

EXEGETICAL PAPERS

Exegetical papers are common in theological degrees. According to [Dale B. Martin](#), these papers present a Scripture passage, argue its interpretation, and discuss its application. [Logos' website](#) states that exegetical papers require you to consult various Bible translations and commentaries.

According to Merriam-Webster, "exegetical" means to explain. Thus, to write an exegetical paper is to explain the passage.

PREPARATION

1. **Pray** - Before researching, pray for God's guidance and clarity ([University of Toronto](#)).
2. **Be familiar with the passage** – Read the passage multiple times in your preferred translation and then in multiple other translations (Logos).
3. **Context and genre** – Examine the passage's literary and historical context and genre (Logos).
4. **Analyze the text** – Outline the passage, examine words, discover relationships, look at cross-references, and note your questions (Logos).
5. **Interpret the text** – Ask, "what do I see in this passage?" (Logos).
6. **Reference commentaries** – Logos advises you to not read every page of a commentary; read what relates to your questions. Use multiple commentaries, because different commentaries are intended for different uses (Logos).
7. **Refine interpretations** – Now that you've done research, some of your questions should be answered and maybe some of your assumptions have been corrected (Logos). Use this information to refine your interpretations.
8. **Ponder theology** – Discover the passage's theological themes, its relation to broader themes, opposing positions, the topic's history, and its implications (Logos).

FORM

1. **Turabian** - Turabian style is commonly used in theological papers. Below are a few basic Turabian requirements. For more help with Turabian, see our [Turabian resources](#).
 - a. 1" margins
 - b. 12 pt. Times New Roman or 10 pt. Arial, both double spaced

- c. ½" paragraph indent
 - d. Footnotes-Bibliography citations
2. **Society of Biblical Literature (SBL)** - According to [Dr. Jan A. Sigvartsen](#), you may be required to use SBL style. SBL style is similar to Turabian with a few differences, which are noted below. For more help with SBL, view Academic Coaching's [SBL Formatting Checklist](#).
- a. Center the first page numbers of the body and bibliography at the bottom
 - b. Subsequent page numbers are on the top right
 - c. Two blank lines separate sections
3. **Professor's requirements** - Check if your professor has special formatting requirements. If any instructions contradict SBL or Turabian style, always follow the professor's preferences.

CONTENT

The following is based on [North Central University's](#) outline.

1. **Biblical text** – Quote your passage.
2. **Introduction** – A paragraph that introduces your topic and contains your thesis.
3. **Contextual analysis** – Include the passage's literary and relevant historical context. Relate these to the passage rather than simply stating them. This part spans about 20% of the paper.
4. **Detailed analysis** – Analyze the passage verse-by-verse with word studies, discuss the passage's form, and enter into a theological discussion. This section proves your thesis. This part comprises about 50% of the paper.
5. **Theology** – Discuss how the passage's theology relates to the Old and New Testaments. This section constitutes about 20% of the paper.
6. **Application** – Conclude your paper by offering applications of the text, a brief summary, a restated thesis, and any questions for further research. This part forms about 5% of the paper.
7. **Bibliography** – End your paper with a bibliography.

Note: Follow the assignment's instructions and your professor's preferences. These guidelines will affect your paper.

PRACTICE NOW