



Course Syllabus: **BIBL1103 – Biblical Distinctions**

AgathonU Professor(s): Christopher Cone, Th.D., Ph.D., Ph.D., Bradley W. Maston, D.Min., Ph.D.
Jacob Heaton, MA, E Dane Rogers, MDiv, Benjamin Coleman

Guest Lecturer(s): Matt Fehr, Don Thomas

For Program: Undergraduate / ABS, AAAP, BBE

Revision Date: 1/7/2026

Policies (Links)

[Enrollment Agreement](#)

[Writing Style Policy](#)

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study on Biblical distinctions and how we discover these distinctions. Learners will be looking at hermeneutics and exegetical foundations for understanding the Bible. This course will exam and Biblicism as the model to study, teach, and learn with an exegetical hermeneutic approach. Learners will be able to understand and explain key distinctions in the Scriptures.

II. AGATHON PROFESSOR(S) BIO

Dr. Christopher Cone, Th.D., Ph.D., Ph.D., is a dedicated, transformative educator, writer, leader, and organizational developer. Dr. Cone is president of [Agathon University](#), former president of Tyndale Seminary and Calvary University, has served in several pastoral roles, and has taught at multiple universities and colleges. He has three doctorates, a ThD in Biblical Studies from Scofield Graduate School, a PhD in Theology from Trinity School of Theology (Kerala, India), and a PhD in philosophy from the University of North Texas. He is the executive editor of the *Journal of Transformative Learning and Leadership* and is the author or general editor of more than twenty books. He is the host of the show *The Transformative Pursuit* on Grace Global Radio and [VyrityTV](#), and has written several hundred articles hosted at [drcone.com](#).

Dr. Bradley W. Maston serves as Executive Vice-President as well as a professor at Agathon University of Applied Faith, bringing over 15 years of pastoral experience as the head pastor of Fort Collins Bible Church. With a deep love for God's Word and a passion for global ministry, Dr. Maston has also been actively involved in missions work across various countries, equipping leaders and encouraging believers worldwide. His teaching is grounded in a conservative, dispensational framework, combining rigorous biblical scholarship with a shepherd's heart. Dr. Maston's commitment to the authority and sufficiency of Scripture shapes his approach to training students for faithful and effective ministry, inspiring them to grow in both theological depth and practical service for Christ.

Jacob Heaton serves as Pastor/Teacher at Fellowship Bible Church in Denver, Colorado and Associate Professor of Applied Faith at Agathon University. He has earned a Master of Theology from Chafer

Theological Seminary. He is Bible teacher committed to the literal, historical, grammatical study and exposition of Scripture.

E. Dane Rogers serves as the Pastor of Tacoma Grace Bible Church in Tacoma, Washington and Associate Professor of Applied Faith at Agathon University. He has earned a Master of Theology and Master of Biblical Studies from Chafer Theological Seminary. He is an author and guest lecturer and has a passion for God's Word, people, learning, and educating. He has published both fiction, and non-fiction in Spanish and English. His works can be seen at his web page: <http://edanerogers.com/>

Benjamin Coleman serves as the CFO for Agathon University. And Assistant Professor of Applied Faith. He has earned a Master of Accountancy from Colorado State University, Bachelor of Science, (Business Administration) from Colorado State University, and a Bachelor of Arts (Biblical Studies) Frontier School of the Bible.

III. COURSE TEXTS AND RESOURCES

Required Texts:

1. All Agathon UAF courses use the Bible as a primary textbook. Translations used for coursework include any of the following: NASB, ESV, KJV, and NKJV. Other translations/versions may be used for complementary study and research.
2. Cone, Christopher, *Priority in Biblical Hermeneutics and Theological Method*: ISBN 9780998280523: Amazon.com: Books -\$14
3. Cook, Stephen, *Seven Types of Death in Scripture*, [Access at this website](#)
4. Lucas, Kevin. *Seven Types of Death in the Bible* (PDF) [Download PDF Here](#)
5. McClain, Alva J. *Law and Grace*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1991. ISBN: 0884690016. <https://a.co/d/abm4Zy6>
6. Showers, Renald E. *There Really Is a Difference: A Comparison of Covenant and Dispensational Theology*. Bellmawr, NJ: Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1990. ISBN:0915540509 <https://a.co/d/2Q0uBfn>
7. Stanford, Miles. *The Green Letters*. (PDF) [Download PDF Here](#)
8. Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *He That Is Spiritual*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967. ISBN 0310223415. [Download PDF Here](#)

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE AND OUTLINE

Module 1 - Introductory Matters – Christopher Cone, Th.D., Ph.D., Ph.D.

A focus on distinctions and how we discover these distinctions. Dr. Cone will be looking at hermeneutics and exegetical foundations for understanding the Bible.

1. *Reading Assignment*
 - Cone, Christopher. *Priority in Biblical Hermeneutics*. Chapters 1, 2, and 10.

2. Reading Content Assessment

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content

3. Module Assessment

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content

4. Interaction Assessment

- Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).

5. Interaction question(s)

- How do hermeneutics affect our theological conclusions?
- Why are biblical distinctions so important to identify? What will help us understand and apply these distinctions correctly?
- What are the consequences of not using natural Bible interpretation in our studies?

Module 2 – Believer/Unbeliever – Spiritual/Carnal – Bradley Maston, D.Min., Ph.D.

In this session we will introduce the issues of Biblical Distinctions, why it is important in Bible Study, and the key distinctions between a believer and unbeliever, a person who is saved vs. one who is unsaved.

1. Reading Assignment

- Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *He that is Spiritual*. In its entirety.

2. Reading Content Assessment

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)

3. Module Assessment

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)

4. Interaction Assessment

- Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).

5. Interaction question(s)

- What are the consequences of misunderstanding the core distinction between believers and unbelievers? What passages of the Bible establish this distinction?
- What is the difference between a spiritual and carnal believer?
- How can a believer be certain that they are spiritual or carnal in any given moment?

Module 3 – The Believer's Standing and State – Don Thomas

This module focuses on the difference between the believer's eternal position in Christ (standing) and daily condition (state). Few things are so important when growing to understand what Christ has done for the believer at the moment of belief, and what happens in the process of spiritual growth.

1. *Reading Assignment*
 - Stanford, Miles. *The Green Letters*. In its entirety (PDF) 55 pgs.
2. *Reading Content Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content
3. *Module Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content
4. *Interaction Assessment*
 - Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).
5. *Interaction question(s)*
 - What passages outline the believer's eternal position in Christ?
 - What happens if a believer is not aware of the distinction between standing and state?
 - How does this critical doctrine impact the Christian life?

Module 4 - Salvation or Rewards – Christopher Cone, Th.D., Ph.D., Ph.D.

The distinction between the justification of the believer by faith through grace and the rewards which the Lord will give at the Bema Seat Judgment is vital information to understand in order to interpret the Bible correctly. This pivotal distinction will be explained from scripture and defended clearly in this module.

1. *Reading Assignment*
 - Cone and Oglesby, Chapters 1-6
 - Cone, *Concise Bible Survey*, 1-253
2. *Reading Content Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content
3. *Module Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content
4. *Interaction Assessment*
 - Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).
5. *Interaction question(s)*
 - Briefly describe the difference between salvation and rewards. Why is this distinction so important to the believer?
 - How are eternal rewards earned and when are they given?
 - What are the consequences of ignoring or misunderstanding this key biblical distinction?

Module 5 Dispensations and Covenants – Benjamin Coleman

Understanding the different administrations in God's plan is based upon a literal understanding of the Biblical Covenants that are revealed in Scripture. By the end of the session the student will be able to identify the major dispensations and the major covenants that come from a literal, grammatical, historical reading of the Bible.

1. *Reading Assignment*
 - Showers, Renald. *There Really is a Difference*. Chapters 6-10. (Pgs. 55-102)
2. *Reading Content Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
3. *Module Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
4. *Interaction Assessment*
 - Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).
5. *Interaction question(s)*
 - How does the literal, grammatical, historical method yield a dispensational view of scripture?
 - What does it mean to interpret the biblical covenants literally and what impact does that have on our understanding of the Lord?
 - How does a literal understanding of the Abrahamic Covenant contribute to a dispensational perspective?

Module 6 – The Kingdom and the Church – E Dane Rogers, MDiv.

The doctrine of the Kingdom of God and its distinction from the Church is one of the most overlooked distinctions in Theology. This module will bring the learner to a clear understanding of what the Bible has to say about the Kingdom of God and its future establishment as well as the institution of the Church, and the Lord's plan for those who enter in by grace through faith.

1. *Reading Assignment*
 - Showers, Renald. *There Really is a Difference*. Chapters 11-14. (Pgs. 103-146)
2. *Reading Content Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
3. *Module Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
4. *Interaction Assessment*
 - Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).

5. *Interaction question(s)*

- How has confusion between the Church and the Kingdom of God affected Christianity in the past 2000 years?
- What are the results of viewing the Kingdom of God a literal future time, as Scripture demands?
- What impact does the doctrine of the Kingdom of God have on believers today?

Module 7 The Church and Israel – Matt Fehr

God made literal promises to the literal descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These are entirely distinct from God's plan and promise for the Church (the body and bride of Christ). This critical distinction comes directly from scripture and gives the background and basis for understanding God's plan for the future, the mission of the Church, and the character of God.

1. *Reading Assignment*

- Showers, Renald, *There Really is a Difference*. Chapters 1-5 (Pgs. 9-37)

2. *Reading Content Assessment*

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)

3. *Module Assessment*

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)

4. *Interaction Assessment*

- Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).

5. *Interaction question(s)*

- What are the principal features and characteristics of Israel?
- What are the principal features and characteristics of the Church?
- What are the results of confusing these two entities in God's plan?

Module 8 – Law vs. Grace – E Dane Rogers, MDiv

Building upon the distinction between the Church and Israel it becomes clear that the Lord intends to administrate these two different groups of people by different means. Israel was given the Law of Moses to protect, direct, and govern their lives. The church, but distinction is "not under law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14). Learn what this critical means for life and growth in the Church, and finally get the answer to the critical question: "Why are Christians allowed to eat bacon?"

1. *Reading Assignment*

- McClain, Alva J. *Law and Grace*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1991. (In its entirety)
- Showers, Renald. *There Really is a Difference*. Chapter 16-18 (Ps 163-180)

2. *Reading Content Assessment*

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)

3. *Module Assessment*

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)

4. *Interaction Assessment*

- Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).

5. *Interaction question(s)*

- What is the purpose of the Law of Moses? How and when was it in force?
- What is the believer's relationship to the Law based upon Romans 6-7
- What does it mean to be a believer under grace as a principle of life?

Module 9 - Distinctions in Death – Jacob Heaton, MA

The concept of death is the principal result of the fall, and carries through to the end of the Bible. It is critical that the Bible student can understand the different ways in which this important concept is used. With patient study, and a growing understanding of linguistic disciplines, the believer is readily equipped to comprehend the ways in which this important concept is utilized in Scripture.

1. *Reading Assignment*

- Cook, Stephen, *Seven Types of Death in Scripture*
- Lucas, Kevin S. *Seven Types of Death in the Bible*

2. *Reading Content Assessment*

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)

3. *Module Assessment*

- Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)

4. *Interaction Assessment*

- Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).

5. *Interaction question(s)*

- Why is a clear understanding of the usage of the concept of death in scripture so important to our understanding of the Bible?
- How do we establish which meaning of death is being employed in any given passage of the Bible?
- What are the results of a right understanding of the seven Deaths of Scripture?

Module 10 – Panel Discussion – Bradley Maston, MA, PhD; E Dane Rogers, MA; Benjamin Coleman, MA

This panel discussion will summarize and review the major points of the issues of Biblical Distinctions. Pay careful attention to the discussion for answers to important questions and encouragement to deepen the understanding of the key distinctions in the Bible.

1. *Reading Assignment*
 - Review: Showers, Renald. There Really is a Difference.
2. *Reading Content Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering reading content
3. *Module Assessment*
 - Undergraduate: Learners will complete a 20-question multiple choice quiz/test covering module content (faculty must provide/create the quiz/test)
4. *Interaction Assessment*
 - Learners will create an initial, substantive post on the assigned question(s)/topic(s), and will respond to at least two other posts by Faculty and/or Learners. Initial posts should address the question/topic, should reflect appropriate critical thought, should be well formatted and communicated, and should be gracious and edifying (even if critical).
5. *Interaction question(s)*
 - Which point/topic most interests you in this discussion and why?
 - What points, if any, brought up any new questions on the topic of Biblical Distinctions?
 - Of all that was studied in this course, what made the biggest impact on your faith?

Course Content Assessment

Undergraduate: Learners will complete a multiple-choice cumulative exam (faculty must provide the exam, which should include 5 questions from each module quiz or topic)

Competency Assessment

Learners will select and complete any 1 of the 3 competency assignments. Specifics of the assessment *must* be preapproved by the Mentoring Professor:

1. Practical Engagement Component – a practical social engagement of 1-1.5 hours applying principles covered in the course, and a 1000-word report discussing: (1) Introduction of the Engagement, (2) Methodology, (3) Summary of What Happened, and (4) Benefits and Implications
2. Writing Component – a publishable quality paper of 3000-5000 words on an approved topic related to the course material.
3. Teaching Encounter Component – preparing, delivering, recording, and submitting a 20-40 minute teaching to a live audience on an approved topic related to the course material.

V. LEARNING OUTCOMES**Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)**

- Remember the key distinctions covered in the course.
- Understand where those distinctions are made clear in Scripture
- Apply these distinctions to the interpretation of the Bible
- Analyze faulty methodology in theological processes

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Agathon UAF's 60 Hr Associate of Biblical Studies Degree (60 Hr ABS) develops skills for understanding and applying Biblical information to diverse contexts to prepare faith-based

educators to lead with Biblical worldview foundations in diverse environments, empowering people and building communities.

Agathon UAF Learning Outcomes (ALOs)

1. *Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Research* – Learners will demonstrate ability to think critically from a Biblical worldview platform, solve problems, and conduct interdisciplinary research at a level appropriate to their program, and in a way that is gracious and beneficial to those operating within other worldviews.
2. *Personal Growth* – Learners will understand how learning is related to personal growth, and will be challenged to grow in their thinking, communication, conduct, and engagement with others.
3. *Skills Development* – Learners will advance in skills related to their area of learning, demonstrating a level of competency appropriate to their program.
4. *Social Responsibility* – Learners will appreciate the diversity in and value of others as designed by our Creator, and will grow in willingness and capability to serve others.
5. *Worldview Applications* – Learners will become capable at thinking from a Biblical worldview perspective and will understand the relationship of description and prescription, so that they can ground their actions in sound principles.

VI. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING RUBRIC (1000 POINTS)

Module Assessments	(20 points each x 10)	200 Points	CLO # / PLO # / ALO #1,2
Reading Content Assessments	(20 points each x 10)	200 Points	CLO # / PLO # / ALO #1,2
Interaction Assessments	(10 points each x 10)	100 Points	CLO # / PLO # / ALO #2
Course Content Assessment		250 Points	CLO # / PLO # / ALO #3,5
Competency Assessment		250 Points	CLO # / PLO # / ALO #4,5
Total Available Points		1000 Points	

[View the Agathon UAF Grading Policy and Assessment Rubrics Here](#)

VII. GRADING SCALE

91-100%	A
81-90%	B
71-80%	C
61-70%	D
0-60%	F

VIII. CARNEGIE UNIT CREDIT HOUR EQUIVALENT

Total Hours of Module Content:	20 hours
Total Hours of Reading Content:	40 hours
Total Hours of Minor Assessments:	10 hours
Total Hours of Major Assessment:	20 hours

Equivalent of 3 Credit Hours (45 hours of total course time per credit hour)