



## **GRADUATE SCHOOL CATALOG**

2025 – 2026

## **McGarvey College of the Bible**

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## Purpose and Philosophy

The purpose of McGarvey College of the Bible (MCOB) is to assist churches of Christ around the world in equipping ministers who have graduated from a school of preaching or undergraduate college to gain an increased knowledge and capability for teaching the word of God. In this sense, we are unique. We are a graduate school designed specifically for graduates of schools of preaching around the world.

The institution also has a special interest in helping bi-vocational preachers continue their ministerial education. We recognize the need and desire of those limited by time restraints and location to learn in a college-level setting. Our schedule and online program are crafted to cater to these needs by offering a flexible method of study.

The philosophy guiding MCOB is completely devoted to New Testament Christianity and the defense of holy scripture as the inspired word of God. Everything we intend to do is dedicated to Christ, His word, and His church. We steadfastly promote the plea to return to New Testament Christianity through obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the gospel alone. We believe that every generation needs “a voice crying in the wilderness” (Isaiah 40:3). We intend on being a “voice” for our generation and generations to come. Our voice will be heard through the work of our teachers and graduates all over the world as we are strengthened with might in our inner man by the Holy Spirit. We desire to call our world, our countries, our communities, our families, and when necessary, our congregations to faith, repentance, and obedience. Our plea is for a return to the “old paths” (Jeremiah 6:16). We believe in providing a school that is truly distinctive in not yielding to denominational doctrines or the men who teach them. We intend to conduct a school

that says, “Here we stand, and we will stand immovable.” We hope to do so with great courage, enthusiasm, and strength that can come only from God.

### **Statement of Accreditation**

MCOB receives no government funding. Our standing in the Lord’s church affirms our credentials and supports our work financially. We are determined and blessed not to seek any remuneration from the United States or any government and are not bound by any of the rules they seek to impose upon educational institutions in general and Bible programs specifically. Our “rule book” is the Holy Bible. While we appreciate the intention of the government accrediting associations to ensure that degrees granted are legitimate in nature, our legitimacy comes from the students we train and the work they do in the kingdom. Legitimacy of this nature is of the highest regard in our estimation and is sufficient for MCOB.

MCOB does not seek government funding due to the current threat such funding would have on the truth of biblical teaching and training. As recently as 2021-22, the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress passed House Resolution 5 – a.k.a., “The Equality Act.” We fear this and other such resolutions could be destructive to the nature of Christian education and accredited educational institutions as we know them. Our conviction is to stay clear of government regulations and resolutions which could inhibit our ability and effectiveness to train gospel preachers. Therefore, MCOB will not seek or accept any interference from any governing body which could have a detrimental effect on the stated purpose of MCOB.

### **The Need for Gospel Preachers**

The church needs preachers. It must also be understood that the church needs the right kind of preachers. We need properly taught and trained preachers. The question must then be raised as

to what kind of education the preacher needs most to be properly equipped for ministry. The answer given usually depends upon one's personal reflection of what the preacher ought to be and do. We believe that schools training gospel preachers must be decisive and distinctive in their teaching of New Testament Christianity. MCOB's dedication to the Lord, His word, and His church must never be questioned by our faithful brethren. We believe the following eight areas are especially important.

### **Gospel Preaching and Exhortation**

Gospel preachers commonly hear statements like, "I have not heard preaching like that in 50 years." Or "He is a good teacher, and a nice person, but not much of a preacher." Primarily, the work of the gospel preacher is preaching. He must be able to communicate the word of God clearly. He must be able to do so in a way that encourages the saved and causes the lost to tremble, while knowing that God longs to rescue them. We need this kind of preaching today. We will always need this kind of preaching.

The men training these students must first be preachers of this caliber. Every teacher in a program specializing in training future gospel preachers ought first to have the ability and longing to preach the gospel. Our aim is not to employ men to teach based on their academic credentials alone but primarily on their faithfulness to God and their faithful service in His kingdom.

### **Expository and Exegetical Bible Teaching**

The church is responsible for teaching God's word. Preachers play a vital role. Preachers must know how to prepare stimulating lessons, which provoke thought and allow the text to enlighten the hearer. Preachers will be called upon to teach saints who are many times many years their seniors. The only way to edify souls who are so grounded and knowledgeable in the word of

God is to study hard, dig into the scriptures, and communicate the lesson clearly. Such lessons require word studies, clearly outlining the text, and offering practical applications in the modern day. Preachers must be prepared to teach in such a way as to help everyone grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

To teach and preach this way, one must know the Bible. In addition to our faculty and mentoring program, we offer one of the finest digital libraries in the world to our students comprising thousands of volumes of commentaries, sermon books, word studies, debates, and periodicals.

### **Soul Winning**

A gospel preacher must be a soul winner. Not only must preachers know how to study and prepare their lessons, but they must also know how to bring a lost soul to Christ. The common man must hear him gladly. Our congregations must grow. While the preacher must not bear sole responsibility for church growth, he should serve as a catalyst for growth. Our focus is not on academic accomplishments alone, but more importantly on training men to be soul winners in God's kingdom.

### **Polemics and Defense of the Gospel**

While debating is not as common as it once was, a gospel preacher must continue to be prepared to give a defense (1 Peter 3:15). The preacher will encounter false doctrines in private and public settings. Additionally, he will encounter honest questions by members who have heard or read false doctrines elsewhere. Moreover, learning how to debate will help a preacher learn to present the truth in a logical way and propositional form which can be easily understood. Doing



so will require a strong knowledge of denominational doctrines and biblical answers. Each class will emphasize the need to know truth and refute error.

### **Writing for Publication**

Publishing written material has been an essential element of the Restoration Movement since its beginning. Our preachers must continue to write. They must be able to write effectively and correctly for journals, books, church bulletins, newspaper articles, and various other forms of print media. Every class places an emphasis on the student's ability to communicate his thoughts in writing in addition to public preaching and teaching. The ability to communicate one's thoughts through writing will only enhance one's ability to communicate one's thoughts when speaking. Furthermore, through his writings, he will be able to help people he may never meet, and for years to come. The MCOB library consists of hundreds of issues of periodicals dating to the beginning of the Restoration Movement in America. Familiarity with this literature will be required of the students.

### **Godly Character and Christian Manhood**

The preacher must take heed unto himself so that he can take heed to the doctrine of Christ (1 Tim. 4:16). He must be a man of God – a man of sound moral integrity. His primary concern must be getting to heaven and taking as many people with him as he can. He must not be like the Pharisees who did not live according to their own teachings (cf. Matthew 23:1–2). Rather, he must be able to say as Paul, “Do as I do, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:9).

## Work Ethic

The preacher must not be lazy. He must set the right example. He must use his time wisely. He must use his time effectively to stay current with the needs of his local ministry, family, personal study, and personal time.

## Ministry in the Local Congregation

The gospel preacher must do all he can to unite the Lord's church in biblical principles. He must love every member, help who he can, and honor faithful elders. Many times, he will be frustrated, and he must learn to deal with these frustrations while continuing to be an effective servant-leader in his local work. MCOB has selected faculty who excel in these areas. The mastery of these principles requires a lifetime of continued application and improvement. With the right education, and providing students with the proper examples, guidance, instruction, and friendship, MCOB stands ready to help the man of God reach his goal to be such a servant of the Lord.



The purpose, philosophy, and goals of McGarvey College of the Bible align with those of faithful schools of the Restoration Movement, both past and present.

## General Information

Students invited to enroll in MCOB will be selected by the administration and faculty based on their proven capability in and undergraduate school of preaching or Christian university equivalent from schools associated with the churches of Christ. Exceptions may be made for ministers with a minimum of ten years of experience. Ministerial experience may be considered equivalent to undergraduate scholastic achievement in such cases.

### **Admission Requirements**

To receive admission into MCOB's graduate program in Christian Doctrine, graduates of a school of preaching or undergraduate program must submit all transcripts to the Office of Admissions for review. In addition, prospective students must submit a letter of recommendation from the director, dean, or professor of the school from which he has graduated OR a letter of recommendation from a church leader (preacher, elder, or professor in a biblical studies program).

Ten students per country are enrolled every two years. Each class will study the same courses together as a group each semester throughout the program. When a class has finished the program and graduated, the next class of ten students will begin their studies. No more than ten students will be enrolled in the program in a particular country at one time.

Students will have thirteen weeks to complete all assignments each semester. Two courses will be offered per semester. Each class session will last for three hours once per week containing two hours of instruction and one hour to work on in-class assignments. Completed assignments will be posted in the Google Classroom online platform for grading and record keeping. The instructor will return the grades to the student upon the completion of each class.

Students can expect to dedicate 135 hours per class per semester to a combination of in-class instructional time and out-of-class research time. Six semesters, twelve classes, and thirty-six semester hours are required to complete the program.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

McGarvey College of the Bible admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship and financial aid, and other school-administered programs.

### **Academic Probation and Dismissal**

MCOB is a scholarship-based school. Enrollment is selective. The enrollment of the school is limited to ten students per class per country. No tuition is required for any student. If a student chooses not to attend or complete the assignments, the scholarship will be revoked, and the student will be dismissed from the program. The student will be responsible for returning the laptop granted from MCOB (if he has received one). Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 to remain in the program.

Should a student fail to meet the criteria set forth by MCOB for one semester, the student will be placed on academic probation. Should the student fail to meet the criteria for a second time, the student will be dismissed from MCOB. The student can apply for re-entry to the program at a future date, but readmission to the program is not guaranteed.

Students selected into the program will be approved by the Selection Committee which will consist of the Board of Directors, President, and Extension Coordinator of the country from which the student is applying.

### **Student Grievances and Appeals**

No appeal or complaint shall be filed unless the student complaining has requested an informal meeting with the supervisor having the authority to resolve the grievance within fifteen calendar days following the occurrence giving rise to the grievance. The student requiring the meeting shall make themselves available at the convenience of the supervisor.

If the issue is unresolved, the faculty member will request a hearing before an Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee shall conduct an inquiry into the complaint as they deem appropriate and shall have fifteen working days in which to make a final decision on the matter. The decision will be communicated in writing directly to the parties involved. The parties involved each have five working days after receipt of the decision to accept or reject the decision or work out an alternative solution.

Should either of the parties reject the decision of the Appeals Committee, they may, within five working days thereafter, appeal that decision to the President who will render a final decision within five additional working days. The time limits as specified in the complaint procedures above may be extended by an agreement of the parties involved – but when so extended, the extension shall be in writing to all parties. All proceedings with reference to complaints will be closed and confidential to protect the parties and MCOB. Records are maintained in the offices of MCOB.

## **General Regulations**

Conduct according to Christian principles is required of all students and must coincide with objectives of MCOB. If a student's behavior is proven to reflect poorly on the school, the student will be reprimanded in writing. If, after 30 days, there is no evidence of change, the student will be dismissed (unless earlier and stronger action is called for as set out in these regulations). Any student who has been dismissed but has completely overcome or corrected the reasons for the dismissal may make an application to enroll again. To be readmitted, the student must meet all the initial entrance requirements again. All who are associated with MCOB (students and faculty alike) are expected to conduct themselves in an honest and upright manner with everyone. The moral standard is to be of the highest possible caliber.

## **Grading**

The following symbols are used on the students' permanent records for all courses in which they are enrolled after the initial registration and schedule adjustment period: A, B, C, D, F. These marks will remain on a student's permanent record and may be changed only if the original instructor certifies that an actual mistake was made in reporting or recording the grade.

The significance of the grade symbols is as follows: "A" denotes excellent comprehension of the subject and outstanding scholarship. "B" denotes good comprehension of the subject. "C" denotes acceptable comprehension. "D" denotes borderline understanding of the subject and does not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree. "F" denotes failure to gain an adequate comprehension of the subject.

## **Applying for Asterisks**

An asterisk (\*) following a letter grade denotes an exceptional, temporary grade. The allowance of an asterisk is solely the decision of the instructor. It is given only when, because of illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control, the student has been unable to complete a portion of the work of the course. The following rules must be observed:

1. Students should make every effort to complete assigned work within the semester and should not assume that an asterisk grade will be granted.
2. Students are expected to contact their instructors via email as soon as problems occur and attempt to work through the problems during the semester.
3. Asterisk (\*) grades are issued to allow students to complete a portion of the work of the course and are not a substitute for a withdrawal—the appropriate action for students who have not done any work.
4. Students may not request asterisk (\*) grades in consecutive semesters.
5. Students may not request nor may faculty issue asterisk grades, after all work in the class has been completed.
6. Asterisk (\*) grades may be assigned only for “C,” “D,” or “F” grades.
7. Asterisk (\*) grades of “C,” “D,” “F” cannot be changed to an “A” grade.
8. A “B” grade is the maximum grade adjustment.
9. Asterisk (\*) grades of “C,” “D” which have been officially recorded by the academic dean may not be lowered by the instructor.
10. Asterisk (\*) grades are to be given only for exceptional and documented cases of hardship such as illness or having to relocate within the semester.
11. The student has until Friday 5 pm CST of week five of the following semester to finish all remaining assignments and the instructor will report the grade change to the academic dean within the following week.



12. Following the period of grace, all asterisks (\*) will be removed the day after semester grades are reported, leaving the student with the letter grade without the (\*).

- a. An asterisk (\*) grade must be requested between weeks 10–14 of the semester for which the grade is requested.
- b. Students should not assume that submittal of the request constitutes the granting of an asterisk grade.
- c. The issuance of an asterisk grade assumes that all information on the request is accurate. Asterisks will be rescinded if it is later determined that information provided by the student was not correct.
- d. Asterisk grade assignments are at the discretion of the course instructor.

Instructors are not required to participate in issuing (\*) grades. Instructors maintain consistent practices within their own courses, but practices will differ among instructors and programs. The decision to issue an asterisk grade rests with the individual instructor.



Our school namesake is John William (J.W.) McGarvey (1829-1911). Brother McGarvey was an outstanding educator at the College of the Bible in Lexington, Kentucky and a prolific writer. He was known throughout the world as a tremendous student of the scriptures and a defender of their inspiration.

At McGarvey College of the Bible, students can expect to study his works as well as others from likeminded men of faith. Many of Brother McGarvey's books have remained in print for well over 100 years.

Just as did brother McGarvey, everyone associated with MCOB holds firmly to their conviction in the inspiration and authority of the Bible.



## Curriculum

The usual course of study in schools of preaching focuses on a general survey of the books of the Bible along with an introduction to hermeneutics and occasionally some introductory work in the original languages. The curriculum at MCOB advances from this methodology to concentrate on the doctrines of the Bible. We move from the text of Scripture in general to the teachings and context of Scripture in particular. The Master of Arts in Christian Doctrine is comprised of twelve courses in doctrinal studies totaling thirty-six semester hours. Classes meet once a week for thirteen weeks each semester. Each class consists of two hours of instruction and one hour for student assignments.

Required Courses		Credit Hours
TH 5101	Introduction to Graduate Studies in Theology	3
TH 5102	Theology and Scripture	3
TH 5203	Theology and Ministry	3
TH 5204	The Biblical Doctrine of the Godhead	3
TH 5305	The Biblical Doctrine of the Bible	3
TH 5306	The Biblical Doctrine of Man, Sin, and Salvation	3
TH 5407	The Biblical Doctrine of the Church	3
TH 5408	The Biblical Doctrine of Last Things	3
TH 5509	Old Testament Theology	3
TH 5510	New Testament Theology	3

TH 5611	Theology throughout Church History	3
TH 5612	Theology of the Restoration Movement	3
<b>Total Courses – 12</b>		<b>Total Hours – 36</b>

## **Program of Study**

### **First Year**

#### ***Spring Semester***

TH 5101 Introduction to Graduate Studies in Theology: Research methodologies with an emphasis on the discipline of theology; a primer for the program

TH 5102 Theology and Scripture: Studies in Advanced Hermeneutics; expounds upon the connection between biblical hermeneutics and theology

#### ***Summer Semester***

TH 5203 Theology and Ministry: Intends to help students bridge the gap between theological studies in the classroom and their application in ministry

TH 5204 Biblical Doctrine of the Godhead: Study of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Triune nature, attributes, characteristics, and works.

#### ***Fall Semester***

TH 5305 Biblical Doctrine of the Bible: Study of the inspiration, canonicity, and development of the Holy Scriptures.

TH 5306 Biblical Doctrines of Man, Sin, and Salvation: Study of man's origin, duty, and destiny; study of the origin, effects, and results of sin; study of the eternal plan of God to save man from sin and destruction

## **Second Year**

### ***Spring Semester***

TH 5407 Biblical Doctrine of the Church: Study of the founding, organization, and purpose of the church of Christ.

TH 5408 Biblical Doctrine of the Last Things: Study of things related to the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, final judgment, and eternity.

### ***Summer Semester***

TH 5509 Old Testament Theology: Analyses and applications of the theological message of the Old Testament.

TH 5510 New Testament Theology: Analysis and applications of the theological message of the New Testament

### ***Fall Semester***

TH 5611 Theology throughout Church History: Study of the most prominent men, events, writings, and doctrines in the discipline of theology throughout church history

TH 5612 Theology of the Restoration Movement: Study of the most prominent men, events, writings, and doctrines in the discipline of theology associated with the Restoration Movement.

## School Calendar

Spring Semester begins each year on the second Monday in January and continues until the thirteen weeks of class meetings are concluded.

Summer Semester begins each year on the first Monday in June and continues until the thirteen weeks of class meetings are concluded.

Fall Semester begins the second Monday in September and continues until the thirteen weeks of class meetings are concluded.

Graduations are conducted every other December following completion of the program in the home country of the students where the extension of MCOB is located.



McGarvey College of the Bible utilizes online modules to facilitate learning for students who are actively engaged in fulltime ministries and bi-vocational careers.

Courses meet once per week and are conducted by teachers of the highest caliber.

## Sharpening Iron: Student and Alumni Mentoring Program



The faculty at MCOB are both teachers and mentors to the student body. Every teacher is an experienced full-time minister. They seek to use their experience to foster healthy mentoring relationships with the students. MCOB believes that mentoring enhances one's

life and work as a minister with benefits which include better productivity, job satisfaction, longer tenure, increases in leadership development, avoidance of burnout, and improved physical health.

Studies have proven that students who have been mentored while in school also tend to have a better grasp of controversial issues in ministry, conflict management, and sermon preparation and delivery, which, in turn, helps prepare them for their work in ministry.

The Dean of Students directs our mentoring program for students and alumni. He is available to help students with academic, ministerial, and personal issues while also providing helpful resources made available through the “Sharpening Iron” mentoring program. Workshops for students and graduates are also conducted periodically. Through these workshops peer mentoring can also occur. Students can make use of the mentoring forum through the Google Classroom platform.

## Administration, Faculty, and Staff



The administration, faculty, and staff of McGarvey College of the Bible has been carefully selected and share in a singular vision to promote New Testament Christianity and produce faithful gospel preachers who will love the Lord, His word, His church, and the souls of their fellow man.

### **Board of Trustees**

Mike Kiser, Sylacauga, Alabama (Chairman)

Ben Coxwell, Summerdale, Alabama (Secretary)

Billy Lambert, Summerdale, Alabama (Treasurer)

### **Faculty**

Andrew D. Erwin, Ph.D., President and Professor

Stephen Atnip, Ph.D., Professor

Joshua Seth Houston, Ph.D., Professor

Johnny O. Trail, D. Min., Professor

Joshua Aidoo, Extension Coordinator, Ghana

Jackson Erwin, Extension Coordinator, United States

Phillip Hendricks, Extension Coordinator, South Africa

Nixon Ochieng, Extension Coordinator, Kenya

### **Administrative Staff**

Bonny Coxwell, Summerdale, Alabama

Emma Erwin, Ashland City, Tennessee

The Christ-like comradery which exists among the board, administration, faculty, and staff at MCOB is truly amazing.

Our desire is to honor and glorify God. May every praise be His for the good that we can do together!

