Liberty University School of Divinity

Implementation of a Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical Class for Students:

To Interpret God's Word Exegetically and Apply God's Word Hermeneutically

Doctor of Ministry Thesis Project

A Thesis Project Submitted to

The Faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity

In Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Ministry

by

Casey Whiteis

Lynchburg, Virginia

March 2019

Liberty University School of Divinity

Thesis Project Approval Sheet

_____

Mentor: Dr. Dan Burrell

_____

Reader: Dr. Dwight Rice

iii

Abstract

THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT

Casey Whiteis

Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017

Mentor: Dr. Dan Burrell

Reader: Dr. Dwight Rice

IMPLEMENTATION OF A BASIC EXEGETICAL AND HERMENEUTICAL CLASS FOR STUDENTS: TO INTERPRET GOD'S WORD EXEGETICALLY AND APPLY GOD'S WORD HERMENEUTICALLY

A course to use in student ministries that addresses the capabilities of students in being able to interpret and apply the Bible for themselves. The rationale for choosing this topic is that students are aging out of the student ministry without a basic understanding of how to read, interpret, and apply God's Word for themselves. All too often, while attending the student ministry, students understand topics that relate to what they are experiencing in high school; however, are they receiving the tools required to continue applying God's Word to their lives? Tools are provided to students that will guide them in interpreting and applying the truths found within the biblical text. The potential value of this program is that it will provide students with the basic knowledge required to interpret exegetically and hermeneutically. The research approach was to design a course that could be used to help develop these skills.

Key Words: Youth, Students, Exegetical, Hermeneutics

Abstract Length: 150 words

Acknowledgments

I would first like to thank God for giving me this great opportunity. I would have never dreamed that God would allow me to experience all that I have in pursuing higher education. It was not that long ago, as a young man, I felt the call of God on my life to step into ministry, but I had such uncertainties. Not uncertainties of His calling on my life, but uncertainties of what I could offer Him. These uncertainties would be laid to rest when I heard a preacher share that "God does not call the qualified but qualifies the called." This would put my mind at ease and call me to step out on faith to do His work. The struggle became real when I began to preach my first sermon because I only had a fourth-grade reading level upon graduating from high school. With my King James Bible and audio tapes, I would begin to strengthen my reading level. Then, years later God would rock my uncertainties again when I felt the calling to start my higher education. School was never my strong suit, nor was there ever a desire to further my education until that point; however, I trusted that God knew best. So, I stepped into a journey that has taking me sixteen years to complete. That is why I am so thankful for a God who takes away all uncertainties.

I would also like to thank my family for standing beside and supporting me through this journey; my wife Debbie and my three beautiful children, Jillian, Christopher, and William who have been so supportive, encouraging, and understanding through it all. They have helped make this journey such an awesome experience. What an honor it is to know that I will not be the first and only generation of Christians in my family nor will I be the first and only generation in my family who has gone on to higher education. My kids and wife have or are already talking about where they feel God calling them.

I would also like to say thank you to all the faculty, who have helped throughout the years in this journey. The faculty at Liberty University has been truly amazing in how they have helped me grow educationally, ministry, spiritually, and personally. The faculty at Liberty is what makes Liberty so unique. Although I cannot list all of them who have had a special place in my heart, I would like to thank two, Dr. Dan Burrell who has been my mentor with this project and my reader Dr. Dwight Rice.

Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One: Introduction

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."[1] These were the words of the Apostle Paul, who was writing to a young pastor, Timothy, about a worker approved by God. One cannot help but reflect on the words of a seasoned pastor, about what it takes to be a worker approved by God. Here, in 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul shares two outcomes of being an approved worker: a worker who is not ashamed and a worker who rightly handles the Word of Truth. This project looks at the latter of these two outcomes, i.e., an approved worker who rightly handles the Word of God in the context of student ministry. This is not from the standpoint of teaching student leadership, even though such leadership should be able to handle the Word of God, but from the standpoint of training students to rightfully handle the Bible for themselves.

There should be a desire on the part of the student ministry leadership for a strong foundation that will start students on the right foot of learning to read, interpret, and apply the Bible for themselves correctly. Amy Jacober stated, "as youth workers, we are in the unique position to come alongside adolescents during this crucial season that quite literally impacts the rest of their lives."[2] Imagine, students aging out of student ministry, rightfully dividing the Bible as they go off to colleges (most of the time secular colleges), starting in the workforce, beginning their own families, and serving in the church. Students who can rightfully divide the Word of

---

[1] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 2 Tim 2:15.

[2] Amy Jacober, "*Adolescent Identity Development*" *Christian Youth Work in Theory and Practice: A Handbook* (Golden Lane, London: SCM Press, 2014), 97.

God result in creating capable, caring Christian adults who are grounded in their understanding of the Bible.

Two sets of questions must be addressed in the area of fundamental practices for interpreting exegetically and applying the Bible hermeneutically. First, when should the teaching of fundamental practices in interpreting and applying the Bible occur? Should these fundamentals only be taught to those attending seminary? Should these fundamentals only be taught to adults who have been in the church for a long time? Should students be taught these fundamentals? Second, can students grasp the concepts of fundamental practices in interpreting and applying the Bible? This project does not seek out the answers for the first set of questions, which are concerned with who should learn these fundamentals and when should these fundamentals be taught. However, it does address the second question.

The purpose of this project was to solidify students' understanding of certain principles and methods for interpreting passages of Scripture exegetically and applying passages hermeneutically. Students were challenged to use these tools to help them understand the Bible for themselves. A small group course was given to students willing to learn these principles and methods for interpreting exegetically and applying hermeneutically passages of Scripture. This course sets the foundation for learning how to correctly divide the Bible. Even though it is a minimal foundation, it still aids students in understanding the basics of how to approach, read, interpret, and apply the Bible in a way that is healthy. Student ministry is designed to challenge students into deeper theological identity formation, and this course will aid in that area.[3]

---

[3] Jacober, *Adolescent Identity Development*, 104.

It is imperative that student ministry is more than just fun games or activities with very little thought given to growing and maturing students to be more like Christ. George Barna states in his closing arguments of *Real Teens*; "Often I am astounded at the great lengths our churches go to in order to provide teens with a fun, fast-paced experience that virtually masks the underlining reason for the experience." He adds, "we have mastered the art of drawing a crowd but at the expense of drilling deep into the lives of teenagers with spiritual truths."[4] Delving deep into the lives of teenagers is the very heartbeat of student ministry. However, it is being set aside through all the "smoke" and "lights" of drawing a crowd. Drawing a crowd is good and will help keep a student minister employed by the church; however, it should not be the focal point of student ministry.

The focal point of student ministry should be bringing students to the realization of God's love for them, which manifests into a personal relationship with Him, and then helping them flourish in that relationship to become all that God has planned for them. Paul states it best when he was writing to the Colossians; "To them, God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me."[5] When looking at Paul's statement from the context of student ministry, one could read it as; "Him the student ministry proclaims, warning every student, teaching every student with all wisdom, that the student ministry may present every student

---

[4] George Barna, *Real Teens: A Contemporary Snapshot of Youth Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 101-102.

[5] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*, Col 1:27–29.

mature in Christ. For this, the student ministry toils, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works within the student ministry."

Although this should be the desire of every student ministry, i.e., proclaiming Christ, warning, teaching, and presenting every student mature in Christ, is this really the case with student ministry? Barna states, "Studying teenagers is a task undertaken by few Americans. For the most part, parents hope to survive the teenage years of their kids, so they will feel they have earned retirement; teachers expect icon status for managing young adults; and church youth workers see such a ministry as a means of retaining a "hip" or "in touch" image among their peers and elders."[6] It appears that Paul's statement to the Colossians and Barna's contradict each other. If most parents hope to survive, most teachers expect icon status, and most student workers want to retain an image, where does that leave students and what conditions does it leave student ministry? There must be a change in the mindset of student ministry, one that focuses on proclaiming Christ, warning, teaching, and presenting every student mature in Christ.

There is an old saying, "You might be able to lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink." This same saying applies to students; "You can lead them to where they can find Christ and lead them to a deeper relationship with Christ, but you cannot make them take it." Therefore, if given the opportunity, will students take it? Do students desire a deeper relationship with God? The reality is that sixty-nine percent of students, the majority, agree that their religious faith is very important in their lives today.[7] Therefore, over half of the students who regularly read their Bible do so because they desire to draw closer to God.[8]

---

[6] Barna, *Real Teens*, 13.
[7] Barna Group, *State of the Bible 2016: Teens–Research Conducted Among U.S. Teens Ages 13 to 17* (Philadelphia: American Bible Society, 2016), 85, accessed March 10, 2019, ebook, https://www.americanbible.org/upload/content/Teens_State_of_the_Bible_2016_Report.pdf.
[8] Ibid, 18.

What happened to the other thirty-one percent of Christian students? Why is faith not important to them today? Could it be that they are reluctant to grow deeper because student ministry is more about going to great lengths to bring in crowds, rather than about taking students into a more profound relationship with God? If this is the case, then thirty-one percent of Christian students are not maturing and being active in church because of this lack of establishing a more profound relationship with God. If student ministry focused more on deepening every student's relationship with God, it would theoretically see a thirty-one percent increase in Christian students' desire to have a more meaningful relationship with God. Imagine having all the Christian students who are grounded in their walk and have a deep relationship with the Father; well, these students could change the face of the world.

Students not only desire a significant relationship with God but they "are also very open to spirituality; however, they have very little knowledge or understanding of God's Word."[9] Thus, the thrust behind this project was taking students through some basic exegetical and hermeneutical skills. These skills will help the student grow in his/her knowledge and understanding of God's Word in such a way that he/she is not just hearing from student ministry leaders, but he/she is finding these truths for themselves. Providing students with the skills to study and apply a few principles to that study will give students the confidence and encouragement to study more of the Bible, with the hope that they will crave more of the Bible.

If student ministry created an environment that would provide students with the confidence and encouragement to study their Bible more on their own, why should they not grasp it? Ultimately, student ministry should want what Peter stated in 1 Peter 2:2-5:

---

[9] Jo Whitehead, "*Spiritual Practices and Faith Formation*" *Christian Youth Work in Theory and Practice: A Handbook* (Golden Lane, London: SCM Press, 2014), 153.

"Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."[10]

Students who long for that pure spiritual milk of God's Word will have the potential to leave behind a legacy for student ministry and may create an environment that will shape future generations to change the world for Christ. Knowing that God uses students as a precious stone to build His spiritual house should encourage student ministries to do whatever they can to help shape those students. In this, God can use students to change His world.

Student ministries cannot expect students to "grow up in salvation" through the spiritual milk of God's Word without providing healthy guidelines as to how students should read and study because students have very little knowledge or understanding of God's Word, and thus cannot achieve this without help. Student ministries should be about discipling students in every facet, which includes discipling them in reading and studying God's Word. Malan Nel makes a valid point that cuts to the heart of student ministry:

My conviction after the many years in youth ministry and in youth ministry research and training is that we have missed this Kingdom-like perspective on salvation and life as such. For some or other reason (some quite understandably so), our understanding of salvation as decision-making rather than disciple-making has not done the job. It is misfiring and backfiring into our faces. Faith communities are paying the price. Shallow, even superficial, connections to the Christ and his body are falling apart in front of our eyes. So much so that, in spite of the many exceptions the 'church' is in trouble around the world.[11]

Moving past decision-making to disciple-making is a way to help students grow. Student leaders can share that students need to make the decision to grow and mature in their salvation of Jesus

---

[10] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*, 1 Pe 2:2–5.

[11] Malan Nel, "Imagine-making Disciples in Youth Ministry… that will make Disciples," *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 71, no. 3 (2015): 1-11.

Christ; however, student leaders need to start discipling students to grow to help prevent shallow and superficial connections to Christ and the church.

Empowering students to read and study on their own could radically change student ministry and the world. Sixty-six percent of Christian students believe the Bible is the inspired and accurate Word of God.[12] This is an overwhelming percentage from Christian students of their belief in biblical teachings. Combining the beliefs of biblical teaching with equipping students to understand and apply those teachings on their own could result in a radical change in the life of the student, student ministry, worldviews, the church, and ultimately the world.

Even though there is an overwhelming percentage of students who believe that the Bible is accurate in all its teaching, there is still a constant conflict with what the Bible teaches. Chapman Clark states:

> There is a cold war brewing, one where both sides are losing. On the one hand, churches are seeking to maintain a well-balanced predictable, and safe youth ministry, an image of youth ministry that mimics the "successes" of the past few decades. On the other, all around every church there multiplies a new crop of postmodern adolescents who live in a world where the rules have changed. These are the ones who have rejected the church as irrelevant and even hostile to their worldview and way of life. There is little middle ground between those who are the pawns on this cultural battlefield.[13]

This conflicting contrast that students have with the Bible being inspired and accurate in all its teachings yet rejecting the church's teaching as being relevant should be concerning for student ministries. If student ministries want to influence students with the gospel, this concern must be addressed and dealt with accordingly.

---

[12] Barna Group, *State of the Bible*, 82.
[13] Chapman R. Clark, "Creating a Place for a New Generation: An Ecclesiological Perspective on Youth Ministry," *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 2 (Fall, 1999): 93.

If the majority of students want to grow in a deeper relationship with God, want more spirituality in their lives, and want to hold to the accuracy of what the Bible teaches, why are they struggling with what the church is teaching them? According to Hryniuk, "young people are searching for spiritual guides who are alive in Christ to help reveal to them their deepest identity and beauty as beloved daughters' and sons' of God and to assist them in discerning their unique gifts and vocations in the service of God's reign."[14] Guides who will help them "in times of questioning, confusion, and crisis and offer them friendship, guidance, and listening hearts as they make the passage through adolescence into spiritual maturity."[15]

Sixty-six percent of all Christian students believe that the Bible is inspired and accurate in all its teachings, yet they reject the church's teachings as being irrelevant and hostile toward their way of life and their worldview. These students desire to seek spiritual guides, which may point to the fact that students today do not want to be told what the Bible teaches. There is a longing from students to be shown and given the opportunity to conclude for themselves. However, this does not mean that student leaders should not share the truth of God's Word. It shows leaders that students desire a leader to show them where the truth is while sharing with them; thus, giving them the opportunity to conclude for themselves what the Word reveals. This development adds to the importance of giving students the skills or principles for reading, studying, and applying the Bible that is healthy and accurate.

Thus, this project aimed to accomplish the task of equipping and empowering students to rightly handle the Bible, by giving them the necessary tools to interpret exegetically and apply hermeneutically the Bible for themselves. These tools will help to assist the students as they

---

[14] Michael Hryniuk, "Creating Space for God: Toward A Spirituality of Youth Ministry," *Religious Education* 100, no. 2 (Spring, 2005): 139-56.
[15] Ibid, 153.

grow and mature in their relationship with God, go deeper in their spirituality, and broaden their principles and truths founded in God's Word.

Statement of Limitations

This project was not designed to make students scholars or experts in the field of exegetical studies or hermeneutical studies; however, it was designed to provide students with a working foundation. Additionally, this project did not seek to replace formal education, such as the seminary. The reality is that very few students will attend seminary and study the field of exegetical and hermeneutical studies. This project was limited to a three-fold premise, i.e., a raw, basic understanding and fundamental principle in exegetical and hermeneutical studies creating an environment for students to expand on their understanding and application of God's Word and discipling students to go deeper in the Word and become more rooted in their relationship with God.

Even though the majority of students want to grow in a deeper relationship with God, want more spirituality in their lives, and hold to the accuracy of what the Bible teaches, there is still only twenty-five percent of born-again teens who read their Bible outside of the church. Out of this twenty-five percent, three percent read daily, eleven percent read several times a week, and an additional eleven percent read at least once a week.[16] Barna did not share why the other seventy-five percent of born-again teens did not read their Bibles outside of the church, just that they did not. To help students grow, this must be addressed also; however, this project did not investigate this matter. Thus, this was a limitation when attempting to help students understand and apply God's Word for themselves.

---

[16] Barna Group, *State of the Bible,* 14.

9

The success of a project of this nature rests in the hands of students who may or may not care to understand or apply God's Word for themselves; however, when looking at George Barna's research in *State of the Bible 2016*, this does not appear to be the case for most students. Thus, finding students who do or would like to learn to understand and apply what they read in God's Word could be a challenge. The desire is there for most students but is there a desire from student ministry leaders?

Another limitation was whether student ministry leaders felt confident in teaching exegetical and hermeneutical skills to their students. Not all student ministry leaders have had the training or the formal education to help assist students in this area, something that this project did not address.

Theoretical Basis

Several practices over the years have been used to help aid student leaders be more exegetical and hermeneutical in the way that they preach and teach to students; however, there is little to none that teach these skills to students. There are many resources in discipleship, Christian education, and spiritual formation for students to study. These will help assist student leaders in growing students' relationship with Christ.

Statement of Methodology

As a student leader, this course was designed to solidify students' understanding of some of the principles and methods of interpreting passages exegetically and applying passages hermeneutically. Students were challenged to use these tools to help them understand the Bible for themselves. This may be a radical approach to help students interpret and apply information for themselves; however, "unless teenagers are provided with a very different spin on truth—one

that is comprehensible, relevant, compelling, practical and consistently modeled—they can be expected to follow the path of least resistance—which is the path of relativism."[17]

Giving students permission to interpret and apply the Bible for themselves can be scary. What will they do with the Bible? Will they interpret it correctly? Will they apply it biblically? As a student leader, this author struggled with these questions; however, as a student leader, giving students the necessary skills so they can and will rightfully divide the Bible offsets the concerns of these questions. Giving students permission to interpret and apply the Bible for themselves will help the student leader in presenting students to the Lord as a workman approved by God.

This project, to solidify students' understanding of some of the principles and methods of interpreting passages exegetically and applying passages hermeneutically, is divided into five sections. The first section is the introduction to the project, which looks at the problem of students in biblical studies. It will also address some of the limitations, theoretical basis, methodology, and review of the literature of this study. Chapter two will address the two passions of student ministry and biblical studies, then it will address the context of ministry, and will share how and why this project came about. Chapter three will address how the course of this project was designed and will provide an overview of each session. Chapter four addresses the outcomes of this project by looking at the results from the beginning to the finish of the project. Lastly, chapter five is the conclusion of the project and shares the strengths and weaknesses of the project, and what could have been done differently to make it better.

---

[17] Barna, *Real Teens,* 64.

Review of the Literature

Core Literature for the Course Given to Students

Books

Listed below are the core resources used for teaching students the tools required to interpret exegetically and apply hermeneutically the Bible for themselves. The resources are listed in order from the most used resource to the least used resource. These core resources were used to develop a class to help teach principles to students on a level they could understand and then apply these principals for themselves. This author pulled the principles and fundamentals from these resources and then mixed and matched them before teaching them to the students.

Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays' book *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible* was highly fundamental in its teaching of the basic exegetical and hermeneutical approach.[18] These authors have a fundamental approach in finding the meaning behind the text and how to apply that meaning biblically. Their approach takes the reader through five sets of steps to discover the meaning and application of God's Word. What makes this book stand out among other exegetical and hermeneutical works is that the authors keep the reader engaged and the text is simple enough for others to follow. Reading and applying what the authors teach in this book would help anyone desiring to get more out of the text.

Wayne McDill's book *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching* offers a more in-depth process for finding the meaning behind the text.[19] Even though this book is primarily for preachers and preaching exegetically, there is a great deal of insight on helping preachers (in this case, students) to find the authoritative intent behind the text. McDill leads the reader to a more

---

[18] Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012).
[19] Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2006).

in-depth study of the exegetical and hermeneutical methods. He does this by leading the reader through the process of finding the meaning and application of a text and then using this meaning and application accurately to apply it in a sermon. Although McDill takes his readers a little deeper in the exegetical and hermeneutical steps, his approach is simple and straightforward.

In Bryan Chapell's book, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon,* he provides some excellent principles of exegetical and hermeneutical study.[20] He pushes his readers to approach Bible study and the way they preach to communicate a change hermeneutically in the lives of others and not just information found in the text. Chapell's view is that Christ can be found in every passage of the Bible and it is the role of the communicator to bring Christ out in every lesson or sermon.

Bryan Chapell's Logos class *CM151 Preparing and Delivering Christ-Centered Sermons I: Foundations and Structures* is a very significant extension of his book *Christ-Centered Preaching* that includes greater detail and more information.[21] There are fourteen units with 120 chapters or lessons that are a great help for exegetical and hermeneutical study. His course is primarily for preachers; however, some great principles apply to this course. Chapell's principles will direct others to a better understanding of God's Word and how it should be applied to their lives.

Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen's book *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* is a great resource to help bring all the text together as one grand

---

[20] Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005).

[21] Bryan Chapell, *CM151 Preparing and Delivering Christ-Centered Sermons I: Foundations and Structures, Logos Mobile Education* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015).

story of God's love for humanity.[22] Bringing all the text together allows for a more significant understanding of the bigger picture before moving into the smaller picture of one text. The authors show their readers the six acts or dramas found throughout the Bible, as one grand story of God; these acts are creation, fall, redemption initiated, redemption accomplished, the mission of the church, and redemption completed. The authors share where these acts begin and end, and thus allow students to place the text they are studying in one of these acts.

The next three books did not play a significant role in the course but did offer some help and insight for bringing the principles to students. Students can become overwhelmed with the knowledge they share and at times it might be difficult for them to understand. Gordan D. Fee's book *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors* offered structural diagraming and structural signals.[23] He leads his readers in the main areas of writing exegetical papers and organizing exegetical sermons. Both areas have a great deal to add in interpreting exegetical and applying truths hermeneutically. Walter C. Kaiser JR and Moises Silva's book *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* assisted in the understanding and application of hermeneutics.[24] This book's two authors have different approaches to hermeneutics. They address how interpreting God's Word is achieved in several areas, which include historical narratives, prophecy, gospels, parables, and epistles. Donald L. Hamilton's book *Homiletical Handbook* is excellent for his mechanical layout of the text.[25] He offers a great

---

[22] Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004).

[23] Gordan D. Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors* 3rd ed. (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998).

[24] Walter C. Kaiser JR and Moises Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984).

[25] Donald L. Hamilton, *Homiletical Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992).

explanation of the process of approaching the text hermeneutically, then homiletically communicating the truth.

Resources for the Entire Project

Books

Doug Fields' book *Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry: 9 Essential Foundations for Healthy Growth* is an excellent book for student ministries.[26] This book helps student ministers create programs and structures that will aid in the purpose of discipleship. Fields' book offers nine components to help student ministers build a healthy student ministry, which are the power of God, purpose, potential audience, programs, process, planned values, parents, participating leaders, and perseverance. His book provides practical knowledge to help student ministers have a healthy spiritual and numerical student ministry.

Howard G. Hendricks' book *Teaching to Change Lives: Develop a Passion for Communicating God's Word to Adults or Children in the Church, Home, Bible Study, or School* is one of those resources that will help with challenging concepts for student leader.[27] This book offers a wealth of information on the how and why in the role of a teacher. Hendricks' desires that teachers understand the influence they have to change their lives with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Len Kageler offers a unique book, *The Youth Ministry Survival Guide: How to Thrive and Last for the Long Haul.* It addresses the reality of burnout and failure found within student

---

[26] Doug Fields, *Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry: 9 Essential Foundations for Healthy Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998).

[27] Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives: Develop a Passion for Communicating God's Word to Adults or Children in the Church, Home, Bible Study, or School* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1987).

ministry leaders.[28] Kageler discusses the areas of conflict, frustrations, exhaustion, and disappointments found within student ministries, which lead to burnout and failure. He also adds awareness to empowering students. His book addresses the drawbacks found within the student ministry and practical ways to avoid them. Through his 2006 survey of over 300 students ministers who were fired or left through burnout, Kageler offers advice on how to prevent burnout.

Rick Lawrence's book *Jesus Centered Youth Ministry* challenges student leaders to question what they are doing and why they are doing it. It leads to the realization that the focus of student ministries is to return to the center of all things, Jesus.[29] Lawrence gives his readers hard statistics about students and student leaders and some great principles to change these statistics. He addresses the issues of how student ministries stay away from the foundational teaching and point students toward Christ.

Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt's book, *Creative Bible Teaching,* offers assistance and ideas that challenge students to delve deeper in God's Word.[30] This book also assists the teacher (student leader) in preparing, delivering, and evaluating the lessons given to students. These authors address the concern of just sharing information found within the Bible and not pointing students to the transforming power found within the text. They offer five steps that unleash that transforming power through teaching, which include studying the Bible, focusing on the message, structuring the lesson, teaching the class, and evaluating the results.

---

[28] Len Kageler, *The Youth Ministry Survival Guide: How to Thrive and Last for the Long Haul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).

[29] Rick Lawrence, *Jesus Centered Youth Ministry* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2007).

[30] Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, revised and expanded (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1998).

The next book, *Gospel-Centered Ministry: A Practical Guide* edited by Cameron Cole and Jon Neilson, has three chapters highlighted in this review of the literature, one by Eric McKiddie and two by Jon Neilson.

Eric McKiddie's writes on *The Impact of Expounding God's Word: Expositional Teaching in Youth Ministry*.[31] McKiddie stresses the importance and influence of expository preaching and teaching to students. He also shares a step-by-step method for how leaders can prepare a lesson that is expositional. These steps provide a beginning point for student leaders to prepare and deliver a message to students that will keep the message in line with the text. He stresses that preaching expositionally will teach students how to study the Bible on their own; teaching students how to study their Bible is modeled by the student minister by observing how the messages are delivered to students.

Jon Nielson writes a chapter on *Helping Students Personally Engage the Bible: Small-Group Bible Study in Youth Ministry*.[32] His insight centers on how teaching to students in smaller groups and not just from one big group will influence and grow students to a deep understanding of God's Word. He stresses the importance of small groups and provides insight on how to add small groups to student ministries.

Jon Nielson writes another chapter, *Equipping Youth for Gospel Ministry: Leadership Training in Youth Ministry*.[33] In this chapter, Nielson addresses the areas of equipping and training students to become leaders within the student ministry, and he adds ways these students

---

[31] Eric McKiddie, "The Impact of Expounding God's Word: Expositional Teaching in Youth Ministry" in *Gospel Centered Youth Ministry: A Practical Guide* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 54-66.

[32] Jon Nielson, "Helping Students Personally Engage the Bible: Small-Group Bible Study in Youth Ministry" in *Gospel Centered Youth Ministry: A Practical Guide* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 117-128.

[33] Jon Nielson, "Equipping Youth for Gospel Ministry: Leadership Training in Youth Ministry," in *Gospel Centered Youth Ministry: A Practical Guide* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 129-139.

are used as leaders within the student ministry. He addresses some of the areas that obstruct the equipping and training of students within student ministries. Nielson explains some areas within student ministries that will equip and train students, which include teaching students to study the Bible, teach, lead Bible studies, disciple, evangelize, encourage students to think globally, and encourage students to undertake ministry now.

Scholarly Journal Articles

Chapman R. Clark's article, *Creating a Place for a New Generation: An Ecclesiological Perspective on Youth Ministry,* addresses the conflict of emerging generations. He discusses how two generations differ and ways to bridge the gap.[34] His insight helps the reader understand how students and adults view specific aspects of the church, religion, and God. After sharing information about the conflict of two cultures, Clark then shares four conflict breakers, which are understanding students; embracing the lives and needs of students; encouraging the giftedness, talents, and contributions of students; and creating an open community where Jesus is Lord.

Benjamin D. Espinoza's article, *Between Text and Context: Practical Theology and The Ministry of Equipping,* addresses the area of the teacher and his/her role of teaching practical theological methods.[35] The major push behind this article is how effective practical theology can assist the church in equipping people for the ministry of the church.

Michael Hryniuk's article, *Creating Space for God: Toward A Spirituality of Youth Ministry,* uses the research conducted by the *Youth Ministry and Spirituality Project* to address the following two approaches in student ministries: entertainment found in Protestant Churches

---

[34] Clark, "Creating a Place," 93.
[35] Benjamin D. Espinoza, "Between Text and Context: Practical Theology and The Ministry of Equipping," *Christian Education Journal* 14 no. 2 (Fall, 2017): 391- 404.

and catechetical commonly found in the Roman Catholic Churches.[36] Hryniuk then provides

areas that will help student ministries create a place for God and not just provide entertainment to

students.

Philippa Strong's article, *Christ Alone: Redeeming Youth Ministry,* focuses on how the

Christocentric message is useful in student ministries, specifically in behavior modification.[37]

She stresses that the Christocentric message will fundamentally change students, by growing

them in their relationship with God and service, through practices that will last as they become

adults. Here, Strong shares that teaching the Christocentric message in four main areas results in

the fundamental change of students; these teaching areas include teaching students about the gift

of God's grace, teaching students their status in Christ as Christians, immersing students with the

message of God's kingdom, and leading students to cultivate a personal relationship with God.

---

[36] Hryniuk, "Creating Space," 139-56.
[37] Philippa Strong, "Christ Alone: Redeeming Youth Ministry/Alleenlik Christus…Die Herstel Van Jeugbediening," *Die Skriflig* 48, no 1 (2014): 1-9.

Chapter Two: The Spark That Led to A Flame

Two Passions: Student Ministry and Biblical Studies

This project merges two passions, student ministry with biblical studies. The first passion addresses student ministry; however, this does not reflect or insinuate the first passion in the life of the author. Student ministry can be a rewarding ministry. The rewarding part of this ministry is sharing Christ with students, and then students responding to Christ, and growing in Christ. The rewards and calling from God have allowed this author to participate and lead students toward Christ for eighteen years. Throughout those eighteen years, the rewards have not changed. Sharing Christ has remained at the forefront of student ministry.

There are other rewards in the exciting ministry of students, such as the times when the leaders and students spend time together having fun and doing stupid stuff, going to places just for the sake of wasting time, and coming together to have fellowship. However, student ministry is more than just fun, it is also about building relationships with students.[38] The relationships built in student ministry will last a lifetime; once a student lets the leader into his/her inner circle, the leader will remain there. The greatest reward is influencing the lives of students for Jesus Christ.

Sharing Jesus is such a vital part of what student ministry is.[39] Student ministry is a facet of the local body of believers, who want to reach the students within their community. Church

---

[38] Barna Research Group, *The State of Youth Ministry: How Churches Reach Today's Teens and What Parents Think About It* (Ventura, CA: Barna Group, pp. 1-119. 2016), 12, accessed March 12, 2019, www.barna.com.
[39] Ibid, 12.

members who have started and funded student ministries long for the lives of the students to be radically changed and shaped by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The desire for student ministry came from a need that was seen by the church. The church saw the need in the form of students serving other gods instead of serving the one true God.

The need for student ministry has been around for some time, with student ministry tracing its roots back to the late 1800s.[40] Thus, students' lives have been radically changed through student ministries worldwide for the last couple of centuries. Student ministers play a vital role in this endeavor. The student minister is the one who sets the stage and direction of the student ministry. To keep this long history of radically changing the lives of students for Christ, the student minister must point the students to Jesus. The task and responsibility of pointing students to Jesus rest on the leader. However, there is a problem within student ministry today; "today's teenagers are just not getting who Jesus truly is, or they are not getting enough of who he truly is, or they are getting, literally, a fake Jesus."[41] If student ministries want to retain the history of radically changing the lives of students for Christ, then student ministers must become better at communicating who Christ is.

To point students to Christ, student ministers should point students to God's Word. God's Word is what radically changes the lives of students and not the student ministry itself. Paul's words to the Ephesians will help keep student ministries on the right track; "But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is

---

[40] Mark H. Senter III, *When God Shows Up: A History of Protestant Youth Ministry in America* (Grand Rapides, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).
    [41] Lawrence, *Jesus Centered Youth*, 33.

corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."[42] The student minister can keep influencing students for Christ by sharing Jesus with students, teaching them about who Jesus truly is, explaining that the truth is in Jesus, their old self is depleted because of Jesus, and their new self is designed in the likeness of God. The reality is that the student ministry should be a place where student ministers point students to God's Word and help them mature in Christ.[43]

The second passion addresses biblical studies because it is through the teaching and studying of God's Word that Christians learn about Jesus and grow in maturity. There are a significant number of reasons and rewards for studying the Bible. The Bible teaches Christians about God's love, what Christ did on behalf of Christians, and is full of truths and principles to grow Christians as they mature in Christ. The Bible is a place to find direction and purpose. The Bible is a place to find freedom, comfort, and strength. However, above all, Bible study is about seeking and knowing Jesus.

Biblical studies will lead to the transformation of Christians, as Paul elegantly stated in Romans; "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."[44] Richard Foster shares that biblical studies are the vehicle that renews the mind.[45] Therefore, Christians who want what is good and acceptable and perfect desiring to be transformed by God must practice the art of biblical studies in their lives.

---

[42] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*, Eph 4:20–24.
[43] Barna Research Group, *The State of Youth Ministry*.
[44] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*, Ro 12:2.
[45] Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1998), 62.

This author's life was radically changed through a student ministry and biblical studies. Therefore, this project joins his two passions of student ministry and biblical studies. This project is about teaching students how to approach, read, study, interpret, and apply the Bible by moving through specific steps. These steps are typically taught to adults and seminary students and not to teenagers. Teaching students how to develop a significant approach and skill to biblical study should not come as a surprise because students are challenged intellectually every day at school; therefore, students should be challenged intellectually in their student ministries. Challenging students intellectually in the way they approach the Bible is not the norm; David Wright states, "the common approach of youth ministry is to address the issues facing students. In doing so, students can get the sense that Christianity is primarily a set of self-help process of becoming a better person."[46] The approach that the Bible is nothing more than a self-help book for becoming a better person has to change if student ministers want to help students mature in their biblical studies.

This project aimed to aid students as they matured in their biblical studies. This project was also designed to lead students through a course consisting of seven steps to better interpret exegetically and apply the truths hermeneutically. These seven progressive steps had two main thoughts: what the text says and what the text means. The first main objective leads the students in some basic observation techniques, understanding the author's flow of thoughts and how the author uses words. The second objective teaches students that the right types of questions will lead to the right answers. Chapter three addresses the details of these seven steps that were taught to the students during this course.

---

[46] Dave Wright, "Gathering God's People" in *Gospel Centered Youth Ministry: A Practical Guide*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 109.

What Does the Text Say and What Does the Text Mean?

The first main thought, "what does the text say," approaches the text exegetically. Exegesis is "a term derived from two Greek words meaning 'to think or infer out of.' As a discipline, exegesis examines biblical passages and 'thinks out' their meaning on the basis of grammar (the meaning of the language and its relationship to thought) and historical considerations (the meaning of each passage in light of the culture of that day)."[47] The second main thought, "what does the text mean," approaches the text hermeneutically. Hermeneutics is a "term, from Gk. *hermēneuō* ('interpret'), is used to denote (*a*) the study and statement of the principles on which the biblical text is to be understood, or (*b*) the interpretation of the text in such a way that its message comes home to the reader or hearer."[48] These two main thoughts flow from investigating the text so that the reader will know what the text says and how to apply the principles learned in that investigation to their own lives.

Procedures or steps are required when approaching the text exegetically and applying the truths found in the text hermeneutically. There are a significant number of people, teachers, and authors who have taught the steps to accomplish interpreting the text exegetically and to apply the truths hermeneutically. This study will not address all the methods that have been taught over the years but will look at the necessary steps or procedures of five different authors. The purpose of looking at an overview of their methods or steps is to demonstrate their similarities and differences to achieve the same goal of interpreting the text exegetically and applying the truths found hermeneutically. This overview is not an exhaustive explanation of their contributing work

---

[47] Grant R. Osborne*, "Biblical Theology," Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 340.

[48] F. F. Bruce, "Hermeneutics," in *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 467.

in exegetical and hermeneutic studies. They are, however; highly recommended as great resources for exegetical and hermeneutical studies.

The first method is from Daniel Akin, Bill Curtis, and Stephen Rummage's steps in *Engaging Exposition*. The authors offer a seven-step procedure that moves the readers from hermeneutical to homiletical (the art of preaching) study. Step one is to study the text through observation and interpretation. Step two is to structure the text by finding the seams, analyzing the argument, and outlining the text. Step three is discovering the main idea by asking "what was the main point?" Step four is the bridge from then to now by asking the following five questions: what does this text teach about God, what does this text teach about the fall of humanity, what does this text teach about Christ, what does God want people to know, and what does God want people to do? The next three steps address the area of sermon preparation by looking at the main idea of the sermon, structure of the sermon, and teaching the sermon.[49]

The second method is from Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks' steps in *Living by the Book*. These authors offer a three-step approach to reading and applying the Bible. Step one is observation, i.e., looking for terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere. Step two is moving to interpretation, which looks at questions, answers, and the integration of the meaning of the text. Step three is applying the text.[50]

The third method is from Gordon Fee's steps in the *New Testament Exegesis*. He offers two sets of steps, one for writing an exegesis paper (fifteen steps) and the other for preparing for a sermon (eleven steps). His condensed (eleven-step) procedure has two parts: the first for

---

[49] Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, and Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 128.

[50] Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, *Living by The Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible,* revised and updated (Chicago, IL: Moddy Publishers, 2007), 38-45.

studying the text (six steps) and the second moves those thoughts into a sermon (five steps). His first six steps of the short eleven steps are the areas that are addressed here.

Step one is to get started in the text. This is accomplished by reading the larger context, reading the passage repeatedly, constructing a translation from the original Greek, compiling a list of translation alternatives, analyzing the structure of the text, and starting a sermon word list. Step two is a matter of context. The steps for checking are significant textual issues, noting any grammar that is unusual/unclear or important, making a list of key terms, doing a mini-word study for any important words, and investigating important historical–cultural matters.

Step three, contextual questions, has two sub-sections. The first sub-section is the steps used for approaching the epistles, acts, and revelation, which include examining the historical and literary contexts. The second sub-section is the steps used for approaching the gospels, i.e., identify the form, use a synopsis, investigate possible life settings where appropriate, and describe the present arrangement or adaptation. Step four is consulting secondary literature such as commentaries and other literature pertaining to the text. Step five is looking at the biblical–theological context, which is achieved by analyzing the relation of the text to the rest of the Scripture and analyzing the use of the text concerning theology. Step six leads the reader to the application part of the text by making a list of contemporary life applications in the text, clarifying the possible nature and area of application, and identifying the audience and categories of application.[51] Steps seven through eleven then assist the reader in moving these findings and arranging them for the sermon.

---

[51] Fee, *New Testament Exegesis*, 3rd ed., 135-154.

The fourth method is from Wayne McDill's steps in *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*. He has a twelve-step method. Steps one through six pertain to finding the meaning of the text and steps seven through twelve address sermon-related steps from those findings. His first six steps are the area addressed here. Steps one through three address the area of text analysis. Step one diagrams the text structure through creating and charting the flow, functions, and relationship of ideas within the text. Step two notes the significant details of the text. Step three addresses the methods of asking research questions to understand the author's meaning of the text. Steps four through six address the theological interpretation. Step four addresses the text's big idea to unlock the text's meaning. Step five moves to join the meaning of the text from the original audience to readers today. This step also starts shifting the readers to crafting a sermon. Step six looks at writing sermon division statements; sermon division statements generate sentences that are best to state the teaching found within the text. Even though the last two sets of steps have sermon implications, they still play a vital role in understanding the meaning found within the text.[52]

The fifth and last method this thesis explored is from Duvall and Hays' steps in *Grasping God's Word*. They offer a five-step approach. Step one looks at what the text meant to the biblical audience by making observations within the text, examining the grammar within the text, analyzing significant words, looking at the historical and literary context, and observing the text relations to the surrounding text. Step two addresses the differences between contemporary readers and the biblical audience by looking at the significant differences in culture, language, situations, and time. Step three locates the theological principles and truths found within the text. Step four then takes the principles and truths from step three and checks for consistency of the

---

[52] McDill, *12 Essential Skills*, 7.

truths throughout the rest of the Bible, to ensure that the principles and truths found do not

contradict with other principles and truths found in God's Word. Step five moves to the

application of these principles and truths in the lives of contemporary readers.[53]

These five separate books and various authors have a lot to teach in exegetical and

hermeneutical studies. These authors wrote their books to a variety of audiences. The primary

audiences for the books of Akin, Curtis, and Rummage; McDill; and a small portion of Fee are

pastors. Most of the work undertaken by Fee in his book is primarily for seminary students,

whereas the primary audiences of Hendricks and Hendricks and Duvall and Hays' books are for

people who would like to deepen their biblical studies. They all have different numbers of steps

ranging from three to eleven. Even though they target different audiences and have different

steps, they are still very similar in what they ask the reader to do and are very similar in what

they want to accomplish when completing their steps. A more in-depth detail of their steps is

shown in Appendix B.

All these authors seek to accomplish the goal of finding the author's main point(s) and

principles being taught using exegetical techniques and then hermeneutically applying the

author's principles in a contemporary setting. To achieve the goal of finding the main point(s)

and principles, all the authors ask the reader to make some observations of the text; analyze or

outline the text; ask historical, cultural, and literary contextual questions; search for the intended

meaning and application to the biblical audience; and apply that meaning and application in a

contemporary setting today. These authors lead their readers through the process of interpreting

the text exegetically and applying the truths hermeneutically. The steps that this project taught to

---

[53] Duvall and Hays, *Grasping*, 3rd ed., 42-74.

students were the steps that originated from these authors listed above and are detailed in the next chapter.

Achieving Maturity Through Biblical Studies

This project sought to lead students through the processes of interpreting the text exegetically and applying the truths hermeneutically by providing them with proven methods; thus, helping students mature in the area of biblical studies. These proven methods have helped pastors, seminary students, and everyday people who want a more in-depth approach to their biblical studies to find the meaning and application of the text. Experts have taught these proven methods in their fields of expertise. This project reapplied these methods and instructed them to the students who learned to apply the process for themselves. Providing students with these proven methods ensures that they will reach the goal of finding the author's main point(s) and principles using exegetical techniques and then hermeneutically applying the author's principles in their own lives.

Giving students these proven principles will also build their self-confidence as they approach the text. These self-confident students will know and understand how to find the right meaning in the text and apply that meaning to their own lives, without the aid of the student minister. It also gives them the power to study any text for themselves. Building self-confidence in biblical study opens the doorway of opportunity to learn more and delve deeper into God's Word.

Giving students these proven principles and building self-confidence will lead to more personal discoveries of God's Word. These personal discoveries will provide the students with a better understanding of who they are, what God is calling them to do or to be, and provide them with a more profound understanding of who God is. Personal discoveries of God's Word will

radically change their lives forever. Through these discoveries, students will find strength, endurance, and guidance throughout their lifetime.

Giving students these proven principles that build self-confidence leads to more personal discoveries of God's Word and will also create a deeper relationship with God, which is the ultimate goal of all ministries within the church. This more profound relationship with God leads the students to maturity; therefore, fulfilling what Paul stated: "so that we may present everyone mature in Christ."[54] Maturing in Christ can be achieved by unlocking the power of the Scripture in the lives of the students.

This project used a test to gauge whether students matured in their biblical studies because of completing this course. The students received the same test at the beginning and end of the course. This test was used to gauge the knowledge that the students had before commencing the course and the depth of knowledge that the students had upon completing the course. Chapter four addresses the details and results of this test.

<div align="center">Context of Ministry</div>

The ministry context where this project initiated was at the First Baptist Church located in Adair, Oklahoma. Adair is a rural area in northeast Oklahoma with a population of approximately 800 people residing within the city limits, based on the 2014 census.[55] Adair is a small community, although it is mostly a community of farmers, ranchers, and others who live outside the city limits. The focal point of Adair is the local public school system that has approximately 1,000 students and faculty.[56] Adair has several churches located within and

---

[54] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*, Col 1:28.
[55] http://www.city-data.com/city/Adair-Oklahoma.html (accessed February 11, 2019).
[56] http://www.city-data.com/city/Adair-Oklahoma.html (accessed February 11, 2019).

outside the city limits. One located within the city limits is the First Baptist Church, also known as the Adair First Baptist Church.

Reverend Guy Carr was the founding pastor of the Adair First Baptist Church but is far from the last. The church has had thirty-one pastors and seven interim pastors over the ninety-eight years that the church has been meeting. On average, most pastors have stayed for approximately two years; however, there has been a transition with some of the last few pastors, who have stayed more than ten years each. This shift in pastors staying longer has set a foundation for the church to grow, both numerically and spiritually. Although the church records do not provide a great deal of insight on the average Sunday morning attendance, growth is shown through Sunday School attendance. The year 1941 was the first one that the church started keeping records of Sunday School attendance, with twenty people recorded. The church then experienced steady growth that topped out with an attendance of 106 in 1957. From then, church attendance fluctuated up and down until 1995, when an attendance of 180 was reached. Despite its attendance fluctuations, the church remained and still has a significant presence in the community. Today, the average attendance on a Sunday morning is approximately 275 people under the direction of the newest pastor (all information regarding the church's history is in a three-ringed binder in the church's office).

The current pastor is approaching his fourth year of service. When he arrived, the church had a weekly Sunday morning attendance of seventy-five and is now running at over 275. As expected, the church has experienced some growing pains, which they are currently facing. The pastor does not face these challenges alone; he has some great leaders around him. The church moved to an elder-led church a few years before the arrival of the current pastor. They have five

31

elders who assist the pastor in the decision-making of the church; however, the church members vote on all decisions regarding significant matters.

The church has two full-time ministers, a senior pastor and student pastor, one part-time children's director, and one part-time office administrator. Overall, the church has a young staff; the pastor and office administrator are in their mid- to late-thirties, the children's director is in her early thirties, and the student pastor, the author, is the oldest, being in his early forties. The ministry team works very well together and complements each other. Even though the staff of the church is primarily a younger staff, they have a combined total of over fifty years of ministry experience.

The church does not have any records of when it incorporated a student ministry. Nor does the church have a record of the average attendance of students or the number of student leaders it has had over the years. Therefore, this author can only provide some of the recent historical background of the student ministry. The current student minister is approaching his fourth year of service, starting just a few months behind the current pastor of the church. The student ministry has had a strong presence in the community over the past decade and is known to be one of the most active student ministries in the area, having a strong presence within the student body of the community. The church has a history of longevity for student ministers— four years with the current student minister and eight to ten years with the previous student minister. However, there was a span of two to three years between the two student ministers where the church had a few interim student leaders. This span affected the overall attendance of the student ministry, dropping it to seven students. After hiring the current student minister, attendance has increased and there are currently sixty to seventy students in attendance on Wednesday nights and approximately forty students on Sunday mornings.

The Spark That Started This Project

It is within this current student ministry that this project occurred. However, this project was not born out of the author's current student ministry at the Adair First Baptist Church. The idea for this project originated during the time that this author was teaching a Bible class, as a side job, at a local Christian high school. The new teacher, this author, was given the authority to locate the materials required to teach the high school students the Bible. Finding materials was not an easy task for someone who wanted to lead high school students toward more in-depth study of the Bible. The administrator of the school suggested several places to search for teaching materials for the classes. The resources ranged from home school literature to Christian high school literature.

While searching for literature at the sites provided by the administrator, the new teacher was astonished by the limited resources available for students regarding spiritual growth. There were quite a few teaching materials from books to workbooks, biblical studies of individuals within the Bible, studies of shorter books of the Bible, and a significant amount of resources on topical studies. This common thread of resources for studying the Bible among Christian high school and home school was confirmed when contacting other Christian high schools to see what they were teaching their students regarding the Bible. Although this project does not seek to undertake research or study on the biblical literature used in Christian schools, it does, however, express the convictions of this author. By no means does this project condemn or condone Christian education but it was necessary to share what sparked this project and how that spark carried over and was applied to the current student ministry at Adair First Baptist Church.

After examining these resources, they appeared to be no more than Sunday School class material. The type of material available sparked a resounding question inside this new teacher;

"Can students be led through deeper biblical studies?" The idea here was simple: students who

have attended Christian schools from elementary to high school should have a foundation to

build on because every year these students have received a Bible class. Therefore, some of them

have had a Bible class every year for the last seven to ten years. This author could not move past

that resounding question of leading students deeper.

With this conviction, the new teacher approached the administrator and school board

requesting them to step outside the box from the norm of teaching the Bible. The two classes

proposed to the administrator and school board for consideration in their biblical classes was a

New Testament survey class (with an Old Testament survey the following year) and a Basic

Exegetical and Hermeneutical class. The problem was that there were no high school resources

available for these classes; therefore, the administrator and school board received three textbooks

that would be used to teach the two classes.

The first two textbooks were designed to teach the New Testament survey class but only

as a resource for the teacher to reference when helping lead students through the New Testament.

Thomas D. Lea and David Alan Black's book, *The New Testament: Its Background and

Message,* was used to help create a deeper understanding of the background of the New

Testament and the events leading up to the New Testament.[57] The next book, *An Introduction to

The New Testament,* by D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, was used to assist students in the

understanding of each book found in the New Testament.[58] The last book functioned as an actual

textbook for students who took the Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class, *Grasping God's

---

[57] Thomas D. Lea and David Alan Black, *The New Testament: Its Background and Message* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 2003).

[58] D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to The New Testament,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005).

Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible by Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays.[59]

After the administrator and board reviewed these literature resources and the explanation of why the new teacher wanted to move in this direction, they approved the texts with the desire to stay informed of the results of how students progressed through the course. The teacher then approached Zondervan to acquire the new textbook, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible,* for the high school students. Zondervan's response was short and straightforward, "This textbook is for seminary students and not high school students." Therefore, can students be led through more in-depth biblical studies? This project aimed to find the answer to this question.

Still holding on to the conviction of taking students deeper in God's Word, the teacher, administrator, and school board decided that students could undertake a more in-depth biblical studies class. The risk of taking some of the high school students through a book used only in the seminary, according to the contact person at Zondervan, was outweighed by the possibility that these students could grasp God's Word as they read, interpreted, and applied the Bible for themselves. In the end, the teacher, administrator, school board, students, and the parents of the students were grateful that they took the risk and stepped up to the challenge of leading students through more in-depth biblical studies. Although this project does not explore the results of these classes or the influence these classes had on the high school students, it does consider the success of that class taught at the Christian high school with the hope that it would be successful in the setting of the student ministry.

---

[59] Duvall and Hays, *Grasping*, 3rd ed.

The Spark Carried On

After seeing the effect and capability of the students at the high school and the way they interacted with the Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class, this author and student minister wondered whether this class could be carried over to the current student ministry at Adair First Baptist Church. The student minister then presented the course/project to the pastor of the church for his approval. The pastor said yes without hesitation. Thus, this project was born.

The same conviction and resounding question of leading students deeper into the Bible have been a conviction the student pastor has faced for many years. Years ago, this student minister quit using other people's lessons and materials and created lessons and materials that would better help students deepen their understanding of God and His Word. In his twenty years of student ministry experience, this author has seen an influx in literature dealing with topics of what students should and should not do, and not enough about taking students deeper. Doug Fields states, "as our world's moral decay becomes more prevalent, our teenagers' quest for answers become more desperate."[60] The problem is that it is impossible for student ministers or leaders to give students all the answers that they may have as adults; however, they can provide students with the skills, tools, and principles to find those answers for themselves. It is out of the desperate quest by students for answers that ignited the spark to a flame.

---

[60] Fields, *Purpose-Driven Youth*, 200.

Chapter Three: Development of the Basic Exegetical and

Hermeneutical Class

Developing the Course to Carry on the Flame

Developing a course to carry on the flame was the next step. This course required a different structure because the setting was unlike the one at the Christian high school. The students within the student ministry may not have had the years of Bible classes that the ones attending a Christian school had experienced. Nor did the students have time to attend a Bible class that lasted two hours a day for eighteen weeks. This course needed to be much shorter and concise. Therefore, this author took what he thought were best practices for teaching to interpret God's Word exegetically and apply God's Word hermeneutically from some core resources and experts in their fields.

The most significant contributing work for developing this course was Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays' book, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*.[61] This book was the instructional book used because of the students' grasp and interaction with this book at the Christian high school coupled with the desire to carry that over to the students within the student ministry itself. Additionally, other works were included that would be influential in helping students understand and apply principles to interpret God's Word exegetically and apply God's Word hermeneutically. These other resources were listed in chapter one under the heading Review of the Literature: Core Literature for the Course Given to Students. An explanation as to how each resource integrated into the students' learning is

---

[61] Duvall and Hays, *Grasping*, 3rd ed.

described in each weekly section below. There is also a Course Syllabus provided in Appendix A.

Determining which concepts and principles to use for this course were determined by this author and what he thought would best help to teach students to read, interpret, and apply God's Word for themselves. The ultimate desire for this course can best be described by Adrian Rogers, "I want you to learn how to study your Bible, how to make it burst aflame in your hand. Knowledge is power. That's true in any realm, whether it's business, athletics, or theology."[62] Therefore, the concepts and principles chosen and used in this course came from other works undertaken by experts, which lead to the way that this author studies the Bible and how those concepts and principles made the Word of God burst aflame in his own life.

Six Areas of Concentrations Within This Course

Making the Word of God burst aflame in the lives of students may come about by accident for a few students; however, most students require a little help. William Yount stated: "I 'shot' the Bible up into the air, and anywhere we landed by the end of class was the Lord's will. While God can bless even these misguided efforts, I did not develop skills as a teacher because I had no target to hit, no way to evaluate what I had accomplished. Skill development requires targets."[63] The purpose of this course was to develop skills for students to interpret God's Word exegetically and apply God's Word hermeneutically and the targets to reach those skills. This course commenced with a clear direction of what six targets it wanted to hit with this course.

---

[62]Adrian Rogers and Steve Rogers, *What Every Christian Ought to Know: Solid Grounding for a Growing Faith* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2012), 255-256.

[63] William R. Yount, "*Planning to Teach*" *The Teaching Ministry of the Church,* 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 234.

The first desired target was the understanding of how the English Bible came about, how the Bible has been translated from the original languages to English, and what the differences are in the English translations. This first target helps students understand what and why they are studying the English Bible, because "it is important to understand the process God used to get the English Bible into our hands."[64]

The second desired target was the importance of context and the role it plays in interpreting God's Word exegetically and applying God's Word hermeneutically. The first major role context was through "understanding the historical context of a passage removes the haze of obscure cultural traditions that often shrouds the text for modern interpreters of Scripture."[65] The second major role context was the "literary context of any communicative act (or the rhetorical context if that communication is oral rather than written) plays in correctly interpreting a speaker's or writer's meaning."[66]

The third desired target was that the author controls the meaning of the text, because "the discovery of the author's intended meaning is the ultimate goal of hermeneutics and exegesis."[67] The goal was for students to discover the author's intended meaning of a text and not what they thought worked best or fitted their own beliefs. The author's intended meaning is a critical component throughout the course.

The fourth desired target was how to find the author's meaning. This target would be the "nuts" and "bolts" of the course and provided practical principles and steps to determine the author's intended meaning of any given text. This target also kept the course very hands-on for

---

[64] Duvall and Hays, *Grasping,* 3rd ed., 24.
[65] Craig L. Blomberg and Jennifer Foutz Markley, *A Handbook of New Testament Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 63.
[66] Ibid, 94.
[67] Akin, Curtis, and Rummage, *Engaging Exposition*, 25.

the students, allowing them to personally wrestle and dig through passages to find the author's intended meaning. The designated purpose of this course was interaction, participation, and putting into practice what students had been learning each step of the way. Therefore, the course was more than just providing students with information. Howard Hendricks stressed that, "the Law of Activity tells us that maximum learning is always the result of maximum involvement."[68]

The fifth desired target was applying the author's intended meaning to the biblical audience, i.e., the "theological and practical truths of the text."[69] Determining how the biblical audience applied these theological and practical truths is essential before attempting to apply them today. This target also assisted students in ensuring that the theological and practical truths found within the scope of the entire Bible cleared up any contradiction these truths may appear to have.

The sixth and final desired target of the course was how students could apply that same meaning today. The desire here was that students would take this course and use it to find the truths in God's Word and then apply these truths to their own lives. This course was never designed to only help students find information within the text, but rather to determine how that information could radically change their own lives.

The six desired targets that this course set out to accomplish required a great deal of planning and preparation. Ted Ward states:

> One of the major reasons that a course must be planned is that the choices of instructional methodology and emphasis are important. The other major value of a well-planned course is the matter of sequence. Learning is made easier if the teaching strategy adds ideas upon ideas and principles upon principles in logical order. The organization of knowledge and skills into concepts that contribute most to long-term development

---

[68] Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives*, 78.
[69] Hamilton, *Homiletical Handbook*, 32.

depends largely on the way that learning experiences are out into step-by-step increments.[70]

Therefore, the course was not taught to students until each weekly lesson was completed. The purpose behind this waiting was to ensure that each of the new lessons built upon the earlier lessons and that each lesson would also complement the other to reach one goal, which was the application. Now that the course of interpreting exegetically and applying the truths hermeneutically was finalized, it was time to start the recruiting process.

Recruiting and Testing Students

The recruitment of students for the implementation of the Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class began by inviting all high school students who were currently attending the student ministry at Adair First Baptist Church to undertake the course. The only stipulation for students to enter the class was that they were currently and faithfully attending the student ministries of the church, and students could not join once the class started. There were twenty-five participants, five adult student leaders and twenty students who started the class on September 9, 2018; four of the participants did not complete the class.

The class was held on Sunday nights starting at 6:00 p.m. and finished at approximately 7:30 p.m. There were initially ten weeks; however, one more week was added to assist students with a concept they were struggling to grasp. These eleven classes included the use of PowerPoint presentations and a lot of hands-on experiences.

Learning concepts and applying these concepts helped students understand the literature presented and relating these concepts in interpreting exegetically while applying the truths

---

[70] Ted Ward, "*The Teaching-Learning Process" Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 120.

hermeneutically. Each week is described below as a basic overview of the principles taught during each weekly session, although these are not a detailed description of everything presented during the course.

Before moving on to each week's presented material, the author would like to address how the effectiveness of the course was evaluated. Terri Stovall states, "it is impossible to address evaluation apart from planning." He goes on to add, "without a plan or a target, there is nothing against which to evaluate."[71] Therefore, there was a great deal of thought and effort put into designing the course, and the same amount of thought and effort given to evaluating whether students did or did not grasp the concepts of the course. In evaluating the effectiveness of the course, each student took a pre-course test and a post-course test.

Following is an overview of the course and chapter four addresses the details. The participants were each given a pre-course test, which comprised twenty-four multiple-choice and true/false questions with twelve exegetical questions and twelve hermeneutical questions; the participants received the same test at the completion of the course. The two tests were then used to evaluate the effectiveness of the course.

<center>Weekly Course Overview</center>

Week 1: Introduction

The first week introduced students to the course by giving them a twenty-four question test. This test took students, on average, twenty to thirty minutes to complete. They were instructed to take their time to answer each question and not to guess on an answer. If they did not know the answer to a question, they were instructed to mark the "uncertain" box and not to

---

[71] Terri Stovall, "*Evaluating the Teaching Ministry*" *The Teaching Ministry of the Church,* 2nd ed., (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 437.

leave it blank or guess the answer. Once all the students finished their test the course started. This introduction week covered six fundamental areas.

The first area addressed was the original translations or languages of both the Old and New Testament in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. An aspect of this fundamental area was how the original translations of the Hebrew and Aramaic Old Testament were translated into Greek and the influence they had on the people living in the New Testament. Charles W. Draper and Jack P. Lewsi provide excellent insight that helped in sharing this concept to students.[72] Through this, the students were able to see the magnitude and lengths it took to translate the Bible in its original form from one language to another.

The second area showed the students the history of the Bible, how it was translated into other languages, and how the English translation came about. Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays dedicate an entire chapter on how the English Bible came to be and was the primary source for this area.[73] Teaching this area was fundamental for students to see the rich history and sacrifices made so that they could read and study God's Word in their own language.

The third area explained the difference found within English translations of the Bible. This area explained how to choose the right translation based on different versions and the types of versions. It also helped students understand the difference and applications of formal and functional translations and explained the complex process of translating and organizing the Bible. The fundamentals in this area came from Duvall and Hays. [74]

---

[72] Charles W. Draper and Jack P. Lewis, "*Bible Translations*," in *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 213.
[73] Duvall and Hays, *Grasping*, 3rd ed., 23-38.
[74] Ibid.

The fourth area began to introduce the students to the concept of who controls the meaning of the text, the reader or the author. Although this concept was covered in greater depth during a later week, it introduced the students to the concept and was necessary to approach biblical studies exegetically and hermeneutically. The two concepts introduced to the students were who controls the meaning and what is the authorial meaning and reader response.

The fifth area introduced to the students was the process of the interpretive journey to find the theological and practical truths within the text. This area discussed why the process is a journey because the students are separated from the biblical audience by culture, customs, languages, situations, and time. These crucial areas where explained using Duvall and Hays' five steps of the interpretive journey: grasping the text in the towns of the original audiences, measuring the width of the river to cross, crossing the principlizing bridge, consulting the biblical map, and grasping the text in our town.[75]

The last area discussed in week one was the seven steps to getting started on the right path of interpreting and applying God's Word. These seven steps came from Gordan Fee: read the broader context; read the passage repeatedly; analyze the structure; note any grammar that is unusual, confusing, and important; investigate important historical–cultural matters; look at commentaries, study Bibles, and other resources; and analyze the passage.[76] These seven steps were used as an overview to explain what was to come in the upcoming weeks.

This week helped complete the first desired target of the course by teaching students to understand what and why they are studying the English Bible and introduced students to the second desired target, the importance of context. Overall, the students enjoyed week one, outside

---

[75] Duvall and Hays, *Grasping*, 42-47.
[76] Fee, *New Testament Exegesis*, 3rd ed., 139-150.

of the test. They were very active and interacted throughout this week. The areas they appeared to be engaged in more were the history of the Bible, translating the Bible, and the concepts of who controls the meaning.

Week 2: Looking at the Context

Week two focused on context and why context matters. This week stressed the importance of context in the interpretive journey and showed students how context was applied for understanding the meaning of the text and then applying that meaning to their own lives. Context is a crucial component to interpreting exegetically and applying truth hermeneutically; therefore, understanding the context role in studying was strategically placed early in the course. Laying this solid foundation of context early in the course helped the students understand why there is a need to learn and apply the principles taught in this course. There were three main areas of context addressed this week, with Duval and Hays' principles guiding the areas addressed.

The first main area addressed was the historical–cultural context that is an important principle to understand the meaning of the text. The students began to learn how the historical–cultural context provided excellent insight to what God was saying to the biblical audience. This area showed students that there was a vast difference in "the geography, the customs of the people, their worldview, politics, science, art, and daily life."[77] The students saw how and where to gain the necessary historical–cultural background for the text.

The second primary area turned their attention to the role of literary context and the part it plays in the interpretive journey. This area showed students how and why literary genre,

---

[77] McDill, *12 Essential Skills*, 53.

words, sentences, and paragraphs help determine the meaning of the text. This area exposed the students to the different types of literary genre and how they are used to help emphasize ideas. It also provided information on how the authors used other grammatical features to prove their point. Students saw how the text they were studying fits in the Bible as a whole, *The Drama of Scripture*.[78] The most significant contributor to this area was Duvall and Hays' principles of literary context.[79]

The last area addressed during week two was the preconceived notions and influences the reader brings to the process of interpreting the text. This area was used to help students understand what they bring to the text and how that affects the context of the text, whether good or bad. The preconceived notions and influences they bring to the text can be seen or influenced by a variety of areas. The book by Duvall and Hays was the most significant resource used in this area.[80]

This week helped reach the second desired target of the course as it stressed the importance of historical and literary context. Students appeared to enjoy the examples of how the historical–cultural background brought life and understanding to the text. They were also very engaged in the literary context portion when they were shown how just by looking at the surrounding context could change the context of one sentence.

Week 3: What to Start Looking for in the Passage – Part One (Exegetical)

The first two weeks provided the students with a great deal of information together with some hands-on activities. Weeks three and four provided them with less information and more

---

[78] Bartholomew and Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture.*
[79] Duvall and Hays, *Grasping*, 3rd ed., 149-154.
[80] Ibid.

hands-on activities. These lessons led the students to wrestle with the text, as they started the

investigation process of the text. Both weeks addressed nine observations they were to make

when studying a text. Week three started by showing students how making observations within

the text deepened their understanding of God's Word and provided them with more insight and

understanding. This week was designed to show students that they can understand the Bible for

themselves. These observations, Table 3.1, will help make the text come alive in the hearts of

these students.

Table 3. 1: Duvall and Hays' First Nine Observations

1	**Repetition of words:** looking for words and phrases that repeat within the text and the surrounding text.
2	**Contrasts:** looking for ideas, individuals, and items that are contrasted with each other.
3	**Comparisons:** looking for ideas, individuals, and items that are compared with each other and also looking for similarities.
4	**Lists:** noting where the text mentions more than two items.
5	**Cause and effect:** looking for cause and effect statements.
6	**Figures of speech:** looking for expressions that convey an image, using words in a sense rather than the literal sense.
7	**Conjunctions:** notice connecting words and what are they connecting.
8	**Verbs:** note whether a verb is a past, present, or future; active or passive; and note imperatives.
9	**Pronouns:** identify the to whom or to what the pronouns refer to.

Source: Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays, Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading Interpreting and Applying the Bible, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 51-68.

These nine observations will force the student to repeatedly wrestle with the text. Each

explored observation meant that the students would reread the text; therefore, the text was read at

least nine times. These nine observations pushed the students to become better acquainted with

the text. The students could begin to see what direction the author was going. The foundation set

in this week was critical to understand the observations throughout the rest of the course.

This week gave the course a big push toward the fourth desired target by helping the students find the author's meaning through a hands-on process. Students loved the concept of making as many observations within the assigned text as possible. They wanted to see whether they could find them all, like it was a crossword puzzle. It was a competition for some; they especially loved when they discovered the observations that had been missed by the teacher.

Week 4: What to Start Looking for in the Passage – Part Two (Exegetical)

Week four was very similar to week three, providing nine additional things to observe when studying a text. Making these types of observations helped the students understand what the author was saying and, ultimately, what God was saying through the text. These two weeks were more about becoming acquainted with the text than interpreting the text. These two classes were also designed to help generate questions found within the text because of making these observations; "Why does the author use such a harsh tone when talking to the Galatians?" The nine observations shown in Table 3.2 are the ones that were addressed this week.

Table 3. 2: Duvall and Hays' Second Nine Observations

1	**Questions and answers:** note if the text is built on a question-and-answer.
2	**Dialogue:** note if the text includes dialogue. Identify who is speaking and to whom.
3	**Means:** note if something was done by means of someone/something and answer the "how."
4	**Purpose/results statements:** these are a more specific type of "means" often telling why. Purpose and results are similar and sometimes indistinguishable.
5	**General to specific and specific to general:** find the general statements that are followed by specific examples or applications of the general.
6	**Conditional clauses:** a clause can present the condition by which some action or consequence will result.
7	**Actions/roles of God:** identify actions or roles that the text assigns to God. **Actions/roles of people:** identify actions or roles that the text assigns to people or encourages people to do/be.
8	**Emotional terms:** does the passage use terms that have emotional energy.
9	**Tone of the passage:** what is the overall tone of the passage.

Now the students had a list of eighteen observations to begin their interpretive journey. A cheat sheet was given to each student to help them remember these eighteen observations. Both lessons gave ample examples of what each observation looked like within the text, and they were also given passages to try to find these observations on their own or within a group of two or three.

After completing these two weeks of observations, the students had become very acquainted with the text, to the point of almost quoting the text orally, thus accomplishing the desired target of being very hands-on and allowing the students to personally wrestle and dig through passages to determine the author's intended meaning. The students approached this section with excitement that carried over from week three. They stepped up to the challenge of adding nine more observations to the passages and observations that they had made in week three. The students struggled with the means, purpose, and result statements of the observations, as well as the conditional clauses, although this did not solicit any significant concerns because they would acquire tools to help in locating these observations during the following weeks.

Weeks 5–7: Diagramming the Passage (Exegetical)

Weeks five through seven covered the same materials, objectives, and principles. These weeks were initially designed to last two weeks but were extended a further week to help students grasp the concepts. Weeks five through seven were designed to help students organize their thoughts and findings (after completing Duvall and Hays' eighteen observation steps) and to help students understand the literary context found within the text. The primary contributing

source for these three weeks was Wayne McDill's book, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*.[81]

After completing weeks three and four on Duvall and Hays' eighteen observations, it left a jumbled mess of thoughts and findings to sort through. Although there was a jumbled mess of information through which the students had to sort, Duvall and Hays' eighteen observations still played a vital role in the course. Weeks three and four were not portrayed as irrelevant but showed students how to make sense and organize their observational findings. Diagramming the passage was strategically placed after the eighteen observations to allow the students to wrestle with the text. This made them very acquainted with the text, which was vital for helping the students through diagraming the passage and understanding the literary context taught during the following weeks. Placing Duvall and Hays' observation principles before McDill's literary context principles was not a waste of time because their principles coincide with McDill's.

Combining Duvall and Hays' and McDill's principles was somewhat easy because they attempt to accomplish the same results and use several of the same observational principles. McDill shares thirteen of the eighteen observation principles that are addressed by Duvall and Hays. Therefore, there were five additional observations made by Duvall and Hays that the students learned and were added into McDill's observations: repetition of words, figures of speech, pronouns, general to specific, and emotional terms.

Although it may appear that during these weeks when McDill's observations and literary context principles were added to their list, the students were being asked to make more observations within the text, in reality this was not the case. McDill asks the students to make

---

[81] McDill, *12 Essential Skills,* 23-47.

only one additional observation, i.e., highlight theological words. That carried over to what they

had previously learned and added to the learning of three new concepts. These new concepts

assisted the student in organizing the author's thoughts and their findings together with

identifying how the author uses literary context or rhetorical functions within the text.

The first concept was the structural diagram. The structural diagram is a phrase-by-phrase

chart of the text in the exact word order of the translation, and is also known as a syntactical

display, block diagram, and mechanical layout.[82] Teaching students to structurally diagram a

passage serves as a platform for organizing their findings from the last two weeks and then leads

them to an understanding of how the author had organized his thoughts and how they had used

literary features within the text. The structural diagram organizes the text by identifying

independent clauses and supporting phrases, and then organizes these clauses and phrases so that

one can see the author's flow of thought within the text. Figure 3.1 is an example of what that

process looks like and what the students were asked to do during these three weeks.

<div style="border:1px solid black;">

Blessed be the God
    and Father
        of our Lord Jesus Christ!
    According to his great mercy,
he has caused us to be born again
    to a living hope
    through the resurrection
        of Jesus Christ
        from the dead,[83]

</div>
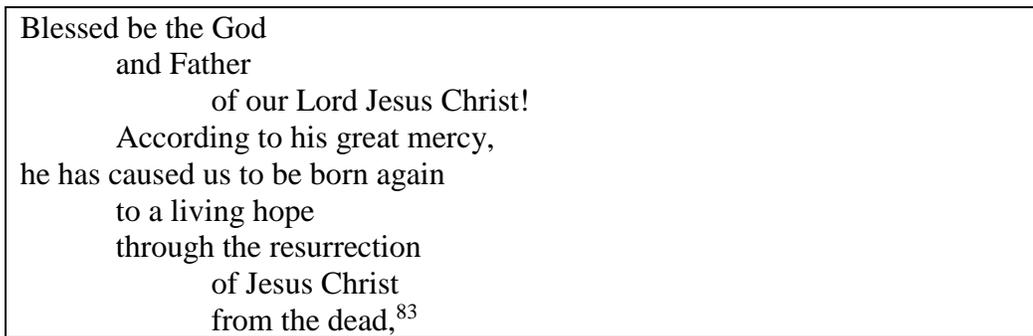
Figure 3. 1: McDill's Example of Structural Diagraming.
Source: Wayne McDill, 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 27.

---

[82] McDill, *12 Essential Skills,* 24.
[83] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*, 1 Pe 1:3.

Students were instructed to insert a table in a new Word document. This table consisted of three columns and two rows (Figure 3.2). The first row consisted of adding the words 'rhetorical function' in the first column, 'verse' in the second column, and 'structural diagram' in the last column. Then, the students were instructed to copy and paste the text they were studying under the structural diagram heading. Copying and pasting the text into the table would keep the text in the exact word order of their translation; this course used the English Standard Version throughout the entirety of the course. Then, they started the process of structurally diagraming their text.

Table 3. 3 The Table Students Where Instructed to Create

Rhetorical Function	Verse	Structural Diagram: Ephesians 2:1-7
		Copy and paste Ephesians 2:1-7 here

Source: Adapted from Wayne McDill, 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 27.

Once students finished the process of structurally diagraming the passage, it was time for them to take the information that they had gained in weeks three and four and place it into the table. Thus, they had to take the eighteen observational principles and place them under the rhetorical function section. Doing this allowed the students to organize their thoughts. This organizational technique and diagraming of McDill guided students as they moved to understand and apply the passage.

Following shows the organizational difference between Duvall and Hays and McDill. After completing each of Duvall and Hays' nine observation principles, he gives an example of what their observations could/should look like once completed (weeks three and four), Figures

3.3 and 3.4 shows the organization of Duvall and Hay and Figure 3.5 shows the origination of McDill.
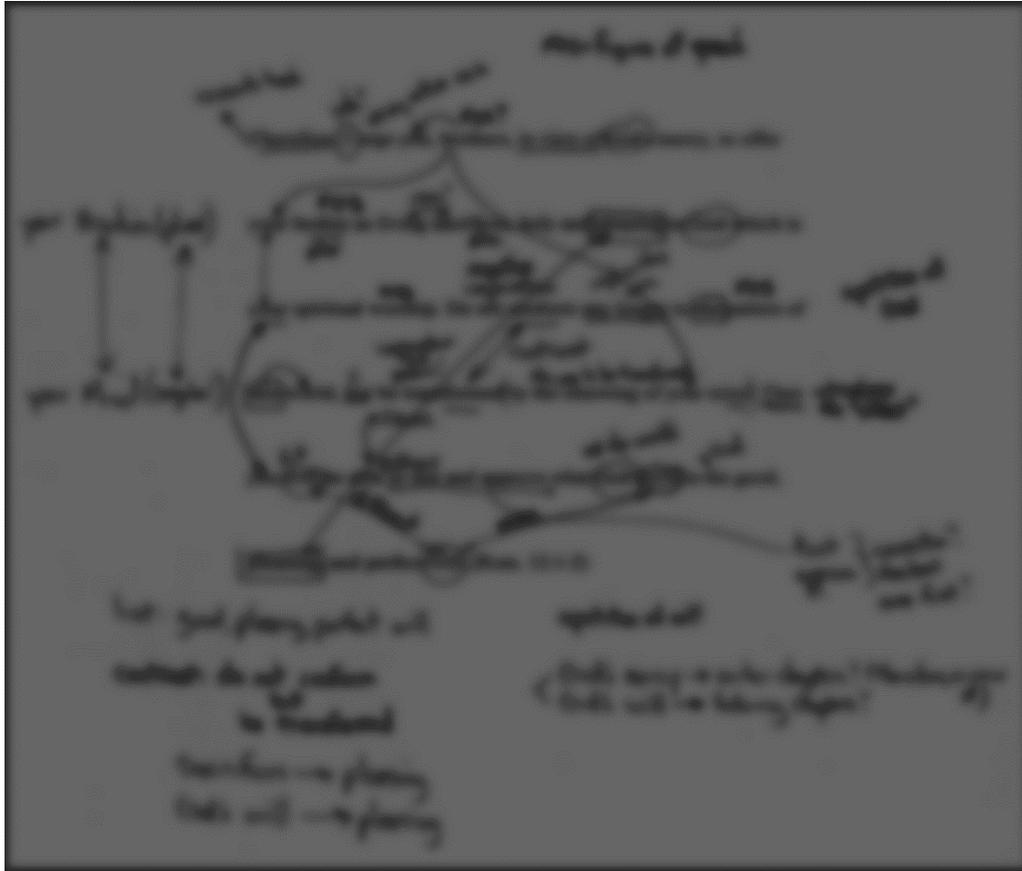
Figure 3. 2: Duvall and Hays' First Nine Observational Principles Applied to the Text
Source: Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays, Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading Interpreting and Applying the Bible, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 62.
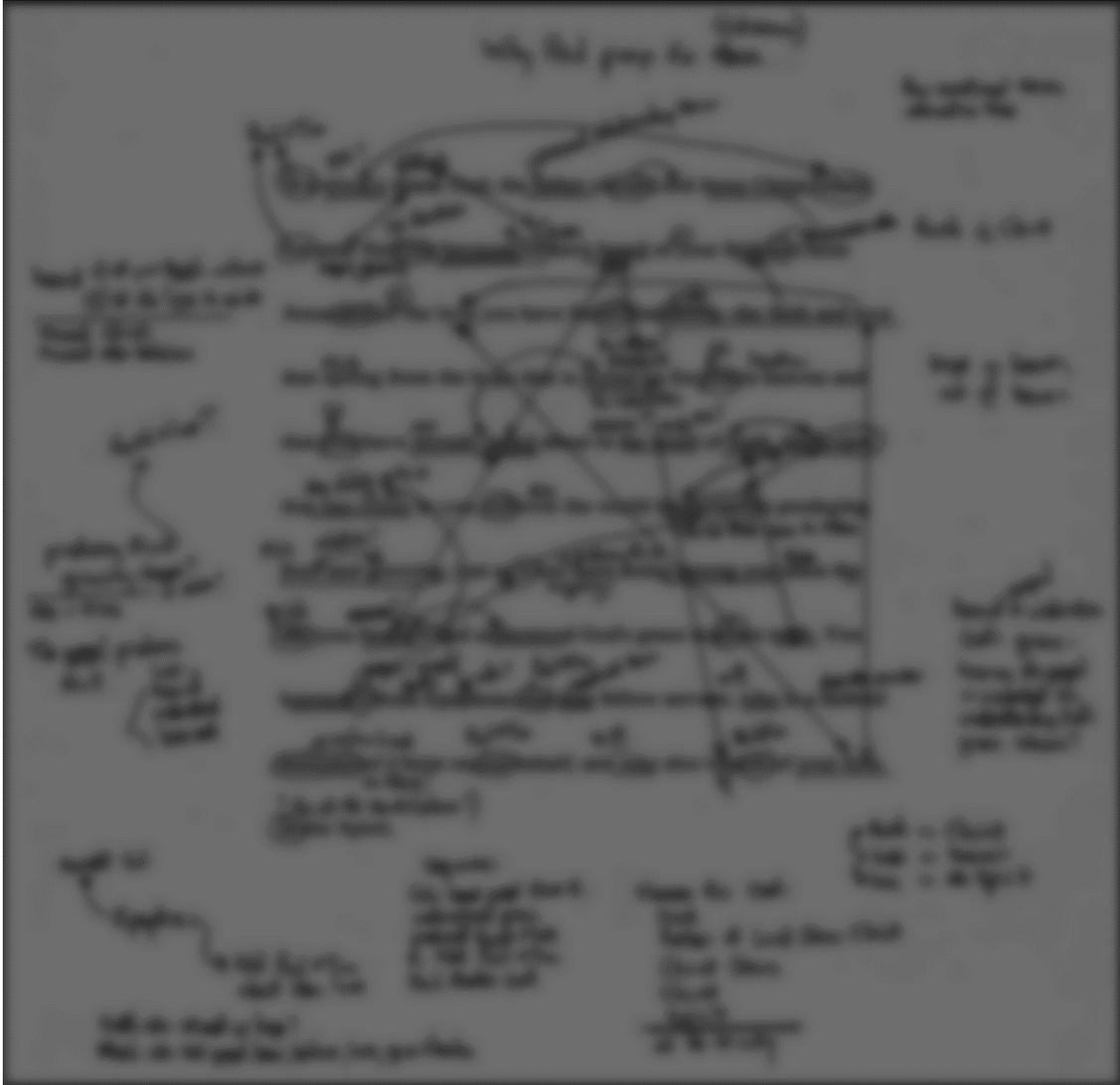
Figure 3. 3: Duvall and Hays' Second Nine Observational Principles Applied to the Text
Source: Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays, Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading Interpreting and Applying the Bible, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 79.

Looking at Duvall and Hays' result examples, one can see how busy, messy, and even possibly confusing they are; therefore, the first desire here is to clean up and organize the results. McDill's structural diagraming was used to help students organize their findings from the previous weeks. Figure 3.5 is an example of McDill's structural diagram.
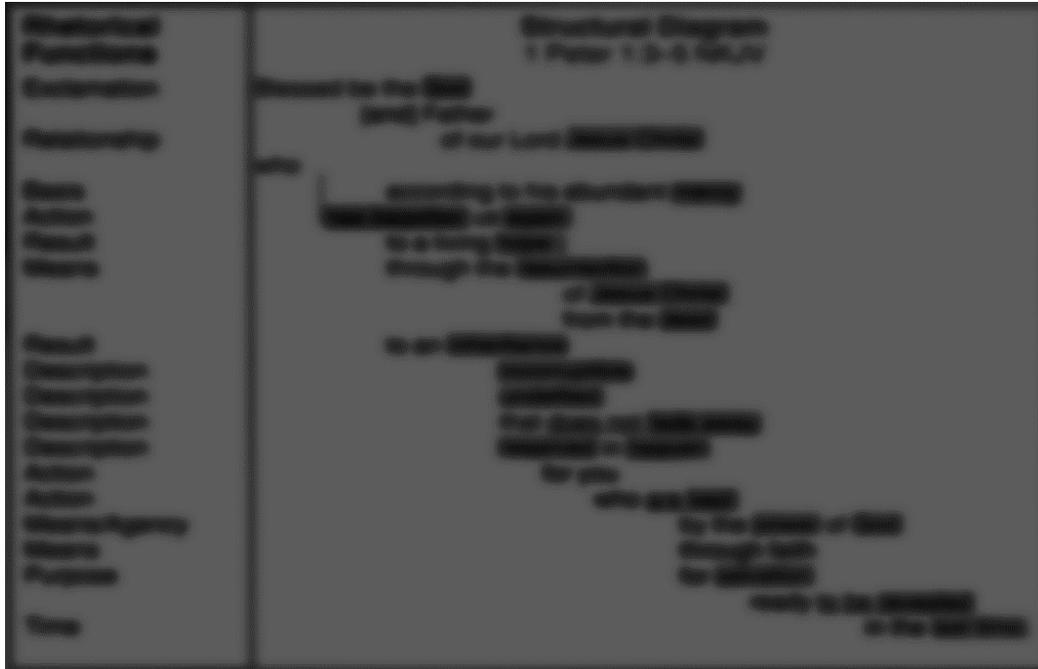
Figure 3. 4: McDill's Structural Diagraming Applied to the Text
Source: Wayne McDill, 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 27.

Structural diagramming is cleaner and better organized in how it displays the result. Providing a better organizational structure will assist students in understanding what they have found during their observations and will help lead them to find the author's main point and supporting points in this lesson.

The second concept addressed was the power of conjunctions and connectives, and the vital role they play in understanding and applying the text. The purpose of this concept was twofold; first was to assist students in finding some of the observation principles they learned in weeks three and four and second was to show how conjunctions interact with literary context. Conjunctions are used in a literary context to show the relationship between ideas found within the text. McDill offers excellent insight into how the relationship between ideas are often connected by conjunctions and, by learning these categories, the students obtained assistance in

correctly interpreting the text. McDill provides nine categories that conjunctions fall into that

assisted during the interpretive process (Table 3.3).

Table 3. 4: McDill's Nine Categories for Conjunctions

1	**Logical sequence** is the most common conjunction used to indicate logical sequence, as in any series of ideas, and uses the conjunction "and."
2	**Comparison** shows ideas to be alike, similar, or of equal weight and use the conjunctions "like," "as," "also," "too," "of course," and "can be."
3	**Contrast** is when two elements are unalike, possibly opposites, and uses the conjunctions "but," "nevertheless," "even though," "much more," "yet," and "although."
4	**Conditional statements** reveal a relationship in which a condition is said to lead to a predictable result and uses the conjunctions "if … then pattern" even when the "if and then" statements are implied within the text.
5	**Correlative structure** shows two elements to be related to each other communally and uses pairs of conjunctions "both … and," "as … so also," "so … as," and "for … as."
6	**Reason** points to arguments that show that one element is the reason behind another and uses the conjunction "because," "therefore," "for this reason," "for," and "since."
7	**Purpose statements** are often apparent with the conjunctions "like that," "so that," and "in order that."
8	**Sequence or time** helps note the order of events and uses the conjunctions "now," "until," "when," "after," "before," "since," and "while."
9	**Geographical** conjunction is "where."

Source: Wayne McDill, 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 28.

The last concept taught looked at identifying the rhetorical functions within the text. This

concept was added to the course to help students understand that the biblical authors did not just

throw words together for the sake of passing on information but chose their words wisely, with a

desire to communicate change within the hearts of their readers. This course used McDill's four

classifications in identifying rhetorical functions, which are explanatory, illustrative, argumentative, and applicational.[84]

After seven weeks, the students should be able to identify what the author was communicating to his audience, what was the author's main point(s), how he supported his main point, and how the author communicated the change. Figure 3.6 is an example of the results and expectations of the first seven weeks.

| Rhetorical Function	VS	Structural Diagram Ephesians 2:1-7
Conjunction/Connective/to CH 1	1	[And]
Circumstance		you were dead
List-Cause		in the trespasses
Conjunction/Connective/Logical		[and]
List-Cause		Sins
Sphere/Time/Active	2	in which you once walked,
Manner/Problem/Description		following the course of this world,
Manner/Problem/Description		following the prince of the power of the air,
Source		the spirit that is
Conjunction/Connective/Time		[now]
Source/Active/Present		at work in the sons of disobedience
Sphere/Time/Active/Present	3	among whom we all once lived
Description		in the passions of our flesh,
Elaborating		carrying out
List		the desires of the body
Conjunction/Connective/Logical		[and]
List		the mind,
Conjunction/Connective/Logical		[and]
Manner/Problem		were by nature children of wrath,
Conjunction/Connective/Comparison		[like]
Comparison		the rest of mankind.
Conjunction/Connective/Contrast	4	[But]
Contrast		God,
Description/Circumstance		being rich in mercy,
Conjunction/Connective/Reason		[because]
Cause		of the great love
Reason Result		with which he loved us,
Conjunction/Connective/Contrast	5	[even]
Description/Climax/Circumstance		[When]we [were] dead in our trespasses,
Divine Action		made us alive together with Christ
Exclamation/Passive/Perfect		by grace you have been saved
Conjunction/Connective/Logical		[and]
Divine Action	6	raised us up with him
Conjunction/Connective/Logical		[and]
Divine Action		seated us with him
Descriptive		in the heavenly places
Descriptive		in Christ Jesus,
Conjunction/Connective/Purpose		[so that]
Sphere/Time/Active/Present	7	in the coming ages
Wish/Desire/Present/Active		he might show the immeasurable riches
Description		of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Figure 3. 5: Results and Expectations of the First Seven Weeks

---

[84] McDill, *12 Essential Skills*, 30.

The end results showed students that Paul told the Ephesians four truths regarding their relationship in Christ Jesus, i.e., they were dead, but God, made them alive together with Christ, raised them in Christ, and they are seated with Christ; everything else Paul shares in this passage supports those four areas.

These three weeks were used to help students reach the third and fourth desired targets of this course, i.e., helping students understand that the author controls the meaning of the text and how to find the author's meaning. With the guidance of the structural diagram and rhetorical function presented to students, they could discover the biblical author's intent. These three weeks started very rocky for the students, from the moment the students heard that they were going to be identifying independent clauses and supporting phrases; "I am not good in English" was the initial response of the students. Although this component started shakily, the students persisted with their studies even though it took longer than expected for the students to grasp the concepts. However, once they started to understand the concepts, little lightbulbs started going off around the room. This lesson was very rewarding for this author, not because of the content presented but because of how students began to see God's Word come alive and make sense to them for the first time. Seeing these lightbulbs go off inside them made the sacrifice and time spent on the course well worth it. The students' new knowledge is addressed in greater detail in chapter five.

Week 8: Working to Understand the Passage (Hermeneutics)

Week eight started the shift from interpreting exegetically to applying truths hermeneutically. This shift moved students from searching and wrestling within the surface of the text to searching and wrestling inside the text. For the previous five weeks, the students were challenged to ask themselves, "what does the text say?" when they approached the text. Students were now challenged to add another question to their thinking when they approached the text,

"what does the text mean?" This week's course focused on helping students learn how to gain information about the text, so they could better understand the text.

There was only one foundational concept taught this week, which was understanding the distance between the biblical world and the world today. This concept taught the students that there are significant differences between what the world was like in biblical times and the way the world is today; however, there are some things that remain the same. There were two main factors the students were asked to investigate regarding these two worlds, i.e., the historical distance and the literary distance. Historical distance looks at "the geography, the customs of the people their worldview, politics, science, art, and daily life" as they fit within the scope of the text that is studied.[85] Literary distance addresses the "different grammatical structures, different ways of communicating a thought" found within the text.[86] To help assist students in exploring these distances, they were provided with insight from resources that would guide them in how to ask the right questions.

Using a variety of resources can help bring understanding and light to a world that is very different and foreign to readers today. The list of resources shared with the students was designed to provide an overview of what each resource can offer to its readers. However, the reality is that most students will not have these resources and probably would not acquire them later in life. Therefore, these resources were shared briefly and the students saw practical places to acquire a general knowledge of the historical, cultural, and literary background of the text they were studying. The overview of resources given included: concordances, word study books, Bible handbooks, Bible dictionaries, commentaries, Bible software, Bible atlases, Bible

---

[85] McDill, *12 Essential Skills*, 53.
[86] Ibid.

encyclopedia, interlinear Bibles, lexicons, and word studies. This overview shared the resources used, what they offer, their strengths, and weaknesses. The next step was to share the practical alternative of using their study Bibles to help them find the historical, cultural, and literary context. Students saw how reading the introduction to the book would give them insight into the things that they could not see without this knowledge.

This next area assisted students in understanding and filling in the distance by having them ask the right investigative questions. McDill's investigative questions use the standard journalistic questions of who, what, when, where, why, and how. McDill uses these journalistic questions to help direct students to the correct questions to ask so that the correct answer is understood (Table 3.4).

Table 3. 5: McDill's Journalistic Questions.

1	The "who" question asks about the people in or behind the text.
2	The "what" question asks about the identification or definition of some matter in the text.
3	The "when" question relates to time.
4	The "where" question inquires about location.
5	The "why" question asks about the reasons or cause for a condition, action, or assertion.
6	The "how" question seeks answers as to some process in the text.

Source: Wayne McDill, 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 56-58.

The last area for this week was another set of questions that looked at asking the right interpretive questions. These set of questions assisted students in finding the meaning within the text. Here, McDill offers seven additional questions to ensure that the text is interpreted biblically (Table 3.5).

Table 3. 6: McDill's Interpretive Questions

1	What other passages help clarify the meaning of this text?
2	What does the context of this book express about the message of this text?
3	How does this text's literary genre affect its message?
4	What seems to be the writer's purpose in this text as part of the whole book?
5	What are the overall tone and style of the text language?
6	What are the apparent implications of the writer's statements in the text?
7	What is the significance of the ideas in the text for the response of contemporary believers?

Source: Wayne McDill, 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 58-60.

Week eight took the foundational concepts of context that were introduced to the students during week two and expounded on these ideas. The search for meaning is a quest, and it requires asking the right questions and looking in the right areas. This search for meaning was the focal point of this lesson and at times required looking outside the text to find the answers.

This week's materials helped the course achieve the fourth desired target of finding the author's meaning. The students did not mind searching and answering the journalistic questions, partly because they only had to find and record their answers if they did not already know the answer. However, when it came to the interpretive question, students struggled to grasp and apply this concept. They grasped the why part of the investigative questions; however, understanding the concept of how to find the answers was where the students struggled.

Week 9: Working on Applying the Passage – Part One (Hermeneutics)

Week nine covered the area of how the text applied to the original audience and how that application applied to the student's own life. There was only one concept taught during this week, which was obtained from two resources, both by Bryan Chapell: *Christ-Centered Preaching* and *Preparing and Delivering Christ-Centered Sermon*.[87] In these resources, Chapell

---

[87] Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*; Chapell, *CM151 Preparing and Delivering*.

shares the concept he calls the Fallen Condition Focus (FCF). This concept was added to help the students realize that they are like the biblical audience, and just as the Word of God was given to help complete the biblical audience, it was also given to complete them as well. FCF is "the mutual condition that contemporary believers share with those to or about whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage for God's people to glorify and enjoy him."[88]

This week showed the students the concept of how the FCF is in every text they study. It exposes the human dilemma inside the original audience while addressing the dilemma inside the student. Therefore, before the text was applied to their lives, they must first find the purpose or the burden within the text. In finding the purpose or burden of a text using FCF, the students must decide what actions or areas the author was addressing to change in the lives of his audience. These actions or areas the author was asking his audience to change fell into one of the following areas: sin, attitude(s), a belief, behavior, or thinking. Students were asked to determine what actions or areas the author was asking his audience to change and make a note of them. The students found help in this area by asking the three questions shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3. 7: Chapell's FCF Questions.

1	What does the text say?
2	What spiritual concern(s) did the text address (in its context)?
3	What spiritual concerns do listeners share in common with those who (or about) whom the text is written?

Source: Bryan Chapell, Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 52.

The FCF concept was a fundamental step in showing students the importance of applying God's Word hermeneutically. Without an understanding of the text, it is impossible to find the

---

[88] Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching,* 2nd ed., 50.

true FCF; the right application of the text is a process with very little room for shortcuts. The reason this week was included in the course was for students to discover what the author was asking the original audience to change in their lives and why they were asked to change that mindset. Then, the students could, in turn, understand how they were like the original audience and learn why they needed to make those same changes within their own lives.

The week helped in completing the fifth desired target of how the biblical audience applied or should apply the author's intended meaning, and it laid a solid foundation for the sixth desired outcome of students applying that same meaning within their own lives. This week was eye-opening for the students as they learned that every person, place, and thing written in the Bible was strategically placed there by God. The FCF examples given to the students showed them just how much they have in common with the original audience.

Week 10: Working on Applying Passage – Part Two (Hermeneutics)

Week ten was used to let students practice the skills they had acquired in applying God's Word. This class was used to help sharpen the skills and principles they had learned throughout the previous ten weeks. Duvall and Hays' four application steps were a guide during this session (Table 3.7).

Table 3. 8: Duvall and Hays' Four Application Steps.

1	Grasp the text in their town. What did the text mean to the biblical audience?
2	Measure the width of the river to cross. What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?
3	Cross the principlizing bridge. What is the theological principle(s) in this text?
4	Grasp the text in our town. How should individual Christians today apply the theological principle(s) in their lives?

Source: Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays, Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading Interpreting and Applying the Bible, 3rd ed. *(Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 237.*

Students used these four steps as a guide and applied them to passages used throughout the course, with one exception. They also had to find the FCF for each example. To accomplish this task and every task the students were asked to complete throughout the entirety of the course, they used the same text examples to practice in every step, one of these being Ephesians 2:1-7 (Figure 3.5).

This practice allowed time for students to ask questions in the areas or concepts that they were struggling with or that prevented them from finding what the author was asking the audience to change. Students reacted and participated in this week as it brought them closer to understanding the overall process and it filled in the gaps that they had about the process. They expressed how they loved being able to understand what they were reading and studying.

Week 11: Finishing Up

Week eleven was an overview of all the methods taught throughout the previous ten weeks. There were seven procedures or steps the students were instructed to undertake when they desired to dig deeper within a text. The first step was the eighteen observations they noted within the text. The second step was to structurally diagram the text and organize their thoughts from the eighteen observations, together with identifying the rhetorical functions. The third step addressed the power of the conjunction and connectives and notes in their rhetorical function. The fourth step was to answer the investigative questions. The fifth step was to answer the interpretive questions. The sixth step was to find the FCF in every text by answering the questions. The seventh and final step was to answer the questions to the four application steps.

The first three steps focused on what they observed in the text and the last four steps focused on finding answers to questions from those observations as they sought to apply what they had learned. After the completion of the course, it was time for the students to take the same

test that was given to them on the first day of the course. This test would be used to evaluate the

course and not the individuals taking the test.

Chapter Four: Results of Students Interpreting God's Word Exegetically and Applying Hermeneutically.

Evaluation Process: Pre-Course Test and Post-Course Test

The students were given a pre-course test and a post-course test to assist in the evaluation process, which can be found in Appendix C. The students were given the pre-course test to gauge the knowledge they possessed before completing the eleven-week course. They received the same test after the completion of the course to record any differences gained from undertaking the course. There were twenty-four questions; ten multiple-choice questions and fourteen true and false questions. The first twenty questions had an option to select "uncertain," and the last four did not have an "uncertain" option. The "uncertain" option was added to the test to allow the students the freedom to answer truthfully instead of guessing.

Five biblical text questions were asked to determine how the students reacted to a particular biblical text, by looking for the author's main point, whom the author was addressing, or how a statement should be interpreted, figuratively or literally. In retrospect, it would have been helpful to the students when answering these five questions to have provided the entire context of the text and not just a single verse, with four of the five questions only including a single verse and not the entire context. Although it was expected that students would use their own Bibles, one was provided for looking up the texts.

However, while observing the students taking the test, there were only a few who used the Bible provided. Without the use of their Bible coupled with no provided context, it demonstrated that students had limited growth because only a small margin improved. The question that did include the entire context saw a significant increase in understanding compared

to the questions with only partial context; therefore, adding the entire context might have assisted

more of the students to perform better on the post-course test. Table 4.1 show the percentages of

the correct answers provided by students to questions 4, 5, 8, 10, and 12 between the pre-course

and post-course tests given to twenty-one students. The differences in this table revealed how the

lack of using their own Bibles coupled with no context influenced the students.

Table 4. 1: The Impact of Only Having a Single Text

Questions	Pre-course test	Post-course test	Difference
4	38%	57%	19%
5	24%	52%	28%
8	14%	24%	10%
10	76%	86%	10%
12	14%	46%	32%

Question 12 was the only test question that included the entire context of the verse. This question

was also the one that showed the most growth in the overall percentage of correct answers given

by the students, with 32% more students providing the correct answer in the post-course test

compared to the pre-course test.

These five biblical text questions were selected because they are often taken out of

context; an example of one of these questions is shown in Figure 4.1.

> 5. What was Matthew addressing in Matthew 18:20; (ESV) "For where two or
>   three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."
>   a. Church discipline
>   b. Corporate prayer
>   c. Individual prayer
>   d. Church worship services
>   e. Uncertain

Figure 4. 1: Example of One of the Five Biblical Text Questions

One of the five questions (question 4, Figure 4.2) is frequently debated on how it should be interpreted; however, to prevent the test from being subjective, all questions and answers were taken from the resources used in the course and not from this author's opinion.

> 4. John was addressing unbelievers when he wrote Revelation 3:20 (ESV) "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."
>   a. True
>   b. False
>   c. Uncertain

Figure 4. 2: Controversial Biblical Text Question

Fourteen of the questions addressed information ranging from application to context. These fourteen questions did not ask the student to look at a specific text, but were more to gauge the way that a student approached the interpretation and application of the text. Out of the fourteen questions, eight questions looked at how the students approached the authorial intent and context of the text. The other six questions looked at how the students approached application questions. Only one of the fourteen questions addressed the types of English translations.

The last four questions on the test addressed how the students approached the text of Philippians 4:10-13. Here, the students were asked to select Paul's main point, select a statement that appropriately described the original situation, select a statement that best described the theological principle, and select the contemporary situation described in the biblical situation. This part of the test was to evaluate the overall process of interpreting and applying a passage.

The test contained twenty-four questions, with twelve questions addressing exegetical areas and twelve questions addressing hermeneutical areas. Chapter two provided a brief description of exegesis as "thinking out" the meaning and hermeneutics as how to "interpret" the

principles and application of the text. The reality is that the two concepts are somewhat similar and different at the same time. D. A. Carson explains the differences as, "Exegesis concludes by saying, this passage means such and such; hermeneutics ends by saying, this interpretative process is constituted by the following techniques and pre-understandings;" therefore, hermeneutics is a process of techniques for interpretation and exegesis is the interpretation.[89] They both work together to accomplish the task of finding the meaning of the text.

The test distinguished the differences this way: all questions regarding the steps for finding the meaning fell under exegetical and all questions concerning the steps of the author's main point and application fell under hermeneutics. Therefore, the answers to the hermeneutical questions address what the students learned by applying the hermeneutical process of techniques and then moved to how the new information should be applied.

The Four Fundamental Variables in the Teaching and Learning Process

The two tests were given to gauge the students' knowledge before and after completing the Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class. The pre-course test and post-course test were designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Lawrence Richards and Gary Bredfeldt share that there are three main reasons for evaluating the effectiveness of what is taught in the church. First, it helps in gauging whether the objectives that were set for the class were reached. Second, evaluation allows the teacher to make changes to the course for the next time the course is taught. Third, the evaluation provides the teacher with personal improvement ideas.[90]

---

[89] D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1996), 25.
[90] Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, 310-311.

Richards and Bredfeldt's three main reasons for evaluating the effectiveness of what is taught in the church applies here to this project. The first reason was to gauge the objectives of the course. There were six main objectives that this project set out to achieve:

- The first was to teach the students the history behind the Bible, i.e., understanding the rich history and differences within the English translation.
- The second objective was teaching the students the importance of context, i.e., understanding the historical and literary context of the text.
- The third objective was teaching the students that the author controls the meaning of the text, i.e., understanding that there is a process to find the author's meaning.
- The fourth objective was teaching the students how to find the authorial meaning within the text, through a hands-on approach, i.e., understanding the process of how to find the authorial meaning.
- The fifth objective was teaching to discover how the original audience applied that meaning, i.e., understanding the theological and practical truths found within the text.
- The sixth and final objective was teaching students how these same theological and practical truths can apply to their own lives, i.e., understanding the transformation power of God's Word in their lives, and thus growing them to be more mature in their walk with Christ.

Richards and Bredfeldt's second reason was to make changes to the course as required. Several changes would make this course better the next time it is taught to students. The changes include what was stated earlier concerning adding the entire context of the text to the question instead of a single verse; there will be several more suggested changes made throughout this evaluation. Richards and Bredfeldt's final reason for evaluating a course taught in church was to help the teacher become a more effective communicator.

Richards and Bredfeldt added that there are four main areas to evaluate: the learner, the teacher, the curriculum, and the environment.[91] They provided a series of questions to answer in each of these four areas that would gauge the effectiveness of a course being used in the church;

---

[91] Richards and Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching,* 310-313.

70

some, but not all, of these questions were used as a guide to gauge the effectiveness of this course.

The Learner

What were the ages, and developmental and spiritual maturity levels of the students?

The Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class included twenty-one students: sixteen students ranged from ninth to twelfth grades, two students had just completed high school, and three students were adult leaders within the student ministry. The students were given an entry questionnaire before starting the class; this served as a reference point for their development and spiritual maturity. There was a total of eight questions in the entry questionnaire, with two of these questions providing an idea of the spiritual maturity level of the students. The entire entry questionnaire is shown in Appendix D.

The two questions that provided an idea of the spiritual maturity level of the students were questions 1 and 8. Starting with question 8; "How long have you been a Christian?," Figure 4.3 shows the results of the twenty students who completed the questionnaire, one student did not complete the questionnaire.

Figure 4. 3: How Long Have You Been a Christian?

The spiritual development answers provided by the students reflects that more than two-thirds of the students had been a Christian for five or more years. This result did not come as a surprise because the students who attended the course class were the students who came on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings, i.e., they were incredibly faithful attendees.

Question 1 was, "How would you rate your knowledge of the Bible?," with the results shown in Figure 4.4.
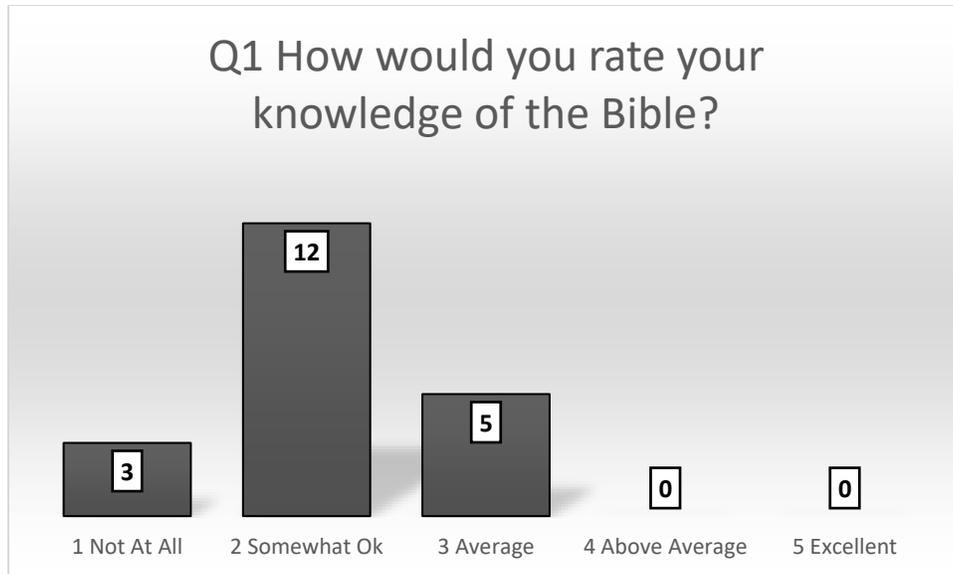
Figure 4. 4: How Would You Rate Your Knowledge of the Bible?

Many of the students shared that they are "somewhat ok" in their knowledge of the Bible. The

lack of students' understanding points to the problem within the student ministry, i.e., students

not maturing in their biblical studies. Jon Nielson stated, "The first priority for students is

increasing their ability to competently read, study, understand, and apply the Word of God." He

goes on to add that "if God's Word is this powerful and effective when it is rightly put to work in

the lives of believers, the first order of business in training and equipping young people must

deal with their competence in handling God's Word!"[92]

     Seventeen students who had attended student ministry for the majority of their lives

believed that they only possessed average or somewhat ok Bible knowledge. This demonstrated

the holes within the student ministry itself. However, these numbers reflect more of the students'

perception of their competence when handling the Bible and not what they know about the Bible.

---

[92] Nielson, "Equipping Youth," 132-133.

The same question was asked again in the exit questionnaire, after completing the eleven-week course, and the response was different (Figure 4.5).
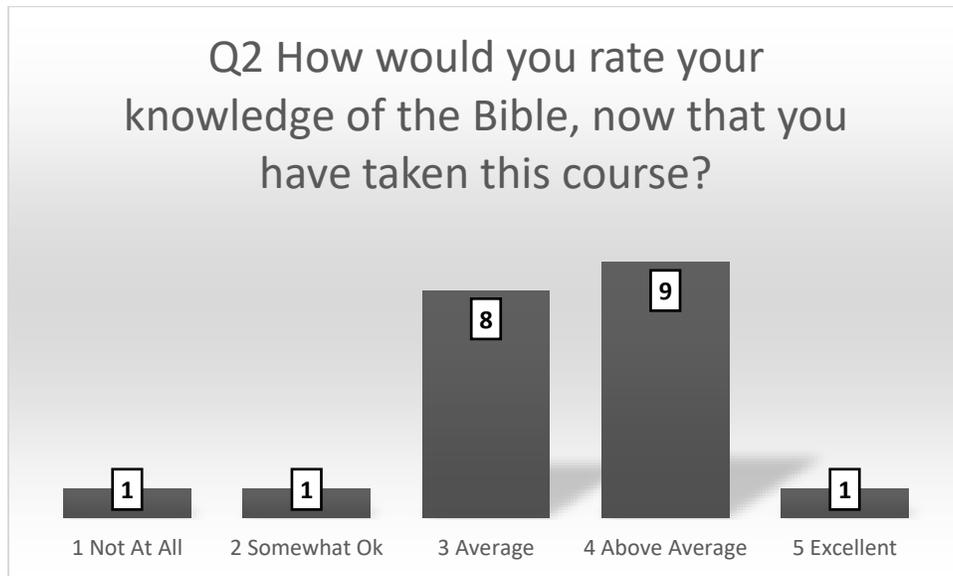
Figure 4. 5: Rate Your Knowledge of the Bible

Eighteen of the students thought that the course had increased their knowledge of God's Word to average, above average, or excellent. One eleven-week course will not raise the bar that much; however, it does show that their feeling of competence in handling God's Word increased because of receiving skills and tools during the course to approach God's Word.

Were the students prepared to learn? Did they participate? How extensively?

These three questions could only be answered subjectively by this author and what he perceived when teaching the course. The first question asked was, "Were students prepared to learn?" On average, the majority of students came prepared and ready to learn; this was observed by students bringing a pen, paper, and computer. However, there were some students who arrived and just wanted to sit in the back and talk with their friends; this was a group of four to five students.

The second question asked, "Did they participate?" When it came time for an exercise of applying a principle taught, all students participated. There were several exercises each week, as this course was designed to have a very hands-on approach. Participation did decrease slightly when it came time to teach a new principle and to show how the principle was used to study a text. Each new principle included a PowerPoint slideshow to help illustrate these principles to the students. Fewer PowerPoint slides might be one way to help improve or increase the participation levels of the students. Although there were some weeks that the students received more PowerPoint slideshows than other weeks, it still might have been more effective to get to the point faster, and thus move more quickly to the exercise for that week. However, there needs to be the right balance in understanding the concepts and applying the concepts.

The third question asked, "How extensively?" When it came time to undertake an exercise, the students were extensively involved in the process. Most of the exercises consisted of students forming into groups of two or three. Students were placed into groups so that they could work together on a task and, upon completing the task, they could then come back as a whole to discuss their findings. Grouping students together allowed the teacher to pair struggling students with students who grasped the principle; therefore, students were teaching students the concepts of the principles. Each class was designed to include a large group time, a small group time, and then back to a large group. This allowed the students to participate extensively throughout the course.

Although the students extensively participated in the course, their attendance fluctuated throughout the eleven-week course. This fluctuation in attendance was related more to the way that the course was structured and planned by the teacher and was not a reflection of the actual

participation of students. Figure 4.6 shows the overall average attendance for each weekly class that had twenty-one enrolled students.
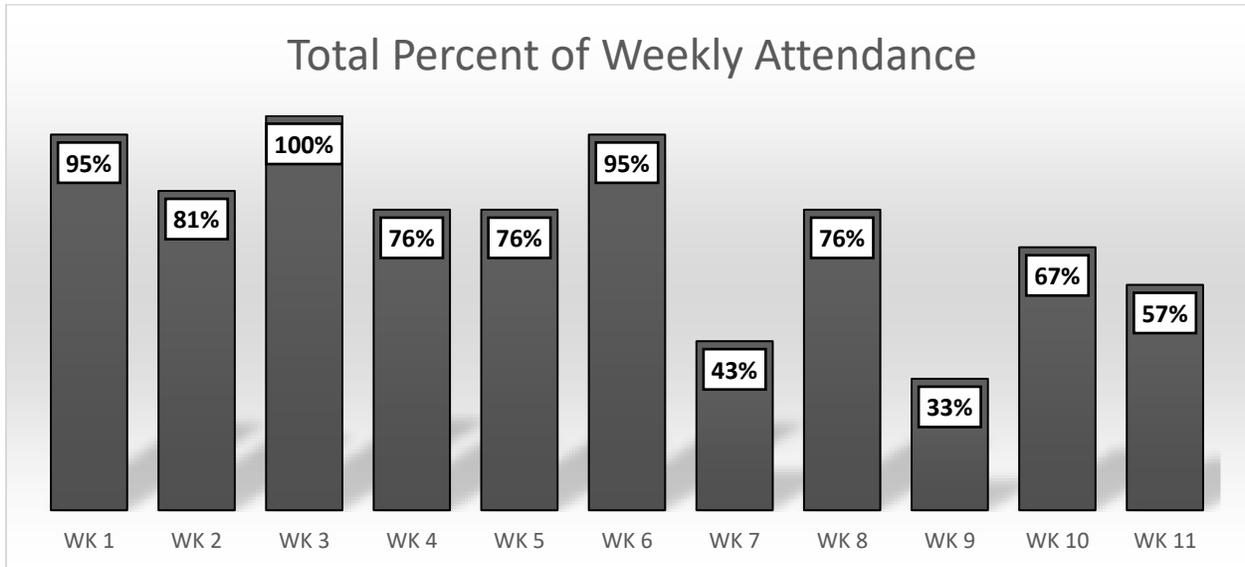
Figure 4. 6: Weekly Attendance Percentages

The graph shows that there was 75% or higher attendance during the first six weeks, whereas during the last five weeks of classes, the attendance dropped (apart from week 8). Several guiding factors caused this decrease in attendance. One of the factors was the unforeseen planning by the teacher; Table 4.2 shows the planned dates of each week and the actual dates of each week.

Table 4. 2: Planned Class Dates versus Actual Class Dates

Week	**Planned Class Dates**	**Actual Class Dates**
Week 1	9-Sep	9-Sep
Week 2	23-Sep	16-Sep
Week 3	30-Sep	23-Sep
Week 4	7-Oct	30-Sep
Week 5	14-Oct	7-Oct
Week 6	21-Oct	14-Oct

Week 7	4-Nov	4-Nov
Week 8	11-Nov	18-Nov
Week 9	18-Nov	25-Nov
Week 10	25-Nov	2-Dec
Week 11	N/A	6-Jan

The first six classes were very consistent on meeting every week on a Sunday night; however, the last five classes were more hit and miss, with the last five classes meeting three times in November, once in December, and once in January. The last five classes had circumstances that affected when the class could meet, e.g., no church that evening (so parents could/would not bring the students), holidays, and the teacher (this author) undergoing surgery in December. The exit interview confirmed that the fluctuation in attendance was related more to the way that the course was structured and planned than on students losing interest in the course.

The exit interview questions, in Appendix F, was given to twelve of the twenty-one students who attended the class. One of the exit interview questions asked, "What kept you from attending 100% of the time?" The answers that were received fell under one of the following five categories: divorced family (at the other parent's home), bad time to meet, school and sporting activities, homework, and sickness. Another exit interview question asked, "Would you recommend a class like this to other students?" Eleven out of the twelve students answered "yes;" the only student who answered "no" went on to explain that they thought the class was too difficult for teenagers.

There is one more question that will help illustrate what the students thought about the course, "Do you feel this course was beneficial?" Figure 4.7 shares the results of this question.
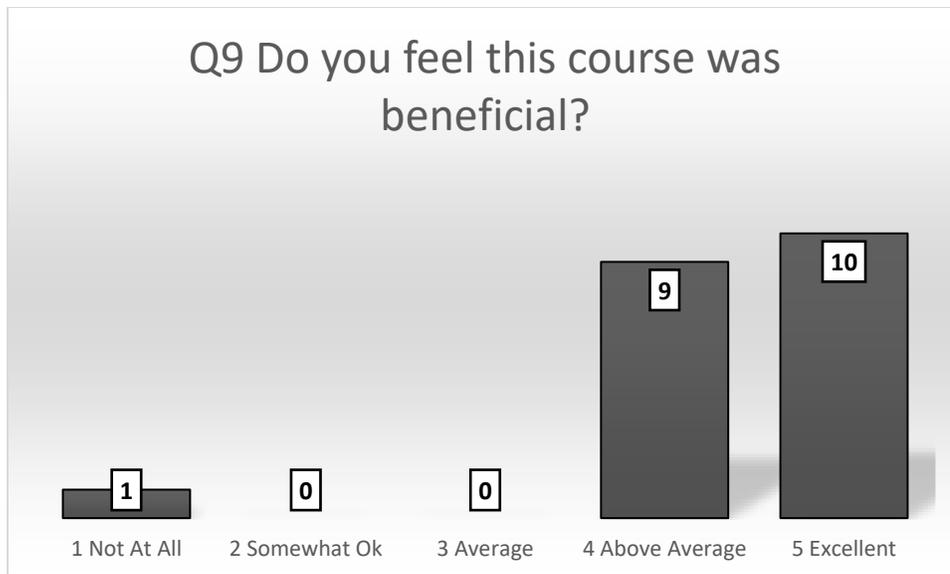
Figure 4. 7: Did Students Feel that the Course Was Beneficial?

Nineteen out of the twenty students shared that they believed the course was beneficial. The exit interview questions and the exit questionnaire showed that the decrease in attendance during the last five weeks was more from unforeseen planning issues and not a result of the quality of the overall course.

What knowledge, attitudes, and skills were developed or enriched through the learning exchange?

This section will begin to share the results of the pre-course test and post-course test by answering the question, "What knowledge, attitudes, and skill were developed or enriched through the learning process?" The knowledge that will be evaluated here reflects the growth gained by the students who attended the course. Measuring the growth of an individual is a difficult process. Joe Whitehead stated, "Growth, in both a physical and a spiritual sense, is a mysterious process, an organic, multifaceted journey that although common to many is

experienced differently by each individual."[93] Therefore, this section can only see the raw numerical differences between the pre-course test and post-course test, and not the overall spiritual effect that the course might have had on the students.

This course was not designed to make each student an expert simply by taking an eleven-week course. Rather, it was to help students understand the processes and steps for approaching the Bible hermeneutically and interpreting it exegetically. The question that was proposed in this project was "Can students grasp the concepts and principles of interpreting exegetically and applying the truths hermeneutically," which would lead students to a significant personal in-depth biblical study.

To provide some clarity to the following table that contains the names of students, each student received a number to track their overall individual progress throughout the course. Nine, twenty, twenty-four, and twenty-five were omitted from the results because these students did not complete the course as they did not take both the pre-course test and post-course test. Two of the students could not complete the course because of family issues and they had attended less than 20% of the course. One student left and had not been attending church regularly for several months; this student also attended less than 20% of the course. The last student completed the course but did not take the post-course test because he left with his family, who are traveling evangelists, and this student completed 75% of the course. Each student received a unique number and the initials "YS" meaning younger students in the ninth or tenth grades, "OS" meaning older students in the eleventh or twelfth grades, "OSA" meaning older students who are

---

[93] Whitehead, "Spiritual Practices," 145.

adults who had just graduated from high school, or "AL" meaning an adult leader within the student ministry.

The results in Table 4.3 look at the overall individual percentages of correct answers in the pre-course test and post-course test, the differences between the two tests, and the average attendance of the individual student.

Table 4. 3: Individual Pre-Course Test and Post-Course Test Percentages

Name	Pre-Course Test	Post-Course Test	Difference	Attendance
1YS	38%	46%	8%	82%
2YS	54%	63%	8%	73%
3YS	50%	54%	4%	73%
4YS	25%	58%	33%	55%
5YS	8%	33%	25%	100%
6YS	38%	67%	29%	91%
7YS	54%	67%	13%	91%
8YS	54%	54%	0%	55%
10OS	38%	42%	4%	55%
11OS	33%	71%	38%	100%
12OS	54%	67%	13%	100%
13OS	54%	92%	38%	64%
14OS	29%	50%	21%	36%
15OS	42%	67%	25%	73%
16OS	54%	71%	17%	82%
17OS	21%	50%	29%	45%
18OSA	75%	92%	17%	82%
19OSA	79%	100%	21%	82%
21AL	71%	92%	21%	100%
22AL	67%	88%	21%	45%
23AL	58%	67%	8%	45%
Average Difference			19%	73%

The raw data from the pre-course and post-course tests showed that the students' knowledge was increased by an average of 19% after completing the course, with the most significant growth being 38% and the lowest growth being 0%. The average attendance was 73%, with the highest attendance being 100% and the lowest being 36%. This raw data showed that applying the principles taught during the course increased the overall test scores of the students. There was a slight difference in the increased knowledge of the students who attended greater than 80% of the course (ten students) over those who attended less than 79% of the time (eleven students; Table 4.4).

Table 4. 4: Students with Higher Attendance versus Lower Attendance

	Pre-Course Test Average	Post-Course Test Average
80% or Greater Attendance	50%	70%
Less than 79% Attendance	45%	62%
Difference	6%	8%

The students who attended 80% or more of the course had an increase in both the pre-course test and post-course test results, achieving 6% higher on the pre-course test and 8% higher on their post-course test than those students who attended less than 79% of the course. Therefore, increasing the attendance of those students who attended less than 79% of the course would have helped increase their average test scores. Having 80% or higher attendance was crucial for the success of this project because each week built upon the week before; therefore, missing a week influenced the ability of the students to move forward with a new principle.[94]

---

[94] Michael R. Mitchell, *Leading, Teaching, and Making Disciples: World-Class Christian Education in the Church, School, and Home* (Bloomington, IN: Cross Books, 2010), 143.

Knowing that the students' attendance directly influenced their ability to move forward, another factor must be considered. This factor addressed the significant difference in the test results between the first six weeks and the last five weeks. The relevance of separating the weeks into two distinct groups is twofold. First, the average attendance by the students was better during the first six weeks than it was in the last five weeks. Second, the first six weeks met every Sunday night with no gaps and the last five weeks had a significant number of gaps when the lessons were held.

Measuring the differences between the first six weeks and the last five weeks required a different process. To accomplish this, the author took the pre-course test and post-course test and placed each question with the week or weeks that were taught on that given principle. The first six weeks of the course covered thirteen questions and the last five weeks of the course covered eleven questions. Table 4.5 shows that the students did significantly better on the first six-weeks questions than on the last five-weeks questions.

Table 4. 5: First Six-Weeks Questions versus Last Five-Weeks Questions

	Pre-Course Test Average	Post-Course Test Average	Difference
First Six Weeks	40%	65%	25%
Last Five Weeks	55%	65%	10%

The students did significantly better on the information that was covered during the first six weeks than they did with the information covered in the last five weeks. The 15% difference in the first six weeks reflects the unforeseen course planning issues.

The results of the overall pre-course test and post-course test scores show that students did gain some knowledge of the hermeneutical and exegetical process. The results also show

how the attendance and unforeseen planning of the course affected the overall evaluation process of students learning the concepts taught throughout the course. Setting aside the variables that affected the overall post-course test scores and going back to the raw data, six students increased their knowledge by scoring 0% to 10% higher on their post-course test, four students increased their knowledge by scoring 10% to 20% higher on their post-course test, and ten students increased their knowledge by scoring 20% to 40% higher on their post-course test than the results from the pre-course tests.. This increase in knowledge was the result of applying the skills they had learned through attending a short eleven-week Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class.

What level of understanding was achieved by most of the students?

The last question addressing the learner asked, "What level of understanding was achieved by most of the students?" Seven areas helped in answering the level of understanding that was achieved by most of the students. The seven areas pulled questions out of the pre-course test and post-course test and placed them in the correct areas. These seven areas are the exegetical questions, the hermeneutical questions, five biblical questions, authorial intent and context questions, application questions, English translation question, and the process applied to Philippians 4 questions. Separating the test questions in these areas allowed a more profound level of understanding to be achieved by the students. The first areas that will be addressed provide an overview of the two main approaches or processes of the project, and the other areas single out five pinpoint areas.

The exegetical questions single out twelve of the twenty-four questions. These evaluate the level of understanding in the steps of interpretation and finding the meaning. These twelve questions were mainly comprised of the concepts the students had learned during the first six

weeks. Table 4.6 shows the results of the twelve exegetical questions taken from the pre-course test and post-course test (questions 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 21, and 22), and then averaged together for the twenty-one students.

Table 4. 6: The Twelve Exegetical Question Results

	Exegetical Questions
Pre-Course Test Average	38%
Post-Course Test Average	64%
Difference	26%

The students showed significant growth in the steps of interpretation and finding the meaning of the text. They increased their knowledge overall by an average of 26%. All but one of the exegetical questions' averages were increased, with the averages ranging from 0% to 48%. Question three, "The most important principle of Biblical interpretation is context determines the meaning (True/False)," remained the same, with 71% of students providing the correct answer. Question fourteen saw the most significant growth, with 86% of the students providing the correct answer; "Verbs in a Bible passage often carry the primary theme(s) of that passage (True/False)."

The hermeneutical questions singled out the other twelve questions, and these twelve questions evaluated the level of understanding in the processes or techniques used for interpretation. These twelve questions primarily came from the concepts and principles taught during the last five weeks of the course. Table 4.7 shows the results of the twelve hermeneutical questions taken from the pre-course test and post-course test (questions 4, 5, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, and 24), and then averaged together for the twenty-one students.

Table 4. 7: The Twelve Hermeneutical Questions Results

	Hermeneutical Questions
Pre-Course Test Average	56%
Post-Course Test Average	68%
Difference	12%

The students showed some growth in their knowledge of the processes or techniques used for interpretation. The students increased their average overall knowledge by 12%. However, there were some significant changes in two of the questions: question sixteen and question twenty-four. Question sixteen ("Application may vary from reader to reader (True/False)") saw an average 19% decrease from the pre-course test, i.e., 86% of the students provided the correct answer in the pre-course test, and only 67% of the students provided the correct answer in the post-course test.

At first glance it appeared that the students misunderstood the question; however, upon investigating this question significantly, this does not appear to be the case. The question was primarily discussed during week nine and carried over into week ten. Week nine had 33% of the students attending the class and week ten's attendance was 67%. Seven of the students did not attend class during weeks nine or ten. Therefore, the 19% decrease in the correct response to question sixteen was the result of absent students not obtaining the required information. The significant change in question twenty-four will be discussed later in the process applied to Philippians 4.

The remainder of the overall average of the hermeneutical questions increased, ranging from 5% to 33%. Question fifteen ("We cannot apply the Bible without knowing what it means (True/False)") saw the most significant growth in knowledge, with 62% of the students providing

the correct answer in the pre-course test and 95% of the students providing the correct answer in the post-course test.

The next five areas pinpoint certain concepts that were taught to the students. These five areas only show the overall average of knowledge gained by the students because the exegetical and hermeneutical discussion overlaps in these five areas. The first area was the five biblical questions (questions 4, 5, 7, 10, and 12) that the students interacted with during the pre-course test and post-course test, with a 19% increase in the overall average of these questions (Table 4.8).

Table 4. 8: The Five Biblical Text Questions Results

	Five Biblical Text
Pre-Test Average	33%
Post-Course Average	52%
Difference	19%

The authorial intent and context questions were principles taught throughout the course to help students understand the vital role context plays when interpreting a text and the importance of the authorial intent of the text. Students were asked to answer eight questions concerning context and the authorial intent. Table 4.9 shows a 22% increase in the overall average of the questions related to authorial intent and context (questions 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14).

Table 4. 9: The Authorial Intent and Context Questions

	Authorial Intent and Context Questions
Pre-Test Average	45%
Post-Course Average	67%
Difference	22%

The next area was the application questions, with the students learning these principles toward the end of the course. These principles showed students how the theological principles found in the text could apply to their own lives. Here, the students were asked to answer six questions that related to the concept of application (questions 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20). Table 4.10 shows that the students increased their overall average by 12%.

Table 4. 10: The Application Questions Results

	The Application Questions
Pre-Test	68%
Post-Course Test	80%
Difference	12%

There was only one question that addressed the principles that students learned regarding translations. This question asked the students to identify the two main approaches within the English translation. Table 4.11 shows a 71% increase in the overall average knowledge of this English translation question (question 1).

Table 4. 11: English Translation Question Results

	English Translations
Pre-Test	19%
Post-Course Test	90%
Difference	71%

The last pinpoint area addressed the overall process applied to Philippians 4. The students were asked to answer four questions (questions 21, 22, 23, and 24) concerning Philippians 4:10-13. These questions were used to evaluate the overall process of interpreting and applying a passage. The questions were designed to show the authorial point of the text, a summarized theological principle of the original situation, a summarized theological principle for a

contemporary audience, and a practical biblical application point. The students showed some improvement with the average growth of knowledge being 8%. However, this section of the test requires a significant change, as shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4. 12: The Process Applied to Philippians 4:10-13

	Pre-Test	Post-Course Test	Difference
Q 21	52%	62%	10%
Q 22	38%	67%	29%
Q 23	52%	57%	5%
Q 24	38%	29%	-10%
Average	45%	54%	8%

The issue with these types of questions is that if the student missed the first question it was hard for them to get the rest of the questions correct. Looking at only the post-course test results shows this to be true.

Questions 21 through 23 were significantly connected. If the student did not understand that Paul was addressing "content" in the first question, then the student would miss the next two answers; out of the eight students who missed the first question, seven of those students missed one or both of the following two questions. If the student got the first question correct, then the next question could still cause an issue because two answers addressed "content" in question twenty-two. That was the case for two additional students. Therefore, if the student answered correctly on the first two questions, then the third was a cause of the problem because it also had two answers that addressed "content." That was the case for one additional student.

These issues led to problems for eleven students thus far. The ten students who were left were faced with another troubling fact, the last question's correct answer does not contain the word "content," but it was implied and one option did use the word "content," even addressed in

a situation just not the biblical situation. There were six additional students affected by this. Overall, seventeen of the twenty-one students struggled with these questions, which was more from the results of a test than it was from the understanding of the student. Four students got all four questions correct. Although the concept of students demonstrating their knowledge by walking through a text from start to finish is a vital part of the course, these four questions did not assist the students enough to demonstrate what knowledge they had gained; therefore, these questions and answers will need consideration in the future.

There were seven areas addressed in this section to answer, "What level of understanding did most students achieve?" These seven areas investigated the average knowledge attained by the student. The first two areas gave broader overviews of the test by dividing the pre-course test and post-course test into two sections, exegetical and hermeneutical. The last five areas were used to pinpoint certain significant areas of the test. First, the five biblical text questions asked the student to interact with the text. Second, the authorial intent and context questions asked the student to express the importance of these two roles. Third, the application questions asked the student to find the concepts of applying the text. Fourth, the English translation question asked the students to identify the two main translation approaches. Fifth and the last area asked students to show the overall process using Philippians 4:10-13. Table 4.13 shows the average growth in knowledge gained by the students in these seven areas.

Table 4. 13: Overall Increased Knowledge in the Seven Main Areas

	Average Growth in Knowledge
Exegetical Questions	26%
Hermeneutical Questions	12%
Five Biblical Text Questions	19%
Authorial Intent and Context Questions	22%
Application Questions	12%

English Translations	71%
Process Applied to Philippians 4	8%
The Entire Test	19%

Each area showed improvement from the pre-course test scores to the post-course test scores. Some of the areas had contributing factors that lowered the overall average; explanations have been given earlier. However, the eleven-week Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical Course proved effective in increasing students' knowledge.

The next three areas will answer two of Richards and Bredfeldt's questions for each area. These three areas address the teacher, the curriculum, and the environment, and provide additional insight into the course and areas that will improve the course and learning opportunities for the students.

The Teacher

Did the teacher pace the lesson well? Did the teacher allow time to drag? Was the teacher rushed?

The first set of questions asked, "Did the teacher pace the lesson well, did the teacher allow time to drag, and was the teacher rushed?" There were seven fundamental steps that the teacher, this author, covered during the eleven-week course, including eighteen observations, structural diagramming, identifying the various types of conjunctions, investigative questions, identifying the FCF, and answering application questions. Covering the seven fundamental steps in an eleven-week course is a challenge in and of itself.

Therefore, there was not a great deal of time to allow the course to drag on, which made the teacher feel rushed at times. Teaching the seven principles was feasible to accomplish but allowing more time to do so would allow the students to develop a deeper understanding of the

hermeneutical process and exegetically find the meaning in the biblical text. An additional week was added to help students grasp the concept of structural diagramming; however, adding additional weeks in the application principles would have resulted in better results from the course.

Did the teacher manage the classroom and student behavior effectively?

The last question under the teacher, asked, "Did the teacher manage the classroom and student behavior effectively?" Overall, the classroom was managed effectively although the class did start a little disorderly because of some of the students. Beth Ackerman states, "Many students disrupt class and wind up in the principal's office simply because their classroom is not the enjoyable place for them or because they do not clearly understand what the teacher expects from them."[95] As the students entered into the third week, the students knew the expectations of the teacher, and there was minimal disorderly conduct by some of the students. To establish a faster approach of effectively managing student behavior; applying Dr. Michael Mitchell's Teaching and Learning Agreement model after his Proverbs 2 Metamodel for Teaching and Learning would be beneficial and effective.[96]

The Curriculum

Were the methods appropriate for the age group?

Two of Richards and Bredfeldt's questions were addressed under the curriculum section. The first question asked whether the methods were appropriate for the age group. There were several concepts that the students struggled to grasp. The first concept involved some of the observations they were asked to find: means, purpose and result statements, and conditional

---

[95] Beth Ackerman, *P.R.A.I.S.E.: Effectively Guiding Behavior* (Colorado Springs, CO: Purpose Design Publications, 2007), 3.
[96] Mitchell, *Leading,* 157-199.

clauses. This struggle could have been avoided simply by moving McDill's nine categories for conjunctions from week six to week four. The next concept that caused students to struggle was the structural diagramming; this was the reason for adding the extra week. Separating the independent clause from the supporting phrases was reasonably comfortable for the students but arranging the flow of those phrases is what caused the struggle. Although it did add an extra week to the course, it was still a valuable part of the process. After a few weeks, the students began to understand the concepts. The third concept that caused the students to struggle was the interpretive questions, which asked the students to answer seven questions. The interpretive questions were not appropriate for their age and should be revised, or another method that is easier to understand should be found. These interpretive questions were the only concept that was taught to the students that would not have been appropriate to their level of understanding. However, the other struggles listed here were areas that the students saw as a challenge and challenging students to think and apply was what made them grow.

Did the course gain the students' attention?

The last question under curriculum asked, "Did the course gain the students' attention?" The students stayed very engaged throughout the process and enjoyed the classes, demonstrating that the class retained their attention. The exit questionnaire showed that nineteen out of the twenty students believed the course was beneficial and the exit interview showed that eleven out of twelve students would recommend the course to other students. These statements confirm that the course gained and retained the attention of the students.

The Environment

Were the chairs arranged for optimal learning? Was visual aid ready to be used?

The last two of Richards and Bredfeldt's questions that provide additional insight asked, "Were the chairs arranged for optimal learning and was visual aid ready to be used?" The chairs remained the same, in long parallel rows, during the first three weeks of the course; there was no change from what students saw on a typical Wednesday night. The setup of chairs changed to incorporate long tables to function as a desk, giving students a place to work; however, rearranging the chairs caused significant changes. First, the students participated more, allowing them to understand the concepts better. The second thing it changed was the disruptive students from the first few weeks were no longer disruptive. The last part of Richards and Bredfeldt's questions addresses the use of visual aids. Visual aids were ready to be used by the time students arrived at their lesson. Visual aids played a significant role throughout the course because they provided the source of the lesson taught and played a role in the lessons being learned. Two of the students are brothers with parents that are evangelists who frequently travel and they were able to participate through the help of a visual aid, i.e., Skype.

Chapter Five: Conclusion of the Implementation of a Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical Class for Students

Reaching the Goal of Participating in the Learning Process

Student ministry has the opportunity to create small moments that help students develop and mature in their relationship with Christ, for example, the two students whose parents were traveling evangelists and were unable to attend the Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class on campus. Thinking outside the box allowed these students to attend and participate with the class using the visual aid of Skype. Creating these types of opportunities is significantly easier to discuss than to accomplish. When these opportunities do arise, the student minister must seize hold of them, grasping the opportunity to help students expound their biblical knowledge.

The focus of student ministry is radically changing right before our eyes. Student ministry is now asking what it must do to attract students to the student ministry rather than what student ministry must do to impact students for Christ.[97] Some student ministries are seeking opportunities to attract larger crowds rather than seeking ministry opportunities to impact students for Christ. The only way to shift this radical change is for the student leader to take a radical stand and commitment to influence students and not just attract students.

The small activities and gatherings in student ministry can have a profound and significant influence on students. God can use small activities and gatherings such as mission trips, retreats, concerts, going out for pizza, and church camps to influence students in incredible and life-altering ways. In those moments, students are drawn to Christ and Christ radically changes the student; some for the first time, others to a deeper relationship. Additionally, some

---

[97] Barna, *Real Teens,* 102.

students may even surrender their lives to fulfill a calling in some form of ministry, whether it be children, students, music, or missions. It is incredible to think what would happen if student ministries applied the energy and zeal that it uses to draw in large crowds and moved that same energy and zeal to create small, life-transforming moments, drawing students closer to God.

This project sought to do that very thing, i.e., create a small moment to draw students to a deeper relationship with Christ. The drive of this project was never to make students experts in hermeneutical and exegetical studies but to provide students with the tools to assist them in studying God's Word for themselves. When students have the tools necessary to study God's Word, they are more likely to experience small intimate moments with Him. Simon Davies shares, "Education depends on the context and purpose of the learning. There are two critical aspects of this; one relates to the 'end state' of the learner, what they have become or gained as a result of their learning. The second concerns the nature of their participation."[98]

Although this project shared the start and end results of the learner and how the student gained knowledge by attending the Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class, the class was designed to help students participate in the learning process of how to read, understand, and apply God's Word. Through teaching students how to approach and understand God's Word, this project created a small moment that could have a lasting effect on the students' lives at Adair First Baptist Church. Therefore, the students who attended this course now have the self-confidence to approach the Bible for themselves because "the Bible, God's Word, was always intended to be understandable."[99]

---

[98] Simon Davies, "Education and Curriculum" in *Christian Youth Work in Theory and Practice: A Handbook* (Golden Lane, London: SCM Press, 2014), 195.

[99] Jon Nielson, *Bible Study: A Students' Guide* (Phillipsburg NJ: P&R Publishing Company, 2013), 51, Kindle.

The purpose of this project was to solidify students' understanding of certain principles and methods for interpreting passages of Scripture exegetically and applying passages hermeneutically. Can students grasp fundamental practices in interpreting and applying the Bible for themselves? Yes. Twenty-one students agreed to participate in this project of learning the fundamental practices in interpreting and applying the Bible for themselves and the majority saw it through to completion. The results of this project showed that twenty students were affected by the fundamental practices of interpreting and applying the Bible for themselves, whereas the fundamental practices did not influence one of the students.

The raw test data showed that twenty students saw growth in their overall knowledge from the pre-course test to the post-course test scores because of this course. The one student who saw no change from the pre-course test to the post-course test scores attended only fifty percent of the course; eighty-three percent attendance during the first six weeks of the course and only twenty percent attendance during the last five weeks of the course. This student saw an eight percent increase in their post-course test in the questions from the first six weeks and a negative eighteen percent result in their post-course test in the questions from the last five weeks. This could explain why one student's overall test results showed no growth from the principles and concepts taught throughout this project.

Influence of this Project on Future Project Opportunities

This project achieved its purpose by allowing the students to participate in the learning process of the Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical class as they learned the hermeneutical process of reading, understanding, and applying God's Word exegetically. However, this project is not and will not state that it is the most effective method for discipling students in their biblical

studies. Churches have attempted to determine the most effective method for discipling for centuries without any success, and this project does not claim to have found the answer.[100]

There are three significant limitations in this project that provide an opportunity for further studies in future projects. The first limitation is the impact limitation of this project, which shows only the current impact of the project on the students because of the time constraints for completing this project. This project addressed the current impact that it had on the students but was unable to see how the student would use the processes taught throughout this project in the future.

Second, the statistical limitations of this project show an insufficient sample size of students for gauging how other students could benefit from the principles taught throughout the course. Having a larger sample size to apply this project to would provide significantly more insight on how students interacted with the concepts taught during this course. These insights could show what principles worked and what principles did not work across different student ministries and student ministers, which could lead to the creation of a universal curriculum to be used within student ministries.

Third, the study design limitations of this project show that there is little or no prior research on teaching students exegetical and hermeneutical skills. Therefore, there was no baseline to gauge or evaluate a project of this nature. Having no baseline to compare the results of this project makes it difficult to determine whether this project was successful or unsuccessful. The hope of this author is that teaching students exegetical and hermeneutical skills will lead to other projects in the future; therefore, creating a baseline for future studies. This project not only

---

[100] Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *Disciple Making Is: How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 276.

has limitations that can lead to studies in future projects, but it also has opportunities to explore new projects concerning students and biblical studies.

Three possible exploration projects could stem from this project. The first is developing a biblical interpretation curriculum for Christian schools. The research undertaken in this project found no curriculum designed to assist students in biblical interpretation, whether at a Christian high school, home school, or within student ministries. There is a tremendous need for developing a biblical interpretation curriculum for students that could assist students in discovering God's truths found within the pages of the Bible.

The second possible exploration project is developing a system to help student ministers in teaching the process of hermeneutics to students. The research undertaken in this project found no system, book, or journal article to assist the student minister. The student minister requires assistance in how to present the materials, what terminology to use when describing subjects such as exegesis and hermeneutics to students, and which processes may work better as they teach students the hermeneutical steps.

The third possible exploration project is developing devotional materials that will take students through the hermeneutical process as they complete their daily devotions. The research undertaken in this project found no such devotional materials but did find countless topical, sin-related, and self-help devotional materials. The reality is it is not hard to find a lot of curriculums, systems, and materials out there to help seminary students, pastors, and even adult lay leaders understand and develop a hermeneutical approach to their personal Bible study, teaching venues, and sermons. However, when one does a Google search for books on teaching students (teenagers) how to study their Bible, one will find blogs and articles but not books. The lack thereof shows the enormous potential of exploration because of this project.

Implications of this Project Applied in the Local Student Ministry

What if solidifying students' understanding of certain hermeneutical and exegetical principles and methods for interpreting God's Word was reinforced every week? Would that influence the student ministry and students individually? Can student ministers and student leaders accomplish such a task? Imagine for a moment that each week the student minister or student leader is engaging and leading students through the hermeneutical processes addressed in this project, i.e., teaching students how to divide the Bible for themselves correctly. The author believes that the principles taught in this project can be reinforced weekly through developing a roadmap using the principles of this course, which may have a lasting influence on the ability of students to read, study, interpret, and apply God's Word long after leaving our student ministries.

This author does not just believe that engaging and leading students through the hermeneutical processes every week is possible, but that it is probable. This new class that would engage and lead students through the hermeneutical processes has not been implemented within the student ministry at Adair. However, one of the interesting takeaway messages from the exit interview questions showed that fifteen of the eighteen students who completed the exit interview shared they would rather have a class during Sunday School. The knowledge gained from that question is what sparked the project's implications of a Sunday School class and the setup for the opportunity to start the new class during Sunday School.

Here is an example of how the Adair First Baptist Youth Ministry and other youth ministries can engage and lead students through the hermeneutical processes every week. One of the ways is to apply hermeneutical skills in a Sunday School setting instead of occasionally having an eleven-week (or more) basic exegetical and hermeneutical class for the students. Some

student ministries may not have Sunday School; therefore, some modifications might be required if there are some discipleship processes within that youth ministry.

To apply the hermeneutical skills every week through a Sunday School setting does not mean using the design of the eleven-week course in this project repeatedly every week. However, it does suggest that teachers should model a class that teaches and leads students through the concepts addressed in the project. Here is how this author would develop this new Sunday School class. The first thing to do would be to design a separate class that would provide the students with the option to join in and would allow additional students to join in later, a class for students who seek a more in-depth biblical perspective. In this class the teacher would act as the facilitator, thus allowing the students to do most of the work and not the teacher. The teacher would do significantly more teaching at first, but the goal would be that students would require less assistance as time goes on. The class should not have any time restraints on how long a principle is worked on, thus allowing the students to progress through the steps at their own pace.

The class should start with a small book of the Bible, such as James (a more in-depth biblical perspective of James). The first couple of weeks would allow the students to research some of the historical backgrounds of the text. The next step would begin with the first section of the book, James 1:2-7, and allow the students to make the eighteen observations and identify the various types of conjunctions found. Once they have completed their observations of James 1:2-7, then they would start the process of structural diagramming, with the aid of a computer and projector or a large whiteboard (computer would be better to ensure their work is saved). Their next step would be answering the journalistic questions concerning James 1:2-7. Once the students are ready to move on, the student minister would assist them in finding the FCF. The next step would be to spend a week or so discussing their findings. Lastly, this process should be

repeated until the students have completed the book of James and move to another book of the Bible.

A class designed this way would not only solidify students' understanding of certain hermeneutical and exegetical principles and methods for interpreting God's Word, but it would also give students the skills to apply what they are learning in their daily devotions. Therefore, the student leaders are walking students through the hermeneutical process and teaching students the theological truths found within the text.

Implications of this Project Applied in the Local Adult Ministry

Although this project was designed to be given to students, it also has implications for adults, of all ages, within the church. Seventy-four percent of Christian adults who read their Bible regularly believe that they have a somewhat knowledge of the Bible.[101] An additional fifty-seven percent of Christian adults do not read their Bible on a regular basis, and wish they used the Bible more often.[102] Therefore, a class of this nature could be reapplied to help adults in the hermeneutical process of reading, studying, interpreting, and applying the Bible for themselves. This class could be designed to be taught in a variety of different ways, e.g., Sunday School, Sunday nights, Wednesday nights, or small groups. A class of this nature could draw on adults within the church and community. However, the most significant impact could be in allowing students' parents to attend the course, which would enable them to learn the same principles and concepts that their children learned through attending the course. This could create an

---

[101] American Bible Society, *State of the Bible 2017: Research Conducted Among U.S. Adults* (Philadelphia: American Bible Society, 2017), 28, accessed March 10, 2019, ebook, https://1s712.americanbible.org/cdn-www-ws03/uploads/content/State_of_the_Bible_2017_report_032317.pdf?_ga=2.149322801.62941458.1554396407-927487036.1554396407.

[102] American Bible Society, *State of the Bible 2018: Research Conducted Among U.S. Adults.* (Philadelphia: American Bible Society, 2017), 11, accessed March 10, 2019, ebook, https://1s712.americanbible.org/cdn-www-ws03/uploads/content/State_of_the_Bible_2018_Report_-_Han_Solo.pdf?_ga=2.147888176.62941458.1554396407-927487036.1554396407.

atmosphere where parents and students are learning, side by side, the hermeneutical processes of reading, studying, interpreting, and applying the Bible as a family. This atmosphere could then be reapplied as a family Bible study in the home.

Another way this project could have implications in the local adult ministry is training pastors through mission trips. A project like this could be used to assist pastors in developing a system that would assist them in finding meaning and application of the text to their own lives and the lives of the people within their churches. There have been other projects that have applied hermeneutical principles to adults and ministers who serve nationally and internationally, although this project has not addressed the principles and methods that were used within those projects and is only addressed here to show additional possibilities.

What Could Have Been Changed or Done Differently to Make This Project Better: Exposing the Weaknesses Found Within the Project

Although students did grasp the concepts taught during this project, some areas could have made this project better if they had been handled differently. The first area that could make this project better is the way the course was structured. As stated earlier, this project was structured differently than the way it was used at the Christian high school. The structure at the school allowed the course to be taught five days a week for over eighteen weeks and the course taught in this project was taught in eleven short sessions. Therefore, the students at the school were able to go slower and more in-depth, and were able to practice the principles more than the students within the youth group. Extending the eleven-week course would have made this project better (even though this project did extend the original project timeline by an extra week). The length of time that this project should be extended depends on the teacher and students.

Planning a course of this nature requires more thought regarding when and where to initiate the course. The last part of this project had some unforeseen planning issues that affected the overall outcome of this project, as stated in chapter four. Unforeseen planning issues will arise; therefore, having a plan in place to review what the students have already been taught would have made this project better. If this project had taken in the possibilities of unforeseen planning issues and planned the course on a different day and time, other than Sunday nights, it could have made this project more successful and influential for the students.

Some areas within the course itself could be changed to improve this project. The first of these areas would be the information that was provided to the students. There were times throughout the course that the students felt overwhelmed with the information presented; as though they were sucking the information from a fire hose. It was during these times that student participation started to drop. Although the information in and of itself was not wrong, there were times that the information was not given in an interactive, hands-on manner, but instead was given merely to inform the students. Designing all the information to be interactive would require a great deal of work; however, it would lead to more interaction and students being able to better retain the information.

The next three areas address some of the principles taught during the course that could have been changed to make the project better. The first principle of conjunctions caused some unwarranted confusion for the students. Even though this project strategically placed each principle to be taught in order, there was still a significant flaw in the way conjunction and connectors were strategically placed for students to learn. Therefore, conjunctions should have been added into the eighteen observations and not after the structural diagraming. It might have been more beneficial to remove the conjunctions from the first nine observations, making the

third class eight observations. Then, teach the next week on observing and identifying conjunctions within the text. By doing this, it would have assisted the students in understanding the last nine observations and allow for a smoother transition.

The concept of moving these principles around would lead to less unwarranted confusion and keep the students engaged. Moving these principles could have changed the mindset of students who thought it was too hard or impossible for them to grasp. This concept is something this teacher learned through the process. The teacher wanted the students to see they can learn to interpret for themselves, but this unwarranted confusion led to doubt, something that could have been avoided just by realigning these principles.

The next principle that could make this project better is approaching the structural diagram differently. This author is not suggesting removing this principle from the course but is suggesting that the principle be disguised. This principle was a fundamental aspect of the overall project; therefore, this principle should remain. However, when introducing and explaining this concept to students, they checked out very quickly, with the statement, "I'm not good at English." The students' unquestionably expressed that diagramming was the most challenging part of the class; the exit interview revealed that to be the case with seven of the twelve students expressing this challenge. However, eight of the students expressed that after understanding how to diagram, it was the process they liked the best. Once they grasped the concept of understanding the author's flow of thoughts, the students began to realize that understanding the Bible was not as difficult as they imagined. Disguising this principle could be accomplished by simply jumping right in without explaining the details of these principles.

One way that could help disguise this principle would be to have the students start separating phrases; this was something that the students shared as being the easiest part of the

class, according to the exit interviews. From there, students could be helped to arrange the phrases to line up supporting phrases under the primary clauses. Here is an example of the method this author used to help assist the students in understanding this principle. To begin, the instructor could copy and paste the passage into a Word document, then hand the keyboard to a student and instruct him/her to read the passage aloud. Every time there was a natural pause, the student would "hit" enter on the keyboard (this is what students shared was the easy part). The next step would be having the students clean up some of the phrases if needed.

The next few steps are a little trickier, arranging the phrases. What this author found that worked the best was to have the students focus on one sentence at a time and not multiple sentences. Here, the students would arrange the main phrase to the left and place all supporting phrases under and to the right of the main phrase. Once all the sentences were diagrammed out, the students arranged all the diagrammed sentences together. The success of this step occurred because the students had an understanding of what the author was trying to communicate because of their eighteen observations.

Therefore, this author always asked the students, "So you are saying that the main author's points are blank and blank." Asking that question throughout this step helped the students understand the author's flow of thought and how some sentences support the thoughts of the main points. After practicing this method several times over three weeks, the students began to grasp the concept. The problem was that the students within this project heard terms, primarily clauses and supporting phrases, that they have heard within their English class and started to mentally check out, thinking that they could not do it. This type of thinking could have been avoided if the principle of structural diagramming was disguised better.

The next principle addressed was FCF. The FCF was very well received by the students and it is a fundamental principle in helping students understand the application side of the process. The only thing here that would have made the project better would be to identify the FCF as a large group for each of the passages used throughout the course. This observation comes from the students who attended the course; they expressed how they loved being able to understand what they were reading and studying. Placing this principle within the first two weeks might have helped students understand what they were trying to accomplish and would also allow the teacher to get the transformation power of Jesus in early enough and reinforce that principle throughout the rest of the course.

If the last principle of interpretive questions was removed altogether, it would make this project better. This principle is an essential step in verifying that the truths the students found matched or lined up with the truths found throughout the Bible as a whole; however, the interpretive questions were a concept that the students could not grasp. Their lack of understanding could be a result of the way the teacher taught it, or it could be the result of the answers being harder to find and requiring further study. These steps require knowledge of the entire book within the text and knowledge within the entire Bible. If the interpretive questions remain as a principle taught to students, they require a great deal of thought in communicating them to the students.

The last area addresses the tests and what should have been done differently. Another way the project could have been better is through the way the course was evaluated. Chapter four addressed the results and some of the shortfalls found with the pre-course test and post-course test. There were two significant shortfalls within the tests presented in that chapter; the lack of providing the entire context to the five questions that addressed the specific text and the final

106

four questions that looked at the process applied to Philippians 4. Adding the entire context to the five questions that addressed the specific text is simple. However, fixing the last four questions requires more thought and planning.

This section of the test could have been made better for the students if the approach to the process was handled differently. To accomplish this, this author would create a worksheet that has each of the steps listed and then have the students approach Philippians 4. This worksheet would be used every week once the students started their observational process and every new principle added to the worksheet as the student progressed throughout the course. Doing this would have made the students familiar with the worksheet and could have influenced the results of this project.

Top Seven Revelations: Exposing Some of the Strengths Found Within the Project

Some revelations can be seen when looking at the top seven strengths and outcomes of this project. The first five revelations address student engagement throughout this project. Even though one of the weaknesses addressed giving students too much information, which led to students disengaging at the time, the class still had a significant amount of interaction that allowed the students to engage or reengage throughout the process. The engagement and excitement the students expressed as they learned to discover God's truth for themselves was intoxicating and encouraging for this author and other students. Their engagement and participation were what made this project successful.

The first engagement revelation came as the students learned about some of the rich history of the Bible and why translating the Bible into another language is difficult. This engagement revelation came as a surprise for two reasons. The first reason was the information was more informative than interactive, even though there was some interaction and this

information came after the students had just taken an extensive test. The second reason was the information was related to history; even though this author loves Bible history, not all share this same passion. This author believes that the students saw the passion, in the way the material was presented; therefore, their engagement was a result of the passion they saw. This revelation was added first to share one vital concept this author gleaned from teaching students basic exegetical and hermeneutical skills, "when the teacher is passionate and excited about the subject then the student gets excited, which leads to engagement." What this author saw throughout this project was his passion for biblical studies rubbing off on the students who attended the course.

The second revelation came when students saw the text come alive through understanding the role of historical–cultural and literary backgrounds. The students saw how simply reading the historical–cultural and literary backgrounds in the introduction section of their study Bibles opens a small window to a deeper understanding of the text. Following are two of the examples of how the text came alive through understanding some of the background. The first example that led to engagement from the students was the background behind the book of Philippians; students saw how Paul used certain words when he was writing to a city that was full of war veterans, "sand firm," "Watchmen," "standing at your post," and others. The second example looked at a passage in Isaiah 40; the way the writer expressed, "that those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength" and how he used the image of an eagle, runner, and walker to give the children of Israel comfort before going into Babylon captivity. Giving the students examples of how the historical–cultural and literary backgrounds shaped the text they were studying and made the text come alive.

The third revelation occurred when the students began to see how the eight observations made the text come alive. This author did not expect the students to make a competition out of

these principles; however, the students did compete, which allowed them to be engaged throughout these principles. What the students began to see when making these observations caused them to understand a passage for themselves. The fourth revelation resulted from the third revelation, students wrestling with the text. Even though these two revelations are very different in what they did and how the students engaged, they do go together. As a youth minister, there is no greater joy than watching students wrestle with the text of the Bible.

The fifth revelation was the "hands-on approach" this course took. This project sought to be more about students doing the work of interpreting God's Word for themselves than being told this is how to interpret God's Word. There were times when the students got frustrated because they had missed an area or the diagramming was not quite right. However, allowing them to make mistakes, then walking them through what was wrong and identifying for themselves what was not quite right were some great teaching moments.

The sixth revelation was the confidence the students expressed when approaching the Bible, from the first night to the last night. This project of teaching students' basic interpretation skills empowered the students and gave them a sense of confidence; confidence in saying, "I can do this." That in and of itself is powerful, changing an attitude that once said, "there is no way I can do this" to "I got this." That kind of change in the attitude of students can lead to some incredible changes in the world.

The last revelation can be summed up by "little lightbulbs going off." All the previous six revelations point to little lightbulbs going off in the minds of the students throughout this project. There was not one significant lightbulb moment but small moments when the students began piecing together each principle. These little lightbulb moments are what made this project a success in the eyes of this author.

The statement made in chapter three shared that the ultimate desire for this course can best be described by Adrian Rogers and Steve Rogers, "I want you to learn how to study your Bible, how to make it burst aflame in your hand."[103] The concepts and principles chosen and used in this course came from the concepts and principles that made the Word of God burst aflame in this author's hands. Now these are the same concepts and principles that made the Word of God burst aflame in the hands of the students who participated in this project. Their new profound knowledge came through several small moments in youth ministry that would empower them to do something unexpected.

Closing Thoughts

This project created a small moment that would empower students to participate in reading, studying, understanding, and applying God's Word for themselves. Empowering students is an incredible tool within student ministries; Kageler states, "Ministry that empowers students will also be one where the gospel is as much caught as taught and where youth themselves feel that they matter to God and the work of his kingdom."[104] When students feel a sense of confidence and capability, this pushes them to achieve some extraordinary things. Students can and will achieve incredible things when youth leaders and ministers empower them. This project empowered students in solidifying their understanding of certain hermeneutical and exegetical principles and methods for interpreting God's Word. Therefore, students realized that they could find meaning when they study and it was not as hard as they thought. In chapter one, two questions were asked, "If given the opportunity to drill deeper in the Bible will students take it?" and "Do students desire a deeper relationship with God?"

---

[103] Rogers and Rogers, *What Every Christian,* 255-256.
[104] Kageler, *The Youth Ministry*, 171.

The answers to these questions appear to be yes; this conclusion comes after discovering what the students initiated on their own. Upon completing this project, seven of the students who attended the class together with two other recruited students began a Bible study group. Students grasped the need to delve deeper together with other students. These students take and share passages and have great discussions. Although it is not known whether they are using all the concepts they learned during the course, they are nonetheless having biblical discussions after completing the course and are demonstrating their desire to grow in a more profound knowledge of the Word of God.

Appendix A

Course Syllabus

Implementation of a Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical Class for Students: To Interpret God's Word Exegetically and Apply God's Word Hermeneutically

Casey Whiteis

918-530-2046

cwhiteis44@gmail.com

I.   Course Description

This Course is designed to give students a proper understanding of how to interpret and apply the Bible for themselves; so that they will be able to live out and walk in the truth throughout life. This course will give students the tools needed to interpret (exegetically) and apply (hermeneutically) the Bible for themselves.

II.   Rationale

This course is designed to solidify students' understanding of some principles and methods of interpreting passages exegetically and applying passages hermeneutically. Students will be challenged to use these tools in helping them understand the Bible for themselves.

III.   Materials List

- The students will need their Bible; preferably a hard copy and ESV (English Standard Version).
- The students will need a notebook and writing utensils.
- If the student has a good study Bible bring that as well. My favorite is the ESV study Bible; although there are several study Bibles that are in the ESV translation, this study Bible is one that is released by ESV itself. If you have questions on this, please let me know.

IV.   Measurable Learning Outcomes

The students will be able to:

a. Evaluate passages in the Bible through interpreting passages exegetically and applying passages hermeneutically.
b. Explain how they came to their conclusions of a passage with meaning and application.

V.   Attendance Policies

Due to the nature of this course, attendance is imperative to gain all the tools required to interpret and apply the Bible passages. Regular attendance is also essential as this is a class I am hosting for my school project.

VI.   Calendar
     Week One: Introduction
     Week Two: Looking at the context
     Week Three: What to start looking for in the passage part one (Exegetical)
     Week Four: What to start looking for in the passage part two (Exegetical)
     Week Five: Diagramming the passage part one (Exegetical)
     Week Six: Diagramming the passage part two (Exegetical)
     Week Seven: Working to understanding the passage (Hermeneutics)
     Week Eight: Working on applying the passage part one (Hermeneutics)
     Week Nine: Working on applying the passage part two (Hermeneutics)
     Week Ten: Finishing up

VII.   Bibliography

Bartholomew, G. Craig, and Michael W. Goheen. *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004.

Chapell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.

Chapell, Bryan. *CM151 Preparing and Delivering Christ-Centered Sermons I: Foundations and Structures*. Logos Mobile Education. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015.

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible.* 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

Fee, Gordan D. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors* 3rd ed. Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Hamilton, Donald L. *Homiletical Handbook.* Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992.

Kaiser J.R., Walter C., and Moises Silva. *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984.

McDill, Wayne. *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching.* 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2006.

Appendix B

Detailed Steps Overview from Five Authors

Steps	Daniel Akin, Bill Curtis, and Stephen Rummage	Wayne McDill	Gordon Fee	Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks	Scott Duvall and Hays
1	Study the Scriptures "Flesh": 1. Observation 2. Interpretation	Diagramming the Text Structure: 1. Identify the first independent clause in the text 2. Place supporting phrases under the center word they modify. 3. Put all direct quotations at the left margin as new statements. 4. Put connectives in brackets and set the apart for emphasis. 5. Underline all the verbs to	Getting started: 1. Read the larger context. 2. Read the passage repeatedly. 3. Make your own translation. 4. Compile a list of alternatives. 5. Analyze the structure. 6. Start a sermon use list.	Observation: 1. Who are the people involved? 2. Watch for cause-effect relationships. 3. Define the terms 4. The importance of place. 5. Relate the verse to the book as a whole. 6. Who are the people in the text? 7. What is happening in the text? 8. Where is narrative taking place?	Grasping the Text in their town: what did the text mean to the original audience? Note Observations 1. Repartition 2. Contrast 3. Comparisons 4. Lists 5. Cause and effect 6. Figures of Speech 7. Conjunctions 8. Verbs 9. Pronouns 10. Questions and answers 11. Dialogue 12. Means 13. Purpose/result statements 14. General to specific and

	emphasize their important role. 6. Highlight the word that carry theological significance. 7. Draw lines to connect words separated by intervening phrases 8. Identify the rhetorical function of words and phrases in a column to the left.		9. When did the events in the text take place? 10. The is infinity of why? 11. Verbs 12. Subject and object 13. Modifiers 14. Prepositional phrases 15. Connectives 16. Thing that are emphasized. 17. Stated purpose. 18. Movement form lesser to greater. 19. Thing that are repeated. 20. Thing that are related. 21. Movement from the general to specific. 22. Question and answers. Cause and effect. 23. Things that are alike and things that are unlike. 24. Metaphors.	specific to general 15. Conditions clauses 16. Action/roles of God 17. Action/roles of people Emotional terms 18. Emotional terms 19. Tone of the passage.

2	Structure the Scriptures "Skeleton": 1. Find the Seams 2. Analyze the argument 3. Outline the text	Noting the Text Details: 1. Make and note observations found with the text. 2. Relationship of Text Ideas 3. Significant Words 4. Rhetorical Functions	Matters of Content: 1. Check for significant textual issues. 2. Note any grammar that is unusual, ambiguous, or otherwise important. 3. Make a list of key terms. 4. Do a mini-word study for any crucial terms. 5. Investigate important historical–cultural matters.	Interpretation: 1. What type of literature is being studies? 2. Literary Context 3. Historical Context 4. Cultural Context 5. Geographic Context 6. Theological Context.	Measure the width of the river to cross: What are the differences between the biblical audience and us? 1. Historical Context 2. Cultural Context. 3. Literary Context 4. Word studies 5.
3	The Main Idea of the Text "Heart": 1. What was the main point then? 2. Theme: What is the biblical author talking about?	Asking Research Questions: 1. The who question asks about the people in or behind the text. 2. The what question asks about the identification or definition of	Contextual Questions: Epistles, Acts, and Revelation 1. Examine the historical context. 2. Examine the literary context. Gospels 1. Identify the form.	Application: 1. Is there an example for me to follow? 2. Is there a sin to avoid? 3. Is there a promise to claim? 4. Is there a prayer to repeat?	Cross the principlizing bridge: What is the theological principle in this text. 1. Where does this passage fits within the large, overarching story of the Bible?

3. Complement: What is the biblical author saying about what he is talking about?	some matter in the text. 3. The when question relates to time. 4. The where question inquires about location. 5. The why question asks about the reasons or causes for a condition, action, or assertion. 6. The how question seeks answers as to some process in the text. Interpretive Questions: 1. What other passages help clarify the meaning of this text? 2. What does the context of this book tell me about the	2. Use a synopsis. 3. Investigate possible life setting where appropriate. 4. Describe the present arrangement or adaptation.	5. Is there a command to obey? 6. Is there a condition to meet? 7. Is there a verse to memorize? 8. Is there an error to mark? 9. Is there a challenge to face? 10.	2. What is the purpose of this passage? 3. What is context specific meaning? 4. 5. The principle should be reflected in the text. 6. The principle should be timeless and not tied to a specific situation. 7. The principle should not be culturally bound 8. The principle should correspond to the teaching of the rest of Scripture. 9. The principle should be relevant both the biblical audience and the contemporary audience.

		message of this text? 3. How does this text's literary genre affect its message? 4. What seems to be the writer's purpose in this text as a part of the whole book? 5. What are the overall tone and style of the text language? 6. What are the apparent implications of the writer's statements in the text? 7. What is the significance of the ideas in the text for the response of contemporary believers?			
4	The Bridge: "Moving from the Then to Now:	Naming the Text Idea: 1. Carefully consider all the theological	Secondary Literature: 1. Consult commentaries.		Consult the Biblical Map: How does our theological principles

1. What does this text teach about God? 2. What does this text teach about fallen humanity? 3. What does this text teach about Christ? 4. What does God want my people to know? 5. What does God want my people to do?	themes in the text for insight into its central idea. 2. Examining the context of the passage will help identify the writer's central idea. 3. Look closely at any expression of intention by the writer for an understanding of his central idea. 4. Translate figurative language in the text for insight into the writer's theological subject. 5. Look for the plain and obvious meaning of the text as the key to the text idea. 6. Look at the rhetorical functions and	2. Read other literature.		fit with the rest of the Bible?

		grammar of phrases in the text for dominant themes.		
5	Steps 5-7 addresses the sermon portion	Bridging from Text to Sermon: Write Two Separate statements 1. The Text Idea Statement 2. The Sermon Idea Statement	Biblical–Theological Context: 1. Analyze the passage's relation to the rest of Scripture. 2. Analyze the passage's use in and relation to theology.		Grasp the text in our town: How should individual Christians today live out the theological principles? 1. Observe how the principles in the text address the original situation. 2. Discover a parallel situation in a contemporary context. 3. Make your application specific.
6		Writing Sermon Divisions: 1. Identify the subject of the text in one word. 2. Identify the modifier. 3. Now state your subject/modifier	Application: 1. List the life issues in the passage. 2. Clarify the possible nature and area of application. 3. Identify the audience and		

		together as a working title for the emerging sermon. 4. Write the text idea statement as the first of the four bridging sentences. 5. Write the sermon idea by rewording the basic statement of the text idea without the historical trappings. 6. Write a purpose statement for the sermon to identify the change you want to see in the hearers in response to the central message of the sermon	categories of application.	
7		Steps 7-12 addresses sermon development and design	Steps 7-11 address the sermon.	

Source: Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, and Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011); Wayne McDill, *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006); Gordon D. Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors.* 3rd ed. (Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002); Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, *Living by the Book: The Art and Science of Reading*

the Bible, revised and updated (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007); Scott Duvall and Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading Interpreting and Applying the Bible.* 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012).

Appendix C

Pre-course test and Post-course test

Name: _____

Please read and answer each question to the best of your ability; if you do not know the answer, you may leave it blank. You may use your Bible, but do not use a study Bible. This test will not be used as a grade, but merely a reference point to what your knowledge level was before taking the class and then you'll take it again for what knowledge you have learned during the class.

2. What are the two main approaches to translating the English Bible? (please circle two answers)
    a. Formal
    b. Transcribe
    c. Functional
    d. Paraphrasing
    e. Uncertain
3. Who should control the meaning of a passage found in the Bible?
    a. Pastor
    b. Author
    c. Scholar
    d. Reader
    e. Uncertain
4. The most important principle of Biblical interpretation is "context determines the meaning."
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
5. John was addressing unbelievers when he wrote Revelation 3:20 (ESV) "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
6. What was Matthew addressing in Matthew 18:20; (ESV) "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."
    a. Church discipline
    b. Corporate prayer
    c. Individual prayer
    d. Church worship services
    e. Uncertain

7. The Holy Spirit does not create new meaning or provide new revelation about the passage of Scripture.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
8. Paul addressed what, when he wrote "so flee youthful passions" to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:22 (ESV), "So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."
    a. Fighting off sexual temptation
    b. Running away from foolish discussions, arguments, and theological freshness
    c. Fighting off immaturity and pursuing maturity in the Lord
    d. Running away from the flesh to pursue the things of God
    e. Uncertain
9. It is okay to approach a Bible study with the question, "what does this passage mean to me?"
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
10. Conjunctions are important to note when looking at the passage because they can provide a great deal of insight into the passage.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
11. How should Peter's statement in 2 Peter 3:8 be interpreted; 2 Peter 3:8 (ESV) "But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."
    a. Literal timeframe
    b. Figurative timeframe
    c. Uncertain
12. Preconceived notions are a major influence that can skew our interpretive process and lead us away from the real meaning of the passage.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain

13. What best describes Peter's <u>main</u> point in 1 Peter 5:5–9 (ESV); "[5] Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." [6] Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, [7] casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. [8] Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. [9] Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world."
    a. "Casting all your anxieties on him"
    b. "Be sober-minded; be watchful"
    c. "Humble yourselves"
    d. "Firm in your faith"
    e. Uncertain
14. Should a passage of Scripture vary its message from one reader to another?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Uncertain
15. Verbs in a Bible passage often carry the primary theme(s) of that passage.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
16. We cannot apply the Bible without knowing what it means.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
17. Application may vary from reader to reader.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
18. Finding an application of a passage involves seeing how the Biblical author wanted his original audience to apply the meaning.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
19. The intersection between the passage and the original situation lies at the center of the application process.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain
20. Simply knowing the facts about a passage is not really understanding its meaning.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain

21. By identifying our mutual condition with the Biblical writer or the audience the Biblical writer was addressing, we are determining why the text was written and then we can apply that meaning to our own lives.
    a. True
    b. False
    c. Uncertain

Read the passages below and answer the questions.

Philippians 4:10–13 (ESV)

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. 11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

22. What is Paul's main point in this passage?
    a. "I can do all things through him who strengthens me"
    b. "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content"
    c. "You were indeed concerned for me"
    d. "Not that I am speaking of being in need"

23. What statement properly describes the original situation in this passage?
    a. Paul told the Philippians that he had learned to be content in a variety of difficult circumstances through Christ, Who gave him strength.
    b. Paul told the Philippians that he had learned he could do anything, because Christ gave him strength.
    c. Paul told the Philippians that he had learned that he can do all things through Christ because the people are concerned for him.
    d. Paul told the Philippians that he had learned that being in need makes him weak, so Christ gives him strength to be content.

24. What statement properly describes the theological principles communicated by this passage?
    a. Christ will give believers strength to be content so that the believer is not in need for anything.
    b. Christ will give believers strength to do anything that the believers set out to do in life.
    c. Christ will give believers strength to do all things through the concerns and help from others.
    d. Christ will give believers strength to be content in a variety of trying circumstances.

25. What contemporary situation best describes the biblical situation?
   a. You are a Christian student experiencing financial difficulty. You had all your needs met when you lived at home, but circumstances changed when you answered God's call to go to college. Because of your parents' financial situation, you must pay for your own education. You are struggling to make ends meet. The long hours of work turn into late nights and drowsy mornings in class. You believe God has called you to go to college, but you find yourself in a tough situation. You are tired most of the time and your spiritual life even seems to be affected. Regardless of it all, you are trusting Christ for the strength to hang in there.
   b. You are a Christian who does not have some of the nicer things in life; like a new car, a big house, or nice clothes. You are holding down a good job that allows you to make ends meet, but not a lot of extra cash to put away for nicer things. You are making all your bills and payments on time, with plenty of money to buy food; however, you would like a little extra cash every now and then for extra activities; like a vacation, going to the movies, or going on a date night. You believe that God has given you this job and you like what you do. Therefore, Christ has given you strength to be content with what you have in your current situation.
   c. You are a Christian athlete, who plays professionally. You believe that God has placed you on this platform to help spread the gospel. You know this because God has given you some incredible talents in your sport, which allow you to speak in media events, other platforms, and events outside of your sport. The championship is coming up and you know if you win you could really take time to give credit to God and all the things that He has done in and through your life. You write the phrase, "I can do all things," on your jersey to help motivate you and give God the glory while playing.
   d. You are a Christian who is struggling in your new walk with Christ. You have a past that seems to always find a way to surface in your life. Just the other day you were in town buying groceries and had to walk by the alcohol section to get to the milk and you desired to buy the alcohol to take home. You started to look around to see if anyone you knew was in the store, but you chose not to put alcohol in your cart. Alcohol is something you were addicted to before you became a Christian, but for some reason you still struggle with it, to the point that you turn your cart around to head back to the alcohol section. As you are going back a friend from your church happens to pass by you and you begin to share with him/her that you are struggling at that very moment. You know that God had placed him/her there to get you through this, because you and your friend are close, and he/she has a deep concern for you; so much that they stayed with until you were done shopping and heading out to your car.

Appendix D

Entry Questionnaire

Answer the questions below to the best of your ability. Do not overthink the questions, just answer as honestly as you can. This questionnaire is used to help me understand where you are now in your ability to interpret and apply the Bible for yourself.

Read each question and choose an answer, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

1. How would you rate your knowledge of the Bible?
   1   2   3   4   5
2. How would you rate your understanding when it comes to the Bible?
   1   2   3   4   5
3. How would you rate your ability to find out the meaning of the passage you are reading?
   1   2   3   4   5
4. How would you rate your ability to apply the Bible?
   1   2   3   4   5
5. Do you feel that you have the tools needed to study the Bible?
   1   2   3   4   5
6. Do you feel that you have the tools needed to understand the Bible?
   1   2   3   4   5
7. Do you feel that you have the tools needed to apply the Bible?
   1   2   3   4   5
8. How long have you been a Christian?
   1 to 2 years   3 to 4 years   5 to 6 years   7plus years

Appendix E

Exit Questionnaire

Answer the questions below to the best of your ability. Do not overthink the questions, just answer as honestly as you can. This questionnaire is used to help me understand where you are now in your ability to interpret and apply the Bible for yourself after taking the course.

Read each question and choose an answer, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

1. How would you rate your knowledge of the Bible, now that you have taken this course?
    1   2   3   4   5
2. How would you rate your understanding when it comes to the Bible, now that you have taken this course?
    1   2   3   4   5
3. How would you rate your ability to find out the meaning of the passage you are reading, now that you have taken this course?
    1   2   3   4   5
4. How would you rate your ability to apply the Bible, now that you have taken this course?
    1   2   3   4   5
5. Do you feel that you have the tools needed to study the Bible, now that you have taken this course?
    1   2   3   4   5
6. Do you feel that you have the tools needed to understand the Bible, now that you have taken this course?
    1   2   3   4   5
7. Do you feel that you have the tools needed to apply the Bible, now that you have taken this course?
    1   2   3   4   5
8. Do you feel that this course has helped you in your ability to interpret and apply the Bible for yourselves?
    1   2   3   4   5
9. Do you feel that this course was beneficial?
    1   2   3   4   5
10. Would you like to see more courses like this?
    1   2   3   4   5

Appendix F

Exit Interview Questions

1. What did you like best about the class?
2. What did you like the least about the class?
3. What kept you from attending 100% of the time?
4. What would have made the class better?
5. Was Sunday night a good night for you or would a class during Sunday School be better?
6. What did you think was the most challenging part of the class?
7. What did you think was the least challenging part of the class?
8. How much effort did you put into learning while in the class?
    a. A lot
    b. Some
    c. Very little
    d. None
9. How much effort did you put in the tests?
    a. A lot
    b. Some
    c. Very little
    d. None
10. Would you recommend a class like this to other students?
    a. Yes
    b. No
11. What would best describe you:
    a. I do excellent in school
    b. I do ok in school but struggle to make an A
    c. I struggle in school to make good grades
    d. I struggle with just passing classes at school
12. Do you have any other comments that you would like to add about the class?

Bibliography

Ackerman, Beth. *P.R.A.I.S.E.: Effectively Guiding Behavior*. Colorado Springs, CO: Purpose Design Publications, 2007.

Akin, Daniel L., Bill Curtis, and Stephen Rummage. *Engaging Exposition*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011.

American Bible Society. State of the Bible 2016: Teens-Research Conducted Among U.S. Teens Ages 13 to 17. (2016), [ebook] Philadelphia: American Bible Society, pp. 1-92. Accessed March 10, 2019. https://www.americanbible.org/upload/content/Teens_State_of_the_Bible_2016_Report.pdf.

American Bible Society, *State of the Bible 2017: Research Conducted Among U.S. Adults* (Philadelphia: American Bible Society, 2017), accessed March 10, 2019 [ebook]. Available at https://1s712.americanbible.org/cdn-www-ws03/uploads/content/State_of_the_Bible_2017_report_032317.pdf?_ga=2.149322801.62941458.1554396407-927487036.1554396407

American Bible Society, *State of the Bible 2018: Research Conducted Among U.S. Adults* (Philadelphia: American Bible Society, 2017), 28, accessed March 10, 2019 [ebook]. Available at https://1s712.americanbible.org/cdn-www-ws03/uploads/content/State_of_the_Bible_2018_Report_-_Han_Solo.pdf?_ga=2.147888176.62941458.1554396407-927487036.1554396407

Barna, George. *Real Teens: A Contemporary Snapshot of Youth Culture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001.

Barna Research Group. *The State of Youth Ministry: How Churches Reach Today's Teens and What Parents Think About It*. Ventura, CA: Barna Group, 2016. Accessed March 12, 2019, www.barna.com.

Bartholomew, Craig G., and Michael W. Goheen. *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004.

Blomberg, Craig L., and Jennifer Foutz Markley. *A Handbook of New Testament Exegesis*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.

Borgman, Dean. "Youth, Culture, and Media: Contemporary Youth Ministry." *Transformation* 11, no. 2 (1994): 13–16.

Botha, Nico. "Children as Theological Hermeneutic: Is there a New Epistemological Break Emerging*?*" *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 72, no. 1 (2016): 1–7.

Bruce, F. F. "Hermeneutics," *New Bible Dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Carson, D.A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. 2nd ed.. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1996.

Carson, D. A., and Douglas J. Moo. *An Introduction to The New Testament.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.

Chapell, Bryan. *Christ Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.

Chapell, Bryan. *CM151 Preparing and Delivering Christ-Centered Sermons I: Foundations and Structures*. Logos Mobile Education. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015.

City-Data.com. City data on Adair, Oklahoma. Accessed February 11, 2019. http://www.city-data.com/city/Adair-Oklahoma.html.

Clark, Chapman R. "Creating a Place for a New Generation: An Ecclesiological Perspective on Youth Ministry." *Christian Education Journal* 3, no. 2 (Fall, 1999) 93.

Davies, Simon. "*Education and Curriculum*" *Christian Youth Work in Theory and Practice: A Handbook*. Golden Lane, London: SCM Press, 2014.

Draper, Charles W. with Lewis Jack P. "*Bible Translations,*" *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003

Duvall, Scott, and Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-on Approach to Reading Interpreting and Applying the Bible.* 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

Earley, Dave, and Rod Dempsey. *Disciple Making Is: How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2013.

Espinoza, Benjamin D. "*Between Text and Context: Practical Theology and The Ministry of Equipping*." *Christian Education Journal* 14, no. 2 (Fall, 2017): 391–404.

Estep, James R., and Jonathan H. Kim. *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology & Human Development*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010.

Fee, Gordon D. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. 3rd ed. Louisville, KN: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.

Fields, Doug. *Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry: 9 Essential Foundations for Healthy Growth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998.

Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1998.

Hamilton, Donald L. *Homiletical Handbook*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992.

Hendricks, Howard G. *Teaching to Change Lives: Develop a Passion for Communicating God's Word to Adults or Children in the Church, Home, Bible Study, or School*. Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1987.

Hendricks, Howard G., and William D. Hendricks. *Living by The Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible* revised and updated. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007.

Hryniuk, Michael. "Creating Space for God: Toward A Spirituality of Youth Ministry," *Religious Education* 100, no. 2 (Spring, 2005): 139–56.

Jacober, Amy. "*Adolescent Identity Development*" *Christian Youth Work in Theory and Practice: A Handbook*. Golden Lane, London: SCM Press, 2014.

Kageler, Len. *The Youth Ministry Survival Guide: How to Thrive and Last for the Long Haul*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.

Kaier, J. R., and Walter C. *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching & Teaching*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1981.

Kaier, J. R., Walter C., and Moises Silva. *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning revised and expanded edition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007.

Kostenberger, Andreas J. and Richard D. Patterson. *Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2011.

Lawrence, Rick. *Jesus Centered Youth Ministry*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2007.

Lea, Thomas D., and David Alan Black. *The New Testament: Its Background and Message*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 2003.

McDill, Wayne. *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006.

McKiddie, Eric. "*The Impact of Expounding God's Word: Expositional Teaching in Youth Ministry*," *Gospel Centered Youth Ministry: A Practical Guide*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016.

Mitchell, Michael R. *Leading, Teaching, and Making Disciples: World-Class Christian Education in the Church, School, and Home*. Bloomington, IN: Cross Books, 2010.

Nel, Malan. "*Imagine-making Disciples in Youth Ministry… that will make Disciples.*" *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 71, no. 3 (2015): 1–11.

Nielson, Jon. *Bible Study: A Students' Guide*. Phillipsburg NJ: P&R Publishing Company, 2013, Kindle.

Nielson, Jon. "*Equipping Youth for Gospel Ministry: Leadership Training in Youth Ministry.*" *Gospel Centered Youth Ministry: A Practical Guide.* IL: Crossway, 2016.

Nielson, Jon. "*Helping Students Personally engage the Bible: Small-Group Bible Study in Youth Ministry*" *Gospel Centered Youth Ministry: A Practical Guide*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016.

Osborne, Grant R. *"Biblical Theology," Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988.

Ransom, Sean. "*Theological Curriculum Design with Integrated Hermeneutical and Exegetical Methodology to Help Students Accurately Interpret the Authorial Intent of the Biblical Text*." Order No. 3703904, Biola University, 2015.

Reck, Stacie. "Analyzing and Evaluating Christian Religious Education Curricula." *Christian Education Journal* 9, no. 1 (Spring, 2012): 27–42.

Reck, Stacie. "*Colouring with Brown Crayons: Evaluating Religious Education Curriculum*." Order No. NR46408, University of Alberta (Canada), 2008.

Richards, Lawrence O., and Gary J. Bredfeldt. *Creative Bible Teaching Revised and Expanded*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1998.

Rogers, Adrian, and Steve Rogers. *What Every Christian Ought to Know: Solid Grounding for a Growing Faith*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2012.

Senter III, Mark H. *When God Shows Up: A History of Protestant Youth Ministry in America*. Grand Rapides, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.

Smith, Abbie. *Can You Keep Your Faith in College? Students From 50 Campuses Tell You How and Why*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2006.

Strong, Philippa. "*Christ Alone: Redeeming Youth Ministry/Alleenlik Christus…Die Herstel Van Jeugbediening." In Die Skriflig 48*, no 1 (2014): 1–9.

Strovall, Terri. "*Evaluating the Teaching Ministry*" *The Teaching Ministry of the Church.* 2nd ed. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008.

Van Aarde, Timothy A., and Lygunda Li-M. "A Faithful Missional Exegesis for a Missional Hermeneutic and Missiology." *In Die Skrifig* 51, no. 2 (2017).

Ward, Ted. "*The Teaching-Learning Process*" *Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the Twenty-first Century*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001.

Whitehead, Jo. "*Spiritual Practices and Faith Formation*" *Christian Youth Work in Theory and Practice: A Handbook.* Golden Lane, London: SCM Press, 2014.

Wright, Dave. "*Gathering God's People*" Gospel Centered Youth Ministry: A Practical Guide.
    Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016.

Yount, William R. "*Planning to Teach*" The Teaching Ministry of the Church. 2nd ed. Nashville, TN:
    B&H Publishing Group, 2008.

IRB Approval

March 7, 2018

Casey Whiteis

IRB Approval 3142.030718: Implementation of a Basic Exegetical and Hermeneutical Class for Students: To Interpret God's Word Exegetically and Apply God's Word Hermeneutically

Dear Casey Whiteis,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP Administrative Chair of Institutional Research **the Graduate School**

Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971