

# Methods of Bible Study

## *Learning to Grasp the Meaning of God's Word*

Offered through ABWE's Center for Excellence in International Ministries (CEIM)

### General Information

#### Textbooks:

- **4<sup>th</sup> (2020) Edition** of *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible* by J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays (Zondervan, 2020).
- Accompanying workbook for **4<sup>th</sup> (2020) Edition** *Grasping God's Word* (Zondervan, 2020).
- Accompanying *Grasping God's Word* Laminating Sheet (Zondervan, 2007)
- Accompanying *Grasping God's Word* Video Lectures--Optional (Zondervan, 2015)

You are required to purchase the textbook, workbook and laminating sheet. The video lectures are optional. Couples can share the textbook, video lectures and laminated sheet but must purchase a workbook for the husband and one for the wife. We recommend that you keep the textbook and laminated sheet in your personal or family library for future reference, as you teach others to study the Bible.

- *Zondervan NIV Exhaustive Concordance* by Edward W. Goodrick and John R. Kohlenberger-Optional (Zondervan, 1999).

This course uses an online concordance. However, especially if you are going to a country where internet is limited, we encourage you to purchase this concordance—one per couple or single—and add it to your personal library.

**Where do I purchase these books?** All of these can be purchased through Amazon.com or from other similar online sources. If you purchase these through Amazon.com, notice special prices that may be available for both new and used copies. Workbooks must be new and the textbook needs to be unmarked. Be sure to purchase the right edition. You can pay for these books from funds in your ABWE ministry or O & P account.

#### Can I take this course for academic credit?

- **Graduate/Seminary Academic Credit:** Read the following web page for an explanation of how you can take this course for credit: <http://www.abwe.org/graduate-academic-credit>
- **Non-credit Option:** ABWE personnel who only desire to take this course for personal enrichment *and/or* to fulfill ABWE's Bible course requirements can take the course on a non-credit basis. Non-credit requirements are two-fold: (1) read and study the book thoroughly and (2) complete all of the required learning activities satisfactorily. [See list of required assignments at the end of this document.]

**How do I officially begin this course?** Go to the following web page for instructions:  
<http://www.abwe.org/resources/events/methods-bible-study>

- Read this web page, if you have not already done so.
- Follow the link to register for the course.
- There is a \$200 fee (for the proctor and course administration), paid to ABWE, for taking this course. This fee will be deducted from your account when you register. An additional \$50 will be deducted, if you take the course for academic credit.

**What is the purpose of having a proctor for this course?** Your course proctor will be available to assist you with questions that may arise as you work through the course. The proctor will also evaluate your work and assign your grade.

## Course Design

### I. Course Rationale

Successful completion of this course will satisfy ABWE's requirement for all of its incoming missionaries to understand the essential methods of Bible study, so that they can interpret Bible passages accurately. For ABWE veteran missionaries, this course will enhance their abilities to interpret God's Word accurately, so that they can teach it more effectively.

### II. Units of Study

- A. How to Read the Book—Basic Tools
- B. Contexts—Now and Then
- C. Meaning and Application
- D. The Interpretive Journey—New Testament
- E. The Interpretive Journey—Old Testament

### III. Goals & Objectives

By the end of this course the student will demonstrate an understanding of...

- A. Interpretive methods for reading the Bible by...
  1. Analyzing sentences of Scripture.
  2. Making observations in Biblical paragraphs.
  3. Analyzing discourses from Biblical passages.

- B. Relationships between Biblical passages and their various contexts by...
  1. Identifying the influences of the historical-cultural context on the meanings of Biblical passages.
  2. Identifying the influences of the literary context on the meanings of Biblical passages.
  3. Identifying the meanings of Biblical words and their influence on the meanings of Biblical passages.
  4. Identifying the most appropriate translation for your Bible study.
  
- C. Processes for determining the God-intended meaning of Biblical passages by...
  1. Critiquing so-called “various levels of meaning” of Biblical passages.
  2. Explaining the Holy Spirit’s role in Bible interpretation.
  3. Making applications from meanings of Biblical passages.
  
- D. Interpretive methods for understanding the literature of the New Testament by...
  1. Interpreting passages from the New Testament epistles.
  2. Interpreting passages from the Gospels.
  3. Interpreting passages from the Book of Acts.
  4. Interpreting passages from the Book of the Revelation.
  
- E. Interpretive methods for understanding the literature of the Old Testament by...
  1. Interpreting historical narrative passages from the Old Testament.
  2. Interpreting passages from the Old Testament books of law.
  3. Interpreting passages from the Old Testament books of poetry.
  4. Interpreting passages from the Old Testament prophetic books.
  5. Interpreting passages from Old Testament wisdom literature.

Achievement of the above (lead-up) goal-objectives sets will contribute to the achievement of the **overall goal and objective for this course**:

By the end of this course the student will demonstrate an understanding of methods of Bible study by...

- Analyzing Bible passages systematically, from any section of Scripture.
- Determining the God-intended meanings of these Bible passages.
- Applying the true meanings of these Bible passages to contemporary real-life settings.

#### IV. Learning Activities

Learning activities used during the course grow out of the statement of goals and objectives. The nature of these goals and objectives suggests such activities as these:

- Make and record observations from Bible passages
- Identify various contextual factors that influence the meanings of Bible passages

- Discover meanings of key Bible words
- Evaluate Bible translations
- Identify inaccurate “levels of meaning” of Bible passages
- Discover the God-intended meanings of Bible passages
- Apply meanings of Bible passages to contemporary real-world situations
- Interpret New Testament passages that represent various types (genres) of literature
- Interpret Old Testament passages that represent various types (genres) of literature
- Write an exegetical paper on an assigned Bible passage (only required of those taking the course for academic credit)

## V. Evaluation Procedures

Evaluation procedures will consist of activities that demonstrate the student’s achievement of the course goals & objectives. These activities are found in the workbook that has been developed to accompany the textbook (to be purchased as a separate item). Most of these same activities can be found in the course textbook, at the end of chapters where they fit appropriately.

Your assigned course proctor will evaluate your assignments and assess the quality of your work in the course. As you work with your proctor:

- Please make sure that your name is on each paper you send to your proctor for grading.
- Be sure to write your answers clearly and legibly, with a black pen, especially if you photocopy the assignments or scan and send them as attachments by email.
- For assignments that lend themselves to typing, that is the easiest for the proctor to read and evaluate. Please be sure to identify the typed sheets carefully in a way that specifies where they fit into the workbook.
- When a husband and wife are working on the same course, it is fine for them to study together, but they must respond to questions independently.

## VI. Bibliography

See Appendix 3 of the textbook—Building a Personal Library.

**If you have questions or need additional information, please contact  
John Taylor ([jtaylor@abwe.org](mailto:jtaylor@abwe.org)).**

# **ABWE Required Assignments**

## **For 3<sup>rd</sup> (2012) Edition of *Grasping God's Word* Workbook**

### **Section 1 – General Assignments**

The following general assignments are required for students taking this course for academic credit, or simply to fulfill ABWE's requirements for pre-field missionaries.

#### Chapter 1

- Do either one of the two assignments (not both)

#### Chapter 2

- Do all of the assignments

#### Chapter 3

- Do assignment 1
- Do one of the other assignments (2-5)

#### Chapter 4

- Do assignment 1
- Do one of the other assignments (2-5)
- Academic credit students – Select one of these passages for your exegetical paper and do this assignment. Consult with your assigned tutor in making the decision regarding the selection of your passage for the exegetical paper.

#### Chapter 5

- Do assignment 2
- Do one of the other assignments (1 or 3)

#### Chapter 6

- Do assignment 1 or 2
- Do assignments 4 & 5
- Academic credit students – Do assignment 6

#### Chapter 7

- Only one assignment – do this (7-1)

#### Chapter 8

- Do assignment 2
- Academic credit students – Do assignment 3

#### Chapter 9

- Do assignment 2 or any two of the other four assignments
- Academic credit students – Do assignment 6

Chapter 10

- Do all three assignments

Chapter 11

- Do assignment 1 only.

Chapter 12

- Do both assignments

Chapter 13

- Do one of these three assignments

Chapter 14

- Do both assignments

Chapter 15

- Do assignment 1 and either one of the other two (2 or 3)

Chapter 16

- Only one assignment given (do this one)

Chapter 17

- Do either assignment 1 or 2
- Do assignment 3

Chapter 18

- Do either assignment 1 or 2,
- Do assignment 3

Chapter 19

- Do assignment one or two, plus either assignment 3 or 4

Chapter 20

- Do assignments 1 & 2

Chapter 21

- Do any one of the three assignments

Chapter 22

- Do any one of the three passages in assignment 1

## Section 2 – The Exegetical Paper

Students taking this course for academic credit are required to write the exegetical paper described in this section. Consult with your assigned proctor for this course as is necessary.

### Who to Contact with your Questions

Read the following web page for an explanation of how you can take this course for credit:

<http://www.abwe.org/graduate-academic-credit>

For questions regarding general CEIM-related academic procedures contact the CEIM Director for Academic Studies [graduatecredit@abwe.org](mailto:graduatecredit@abwe.org).

For questions related to course assignments, etc. for this course, contact the proctor assigned to you when you register.

Go to <https://na.hismoodle.com/course/view.php?id=2979> and log in for contact information.

For questions related to tech support with the Moodle platform, contact [jodi@abwe.org](mailto:jodi@abwe.org).