
1. Sources for a research paper
   a. Types of sources:
      i. *Primary sources* are the original works you are studying (the Bible, ancient Jewish works).
      ii. *Secondary sources* are scholarly books and articles that analyze the primary sources (e.g. Bible commentaries, Greek lexicons, Bible dictionaries).
      iii. *Tertiary sources* are summaries and simplified explanations designed for laypersons (e.g. study Bibles, devotional books). These should be used sparingly if at all in an academic research paper.
   b. Expected secondary sources
      i. Grade “A” biblical studies research papers use scholarly secondary sources, including several good exegetical commentaries, a Bible dictionary and/or encyclopedia, Greek/Hebrew lexicons and/or word study books, and journal articles.
      ii. With the exception of journals, you should be gradually adding these reference books to your personal library, since they will be used every time you prepare a sermon, article or paper.
      iii. Use of devotional books should be minimized for biblical studies research papers, although they may supplement more scholarly books. If a book is a paperback or written in a casual tone for a lay audience do not use it as a main authority, although it may have valuable and suggestive ideas, particularly for contemporary application.
   c. Commentaries
      i. A good exegetical research paper should include at least 3 high quality, modern commentaries for each book of the Bible that you are studying. An exegetical paper on a single passage should probably include even more commentaries, since it is a more in-depth study of a passage.
      ii. Use high quality, scholarly, exegetical commentaries, not devotional or popular commentaries. (1) Good commentaries list the major interpretations for controversial issues and give reasons for the author’s view. (2) D. A. Carson, *New Testament Commentary Survey* lists the best commentaries and advises which ones to avoid.
      iii. Inappropriate commentaries for an academic paper include 1 volume commentaries on the whole Bible (e.g. New Bible Commentary), very old commentaries (e.g. Matthew Henry, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, Adam Clarke), and devotional commentaries (e.g. Barclay, Wiersbe).
      iv. As a rule of thumb, use biblical commentaries from 1950 or later. Archaeological and ancient manuscript discoveries since then give important insights into the meaning of the Bible and its religious and cultural background (e.g. the Dead Sea Scrolls, Gnostic manuscripts at Nag Hammadi, ancient Greek manuscripts).
      v. Be careful to confirm the “real” date of a book. (1) Old commentaries and other reference books are often reprinted or made available in Bible programs and on the Internet. The original publication date may be different than the copyright date. Search the Internet for the original publication date of the book or check Wikipedia to find when the author lived. Examples include: Matthew Henry’s Commentary (1701), Jamieson-Fausset-Brown (1871), Adam Clarke (1810-1826). In general these older commentaries are largely obsolete, although their better comments have been extracted and can be found in good modern commentaries.
      vi. Devotional commentaries may be useful for personal Bible study and sometimes sermon preparation, but they normally do not examine a passage in enough detail for a seminary paper. They usually do not give reasons for their interpretations, which is critical for serious Bible study. Avoid them in seminary papers.
      vii. Study Bibles are too basic and should only be used to give you the lay of the land when you start. They do not count as a “commentary” for a seminary research paper.

2. Use of the library
   a. Unless you have an extraordinary personal library or know a pastor who has one, you usually cannot get an “A” or “B” grade on a research paper without some library research. Part of the purpose of a research paper is to give you experience in doing research in a library. Don’t just grab the books that are on your shelf!
   b. Consult the reserve section in the library for some useful books for research papers in this course.
c. Many of the better reference books (Bible commentaries, Bible encyclopedias, Greek and Hebrew word study books, etc.) are in the reference section of the library. You may want to photocopy relevant articles.
d. Most journal articles are available online through the seminary library Web page.

3. Use of Internet resources
   a. Most free Web sites only offer old books that are out of copyright. Generally these have long been replaced by more up to date scholarly works.
   b. Web sites may not tell you the original date of published books. A copyright date may simply be the date of the creation of the electronic edition, not the date of the original book. Examples: Easton’s Bible Dictionary (1891), Vincent’s Word Studies (1887).
   c. Some paid Web sites offer up to date and scholarly resources. The seminary library Web site offers access to hundreds of journals through bibliography databases (First Search, EBSCO, RTA). Students have free electronic access to these journals. Ask the librarian how to search and download articles!
   d. Exceptions are works that were of such high quality in their day that they are classics and are still of value (e.g. Keil and Delitzsch OT commentaries, Lightfoot’s NT Commentaries). Even then, these should not be your only commentaries. The better observations from these works are summarized by modern commentaries.
   e. Some reference books on the Web are older editions. For example, the International Standard Bible Dictionary 1919 edition is available on many Web sites, but is so dated as to be misleading at times. You are better to use the 1978-1988 edition in print or the Logos electronic edition.
   f. Many Web sites have simple study guides for lay persons and are not suitable for seminary research. If the site reads like a sermon or is apologetic in nature, you should not use it as a main research source.

4. Use of reference books in Bible software
   a. Logos Bible Software includes a mix of excellent recent reference books (e.g. New Bible Dictionary, Kittel’s Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament) and older public domain books, which are not suitable for research papers (e.g. Matthew Henry, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, Vincent’s Word Studies, Vine’s Expository Dictionary).
   b. Select books in your Bible software as carefully as you would in a physical library.
   c. Make sure that the date of electronic books

5. Key aspects of an exegesis of a biblical passage:
   a. Brief summary of the historical context of the passage (at most ½ page for a 10 page paper). Often this can be dealt with as you deal with interpretive issues.
   b. The literary context of the passage – how the passage fits into the argument of the book.
   c. The literary structure of the passage
      i. at least an outline
      ii. ideally key repetitions, connective words, chiasm, etc. (can refer to as you discuss interpretive issues)
   d. The major theme, argument and teachings of the passage
   e. Important interpretive issues, including the major alternative viewpoints scholars take on controversial questions.
   f. As you answer interpretive questions, discuss:
      i. The meaning of important Greek words
         (1) Use commentaries, Greek lexicons and Greek word study books. Logos makes it easy to find information in these books, even if you know little or no Greek.
         (2) Don’t just define the possible meanings of the words. Explain the meaning in the context and the significance of the words for the meaning of the passage.
      ii. Important grammatical features that communicate the meaning.
      iii. Historical, cultural and geographical background that clarifies the meaning of the passage.
      iv. The impact of figures of speech and the literary genre on the meaning.
   g. The theological and ethical teachings of the passage
   h. A brief discussion of the contemporary relevance and application of the teachings (1 page)
6. Arguing your case
   a. It is not enough to state the correct interpretation – show reasons why your view is correct.
   b. Don’t presuppose your answer in the beginning of the paper. Lead the reader through the argument to
      convince him or her of your viewpoint.
   c. Evidence for your biblical interpretation should come from:
      i. word meanings (cite a lexicon or word study book or other biblical passages)
      ii. the grammar
      iii. the structure of the passage
      iv. the context
      v. use of figures of speech
      vi. the type of literature (parable, narrative, proverb, poetry, sermon, letter, prophecy, apocalypse)
      vii. the cultural and religious background
      viii. Related biblical passages
   d. Good expository commentaries will show the evidence for their interpretations. Look for the reasons the
      commentator gives for his interpretation.
   e. For major points with several views, list the most widely held views, mention scholars that hold these views
      and the major arguments for and against each view. Then state the view you hold and the reasons why.
   f. Citing or quoting an authority does not constitute proof. You can, however, list scholars who hold a particular
      view to show the range of scholarly opinions.

7. Helpful books about how to interpret the Bible
   a. Biblical Hermeneutics (methods of interpretation)
      i. Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard, Basics of Biblical Interpretation
      ii. Fee and Stuart, How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth.
   b. Steps of New Testament exegesis
      i. David Alan Black, Using New Testament Greek in Ministry (especially chapters 3-4; good even if you
         don’t know much Greek)
      ii. Gordon Fee, New Testament Exegesis (chapter 1 is a good summary; best if you know some Greek)

8. Writing style tips
   a. A fine easy-to-read book on how to research and write a research paper is William B. Badke, Research
      Strategies. Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog. The Kindle edition is only $3.00!
   b. Consult a good book about writing style, such as Shrunk and White, Elements of Style.
   c. Don’t preach!
   d. Use an average of 2-3 paragraphs per page. Indent the first line of each paragraph½ inch (press the Tab key).
   e. Put page numbering on every page. The first page of the paper itself should be page 1 (the title page has no
      page number).
   f. A paragraph should begin with a theme statement followed by support for the opening statement. Everything
      in the paragraph should relate to that opening statement. When you move to another subject, start a new
      paragraph.
   g. Avoid statements such as “in my opinion”, “I believe”, “it is the author’s view”, etc. It is obvious that the
      paper expresses your view.
   h. In general, academic research papers should not include personal stories or experiences. Exceptions would
      include sermons, spiritual formation papers, journals, etc.
   i. Avoid judgmental statements and personal attacks, such as calling a person a heretic or saying a particular
      idea is foolish.
   j. if a quotation is 4 lines or longer, it should be indented and single spaced. No quotation marks are needed in
      this case. Shorter quotations should appear in the main text in quotation marks.
   k. Biblical verse numbers should be in parentheses in the text, rather than in a footnote (Rom. 8:28). You can
      show a long list of passage references in a footnote.
9. Gateway Seminary requires that all student papers conform to the style specified in the current edition of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*.
   a. Turabian style specifies the format of bibliographic citations, typeface, margins, punctuation, spelling, abbreviations, etc.
   b. For a brief summary of Turabian style, see Gregg Watson, “A Student Supplement for Form and Style as Required by Turabian” [http://library.ggbts.edu/Turabian/Turabian_Form_and_Style_Requirements.pdf].
      i. When Turabian allows choices, this document reflects the official Gateway Seminary style.
      ii. You can also access this from the Gateway Seminary library Web site.
   c. For further tips on writing in Turabian format, including how to set up Microsoft Word, see http://library.ggbts.edu/RefWebPages/Turabian%20Page.htm.

10. Documentation of sources
   a. Bibliography and footnotes must conform to the style in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*.
      i. “Dr. Watson's Turabian Supplement” offers a concise guide to Turabian citation style (http://library.ggbts.edu/Turabian/Turabian_Form_and_Style_Requirements.pdf).
      ii. You can optionally use a bibliographic formatting program such as *Library Master* to automatically format the citations (http://www.balboa-software.com/lmw.html). The free Windows demonstration version can be used in writing research papers or you can buy the full program at a 60% student discount.
   b. Cite all sources that influenced the ideas in your research paper, even if you don’t quote the source.
      i. Put citations in footnotes with the page number(s) from which you got the idea or quotation., unless the course syllabus permits the author and pages citation style.
      ii. Papers should also include a bibliography formatted in Turabian style.
         (1) A bibliography is a list of sources used, with author’s last name first (Smith, John H.). Sort by author and title.
         (2) Do not number bibliography entries.
      iii. Consult Turabian or Watson’s guide (above) for specific citation and bibliography requirements for various types of sources.
   c. You must cite any source of ideas or words that are not your own, including:
      i. Any book, article, Web site, lecture or other source of information that influenced your thinking must be documented, whether you quote it or not.
      ii. An idea that you did not come up with first
         (1) This can be an idea you agree with or one that you disagree with and want to refute.
         (2) The idea should be paraphrased in your own words.
      iii. A quotation
         (1) Quotations should be used sparingly in research papers.
         (2) If the quotation is 5 or more lines, indent it and use single spacing without quotation marks.
         (3) Put quotation marks around shorter quotations and embed them in the body of your paper.
      iv. You must quote any distinctive phrase or term that comes from an author, even if you weave it into your own sentence.
      v. If you come up with an idea, then later in your research you see the same idea in a source, you may want to indicate this source in a footnote. Use “cf.” before the citation, meaning “see also”: cf. Johnson, 20.
   d. As a rule concordances and Bibles should not be in a bibliography, since it is assumed you will use them.
   e. Citations of commentaries that are part of a series should specify the author’s name of the individual commentary.
   f. Citation of Bible passages and other ancient sources
      i. Generally Scripture references should be in parentheses after the quotation or allusion to a passage, rather than in footnotes. For example: “God so loved the world” (John 3:16).
      ii. The first time you quote a Bible passage, include a footnote specifying the Bible version used in the paper.
      iii. Subsequent Bible quotations should not specify the Bible version, unless you deviate from the version you most often use.
11. Plagiarism
   a. “Plagiarism” means using another person’s words or ideas without acknowledging where they came from.
   b. Plagiarism is immoral, because it is stealing (taking someone’s intellectual creation without permission) and lying (falsely claiming something is your own creation).
   c. Plagiarism is illegal, because it violates international copyright laws. You could end up in jail or be sued.
   d. Plagiarism can ruin your credibility, destroy your career and lead to expulsion from school.
   e. Intentional plagiarism
      i. Copying material off the Internet.
      ii. Pasting together paragraphs from one or two books.
      iii. Copying something from somewhere without acknowledging the source.
      iv. When you use even a few of another person’s words, you must cite the source in a footnote.
   f. Accidental plagiarism
      i. When you describe another person’s ideas, even in your own words, you must cite the source.
      ii. You must put quotation marks around any phrase that came from someone else, even if it is part of a sentence that you wrote. Quote the portion of the sentence that is not your own.
      iii. You should paraphrase the ideas you get from someone else in your own words.
      iv. For more information and examples of accidental plagiarism, see “Plagiarism - What it is and how to avoid it” [http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/guides/engineering/ee/plagiarsize.html].

12. Learning effective research and writing skills
   a. An easy to read book about how to do research, plan your argument, and write an effective research paper is William B. Badke, Research Strategies. Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog.
   c. Several Gateway Seminary courses will help you research and writing
      i. “Tools for Theological Research” (P2141) shows how to do theological research and will improve your writing.
      ii. “Hermeneutics” teaches how to do in-depth Bible study.
      iii. “Computer Tools for Biblical Research” teaches how to use Bible software, the Internet, and research databases to study the Bible.
      iv. “Greek Exegesis” teaches you how to understand the nuances of a New Testament passage in the original Greek.