

REED 70970/80970- Special Topics in Religious Education: Teaching the Bible in  
Communities of Faith

(3 semester hours)

(Fall 2022)

Instructor: Russell Dalton

Prerequisites: None

Description of Content:

The Bible is often used in churches and other communities of faith without much serious reflection on how it is being used and why it is being used. Students in this course will examine and explore a variety of approaches to the interpretation and the authority of the Bible, their implications for how we use the Bible in the church. They will explore various methods and models for teaching the Bible in a variety of settings and for a variety of purposes. Finally, they will develop their own primary approach(es) to teaching the Bible.

Purpose of the course:

Students will be able to articulate several approaches to interpretation and authority of the Bible. They will be able to embody a model of teaching the Bible, chosen in consultation with the professor, by using that model to teach a lesson in class. Students will be able to articulate their own primary approaches to teaching the Bible, in dialogue with a number of texts and theories, and apply that approach by teaching the Bible in class and in a Bible study setting, Sunday School class, or other setting and writing a papers reflecting on that experience.

Class Procedures:

Lectures, discussions and course activities led by the professor, an extended in-class role-playing activity, in-class Bible classes taught by students in class, and an outside of class lesson taught by students in a church setting.

Requirements:

Attendance and informed, prepared participation in class. Failure to complete and pass all three graded assignments will result in failure of the course.

1. Write a 7-9-page paper surveying various theories of the interpretation, meaning and authority of the Bible, making the case for your own emerging approach, and suggesting some implications this approach has for how you will use the Bible in your ministry. The paper should draw upon and cite course texts, additional texts, and other classroom content.
2. Choose a method or model of teaching the Bible based on a text approved by the professor. Lead our class in a Bible study or bible lesson using that model and write a 7-9-page paper on the model and how you adapted it, reflecting on issues

discussed in class sessions and course texts. Student grades on this assignment shall be based on both the paper and the Bible study itself.

3. Lead a Bible study, Sunday School class session, or other Bible lesson outside of class (usually in a community of faith setting). Write an 7-9-page paper that provides a rationale for your approach to using the Bible, describe the teaching experience, and reflect on that experience discussing issues of meaning, authority, learners, and methodology with reference to course texts and classroom content.

\*4. Advance Degree students taking the course at the 80970 level will also write a 4-8-page reflection paper on how they have used the Bible in their past ministry and what changes, if any, they plan to make in how they use the Bible in the future, making connections to course texts and other content.

Required Texts:

John M. Bracke and Karen B. Tye, *Teaching the Bible in the Church* (Chalice Press, 2003) ISBN 0827236433 \$19.95

Mark Alan Powell, ed. *Methods for Matthew* (Cambridge University Press, 2009). ISBN 0521716144. \$24.99

Jack L. Seymour, *Teaching Biblical Faith: Leading Small Group Bible Studies* (Abingdon, 2015), ISBN-10: 1630884308 Retail: \$15.99

Anne Streaty Wimberly, *Soul Stories: African American Christian Education: Revised* (Abingdon, 2005) ISBN: 068749432X \$19.00

\*\*Note: After we meet together in class, each student will also be required to read (and possibly purchase) an additional text that describes the model of teaching the Bible they choose for assignment # 2.

\*\* Additional essays and articles will be made available at no cost through the TCU library and the course website, from authors such as Michael Joseph Brown, Will Gafney, Francisco Lozada, Shelly Matthews, David Tabb Stewart, and others.

Recommended Texts:

*The New Interpreter's Study Bible* (Abingdon, 2008). ISBN 0687647339 \$29.95. (Students will be required to read some brief essays included in the back matter of this study Bible.)

Russell Pregeant, *Reading the Bible for All the Wrong Reasons* (Fortress Press, 2011). ISBN 978-0-8006-9844-7. \$14.99.

William P. Brown, Editor, *Engaging Biblical Authority: Perspectives on the Bible as Scripture* (Westminster John Knox, 2007). ISBN 978-0-664-23057-9 \$19.95

Grading procedures:

Approach to the Bible paper 33 1/3 %  
In class lesson and reflection paper 33 1/3 %  
Outside of class lesson paper 33 1/3%

\*\*Students must complete all 3 long papers assignment with a passing grade and attend class in order to pass the course.

Positive consideration given for prepared, informed class participation. Excessive absences will result in the student receiving no credit for the course.

Note: This is a tentative course plan. Some specifics of this course may change depending upon the size of the class and the goals and backgrounds of the students in the course.