

# Master of Arts in Biblical Studies

*Dr. Thomas A. Halstead, Chairperson*

The Master of Arts in Biblical Studies (MABS) is intended to provide Bible training to men and women at the graduate level. The content of the program is biblical-theological in nature and emphasizes both proper interpretation and practical application of Scripture. The classes, homework, and reading assignments can be practically implemented in each student's life and ministry immediately. Each course the student takes is designed to enhance his/her walk with God and ministry. The MABS degree is designed to help people study, use, and apply Scripture more effectively in their own lives and in their churches.

## Program Distinctive

The MABS is designed for missionaries, teachers, school administrators, or lay people who are actively involved in ministry. This modular based program enables students to earn a graduate degree in approximately 2-6 summers depending on their own schedule and commitments. This allows each student to pursue in-depth Bible training in biblical studies while continuing in his or her current ministry or occupation.

## Program Length

Modular courses are offered the second, third, and fourth weeks of July each year. Up to three weeks of classes can be taken each summer allowing students to complete their on campus classroom work in 2-6 summers (not including independent study classes and thesis). Each week consists of two 2 unit classes. Each of our modular courses are divided into three parts: pre-session assignments, in-session lectures, and post-session assignments.

## Full / Part Time Student Status

Any student enrolled in 8 units or more is considered to be "full-time" status for the Master of Arts in Biblical Studies. A student must be enrolled in at least 4 units of graduate level classes to achieve "part-time" status.

## Israel Bible Extension

Another unique feature of this program is the opportunity for students to study abroad in Israel and apply their graduate credits through IBEX to

their MABS degree. Details on this opportunity can be obtained by calling TMC IBEX extension.

## Independent Study

Independent Study courses must be completed before a student is able to graduate. These courses may be taken any time after the first modular course is completed. Students have 4 months from the time of enrollment in an Independent Study course to complete all assignments under the supervision of a faculty member.

## Course Registration

Registration for MABS will be available online in February to each student who has already been accepted into the MABS program. In addition to registering for specific courses, registration allows the student to make housing and meal plan reservations. Housing and meal plans are available for the student, his or her spouse, and children.

## Remote Library Access

In order to facilitate research from off-campus locations, the college library provides remote access to many of The Master's College's online databases. This access allows students to search the available databases from any computer off campus that has an Internet connection. Currently The Master's College has over 20 databases available with remote access. Students are welcome to contact the library directly if they need help with their research.

## Degree Requirements

The MABS includes 24 core units which are taken on campus usually over two to four years. The core units consist of the following courses:

BTS500	Introduction to Biblical Studies
BTS501	Hermeneutics
BTS511	Creation and Covenant
BTS512	History of the Covenant People
BTS513	Prophecy and Prophets in Context
BTS515	Worship and Wisdom
BTS521	Historical Background of the N.T.
BTS522	Life, Ministry and Teaching of Christ
BTS523	Life, Ministry and Theology of Paul
BTS524	General Epistles and Revelation
BTS571	Contemporary Issues in Theology
BTS572	Seminar in Applied Biblical Studies

*In addition to these core classes 15 additional units will be*

*taken in ministry application courses and elective courses for a total of 39 units required for graduation.*

### Prerequisite Requirements

It is highly recommended that a student's undergraduate program be strong in a liberal arts emphasis, including courses in literature, history, and philosophy. The Bachelor's degree must be from an accredited college or university (official transcript required). They must have completed their baccalaureate program with a cumulative grade point average (CUM GPA) of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale for all undergraduate work. While students will not be required to have completed an undergraduate major in Biblical Studies, they will be required to demonstrate a threshold level of biblical and theological knowledge in order to be admitted to the program. This requirement can be satisfied by either of the following:

- Complete 24 semester units of undergraduate coursework in biblical studies with a GPA of at least 3.0 that includes at least 6 units of New Testament (N.T.), 6 units of Old Testament (O.T.), and 6 units of Christian Theology.
- Complete a three-part comprehensive entrance examination in O.T., N.T., and Christian Theology to certify a level of theological knowledge necessary for graduate study. You must earn at least a 70% on the exam to pass.

### Guidelines for 24 Units

1. The 24 semester units of undergraduate coursework in biblical studies with a GPA of at least a 3.0 required as a prerequisite to the MABS program must be from a school accredited by an accreditation service accepted by The Master's College Registrar's Office.
2. There are certain schools which are unaccredited, but are accepted by special agreement by the Registrar. These schools will also be accepted for prerequisite units by the Registrar's Office.
3. Prerequisite units taken at schools that are not accepted by the Registrar's Office will not be accepted. Instead, the student should take the MABS Entrance Exam.

### Advanced Standing

Any graduate from TMC's undergraduate Biblical Studies major program who has earned at least 36 units of Bible will be allowed a maximum of six (6) units of advanced standing in the program. Students from other accredited institutions with at least 36 units in Bible may also apply for Advanced Standing. Advanced standing is not guaranteed, but will be decided on an individual basis at the discretion

of the Graduate SIP Director and/or the Chairman of the Bible Department. Students awarded "Advanced Standing" will be waived from (6) units of electives, therefore only requiring 33 units to graduate with a Master of Arts in Biblical Studies.

### Transfer Credit Policy

Students transferring credits from The Master's Seminary will be allowed a maximum of twenty (20) credits to transfer for courses with goals and objectives that correspond with the overall goals of the MABS program. A student transferring from another graduate program will be allowed credit for a maximum of six (6) credits for courses that correspond to those offered in the MABS program. Decisions regarding advanced standing and transfer credits will be made by the Director of the MABS program in consultation with the Registrar.

## Course Offerings in MABS

### CORE COURSES

#### BTS500 Introduction to Biblical Studies (2)

A graduate seminar focusing on foundational issues in the field of Biblical Studies. Seminar topics include inspiration, origin, authority, canonicity, transmission, and translation. Students will be exposed to the assumptions of critical scholarship related to the Bible and an evangelical response to those assumptions. Issues of special introduction to selected portions of the Old and New Testaments will be treated with particular attention to the conclusions of modern "higher criticism."

#### BTS501 Hermeneutics (2)

A graduate seminar focusing on hermeneutical theory and practice related to the Biblical text. Attention is given to the philosophical and literary foundations that describe relationship between author, text and reader; the interpretative methodologies that are applied to various Scriptural genres; and the application of interpretative theory to specific passages of Scripture.

#### BTS511 Creation and Covenant (2)

A graduate seminar focusing on the biblical-theological study of the Pentateuch. Emphasis will be given to the foundational themes of creation and covenant as essential to biblical theology; the exploration of critical issues of authorship and composition; the discussion of interpretive options for crucial passages; and the formative influence of creation on the current public debate on origins and age of the earth.

#### BTS512 History of the Covenant People (2)

A graduate seminar focusing on the history of Israel from the period of the patriarchs through the Babylonian exile.

emphasis will be given to placing the history of Israel against the backdrop of the ancient Near East, from the perspective that God used the nations surrounding Israel to accomplish His purposes for her and orchestrated world history around her. Further attention will be given to the historical method and historiography concerning ancient Israel. The current public debate on the status and legitimacy of modern Israel will also be considered.

#### **BTS513 Prophecy and Prophets in Context (2)**

A graduate seminar focusing on the Old Testament prophetic literature with attention given to historical backgrounds and context; internal message; theological themes; and issues of criticism.

#### **BTS515 Worship and Wisdom (2)**

A graduate seminar focusing on the worship and wisdom literature of the Old Testament and its application to the contemporary church and the sanctification of every believer. Issues like the problem of pain, the value of worship and why do the wicked prosper will all be addressed. The student will learn to seek answers to life in the true worship of God and in the wisdom of God provided in these books.

#### **BTS521 Historical Background of the New Testament (2)**

A graduate seminar focusing on the history, literature, and culture of the Inter-testamental period through the first century A.D.

#### **BTS522 Life, Ministry, and Theology of Christ (2)**

A graduate study of the earthly life and ministry of Jesus Christ, including his role as Messiah and as Son of God. Special attention will be given to the Jewish historical and cultural background of his life, to the implications of his true humanity, and to the modern alternative theories about the facts and meaning of his life.

#### **BTS523 Life, Ministry, and Theology of Paul (2)**

A graduate seminar focusing on the writings of Paul. Attention is given to historical and cultural settings; messages, theological themes, and analysis of selected passages.

#### **BTS524 Theology of General Epistles & Revelation (2)**

A graduate seminar focusing on the theology of General Epistles and the Revelation. Emphasis will be placed on critical issues relating to authorship, acceptance into the canon, historical settings, messages, theological themes, and interpretive problems. Special emphasis will be placed on the high priesthood of Jesus Christ as in Hebrews and the eschatology of 2 Peter 3 and the Book of Revelation.

#### **BTS571 Contemporary Issues in Theology (2)**

A culmination seminar that seeks to integrate biblical studies with Christian faith and ministry. Students will use an evangelical theological method to address contemporary trends and emphases in theology confronting the contemporary Christian church: Students will be exposed to a wide diversity of theological literature and perspectives within and beyond the evangelical spectrum.

#### **BTS572 Seminar in Applied Biblical Studies (2)**

A graduate seminar focusing on the application of biblical studies to the life of the believer. Attention will be given to the priority of Christ-likeness; the process by which this occurs in the life of the believer; and the role of discipling towards this objective. The uniqueness of the biblical process of change will be addressed.

### **MINISTRY APPLICATION COURSES**

#### **BTS531 Practicum in Biblical Leadership (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study focusing on a biblical theology and philosophy of leadership. Attention will be given to examples of leaders in the Bible and an examination of the concept of spiritual leadership. The student will be expected to articulate a philosophy of leadership and provide evidence of applying that philosophy in a specific facet of their own ministry.

*Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

#### **BTS532 Practicum in Church Administration (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study focusing on both the theological and practical aspects of church administration. Theories of church organization will be examined and compared with the teaching of the New Testament. Topics include the practical operation of the church; building qualified lay leadership; development of the pastoral staff; the preservation of unity in the church; and the place and role of church discipline.

*Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

#### **BTS533 Practicum in Discipleship (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study focusing on the analysis of discipleship models and the application of scriptural principles in the discipleship process.

*Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

#### **BTS534 Practicum in Biblical Counseling (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study focusing on the basic concepts and distinctive features of biblical counseling. Students will discuss the nature of biblical counseling; the role of the counselor; the different models of counseling; the place of counseling in the ministry of the church; and how biblical counseling theory and practice relate to, and

differ from, secular models and theories. This course will involve a personal improvement project in which the student will evaluate their own counseling qualifications, design a plan for improving some area of their life, put that plan into action, and then evaluate their progress. *Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

#### **BTS535 Practicum in Youth Ministry (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study focusing on the analysis of contemporary youth culture and ministry. Emphasis will be given to finding biblical solutions to the needs and challenges of contemporary youth culture.

*Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

#### **BTS536 Practicum in Children's Education (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study focusing on the theory, methodology and practice of biblically-based Christian education to children. Attention will be given to the preparation and teaching of Bible lessons that are age and culture appropriate, the recruitment, training and supervision of volunteer teachers, the development and administration of ministry programs, and the assessment of curricula. The student will be involved in a supervised and evaluated teaching experience as part of the course.

*Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

#### **BTS537 Practicum in Worship (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study concerning the principles and practices of worship. Attention will be given to a biblical definition of worship; biblical paradigms of worship; styles of worship; leading in worship; hymnody and hymnology; and current issues in worship.

*Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

#### **BTS538 Practicum in Teaching (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study concerning the principles and practices of effective teaching. Emphasis will be placed on teaching technique, the learning process, and basic curricular design.

*Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

#### **BTS539 Practicum in Missions (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study concerning the principles and practices of biblically-based mission work. Emphasis will be placed on evaluating mission boards, the mission program of the local church, a survey of the biblical basis of missions, cross-cultural communication, mission strategy, the call and preparation of the missionary, and the role of sending organizations. Some consideration

will also be given to one or more contemporary issues, such as urban ministries, student ministries, and creative access to closed countries. *Prerequisite: program approval by MABS faculty and consent of the chairman of the Bible Department.*

### **ELECTIVE COURSES**

#### **BL501 Elementary Greek I (4)**

Designed for beginners in Greek and includes a thorough study of the pronunciation and acquisition of a working vocabulary; exercises in translation from Greek to English as well as from English to Greek. Translation of selected passages of the Greek New Testament.

#### **BL502 Elementary Greek II (4)**

Designed for beginners in Greek and includes a thorough study of the pronunciation and acquisition of a working vocabulary; exercises in translation from Greek to English as well as from English to Greek. Translation of selected passages of the Greek New Testament.

#### **BL511 Elementary Hebrew I (4)**

A study of the grammar of the Hebrew language as well as the translation of selected passages of the Old Testament.

#### **BL512 Elementary Hebrew II (4)**

A study of the grammar of the Hebrew language as well as the translation of selected passages of the Old Testament.

#### **BTS551 Seminar on the Epistle to the Romans (3)**

An in depth exposition of Romans, with careful attention to the meaning, implication, and application of the text.

#### **BTS552 New Testament Chronology (2)**

This is a graduate level class designed to be taught as an independent study under the supervision of a Bible Department faculty member. This class will focus on the chronology of New Testament events and the lives of people (especially Jesus and Paul). Special attention will be given to chronological difficulties. Significant reading and research will be required. Reading reports and research papers will be required.

#### **BTS553 The History of the English Bible and Philosophy Underlying Biblical Translations (2)**

This is a graduate level class designed to be taught as an independent study under the supervision of a Bible Department faculty member. This class will focus on the history of the translation of the Bible into the English language from the Early English period to the present. Special emphasis will be given to the reasons, the opposition, and the sacrifices made in order to make the Bible accessible to the English reader. An emphasis also will be placed on the philosophy that underlies various modern translations, that is, literal versus dynamic

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equivalence.

**BTS554 Apologetics (2)**

A survey of the main approaches to apologetics, and examination of evidences for the Christian faith from such fields as science, history, archaeology, and philosophy.

**BTS555 Ethics (2)**

A survey of the main approaches to ethics, issues in personal ethics, such as moral responsibility, decision making, honesty and conscience; and topics in special ethics such as war, abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, and church-state relations.

**BTS556 World Religions (2)**

A study of major non-Christian religious systems in the world. The claims of each will be compared with the absolute truth and adequacy of biblical faith.

**BTS557 Religions of America (2)**

A study of the most prominent modern religions native to America, with particular reference to their historical backgrounds and doctrinal positions.

**BTS558 Spirituality in the Christian Tradition (2)**

A study of the ways in which the spiritual life has been conceived in the life of the Christian Church. Attention will also be given to formulating a philosophy and a methodology of how Biblical Spirituality can best be implemented in one's own Christian life and walk.

**BTS559 Reading Biblical Narratives (2)**

A faculty-directed independent study in learning how to read, study and teach the narrative portions of the Bible. The following topics will be considered: ways of approaching Scripture, Scripture as story, characteristics of narrative, narrative and reader, point of view, levels of knowledge, time and space, plot, character, style and structure. Course work includes extensive reading and a final analysis of a narrative, which employs all approaches covered.

**BTS599 Thesis (4)**

This is a guided independent research paper. The special problem or area of investigation must be precisely stated in written form and pursued under faculty supervision and must be approved by the chairman of the Biblical Studies Department. A fully documented research thesis of 100-120 pages in length is required for this course.

**IBEX570 Physical Geography of Israel (2)**

An examination of the physical geography of the land of Israel with attention to regional structure, geology, and topography with a view to the development of communication lines and settlement.

**IBEX598 Cultures & Religions of the Middle East (2)**

A field-based exploration of the cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity of the land of Israel. Special attention is given to religious and cultural distinctives of the major ethnic communities and monotheistic religions of the region.

