**THIS SYLLABUS IS TENTATIVE. IT IS INTENDED TO GIVE STUDENTS AN IDEA OF THE ANTICIPATED STRUCTURE, SCHEDULE, AND ASSIGNMENTS OF THE COURSE, BUT IS NOT FINAL. THE PROFESSORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE SYLLABUS. THE FINAL SYLLABUS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS.**

NT524—INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS  
Dennis J. Ireland, Ph.D., and Guy P. Waters, Ph.D.  
Spring Semester 2011  
2 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION: “This course focuses on approaches to the interpretation of Scripture. Various critical-interpretive systems are considered and special attention is given to the historical-grammatical method. Emphasis is placed on understanding the original, intended meaning of Scripture in its canonical context as the basis upon which to prepare expositions and make appropriate contemporary applications” (RTS website and 2009-11 Catalog, p. 68). The professors will be working within and adapting the course description above.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
1. to consider various elements necessary for the proper interpretation of Scripture;
2. to emphasize the original, authorial intent of Scripture as our goal in exegesis, interpretation, and exposition of any given passage;
3. to highlight the redemptive-historical unity and Christocentric focus of Scripture.

TEXTBOOKS:

Additional reading assignments from books on reserve in the library will also be made as indicated in the Tentative Schedule below. Please note that it is assumed that each student will personally and carefully do all the assigned reading. There will be regular reading quizzes throughout the semester, and there will be questions on both the mid-term and final exams asking you to report whether or not you have done all the reading.

COURSE PROCEDURES: Class time for this course will be devoted to lecture and discussion of topics related to the interpretation of Scripture. The outline of topics is found below. It is expected that students will be present and on time each week the class meets, unless providentially hindered. Please note the statement of seminary policy on Class Attendance in the RTS Catalog (p. 46).

COMPUTER USE IN CLASS: Students may use computers during class for taking lecture notes ONLY. All other uses are prohibited. Abuse of this policy will result in computers be banned from class altogether.

COURSE GRADE/ASSIGNMENTS: The grade for this course will be based on the student's scores on the following assignments.

1. **Two exams, mid-term and final.** There will be two exams, a mid-term and final. The mid-term will be given March 11, the final during finals' week. The material to be tested on the exams will be announced in class. Each exam will be worth 200 points. There will also be a question on each exam, worth 25 additional points on each, asking the student to report whether he/she has personally completed all the assigned reading up to and since the mid-term, respectively, and, if not, what percentage was completed.
2. **Research paper.** The student will submit an original research paper on a New Testament passage which is hermeneutically disputed. M.Div. students’ papers should be exegetical in nature (i.e., using the original languages and incorporating the steps discussed in exegesis classes). The paper should be 10-15 pages in length, excluding notes and bibliography of works cited, but no longer than 20 pages. A detailed sermon or Bible-study outline based on the paper should be included at the very end of the paper. General information on the format of the paper and possible passages are attached. Please pay particular attention to the policy-on-editing statement which is also attached. The paper will be worth 200 points. This assignment is due by 1 p.m. on **Thursday, April 14**. LATE PAPERS WILL LOSE ONE FULL LETTER GRADE PER DAY LATE. Please have the paper in on time. Both professors will read each paper.

3. **Reading quizzes.** There will be five scheduled reading quizzes during the semester. The quizzes will be given at the beginning of class (please be on time) and will be short answer in nature; each quiz will be worth 20 points. The quizzes will cover reading assigned in the syllabus for that day AND SINCE THE LAST QUIZ. (100 points).

4. **Reading Report.** There will be a question on each exam asking whether or not you personally completed all the assigned reading, and, if not, what percentage you did read. The reading report will be worth 25 points on each exam. (50 points)

The student's cumulative points will be divided by the total possible points (750) to arrive at a percentage which will then be given a letter grade according to the RTS Catalog (p. 44).

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**DATE:**  **TOPIC/ASSIGNMENT:**

Feb 3  Syllabus & General Introduction/Orientation [DI]

Feb 10  **Presuppositions/First Principles [GW]**
          Kaiser/Silva, Chs. 1-2
          McCartney/Clayton, Chs. 1-3

Feb 17  **Presuppositions/First Principles [GW]**
          *Reading Quiz 1*
          Kaiser/Silva, Chs. 3-5, 7
          Reserve: Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, Introduction; Ch. 4

Feb 24  **Presuppositions/First Principles [GW]**
          Kaiser/Silva, Ch. 18
          Reserve: Vos, *Biblical Theology*, Ch. 1

Mar 3  **History of Interpretation [DI]**
          *Reading Quiz 2*
          Kaiser/Silva, Chs. 16-17
          McCartney/Clayton, Ch. 4, Appendices A & B

Mar 10 **History of Interpretation [DI]**
McKim, ed., *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*, Part Three
Introduction (Muller, pp. 123-52); articles on Calvin, Erasmus, Lefèvre d’Étaples, and Luther

Mar 17  SPRING BREAK

Mar 24  MID-TERM EXAM

Mar 31  **Genre** [DI]
    Kaiser/Silva, Part 2 (Chs. 8-12)
    McCartney/Clayton, Chs. 5, 8

Apr 7  **NT use of OT** [DI]
    *Reading Quiz 3*
    Kaiser/Silva, Ch. 6
    McCartney/Clayton, Ch. 6

Apr 14  **NT use of OT** [DI]
    *Paper due by 1 p.m.*
    Reserve: Beale, ed., *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts?*, Chs. 10-12, 20

Apr 21  **Dispensationalism & Covenant Theology** [GW]
    *Reading Quiz 4*
    McCartney/Clayton, Ch. 7
    Reserve: Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, Ch. 1

Apr 28  **Dispensationalism & Covenant Theology** [GW]

May 5  **Culture and Application** [GW]
    *Reading Quiz 5*
    Kaiser/Silva, Part 3 (Chs. 13-15), Ch. 19
    McCartney/Clayton, Chs. 9-10

TBA  **FINAL EXAM**
General Guidelines for Paper

Students will submit an original paper (i.e., your own new work, not a revision of a paper for another class) on any hermeneutically disputed passage in the New Testament. The passage may involve textual, historical, and/or theological issues. M.Div. students’ papers are to be exegetical in nature with due attention to the matters of exegesis. The length of the paper is 10-15 pages, excluding bibliography, and sermon/Bible study outline (explained below). Students may choose the passage themselves but must have their choice approved in advance by the professors (first come, first served—i.e., one student per passage). A list of possible passages/topics is included below to suggest possibilities and stimulate thought.

Please consult Strunk’s & White’s The Elements of Style and Turabian A Manual for Writers (7th ed.: chs. 15-17, 20-25, Appendix) for matters of style and form in footnotes and bibliography.

The precise format of the paper is largely up to the student, as long as the relevant and necessary hermeneutical matters are treated. The paper should have a concise general introduction (indicate what the passage is and what the issues are), a brief and succinct summary of the historical AND literary contexts of the passage, a clear and detailed explanation of the passage and how the meaning was determined (M.Div. students should account for every word and phrase, citing extensively from BDAG, Wallace, and other lexicons and grammars), and a short summary/conclusion.

The paper should include a title page (with at least the passage and the student’s four-digit identifier number only [NO NAME]), body of the paper (with elements noted above), and bibliography of all works used (i.e., works cited in the footnotes). The bibliography (and thus the paper) should include at least "a few" (i.e., more than one) journal articles, in addition to commentaries, books, etc. Please use footnotes (at the bottom of the page), NOT endnotes, and follow the humanities style of documentation as explained in Turabian. Greek and Hebrew words should be typed (if the student’s word-processing software/printer can do so) or handwritten. Do not transliterate.

Please number the pages of the paper (title page is NOT numbered), maintain one-inch margins, use left justification and 12 pt. Times New Roman font, and double space the text (footnotes can be single-spaced). Please submit the paper stapled in the upper left-hand corner; do not submit it in a folder or binder of any sort.

The paper should include at the end, after the bibliography, a detailed sermon outline or Bible-study outline (i.e., points and sub-points) based on the paper. The outline should be one page minimum, two pages maximum.

The paper (including the outline) is worth 200 points.

Please proofread the paper carefully before submitting it. Typographical, grammatical, and/or spelling errors will lower the grade on the paper. Points will NOT be deducted for occasional errors in form in footnotes or bibliography, but a persistent pattern of disregard for correct bibliographic form will result in a lowering of the grade on the paper.

LATE PAPERS WILL LOSE ONE FULL LETTER GRADE PER DAY. Please have the paper in on time, as specified in the syllabus.

Please submit two copies of the paper, one electronic, the other hard copy. Turn in the latter in class or drop it in one of the professors’ mail baskets in the BSB by the deadline specified elsewhere in the syllabus. Send the former as a Word-document attachment to either direland@rts.edu or gwaters@rts.edu, and include “NT524 Paper” on the subject line of the email. Both professors will read every paper. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME ANYWHERE IN THE PAPER ITSELF; USE YOUR FOUR-DIGIT IDENTIFIER NUMBER ONLY.
Policy for Editing Papers

On the assumption that written material submitted by students at RTS should be solely their own work, the professor’s policy is that **no editing of papers by other people is permitted.** (A slight exception is made for international students; see below.) Please do not ask others (spouses, parents, children, pastor, classmates, friends, proofreaders, the mailman, etc., etc.) to read your paper for the purpose of offering suggestions or making corrections of any sort (they can offer suggestions etc. after you get your paper back). You sink or swim on your own. At the time the paper is submitted, **please also turn in this page (separate from the paper), signed below, to affirm that the paper is your own work.** If it should be discovered that you have violated this policy, you will receive a zero (0) on the paper, and zeroes do hurt your overall average for the class.

**International Students**

In recognition of the difficulty of studying and writing in a language other than your native one, a slight exception is made for international students to the “no editing” policy stated above.

If you ask someone else to edit your paper, here are the conditions:

1. That person must be shown this statement and must sign it.
2. That person must be identified by name on copies of all drafts on which he/she works (see #3 below).
3. All copies of all drafts read and edited by others must be submitted with your final draft.
4. Any editing must be very general in nature, as indicated below, by way of example. An editor may:
   a. point out awkward English sentence or overall structure of the paper (write ‘awkward’ [or similar] in the margin), but **may not** correct the structure;
   b. signal typos, etc. (circle), but **may not** correct them;
   c. indicate poor or incorrect word choice (underline/circle with question mark), but **may not** offer alternatives;
   d. indicate inconsistent or incorrect bibliographic form (‘wrong/inconsistent form’), but **may not** correct the form;
   e. in short, at most indicate errors or weaknesses, but **may not** correct or rewrite the paper in any way.

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pledged:

"the exegesis paper submitted by me for NT524 is my own work. I have received no help from others in the research and writing of it."

_______________________ (Print name) ___________________________ (signature) __________ (date)

for editor and international students only:

"I have read the editorial guidelines/conditions above, and, to the best of my knowledge, have received and/or provided editorial assistance only within those guidelines."

_______________________ (Print name of editor) ___________________________ (Signature of editor) _____ (date)

_______________________ (Print name of student) ___________________________ (Signature of student) _____ (date)
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Possible Paper Topics

Matt 1/Luke 3 Genealogy of Jesus

Matt 5:17-20 Jesus’ fulfillment of law and prophets

Matt 5:21-48 Any of the ‘antitheses’ (e.g., Matt 5:31-32, divorce and remarriage)

Matt 16:19 Keys of the kingdom

Matt 24 and parallels ‘Olivet Discourse’ (some portion of it)

Parables

John 2/Luke 19 (and pars.) One or two temple cleansings?

John 7:53—8:11 Authenticity and placement of ‘Woman caught in adultery’ pericope

Tongues/prophecy (specific texts, e.g., Joel 2/Acts 2; 1 Cor 12/14)

Acts 2/Ps 16 Use of psalm

Acts 8:15-17 Samaritans’ reception of Spirit

1 Cor 7 Marriage

1 Cor 8/10 Food sacrificed to idols

1 Cor 11 Head covering/hair

Hebrews’ warning passages (choose one)

Heb 3/4 Sabbath-rest of God

Heb 7 Melchizedek

Heb 8 New covenant

Heb 9 Furniture of tabernacle

Heb 10:5-7 Use of Ps 40 (ears/body)

James 2 Relationship of James and Paul

1 Pet 3:18-22 Preaching to spirits in prison/baptism

Jude 9, 14-15 Jude’s use of non-canonical literature

Rev 20:1-6 Millennium
# Course Objectives Related to M.Div* Student Learning Outcomes

**Course:** NT524 Introduction to Hermeneutics  
**Professor:** Dennis Ireland & Guy Waters  
**Campus:** Jackson  
**Date:** Spring 2011

## M.Div* Student Learning Outcomes

In order to measure the success of the M.Div curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the M.Div outcomes.

*As the M.Div is the core degree at RTS, the M.Div rubric will be used in this syllabus.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>Minimal</td>
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### Articulation (oral & written)

Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.

**Rubric:** Moderate  
**Mini-Justification:** Writing a paper

### Scripture

Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)

**Rubric:** Strong  
**Mini-Justification:** Emphasis on sound hermeneutical methods to determine the original meaning of Scripture. Exegesis paper for M.Div. students; research paper for M.A. students

### Reformed Theology

Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.

**Rubric:** Moderate  
**Mini-Justification:** Discussion of role of theology in hermeneutics (presuppositions, etc.)

### Sanctification

Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.

**Rubric:** Minimal  
**Mini-Justification:** Consideration of relationship between hermeneutics and obedience to God’s Word

### Desire for Worldview

Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.

**Rubric:** Minimal  
**Mini-Justification:** Discussion of implications of hermeneutics for worldview

### Winsomely Reformed

Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)

**Rubric:** Moderate  
**Mini-Justification:** Irenic discussion of hermeneutical differences between dispensationalism and covenant theology

### Preach

Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.

**Rubric:** Minimal  
**Mini-Justification:** Some consideration of how to communicate the fruit of hermeneutics to others (sermon/Bible study outline attached to paper)

### Worship

Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.

**Rubric:** Minimal  
**Mini-Justification:** Perhaps some discussion of hermeneutical principles involved

### Shepherd

Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.

**Rubric:** Minimal  
**Mini-Justification:** Perhaps some discussion of hermeneutical principles involved

### Church/World

Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.

**Rubric:** Minimal  
**Mini-Justification:** Perhaps some discussion of hermeneutical principles involved