

# INTERPRETING THE SCRIPTURES THROUGH TEACHING

Instructor: Rev Ken Burgard

## Purpose:

The goals of this course are for each student to:

- engage firsthand many of the themes of Scripture and the variety of its types of literature.
- Incorporate helpful teaching techniques and learning theory into their teaching of the Bible.
- To articulate his/her own relationship to the Bible as a key for opening Scripture to other readers.
- To understand distinctly United Methodist/Wesleyan approaches to Scriptural interpretation.

**Required Texts:** Your readings contain many unique examples and points of view. A good course reading should stir good questions. Please don't feel you need to wait to ask them in class. You are most welcome to share questions about the readings via email (the instructor's contact information is at the end of this document).

**Guidelines: *Christian Education.*** A great downloadable resource from Cokesbury that can help with the basics of planning Christian Education for your church.

***Teaching Today's Teachers to Teach,*** Donald L. Griggs. Abingdon Press, 2005. ISBN 0-687-04954-7

- ***Only chapters 1, 6, 7, and 10 are required reading for the course***
- Chapters 4, 5, and 8 may be of assistance when writing your Bible Studies, but are not required reading.

***The Unfolding Drama of the Bible: Fourth Edition,*** Bernhard W. Anderson. Fortress Press, 2006. ISBN 13: 978-0-8006-3560-2

**A Study Bible:** You must have access to a *study* Bible. The following are highly recommended:

***The New Oxford Annotated Bible***

***The Wesley Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version,*** Abingdon Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-687-64503-9

*Note:* There is a difference between a study Bible and a devotional Bible. Both have extra content, but the Study Bible offers scholarly content, referencing historical context, verse by verse commentary, and introductions for each individual book. A Bible that has a few interesting articles and side-bars in it, while it may be a helpful resource, is not a study Bible.

**The United Methodist Book of Discipline:** Please review the following sections to prepare for class discussion related to the topic of Bible Study and Christian Education:

- The Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church – *as they pertain to scripture*
- The Confession of faith of the Evangelical United Brethren – *as it pertains to the Bible*
- Our Theological Task – *special emphasis on the conversation around Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and Reason.*

## PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENTS

**Assignment 1: due June 1.** In the study Bible of your choice, **read** the **general introductory sections** and the **introductions** to each of these nine specific books, **as well as** the chapters indicated:

Genesis (chapters 12 through 25)  
 Job (chapters 1-3, 29-31, and 38 through 42)  
 Psalms (1, 22, 23, 51, 100, 103, 131, 137, 146, 148)  
 Malachi (entire book)  
 Mark (chapters 14-16)  
 Luke (the entire gospel)  
 Acts (chapters 1, 2, 9 through 15)  
 Romans (chapters 1 through 8)  
 Revelation (chapters 1 through 5)

Using resources from your study Bible, write **three (3) brief papers** (each *at least* one page, but *no more* than 2 double-spaced pages, 12-point font) selected from the following topics:

1. How is the migration of Abraham’s family a turning point in the unfolding story of Genesis, and what is the significance of Abraham’s special role in God’s purpose?
2. If the book of Job probes the depths of faith in the midst of suffering, what is Job’s question, and what is the significance of the Lord’s response?
3. Sort the Psalms you were assigned to read, what type are they (individual lament, community lament, royal psalms, wisdom psalms, praise hymns)? How might you employ each type of Psalm in designing various occasions of worship today?
4. Can portions of the prophecy of Malachi be used to help a parishioner to draw a connection between the Old and the New Testament? How would you do so?
5. The Bible study group you are leading has arrived at Mark chapter 16. A group member notices something peculiar in their study Bible: “The shorter ending of Mark,” and “The longer ending of Mark.” What are the textual

issues involved as you lead the group to understand and interpret this chapter? If this exercise raises deeper faith issues regarding your students' understanding of Scripture, how would you respond?

6. If the gospel of Luke has a turning point, a moment when we begin to move toward the climax of the story of Christ, where is it? At what point does the story shift dramatically toward the cross? How would that inform the way you teach this gospel?
7. What is the significance of the Book of Acts in relationship to the New Testament as a whole? One biblical scholar observes, "...the New Testament would be infinitely poorer without this first book of church history." Explain why this is so.
8. The Apostle Paul understands the Gospel as God's power for salvation to all who believe. In his letter to the Romans, this is expressed as God's saving righteousness, or justification by faith. Based upon Romans 1—8, how would you explain the doctrine of justification by faith to an adult Bible study class?
9. The adult Bible study group you lead desires to study the book of Revelation. You have chosen to use the entire first session to introduce the book. How will you explain the nature and features of apocalyptic literature in order to set Revelation in the context of scripture as a whole? What else does the class need to hear in your introduction?

**Note:** *Be prepared to share any of your three papers with the class, at the instructor's discretion and invitation.*

**Assignment 2:** *due upon arrival at the school in July.*

- Submit two Bible studies for youth or adults based upon any of the assigned Scripture passages (above), utilize the techniques of lesson planning found in *Teaching Today's Teachers to Teach* and be prepared to explain which principles you used and how.
- One of the Bible studies must be a single 30 minute session ***that you will teach in class.***
  - This study should include at least one teaching method, resource, or activity that is new to you. Should your lesson require materials or media, you will need to provide them.
- The second Bible study must extend from 4 to 6 sessions. Provide one complete Bible study session experience (45- to 60-minutes) with an outline for the remaining sessions.

**Class Sessions:**

- Many of the class sessions will include student-led Bible studies. If class size warrants, Bible studies will be conducted outside class time until all students have had the opportunity to lead a Bible study session.
- Discussion will center around the Book of Discipline as it discusses the role of scripture, and on some of the questions and topics from *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible*.

## **Passing the Course:**

A grade of pass is required for the successful completion of this class. The system for determining that is below.

- Assignment 1 (three papers) 30 points
- Assignment 2 (in-class presentation) 40 points
- Assignment 2 (4-6 week Bible Study) 20 points
- Class Participation 10 points

P+	[Pass Plus]	94-100
P	[Pass]	75-93
P-	[Pass Minus]	65-74
U	[Unsatisfactory]	0-64

## **What does a passing assignment look like?**

- It has the student's name on it.
- It is free of distracting typographical errors.
- It was presented by or before the given deadline for the assignment.
- It is presented double spaced, in a common readable font and font size (12).
- For assignment 1:
  - It answers the question and provides evidence, staying between 1 and 2 pages.
- For assignment 2 (4-6 session study):
  - It chooses a topic from within the list of scriptures provided.
  - The design of the lesson incorporates methods learned from the readings.
- For assignment 2 (in class teaching):
  - The student was well prepared, on time, and ready to answer questions.
  - The student knew their chosen scripture well.
  - The student tried a new teaching method, resource, or activity that they had not used previously.

*Email submissions of materials are acceptable but are **not considered turned in** until you have received a reply from the instructor.*

***Questions about the readings, assignments, and class are welcome and encouraged! Email is my preferred method of communication for the class, but calls and texts are OK too.***

**Instructor:**

**Rev. Ken Burgard** is an ordained United Methodist elder and clergy member of the Illinois Great Rivers Conference, serving as lead pastor of Downs UMC, Downs.

Graduate of the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary (Master of Divinity, 2008), and Eastern Illinois University (Bachelor of Science, 2000)

Board of Ordained Ministry: 2012-2018 – worked with ministry candidates specifically in the area of Bible Study.

License to Preach Faculty (Pastoral Care) 2019-2020

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