

## DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

# COURSE SYLLABUS

**Course:** DM802—Biblical Interpretation for the Church and the World  
(3 credits)

**Section DM**

**Concentration:** *Required*

**Date of Course:** January 16-20, 2012

**Location:** Wilmore Campus

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Instructor:** Dr. Joseph R. Dongell  
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Mailing Address

(for assignments):

Dr. Joseph R. Dongell  
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### COURSE DESCRIPTION/GOALS

This course is designed to 1) broaden and deepen the student's understanding of scripture as God's word to the church; 2) extend and strengthen the student's grasp of key hermeneutical issues related to the contemporary understanding and appropriation of the Bible; 3) enhance the student's skills in interpreting and applying Biblical passages; and 4) open up new avenues for the penetration of the Bible into the spiritual and personal formation of the minister.

### INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Dongell joined the Asbury Seminary faculty in 1989, and now serves as Professor of Biblical Studies, with primary responsibility in the Inductive Bible Study Department. Previous to 1989, Dr. Dongell served as an instructor in various languages (Greek, Hebrew, and Latin) at Asbury Seminary (1981-83), Asbury College (1985-86), and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va., (1987). Dr. Dongell is the author of a commentary on the Gospel of John (published by Wesley Press) and co-author of a book with Dr. Jerry Walls, on the topic "Why I Am not a Calvinist." As an ordained elder in the Wesleyan Church, Dr. Dongell has maintained an active ministry in that denomination. His personal interests include organic gardening, astronomy, and coffee shop conversation. He and his wife, Regina, have adult twins, Jordan and Janna, and enjoy living out in the country.

### TEXTS

Jones, Scott J. John Wesley's Conception and Use of Scripture. Nashville: Kingswood, 1995. 0687204666

Jasper, David. A Short Introduction to Hermeneutics. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. 0-664-22751-1

Davis, Ellen R. and Richard Hays, eds. The Art of Reading Scripture. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. 0-8028-1269-4

Thompson, David L. Bible Study that Works. Revised Ed. Nappanee, IN: Evangel 1994. 978-0-916-035-61-7

## ASSIGNMENTS

### A. Pre-Class

**For Thompson**, read the entire book to gain an overview of issues and methods for effective Bible study. In a single essay totaling about 1500 words, identify three specific features of Thompson's teaching that can help you deepen and strengthen your own practice of Bible study. Include examples of your own creation to illustrate how you might put into practice some of these improvements.

**For Jasper**, read the entire book. For each of the seven (7) chapters, write about a 300 word essay (for a total of about 2100 words). In each essay, describe how that chapter might relate to the practices and approach of:

- the prevailing culture you are ministering in; •your tradition; •your mentors;
- your education; •your own approach as developed in the practice of ministry;
- various traditions or styles of Christianity or Christian ministry you find problematic.

[**Note**: The list above is suggestive. You need not cover them all in every essay, and you may develop other points of engagement.]

**For Davis and Hays**, read:

- “Nine Theses...”
- “Scripture's Authority in the Church”
- “Reading Scripture as a Coherent Story”
- “Reading Scripture in Light of the Resurrection”
- “How Can We Know the Truth...”
- “His Own Received Him Not...”

Respond (in sequence) to each of the chapters listed above. The total word-count should be around 2400 words. You may find yourself devoting a little more or a little less to each response than the 600 words that they would average.

In responding, consider such questions as these: What is the author's essential concern? [Take care not to spend too much simply in summary.] How and why might this chapter strengthen and/or call into question:

- the prevailing culture you are ministering in; •your tradition; •your mentors;
- your education; •your own approach as developed in the practice of ministry;
- various traditions or styles of Christianity or Christian ministry you find problematic.

Each student shall identify at the first class session two (2) passages of scripture possibly relevant to an anticipated dissertation or preaching responsibility. Each passage should be about 10-15 verses in length.

**For Jones**, read the entire book with care. In a first essay of about 1200 words, summarize the content of the whole book. Be concise, but be clear and specific in your summary. Then in second essay of about 1200 words, consider how Wesley's conception and use of Scripture relates to that of your own tradition (whether it traces its roots to Wesley or not), and to that of your own personal practice. You should feel free to agree or disagree, to object or affirm, and so on.

**B. Class Sessions:** Daily class sessions will include lecture, discussion, skills enhancement, small group work, and brief individual assignments.

**C. Post-Class:** Each student will submit an integrative paper (7,000 words) drawing upon the insights gleaned from the pre-class readings and the class sessions. Its specific format will be clarified during the class sessions. Due Date: March 20, 2012. [This is a post-mark date. Please send me hardcopy: (see address above)]

#### MEANS OF EVALUATION

Pre-class critical evaluations	20%
Class assignments and participation	10%
Post-class integrative paper	70%

## Online Section Descriptions and Communication Guidelines

The Online Classroom is built upon the open-source Moodle platform. By logging into <http://one.asburyseminary.edu> and clicking on the Online Campus tab (upper right corner) you will have access to this course and be able to collaborate with participant-colleagues and me throughout the course.

The following are functions with which you should familiarize yourself:

1. The **Course Information Center** contains many features to be used throughout the semester: a) **Course News and Announcements**, where I will post items important for the entire class; b) **Syllabus**, where a copy of the syllabus is provided; c) **To Professor**, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately; d) **Course Questions**, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so others may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me you should post it to the Course Questions Forum; e) **Prayer Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community; f) **Open Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post anything

that is not course-related for all to see. Examples include someone getting married, an upcoming birthday, discussions on topics not course-related, etc. This is a way for us to build community.

2. **Modules**, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download or view online, and assignment links where you will post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.

### ***Online Support Contact Information***

For technical support, library research support, library loans and Online media contact Information Commons: <mailto:Info.Commons@asburyseminary.edu> Phone: (859) 858-2233; Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

For general questions and administrative assistance regarding the Online program, contact Dale Hale: <mailto:ExL.Office@asburyseminary.edu> Phone: (859) 858-2393

### ***Accessing Information Commons Materials***

1. General Questions:

a. The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here:

<https://one.asburyseminary.edu/information-commons>

2. Materials Requests:

a. To search the library catalog for available materials, click here:

<https://one.asburyseminary.edu/information-commons>

b. Online Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/portions of reference books from Asbury Seminary's Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.

c. Online students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions:

a. Online students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases:

a. To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to <https://one.asburyseminary.edu/information-commons> or login to **OneATS** and

click on the Information Commons link in General Navigation. The links to **Research Databases** and other library systems will be on the right-hand side of the page.

## ***Plagiarism***

*Academic integrity is expected from every student. Plagiarism, that is, "presenting...another's ideas or writings as one's own," is considered a serious violation of trust and not acceptable. Detailed information including penalty for plagiarizing is to be found in the Student Handbook.*

## ***Copyright Policies***

The copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

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