COS 121 Bible I: Introduction

Date: April 3-4 and May 1-2, 2020  
(Friday 4:00 pm -7:00 pm & Saturday 8:00 am -3:30 pm)

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Course of Description:

This course introduces biblical interpretation. Attention is given to the inspiration, formation, and function of the canon and to the development of a methodology of interpretation consistent with the nature of scripture. The importance of the Bible as a witness to the life and faith of ancient Israel and earliest Christianity will be emphasized.

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate the place of scripture in the life of the congregation and the role of the pastor in interpretation.
2. Understand the inspiration and formation of the canon and its authority within the community of faith.
3. Understand and apply historical, literary, and theological approaches to various types of literature in scripture using Genesis, Hosea and Amos, Mark, and Philippians.
4. Develop a method of exegesis consistent with the nature and authority of the Bible.

Required Texts:


Supplemental Texts (nice but not required):

Course Requirements: Class attendance is required.
Grade: Participation in class discussions (30%) + Homework (70%)

Homework 1 (due date: April 3, 2020) (15%)
1. Read How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth. Summarize Fee and Stuart’s discussion of the reader as an interpreter and the nature of Scripture (400-600 words).

Homework 2 (due date: April 4, 2020) (15%)
2. Read A Reader’s Guide to the Bible. Identify and discuss briefly 3 insights you believe will be helpful to you in your ministry, and why. (400-600 words).
3. You do not have to write, but be familiar with: a. Genesis b. Judges c. Psalms d. Isaiah e. Kingdom division, f. Northern Kingdom of Israel taken into exile, g. “Good” kings and “Bad” kings h. Mark, 1 Corinthians, James, Revelation k. Subsequent formation of biblical ‘canon” and role of the church council such as Nicea. i. development of Bibles translated for laity.

Homework 3 (due date: May 1, 2020) (20%)
4. Write your thoughts about God’s inspiration of the Bible, and yet the humanity of the authors, how and why the Bible has its authority within the community of faith in the 21st century (400-600 words). Also...What kind of authority does the book of Leviticus have on you? (100-200 words)

Homework 4 (due date: May 2, 2020) (20%)
5. Choose one of the passages that many people are struggling with interpretation in their culture, and answer the following questions (800-1,000 words):
   o Why did you choose this passage?
   o Why do you think people have difficulties on this specific passage?
   o How do you understand this passage and apply it to the community of faith? Start with the analysis of biblical passage, have some exegetical works, and deal with text hermeneutically and contextually.

Instruction on how to format your homework
1. Write your paper, using a 12-point font with single space, and send me electronically.
2. Type the questions before your answers.
3. If you quote from any resource, use quotation marks and note the source.
4. Bring your paper with you for your own use during the class.
5. All homework must include your Personal Identification number supplied by GBHEM.
   You can find out yours by emailing Pamela Frost at pfrost@gbhem.org.