

3. The Grading data+

--There are three tests each constituting 1/5th of the course grade:
 One is over the Hebrew assignments in Ecclesiastes
 One is over the Hebrew assignments in Song of Solomon
 One is over the content, critical questions, and presentations of both books. This is the final examination.

--The class reports/papers constitute 1/5

--Class preparation and response (including the Glickman paper) comprise the final fifth.

So there is no room for personality grading or special credit for those who appreciate my stories, etc.

4. On class attendance

It is imperative that you be present for every class in a course like this. If bad weather or poor health present your attendance you may be excused but any other sort of absence will be regarded as treason. Well, that is a bit severe and we know that there are many wrinkles in life that we cannot erase with our edicts...so I will show as much consideration as possible. But I do want you present..it is very difficult to conduct a seminar-sort-of-class when the enrollees are not present. And it is also important to have your work done in advance. Work not done when due is a grief.

5. Our Hermeneutical foundation

For both of the books of our study I urge the acceptance of a common hermeneutic that applies to them and all other Scripture as well. We do have a course in hermeneutics in the seminary curriculum and I am not going to repeat that material but the following will at least tell you where I am working and how our aims are set.

My preference is for a single rule of hermeneutics that will be applicable in all parts of the Bible. This does not deny the need of special hermeneutics for particular types of literature but it suggests an over-all principle that allows for a more uniform interpretation of the whole and to this the special principles may be brought as needed. This single rule of my preference is that of literal interpretation, the acceptance of the terms as being truly descriptive of the entities enjoined. It is not only a hermeneutic for biblical study but for almost any language or literature known to me. The literal concept can be set aside with a direct statement, an absurdity or contradiction, or in some cases an obviously non-literal context. But apart from these a literal rule is what commends itself to my thinking. Remember that a literal principle does not take on the character of letterism and makes full use of all the proper speech figures but always sees these as being consistent with the ideals expressed. In taking a literal line of thought, the following are rather necessary corollaries: