

What is an exegesis and how will it be marked?

Exegesis (from the Greek word meaning “to lead out”) is a critical explanation of a set passage of scripture. The goal of exegesis at AC is to interpret a passage within its historical, social, and literary context and derive from this interpretation a modern application. You will note that the exegetical process is present in the other forms of assessment (contemporary presentation and thematic essay) and is at the core of good biblical understanding. Exegesis, in other words, is the chief academic skill that we want to develop in our students, as it will inform all types of church ministry, both teaching and pastoral.

An exegetical paper is broadly divided into 3 main sections: examination of the historical setting of the passage, analysis of the passage, modern application of the message of the passage. Each of these sections has its own set of criteria, which are outlined in the marking grid below. Generally speaking, the task of exegesis is to go beyond a mere surface reading of the text, the aim is to dig deeper into the context, to get behind the text and explore the world in which it was created. Good contemporary application of any biblical passage must begin by understanding it on its own terms and in its own world (as much as is possible).

At a scholarly level, the student is expected to read, understand, and incorporate (to varying degrees depending on the level of the subject, i.e. BIB100-500) the leading scholars from various church traditions on that particular subject. See the document regarding “what is good biblical scholarship?” that is part of this Moodle page for more information about this. They are then required to present a quality piece of academic writing that addresses all the points as set out in the marking grid.

At a structural level, an exegesis should contain a title page, an abstract, introduction, and conclusion. There is no set word count for each of the three sections mentioned above, but perhaps a “rule of thumb” might be (in a 2,500 word paper) 100-200 words for the abstract, intro, conclusion, 1,000 words each for the background and passage analysis, and the remaining for the application. But do not interpret this as a hard and fast rule; rather, set out the sections to answer clearly each of the key points of the assessment. In terms of the application, it is not weighted as heavily as in the contemporary presentation or thematic essay; in the exegesis, the focus is toward the analysis of the passage rather than its application. An exegesis should also contain headings that clearly set out the structure of the paper. Biblical texts (of the passage being exegeted), footnotes, abstracts, and bibliography are not included in the word count.

All exegeses submitted to AC will be marked against the following grid:

<p>Context of the passage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the social historical, and literary background of the passage • Passage suitably located within its context • Key cultural issues identified 	/15
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<p>Analysis of the passage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established authorship, date, and purpose of the passage • Passage located within its literary context • Discussion of genre • Detailed analysis of the passage • Key terms discussed (where possible, in the original language) • Message/argument of the passage articulated 	/15
<p>Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message of the text presented to a modern context • Critique/challenge/encouragement to modern church praxis outlined 	/10
<p>Research and grammar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate number of resources used (rule of thumb: 5 resources per 1,000 words) • Engagement with recent, quality commentaries, monographs, and scholarly articles • Grammar • Correct referencing and bibliography • Abstract, introduction, conclusion • Headings 	/10