

1 – B101 Introduction to the Bible

Course Description and Purpose

A study of the nature, origin, inspiration, development, literary characteristics, and ethical content of the Bible.

The course will show the value of understanding the Bible in its historical, geographical, linguistic, and literary setting. Students will be able to explain ways in which God intervenes in time and space, and how this worldview is supported by the inspired Scriptures. Students will be able to tell the meta-story of the Bible to non-believers. Students will apply underlying biblical principles of holy love in their lives as a godly example to others.

Course Rationale

Many people have not read the whole Bible or been exposed to the wide range of stories found in it. This survey course introduces outlines that will help student grasp the flow of the story through Scripture and give them a basic launching point for further study. It also emphasizes devotional methods so that Scripture is not just an object of study but an interaction with the loving God who created them. Students will identify ways that God intervenes in time and space to reveal Himself to build faith and provide assurance. Prayer and answered prayer are key elements in that experience. The same types of experiences build a connecting bridge between the people of God today and those in the biblical stories.

Program Outcomes

Content

CN-1 Ability to describe the basic story of the Bible.

CN-2 Ability to describe the content, genre, major characters, historical context, main events, and theological themes of the Old Testament.

CN-3 Ability to describe the basic content and theological themes of the New Testament, identify the principal people and events and their roles in New Testament history.

Competency

CP-13 Ability to interpret and apply Scripture to personal and congregational life.

Character

CH-1 Ability to find, understand and utilize resources for one's own spiritual growth in prayer, Bible study, and personal devotion with the goal of becoming like Christ.

Context

CX-6 Ability to compare between worldviews and values from the Bible, contemporary cultures, and the local context.

Activity Outcomes

Accountability

ACC-1 Demonstrate a Christ-like character of submission, integrity and love in all relationships.

ACC-7 Explain how the difference between Biblical understanding of forgiveness, restitution, and trust compare and contrast with local cultural understandings and the impact on the accountability relationship.

Discipleship

DIS-2 Testify each week to love by putting the needs of someone else ahead of their own.

DIS-3 Model spiritual disciplines to individuals and small groups including: prayer, devotional reading, fasting, solitude, and public worship.

DIS-4 Use the reading of God's Word to foster spiritual growth and for personal devotions.

Impact Community

ICO-4 Tell several Biblical stories where the people of God made a positive or negative impact in the community. Identify vocational training opportunities the church can initiate in a given context in partnership with the community leaders. Explain the process and steps of organizing a culturally appropriate evangelistic outreach.

Leadership

LEA-1 Be able to clearly demonstrate the role of the team in leadership development and how to develop trust between the team members using personal integrity. Understand and articulate the importance of demonstrating the worth of each individual within the team.

Prayer

PRA-1 Model the prayers of Christ and His relationship to the Father through a strong passion for a life of prayer shown by devoting time to prayer and keeping a prayer journal, including a list of lost people for whom God has made them responsible.

Preaching

PRE-3 Tell the story of the Bible including important dates, people, and events, in order to show the human problem and God's answer in Jesus Christ.

PRE-5 Describe the key themes and methods of Jesus' teaching, how this affected people, how they responded to his ministry, and how this can be applied to preaching today.

PRE-6 Describe how the early church grew, the key themes of early Christian preaching, the methods used to spread the gospel, and how these are relevant today.

PRE-13 Explain how God communicated his word to humanity as recorded in the Bible and the place of preaching in this.

Content	40%
Competency	22%
Character	22%
Context	16%

Course Texts

The Bible

Branson, Branson, Timothy M. Green, Jim Edlin, Alex Varughese. *Discovering the Old Testament: Story and Faith*. Nazarene Publishing House, 2003.

Varughese, Alex, Roger Hahn, David Neale, Jeanne Orjala Serrao, Dan Spross, Jirair Tashjian. *Discovering the New Testament: Community and Faith*. Nazarene Publishing House, 2004.

Telling the New Testament Story of God. RIII Course Module. Kansas City: Clergy Services, 2005.

Telling the Old Testament Story of God. RIII Course Module. Kansas City: Clergy Services, 2002.

Tracing the Story of the Bible. RIII Course Module. Kansas City: Clergy Services, 2005.

These resources are available free at the Wesleyan Holiness Digital Library (www.whdl.org):
McCumber, William E. [The Bible Speaks to Me About My Beliefs](#)
Earle, Ralph. [How We Got Our Bible](#)
Earle, Ralph. [The Story of the New Testament](#)
Winchester, Olive. [Story of the Old Testament](#)

Other suggested resources:

Alexander, Pat. *The Lion Handbook of the Bible*, 2009.

Anderson, Bernard W. *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today*. Third ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.

Bruce, F.F. Paul: *Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Grand Rapids : Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977.

Bruce, F.F. Paul. *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* Paperback. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, April 2, 2003

Drane, John. *Introducing the New Testament*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, San Francisco, 1986.

Holladay, William L. *Long Ago God Spoke: How Christians May Hear the Old Testament Today*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Mears, Henrietta. *What the Bible Is All About: NIV Edition*. Regal Books, 1998.

Mears, Henrietta. *What the Bible Is All about for Young Explorers*. Edited by Frances Blankenbaker. Regal Books, 1986.

Reed, Gerald. *The Liberating Law: 10 Steps to Freedom*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1996.

Course Requirements

Minimum Course Requirements

45 Hours Per Course

- 27 hours in-class sessions
- 18 hours of assigned collateral work
 - Reading
 - Study guide questions
 - Research projects

* The division of the time may vary, depending upon the circumstances of the class.

** Courses may be taken for lay ministry with less requirements.

1. **Bible Reading and Prayer Journal:** Students should read through the Bible as designated in the *Master Plan for Bible Reading* in the Course of Study. For this course, students will read Genesis 1-36 and Matthew 1 - 13. As part of the Scripture reading for each week, students will keep a journal. In this journal, answer these personal questions, “How does God speak to me or my family today through His word? How does this reading help me to love others?” There should be at least five entries in the journal of at least one paragraph of 200 words each entry. The entries can be scattered across a semester, be daily for intensive modules, or in

follow up to modular class meetings. As an alternative, students may give a short oral report in a small group during the class meeting time, sharing how God is developing them through reading the Bible.

(Outcomes CH-1, CN-1, ACC-1, DIS-2, DIS-3, DIS-4, PRA-1)

2. Reading

1) Bible: Students will read selected passages throughout the course:

Old Testament: Genesis 1-11, 12-50; Exodus 1-21; Leviticus 16-19; Numbers 1, 11-14, 25; Deuteronomy 1-6, 14-15, 28, 34; Joshua 1-7, 23-24; Judges 1-2, 13-16, 19-21, Ruth; 1 Samuel 8-20, 24, 31; 2 Samuel 1-7, 11-12; Psalm 51; 1 Kings 1-11; Psalm 120-27; 1 Kings 12, 16-19, 21; 2 Kings 1-5, 17-24; Amos; Isaiah 1-6, 11, 35-39; Jeremiah 1, 7-8, 31; Psalm 137; Isaiah 40-42, 52-56, 65-66; Ezekiel 1-3, 8-10, 18, 34-39; Ezra; Jonah; Ecclesiastes, Daniel 7-12;

New Testament: Matthew 1-7, 28; Mark; Luke 1-4, 23-24; John 1-3, 11, 19-20; Acts 1-3, 9-11, 15-19; 1 Corinthians; 1 Thessalonians; James; 1 Peter; 1 John; Revelation

2) Course materials: Lecture notes will be provided. These notes will serve as the primary resources for class sessions.

3) Various outside resources as available (linked above under “textbooks”).

The reading assignments can be counted towards the 45 hours needed to complete the course.

(Objectives CN-1, CN-2, CN-3)

3. **Bible Studymap:** Students will use the Studymap of the whole Bible to teach someone in the community (family, friend, acquaintance, new friend) the basic story line and outline of the Bible. The student must ask the community person if he or she understood the story of the Bible and ask to repeat it. The student will write a one-page reflection on this exercise or give an oral class report.

(Outcomes CN-1, CN-3, ICO-4, PRE-3)

4. **Discussion Questions:** Each session has discussion questions related to the topic of the session. These questions can be discussed in small groups (if available) or as an individual. The Bible is the primary source for these questions. For students receiving credit for this course, they should keep notes on the discussions. These notes may be handwritten and should total at least 10 pages.

(Outcomes CN-2, CN-3, CN-3, CP-13, ICO-4, LEA-1, PRE-3, PRE-5, PRE-6, PRE-13)

5. **Bible History and Culture Presentation:** Each student will choose a historical or cultural issue related to studying the Bible and give a presentation on this topic. If the student is doing individualized study, this presentation can be done orally before a church group such as a Sunday School class. If this report is not done in a church or class setting, the student should prepare and submit a written copy of the presentation, typically three pages. In your presentation, you can ask and answer questions like: Who, what, when, where, how, and why. Help the class/group understand the world behind the Bible. Choose a topic that is especially relevant to your cultural context. Suggested topics include:

- Idolatry
- Political strife in Palestine
- Immorality

- Various Religions of Ancient Canaan
 - The Intertestamental Period
 - Ancient Egypt during the time of Moses
 - The Babylonian Empire
 - The Assyrian Empire
 - The Romans Empire during the First Century
 - Nomadic life of the Patriarchs
 - Various Jewish Parties during Jesus' Day
 - Life in the Roman Empire in the Mediterranean Region
 - Honor and shame in the Ancient World
- (Outcomes CN-2, CN-3, CP-13, CX-6, ICO-4, PRE-13)

Course Evaluation

Journal	10 %
Discussion Questions	40 %
Studymap Sharing/Report	20 %
Bible History and Cultural Presentation	30 %

Grading Policy

Students must show minimal proficiency in each of the above assignments in order to pass this course. The proficiency will be determined by 1) if the assignment has been completed, 2) if the work is original to the student, 3) if minimal communication standards are evident (writing is clear and relatively free from major errors).