Exegesis (Greek for “interpretation”) is the art of interpreting a literary text, in this case the Bible. For the purposes of this course, we will be distinguishing between exegesis, or the attempt to uncover the original meaning of a text (“what the text meant”) and hermeneutics (the application of the text, or “what the text means”). We will be doing some of both in this course.

**BA Course Goals:**

The student will show mastery of the biblical story and familiarity with various genres of biblical literature (law, wisdom, prophecy, poetry, etc.) and basic methods and principles of biblical exegesis.

**Course Objectives:**

1) The student will acquire a working knowledge of the methods and practice of exegesis.
2) The student will be able to take these methods and apply them to select passages of scripture in the Old and New Testaments.
3) The student will be able to distinguish between various literary genres in the Bible and be able to articulate important distinctives of each.
4) The student will be able to relate the practice of exegesis to the life of faith and practical ministry today.

By the end of the course, the student will be acquainted with the tools and terminology related to biblical interpretation. He or she will be able to apply these tools to specific biblical passages in order to understand them in their historical and literary contexts and to make application both personally and for the life of the
church.

**Required Texts:**

A good modern translation study Bible, such as the *Oxford Annotated Bible of the New Revised Standard Version*, or a study Bible of the New International Version or New American Standard Version; scripture readings as assigned.


In addition, there will be occasional readings which will be made available to you online.

**Means of Assessment:**

*Reflection Papers:* Because exegesis is an art which must be learned by doing, we will be working on weekly assigned scripture passages. You will prepare each week one to three 1 to 2 page reflection papers on the assigned passage or topic. Each week, particular methods, approaches, and questions will be assigned which will be the focus of that week’s study and lectures. You will upload these papers as Word or PDF files (70% of grade).

*Exegesis Paper:* In addition, each student will prepare one five to seven page term paper. The paper will be an exegesis of one approved passage from the Bible, supplied for you in week 8. It will be due on December 20. You will use the guide for writing the paper provided also in week 8 (20% of grade).

*Quizzes:* There will be two short quizzes covering the terminology and tools you have studied the first week of the course (10% of grade).

**Schedule of Classes**

**Week 1 (10/21-10/27):**
Syllabus and Introduction to the Course: general comments; definition of plagiarism.

• Read AGST Plagiarism Policy; Read William Bardke, “Research Strategies on Plagiarism”; take quiz on plagiarism.

Exegesis and Interpretation: definition of terms, historical development of exegetical methods; exegesis and hermeneutics, basic principles.

• Read and listen to lecture on exegesis and interpretation. Read Gorman pp. 10–59. Take quiz on exegesis and hermeneutics.

• Brief History of Biblical Interpretation: Read the Lecture and watch the movie on a Brief History of Biblical Interpretation (Part 1); Read Grant and Tracy, pp. 8–51; Read the Lecture and Watch the Video on "A Brief History of Biblical Interpretation" (Part 2); Read Stanglin, pp. 47–76. Do Quiz on the History of Biblical Interpretation.

Week 2 (10/28-11/3):
Step 1: Survey and Initial Questions; Step 2: Literary Contexts.

• Survey and Initial Questions: Read Gorman pp. 63–68; read and listen to lecture on “Survey and Initial Questions. Do assignment.

• Analyzing Literary Contexts: Read Gorman pp. 69–70, 74–81; read and listen to lecture on analyzing literary contexts; watch video and listen to lecture on words and divisions in Romans 8. Do assignment on literary context of Matthew 15:21–28.

Week 3 (11/04-11/10):
Step 3: Historical Contexts (part one); Analysis of Difficult Words.

• Read and listen to lecture on analyzing historical contexts; Read Gorman pp. 69–74; Do assignment on Sennacherib’s invasion.

• Do assignment on analysis of difficult words.
Week 4 (11/11-11/17):
Historical Contexts (part two): Multiple Reports of an Event and Literary Parallels.

• *Multiple reports of an event*: Do assignment on the conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

• *Analyzing Literary Parallels*: Read and listen to lectures on analyzing historical parallels; read the *Gilgamesh* and the biblical flood story. Do assignment comparing *Gilgamesh* and the biblical flood story in Genesis 6–9.

Week 5 (11/18-11/24):
Step 4: Analyzing Form and Structure.

• Read and listen to the lecture on form, structure, and movement of a passage; read Gorman pp. 83–100; read “some literary genres in the Bible.” Do exercise on the structure of the epistle or the lament.

Week 6 (11/25-12/1):
Step 5: Detailed Analysis (part one): Text Criticism and Identifying Key Words and Concepts.


• *Detailed Analysis: Identifying Key Words and Concepts*: Do assignment on identifying key words and concepts.

Week 7 (12/2-12/8):

• *Detailed Analysis (part two) Redaction and Movement of a Passage*: Read and listen to lecture on detailed analysis (part two); read Gorman pp. 117–125; read lecture on movement of a passage; do assignment on comparing Matthew 19:21–28 with Mark 7:24–30.

• *Detailed Analysis (part two) Intertextuality*: Do exercise on intertextuality.

**Week 8 (12/9-12/15):**
Step 7: Theological Reflection; Hermeneutics; Exegesis Paper


• **Step 7, (part two): Hermeneutics and the Expansion and Refinement of the Exegesis**: Read Gorman pp. 167–179; read and listen to lecture on hermeneutics. Do assignment on your own hermeneutical philosophy.

Do Exegesis Paper (due on December 20).