of Biblical Interpretation	
8/25	Hermeneutics and the Challenges of Biblical Interpretation	Duvall and Hays, chaps 2, 7, 10, 12
9/1	History of Biblical Interpretation I	Stanglin, chaps 1-4
9/8	History of Biblical Interpretation II	Stanglin, chaps 5-8; Steinmetz, "Superiority"
9/15	Literary Context and Historical Background	Duvall and Hays, chaps 6, 8
9/22	Word and Concept Study	Duvall and Hays, chap. 9
9/29	Grammatical Analysis	Duvall and Hays, chaps 3-5
10/6	Mid-Term Exam; Literary Genre I: Narrative and Law	Duvall and Hays, chaps 18-19
10/13	Literary Genre II: Poetry and Wisdom	Duvall and Hays, chaps 20, 22
10/20	Literary Genre III: Prophecy	Duvall and Hays, chap. 21

10/27	Literary Genre IV: Gospels and Acts	Duvall and Hays, chaps 15-16
11/3	Literary Genre V: Epistles and Revelation	Duvall and Hays, chaps 14, 17
11/10	Canon, Confession, and Systematic Theology	Allen and Swain, chaps 4-5
	NO CLASS 11/17, 11/24	
12/1	Application and “Contextualization”	Duvall and Hays, chap. 13; Webb, “Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic”; Ngewa, pp. 49-58
12/8	Reading Report Due Exegesis Paper Due	

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXEGESIS PAPER

## *I. Overview*

In this double-spaced, 8-10 page paper, you will explain and apply 1 John 2:7-11. For this paper, you must use a reliable and reasonably literal English Bible translation (e.g., ESV, NRSV, NIV, NASB). You will be required to do the following things:

- 1) explain the purpose of 1 John and how this passage fits within the overarching flow of thought in 1 John
- 2) discuss particular factors in the literary context that may illumine the passage's meaning
- 3) discuss particular factors in the historical context that may illumine the passage's meaning
- 4) complete a word study of the terms "light" and "darkness"
- 5) summarize the logical development of the passage from one verse to the next
- 6) without setting aside the specific language and content of this passage, explain how this passage relates to broader Christian doctrine on the necessity of saving faith showing itself through love, holiness, and good works
- 7) explain how the passage may be applied in the life of the church, balancing the need to draw out specific implications and the need to take into account the diverse situations that Christians face

## *II. Structure*

You will be required to use the following outline exactly. If you deviate from the following outline, a significant number of points will be deducted from your final grade. This is not to stifle your creativity but to provide you with the clarity of mind and the freedom to focus on the real task at hand. Each section of the paper will have a Roman numeral and a section heading. The text must be double-spaced throughout.

Unlike many papers you will write, this one does not require explicit transitions from one section to the next (e.g., "In light of the preceding section, this section will now..."). You may simply finish what you need to do in one section and then jump into the next section.

### *I. Introduction (c. 1/2 page)*

*(In this section, tell me exactly what you're going to do. Give an overview of where you are going with the rest of the paper. Be clear, not clever! It is permissible to use some first-person language here: e.g., "In this paper, I will discuss...")*

II. The Purpose and Flow of Thought in 1 John (c. 1-2 pages)

*(In this section, explain the purpose of the book of 1 John and, at a general level, explain the book's flow of thought. While explaining the flow of thought, specify how your passage in particular follows from the material that comes before it and leads into the material that comes after it. You do not yet need to analyze in any detail the flow of thought or the logic of your passage itself – that will take place below.)*

III. Literary Context (c. 1-2 pages)

*(In this section, discuss how the literary context sheds light on certain things that appear in 1 John 2:7-11. Are certain terms or themes in 1 John 2:7-11 discussed elsewhere in 1 John or even in John's Gospel? Is John's point in 1 John 2:7-11 clarified or qualified by looking at his concerns and his teaching in other places in 1 John? How do these features of the literary context help you explain the meaning of 1 John 2:7-11)*

IV. Historical Context (c. 1 page)

*(In this section, discuss how the historical context may shed light on certain things that appear in 1 John 2:7-11. What about the situation of John's readers may have made this passage's teaching particularly relevant or urgent for John's readers?)*

V. Word Study of "Light" and "Darkness" (1 page)

*(In this section, you will do word studies of "light" and "darkness." You may use the website [www.stepbible.org](http://www.stepbible.org) and/or other resources that are listed above in the "Word Study" section and are available in the Seminary library. My recommendation is that you use [www.stepbible.org](http://www.stepbible.org) to gain some familiarity with the word usage and then use Colin Brown's New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology on reserve in the library. See Brown, vol. 1 (pp. 420-5) for "darkness" and Brown, vol. 2 (pp. 484-96) for "light."*

*For this section you need to do the following things:*

- a. identify other places where these words occur in the NT, esp. in the Johannine epistles and John's Gospel*
- b. discuss the different ways in which the terms are used in the NT and Johannine literature*
- c. articulate the most plausible meaning of these terms in their particular usage in 1 John 2:7-11 (which may be multi-faceted) and explain how this helps us to understand the whole passage better*

## VI. Logical Development (c. 1 page)

*(In this section, you will describe how John logically develops his message in this passage. First, give a one-sentence summary of the main point of the whole passage. This should be explicitly stated: e.g., “John’s main point is...” Second, explain how that main point unfolds throughout the verses of the passage. Here you will summarize each verse and explain how one verse leads into the next. In other words, after writing [x] in this verse, why would he go on to write [y] in the next verse? What is the connection? Is John expanding on a point or illustrating something? Is he contrasting two things? Does John point out any cause-and-effect relationships here? Etc.)*

## VII. Relationship to Broader Christian Doctrine (c. 1 page)

*(In this section, you will need to show an awareness of how the particular teaching of this passage relates to broader Christian doctrine. This is an opportunity to see the benefits of reading with the whole Bible in mind and of reading the Bible with the help of the Christian tradition. Because of the content of this passage, the most pertinent connection to make is with broader Christian teaching on real saving faith in Christ showing its genuineness through love, holiness, and good works. How might John’s teaching in this passage make a distinct contribution on this broader topic? In turn, how might broader Christian teaching on this topic help us to avoid problematic interpretations of this particular passage? My recommendation would be to consider texts like Galatians 5:6; 6:7-10 and James 2:14-26 and the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapters 16-17.)*

## VIII. Application (c. 1 page)

*(In this section, you will unpack some practical implications or applications of your passage. You will need to show discernment. Be specific while still taking into account that believers have diverse personalities, diverse circumstances, etc. Limit yourself to things that are genuine entailments or applications from the text (rather than mere personal preferences) while still conveying the urgency of the passage.)*

### **III. Resources, Footnotes, Bibliography**

#### A. Resources

You will need to consult and cite a minimum of five different academic resources ([www.stepbible.org](http://www.stepbible.org) does *not* count toward this total; Brown’s *Dictionary* does count). At least three of these should be commentaries on 1 John from the list provided in the Duvall and Hays textbook, p. 544. Several of those commentaries are on reserve in the library (Burge, Kruse, Yarbrough – each

of which assumes a different degree of familiarity with the biblical text). You may draw ideas for additional resources from the lists provided above in the syllabus and from Appendix 3 in the Duvall and Hays textbook.

## B. Footnotes and Bibliography

The goal in citing your sources is to help others see where you have learned something and how you are substantiating your claims. This enables others to find useful resources and also to assess the reliability of your work.

The citation of sources should be done by using footnotes (not endnotes). A bibliography page should be added at the end of your paper (it will not count toward the total number of pages in your paper).

Key pieces of information that are provided in footnotes include author, title of the work, location and name of the publisher, date of publication, and particular pages where relevant information is located. There are different formats for arranging these pieces of information. For citation format and for other formatting guidelines that the Seminary requires, see <https://ps.edu/guidelines-for-course-papers/>. This link will provide everything you need to know for proper formatting.

Students may ask a question about paper format or similar logistical items *in class* (rather than outside of class or by email). If the student needs further assistance, he or she may contact the Seminary's library staff.

## IV. *Submission*

You will submit this paper ideally in a PDF document. Alternatively, a Word document is acceptable. The document should be attached to an email sent to the professor ([sduby@ps.edu](mailto:sduby@ps.edu)). The email – *which should include your reading report as well* – must arrive by the end of the class period in the final week of class.