

St. Andrew Center for Christian Learning
BIBLE ACADEMY

INTRODUCING THE BIBLE: *The Drama of Scripture*
Fall 2005
Monday Evenings

- Class Times: Monday evenings
6:45 – 7:00, gathering time
7:00 – 8:30, class time
- Class Dates: 9/12, 9/19, 9/26, 10/10, 10/17, 10/24, 11/7, 11/14 **NOTE – No class on Oct 3 & 31!**
- Instructor: Scott L. Engle, Ph.D.
- Reaching Scott: Scott's (214) 291-8009
Scott: Scott's e-mail: sengle@standrewccl.org

You can find the syllabus and other course materials at the website for the St. Andrew Center for Christian Learning, www.standrewccl.org. Simply go to the Bible Academy page and you'll find the link to the materials for this class.

IN THE EVENT OF BAD WEATHER, CHECK THE "CCL" HOMEPAGE TO SEE IF CLASS IS CANCELLED. If we have to cancel a class, we'll simply reduce the class to seven weeks and I'll modify the lectures so we can get back on schedule. If we have to cancel two or more classes, then we'll extend the class further into November.

Course materials:

Readings
Weekly Worksheets
A study Bible

Optional:

Highly Recommended: Bartholomew, Craig G. and Goheen, Michael W. 2004. **The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story.** Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic

I highly recommend this book to accompany the class. Many Christians have little sense of the Bible's larger story, how the pieces fit together. The authors present the Bible as a six-act play. Their book will give you an excellent sense of the Bible's grand narrative.

Fee, Gordon D. & Stuart, Douglas. 2003 (3rd Edition). **How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth.** Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing

For those who want to go further than we can in this class, Fee & Stuart's book is a layperson's primer on how to interpret all the different types of biblical literature. It is excellent but covers too much ground for us to use it in this survey class. It can be found in some bookstores and can also be ordered online.

Course Description

The UMC Book of Discipline reminds us, “*United Methodists share with other Christians the conviction that Scripture is the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine. . . . The biblical authors, illumined by the Holy Spirit, bear witness that in Christ the world is reconciled to God. The Bible bears authentic testimony to God’s self-disclosure in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as well as in God’s work of creation, in the pilgrimage of Israel, and in the Holy Spirit’s ongoing activity in human history.*” The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the Bible. We will learn how we got the Bible, how we can better interpret it, and what we believe about the Bible’s role in shaping our Christian community and ourselves. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we will consider how we can find meaning in the Bible and use the Bible as the foundation for our Christian discipleship. We will study the over-arching Christian story told by the Bible so we can gain a better understanding of how all the books of the Bible fit together. We will examine the biblical heritage and beliefs of John Wesley and United Methodists.

Learning Objectives

Those who complete this course should be able to:

1. Outline the development and history of the Bible.
2. Identify and appreciate the different types of literature found in the Bible.
3. Evaluate the various translations and determine how to choose among them.
4. Examine various approaches to interpreting the Bible.
5. Better appreciate the historical, geographical, and cultural contexts in which the books of the Bible were written.
6. Describe the Biblical story and major biblical themes.
7. Gain a deeper understanding of how we can use the Bible to further our discipleship.

Expectations

To get the most out of this class, you should attend every meeting and be prepared to devote at least a couple of hours each week to the readings. My suggestion would be that you devote a half-hour each day, rather than do all the reading at one sitting. This class can be a good means of building a daily “Bible habit” that can sustain and enrich our lives and our congregation.

I hope that you will bring to the class all the questions and uncertainties about the Bible that have puzzled you. We won’t necessarily be able to answer them all, but we want the class to be responsive to your needs, while still ensuring that we cover most of the material in the syllabus.

We expect you to enjoy the class and we will do all we can to exceed your expectations!

Schedule of Class Activities - Fall 2005

Class Date	Topic	Readings & Worksheets
9/12 (#1)	Introduction to the class Authority and inspiration of the Bible The UMC and the Bible The Bible's history Translations	
9/19 (#2)	Methodists and the Bible Introduction to the Old Testament Creation and fall - Kingdom and rebellion	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading 1 - from the UMC <i>Book of Discipline</i> 2000 • Reading 2 - "Choosing - and Using - a Translation: Questions and Suggestions," from <i>The Bible In English Translation: An Essential Guide</i>, Sheeley and Nash • Reading 3 - "Is the Old Testament worth the effort?," from <i>The Bible Jesus Read</i>, Yancey <u>Weekly Worksheet for Week 2</u> <u>from <i>The Drama of Scripture</i>:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prologue, Acts 1 and 2 - pages 15-45
9/26 (#3)	God Chooses Israel: Redemption Initiated A people for the King	<u>Weekly Worksheet for Week 3</u> <u>from <i>The Drama of Scripture</i>:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 3, Scene 1 - pages 47-79
10/3	NO CLASS	NO CLASS - PLANO ISD FALL BREAK
10/10 (#4)	A land for God's people	<u>Weekly Worksheet for Week 4</u> <u>from <i>The Drama of Scripture</i>:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 3, Scene 2 - pages 79-112
10/17 (#5)	John Wesley and Scripture Prophets, Poetry, and Wisdom A Kingdom Story Waiting for an Ending: Between the Testaments	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading 4 - "Practical Tools for Bible Study," Engle <u>from <i>The Drama of Scripture</i>:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interlude: between the testaments - pages 113-127
10/24 (#6)	Interpreting the Bible Introduction to the New Testament The Coming of the King: Redemption Accomplished	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading 5 - "Introduction: The need to interpret," from <i>How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth</i>, Fee and Stuart • Reading 6 - "Introduction: The task of New Testament ethics," from <i>The Moral Vision of the New Testament</i>, Hays <u>Weekly Worksheet for Week 6</u> <u>from <i>The Drama of Scripture</i>:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 4 - pages 129-170
10/31	NO CLASS	NO CLASS - HALLOWEEN!!
11/7 (#7)	Spreading the News of the King: The Mission of the Church	<u>Weekly Worksheet for Week 7</u> <u>from <i>The Drama of Scripture</i>:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 5 - pages 171-206
11/14 (#8)	The Bible and our discipleship The Bible and our church The Return of the King: Redemption Completed	<u>Readings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading 7 - "Because the Bible is our book," from <i>Why I am a United Methodist</i>, Willimon <u>Weekly Worksheet for Week 8</u> <u>from <i>The Drama of Scripture</i>:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 6 - pages 207-213