



GRADUATE CATALOG

# SUNSET

GRADUATE SCHOOL

2024 - 2025

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SUNSET INTERNATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE

# MESSAGE FROM THE GRADUATE DEAN:

**Kerry W. Williams, PhD**

Congratulations on your decision to advance your education. For those who pursue ministry, there is nothing more important than the unrelenting quest for greater knowledge to be imparted unto those we serve. The desire to advance your knowledge and understanding of spiritual things is a testament to your devotion to the advancement of Christ's Kingdom. Thank you for choosing Sunset Graduate School to advance your knowledge.

Our Masters' Degrees are distinctive programs combining scripture with practical ministry knowledge to prepare you for successful service in the Kingdom. Your studies will include instruction on how to do graduate level work, practical teaching regarding the day-to-day work of ministry, and training to develop your leadership skills. You will have the opportunity to take elective classes in the biblical text, Christian history, and Christian counseling. The overall program was developed to help you find success as you work with a local congregation, so that your ministry in Christ's Kingdom may be long and fruitful.

Doctoral studies with Sunset Graduate School provide deep insight into the biblical text, theology, and practical ministry skills (preaching, counseling, and leadership). Our Doctor of Biblical Studies and Doctor of Theology programs afford Master Degree graduates with the opportunities to advance their knowledge and earn a terminal degree in Bible and ministry.

A Sunset education is both an opportunity and an honor. Sunset International Bible Institute is the oldest preacher-training type school in the churches of Christ. It has been estimated that at least one-quarter of all ministers within churches of Christ have received their training from Sunset, and the school's reputation is well respected within the brotherhood. As a student of the Sunset Graduate School, you are now a part of the great Sunset family, and we welcome you with open arms.

This catalog describes our degree programs and the academic policies of the Graduate School. Please examine this material closely and contact us with any questions you have. May God bless you as you pursue your education and advance your knowledge in Christ!

Sincerely,  
Kerry W. Williams  
Dean, Sunset Graduate School

# INTRODUCTION

This Catalog is intended to give you an overview of Sunset International Bible Institute Graduate School programs and to acquaint you with what is involved in pursuing and completing our professional academic degrees. Degree and course offerings are listed, as well as transfer and enrollment details.

The material contained in this book is intended to be as complete as possible at the time of writing, but it is not intended to be regarded as a binding contract. Updates will be made on a regular basis, and future changes in policy or program will supersede what is contained here.

## AUTHORIZATION TO GRANT DEGREES

Sunset International Bible Institute is a recognized degree-granting institution. Sunset has been issued a letter of authorization to confer degrees by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, according to the provisions of the Texas Education Code, sub-chapter G, chapter 61, title 3, section 7.5 (g). This authorizes SIBI to legally grant religious degrees under the laws of the State of Texas.

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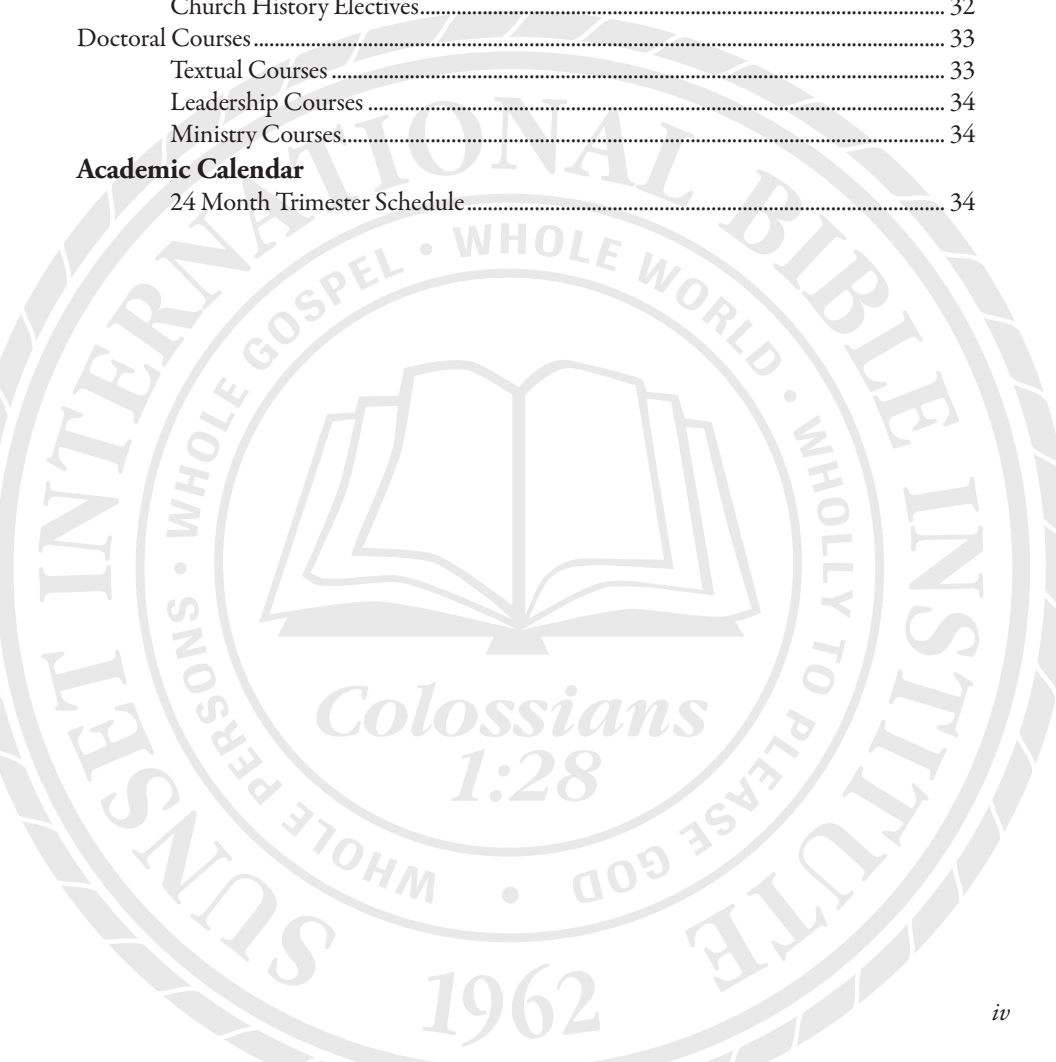
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# GENERAL INFORMATION

## HISTORY OF SUNSET INTERNATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE:

The history of Sunset International Bible Institute is a rich one. It reveals and reminds us of God's blessings over the years, while pointing toward a present and future that are full of momentum and promise.

### INCEPTION AND 1960s

In 1962, returning missionary Cline Paden established a preacher training school in Lubbock with the help of West Texas church leaders. The school was initially named Latin American Bible School, having as its objective the training of Spanish-speaking preachers. The first class started with six students.

The following year the elders of the Sunset Church of Christ in Lubbock accepted oversight of the school. It was moved into the facilities of the Sunset church and was renamed West Texas Bible School. In 1964 the name was changed again to the now well-known Sunset School of Preaching (SSOP). Instruction was now given for both English and Spanish-language preachers.

By 1969 the student body had swelled to more than 175 students. Several teachers joined the staff in these early years to help instruct the growing numbers who came to be equipped. They included Ed Wharton, Richard Rogers, Abe Lincoln, Tex Williams, Parker Henderson, and Dayton Keesee. In addition, the Sunset church added the East Wing and basement to its facilities to accommodate the growth.

### 1970s

The 1970s saw the school extend its work into additional methods of ministry training. The school began its External Studies department to offer SSOP courses via correspondence. In 1973 the Adventures in Missions (AIM) program was started for college-age young people.

Later in the decade, the school graduated its first female students. The Deaf Program began in 1977 under the direction of Hollis Maynard. Spanish-speaking training continued, and departments were established for training in Slavic and Chinese languages.

The 1,000th student graduated in 1978. A number of new teachers made their first appearances on SSOP staff during the 1970s, including Ted Kell, Richard Baggett, Gerald and Bobbie Paden, Nat Cooper, Jim McGuiggan, Ian Fair, Ted Stewart, Norman Gipson, and Doyle Gilliam.

## 1980s

By 1980 student enrollment had topped 300 annually. Waning G.I. benefits, however, significantly affected school enrollment during the following years. Students continued to come for training, and new faces on the SSOP faculty included Charles Cook, Bob Anderson, Truman Scott, Jim Stamatis, Truitt Adair, and Charles Speer. In addition, a new library and office addition was built with funds raised by alumni.

During this time God worked to present the school with increasing opportunities in foreign nations. Materials from the SSOP Extension School were used in preacher training schools in places like Canada and Guyana. In 1984 the school purchased a place for the training of missionaries in the heart of Mexico City. The following year, groups of AIM and SSOP students participated in the first annual student trips to Mexico City.

## 1990s

In 1990 External Studies started translating courses into a few foreign languages. 1992 saw the introduction of the Small Church Growth Workshop and the establishment of a video studio for the school. The Senior AIM program was started in 1994, and in 1998 a planned effort commenced to develop international branch schools.

All of this growth in the school brought about a number of notable organizational changes. In 1993, Cline Paden “passed the torch” to Truitt Adair, who became director of the school, while Cline continued on as chancellor. The school’s name changed to Sunset International Bible Institute (SIBI) in 1995 to reflect its growing worldwide involvement in God’s kingdom. A reorganization followed in 1998 that structured the school into three divisions: Residential Studies, External Studies, and International Studies.

The school grew in several other ways during this decade as well. AIM had its largest class to date in 1993, with 84 students. By 1995 there were 87 women enrolled in various programs. By 1996 the school’s library boasted 14,000 volumes. The school’s 2,000th graduate walked the stage in 1997. New faculty members during this time included Jay Jarboe, Stuart Jones, Bobby Hise, Tim Brumfield, Ron Bontrager, Kris Smith, and Terry and Terri Fanning.







## 2000-PRESENT

SIBI launched into the new millennium with as much activity and hope as ever. In 2000, SIBI started the Evening School program and also saw total enrollment at international branch schools surpass that of our Lubbock campus. The passing of beloved SIBI instructor Richard Rogers that same year served as a reminder of God's blessings and a challenge to press on.

In 2001 the school unveiled a new logo and graduated its 70th class. The following year included the celebration of the school's 40th anniversary and the opening of its first Remote Classroom location in Fall River, MA. In the first half of the decade, several new faculty members were introduced including Bill and Betty Tracy, Pat Sheaffer, and Gibby Gilbert.

Sunset launched a three-year, 12-million-dollar "Let's Go...Make Disciples" campaign in 2005. The campaign goal was reached and surpassed. Gifts given totaled \$13,070,894. Renewed by this support, Sunset continues its tradition of using its past blessings to launch into a future filled with kingdom growth and world evangelism.

2009 marked the first year that Sunset was authorized by the State of Texas to confer religious degrees. Eighty-nine alumni choose to upgrade their existing certificates from Sunset for a Bachelor of Biblical Studies degree. Additionally, nine students entered Sunset's Graduate Program in hopes of achieving a Master of Biblical Studies degree. This two-year program is designed to allow a minister to continue his education while staying in ministry wherever that may be.

2012 marked 50 years of ministry training from Sunset International Bible Institute. The school celebrated throughout the year and marked the occasion by setting up a special memorial "Ebenezer" stone in the newly completed Missions Plaza.

2019 saw Tim Burow installed as the third president of the school. Truitt is now the Chancellor.

Sunset International Bible Institute continues to grow through the blessings of God. New training programs are underway and new innovations continue. A more complete history of the first 50 years has been written by Truman Scott entitled *Preach the Word* and is available through the Sunset External Studies store.

## HISTORY OF THE SUNSET GRADUATE SCHOOL:

The first Master of Biblical Studies graduates completed their degrees in 2011. J.J. Turner helped to develop the school's original curriculum and served as the first Dean of Graduate Studies. Jim Harris followed Turner as Dean of the School as the student base continued to expand throughout the mid-2000s.

Jim Harris resigned as Dean of the graduate school in late 2016 at which point Kerry Williams, a 1994 Sunset School of Preaching graduate, was appointed as Dean. In August of 2017 several changes were made to the curriculum. First, focus for the MBS degree was placed upon practical ministry and the primary degree offering became, "Master of Biblical Studies in Congregational Ministry." Due to the difficulty and expense students experienced in attending short courses in Lubbock, the short-course requirement was suspended, allowing the degree to be earned completely online. Several other policy changes, including the acceptance of additional transfer hours and the expansion of course selection, were put into place as well. Such changes were made in pursuit of greater academic and spiritual excellence, and to provide the most practical and comprehensive educational experience to Sunset graduate students.

In January, 2022, Sunset Graduate School began offering two Doctoral programs, the Doctor of Biblical Studies and the Doctor of Theology.

## ACADEMIC RECOGNITION AND ACCREDITATION:

Sunset Graduate School is not accredited, nor are there any plans to pursue accreditation in the future. As the first preaching school among churches of Christ, the reputation of Sunset (originally the Latin American Bible Institute, then Sunset School of Preaching, now Sunset International Bible Institute and its many associated schools) is well established and is internationally known. It is estimated that approximately one-fourth of the preachers currently preaching in the churches of Christ have their training from Sunset. We do not feel that pursuing accreditation would add anything to the level of credibility which we already have among those whom we seek to serve.

Our objective is to provide the highest quality ministry education at a price that ministers can afford.

## MISSION STATEMENT:

In service to the Kingdom of Christ and the mission of Sunset International Bible Institute, Sunset Graduate School exists to equip and inspire God's servants for effective, long-term service in local congregations of the churches of Christ through biblically based, practical, real-world instruction.

## DOCTRINAL BELIEFS:

Sunset Graduate School affirms that there is one sovereign, creator God who exists in the three persons of Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit. The Bible is the inspired communication from God to mankind and is complete in its instruction for life and godliness. Through study of the Bible, mankind can come to a saving knowledge of the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

Sunset affirms that through His grace, God has provided a means whereby mankind can be saved from sin. The sinner must respond to God's grace manifested through the sacrifice on the cross of His Son, Jesus Christ. Salvation is therefore received through obedient faith, which includes belief, repentance, and baptism in water for the remission of sins. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer at the moment of his/her baptism, providing a lasting fellowship with God.

Sunset further affirms that Christ established the church, His Kingdom on earth, on the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts chapter two. The Bible provides all authority for faith and practice in the church. This church, by definition, includes all the redeemed. Sunset is unwaveringly committed to the uniqueness and non-denominational nature of the Lord's church.

## LOCATION:

Sunset International Bible Institute is located on the campus of the Sunset Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas. The Sunset Graduate School is operated from the main campus in Lubbock. Sunset's postal address is:

Sunset Graduate School  
Sunset International Bible Institute  
3723 34th Street  
Lubbock, TX 79410

# DESCRIPTION OF DEGREE PROGRAMS

## MASTERS DEGREES AND GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

### MASTERS OF BIBLICAL STUDIES IN CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY:

The Master of Biblical Studies (MBS) in Congregational Ministry degree is a thirty-six-hour program consisting of two foundational courses (six hours credit), four required core courses (twelve hours credit), five elective courses (fifteen hours credit), and a capstone research seminar (three hours credit). The entire course of study is offered online and can be completed from anywhere with access to the internet. The coursework is intended to be done in a ministry setting, allowing students to put their studies to immediate practical use. Students can therefore complete a master's degree without having to leave their present ministry.

Several hybrid short-course versions of our regular courses will be offered in various locations around the United States every year. These two-day intensives allow students to experience a classroom environment and complete the remainder of the course online. Although not required, Sunset strongly encourages students to take advantage of as many short-courses as possible, as there is no substitute for in-person classroom instruction.

The coursework normally requires a minimum of two years to complete. A student may take up to two courses per trimester. There are three trimesters per year. SIBIGS (Sunset International Bible Institute Graduate School) semesters begin in January, May, and September. Trimesters are fourteen weeks in length. A maximum of six years is allowed for completion of the MBS degree.

### DEGREE PLAN:

#### **Foundation Courses (3 Courses - 9 Credit Hours)**

BIB501 – Introduction to Graduate Studies

BIB512 - Theology of Biblical Leadership

BIB508 - Graduate Readings in Theology - Christian Spirituality

#### **Core Courses (4 Courses - 12 Credit Hours)**

MIN502 - Preaching in the 21st Century

MIN532 - Practical Ministry in the Congregational Context

*(Two of the following courses)*

COU503 - Theology of Christian Counseling  
COU570 - Conflict Resolution in the Church  
MIN515 - Advanced Homiletics and/or  
MIN533 - Advanced Church Growth

### **Electives**

12 hours (4 classes) in any combination of other courses

### **Capstone (1 Course - 3 Credit Hours)**

MIN600 - Research Project

## **MASTERS OF BIBLICAL STUDIES IN YOUTH AND FAMILY:**

The Master of Biblical Studies in Youth and Family (MBS) is a thirty-six-hour program consisting of three foundational courses (nine hours credit), five required core courses (fifteen hours credit), three elective courses (nine hours credit) and a capstone research seminar (three hours credit).

### **DEGREE PLAN:**

#### **Foundation Courses (3 Courses - 9 Credit Hours)**

BIB501- Introduction to Graduate Studies  
BIB512 - Theology of Biblical Leadership  
BIB508 - Graduate Readings in Theology - Christian Spirituality

#### **Core Courses (6 Courses - 18 Credit Hours)**

MIN532 - Practical Ministry in the Congregational Context  
COU503 - Theology of Christian Counseling  
COU570 - Conflict Resolution in the Church  
MIN513 - Family Ministry Concepts  
MIN531 - Advanced Youth Ministry  
MIN519 - Christian Education

### **Electives**

6 hours (2 classes) in any combination of other courses

### **Capstone (1 Course - 3 Credit Hours)**

MIN600 - Research Project

## MASTERS OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP:

The Master of Spiritual Leadership (MSL) is a thirty-six-hour program consisting of three foundational courses (nine hours credit), six required core courses (eighteen hours credit), two elective courses (six hours credit) and a capstone research seminar (three hours credit).

### DEGREE PLAN:

#### **Foundation Courses (3 Courses - 9 Credit Hours)**

BIB501- Introduction to Graduate Studies

BIB512 - Theology of Biblical Leadership

BIB508 - Graduate Readings in Theology - Christian Spirituality

#### **Core Courses (5 Courses - 15 Credit Hours)**

MIN532 - Practical Ministry in the Congregational Context

COU570 - Conflict Resolution in the Church

LDR575 - Leadership: Creating Vision

LDR576 - Leadership: Mediating Change in Adverse Conditions

LDR577 - Leadership: Succession Planning

#### **Electives**

9 hours (3 classes) in any combination of other courses

#### **Capstone (1 Course - 3 Credit Hours)**

MIN600 - Research Project

## GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN LEADERSHIP:

### DEGREE PLAN:

#### **Foundation Courses (4 Courses - 12 Credit Hours)**

BIB512 - Theology of Biblical Leadership

COU570 - Conflict Resolution in the Church

LDR576 - Leadership: Mediating Change in Adverse Contexts

LDR577 - Leadership: Succession Planning



# GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN CHURCH HISTORY

## DEGREE PLAN:

### **Foundation Courses (4 Courses - 12 Credit Hours)**

HIS520 - Restoration History: Stone & Campbell

HIS535 - History of Churches of Christ in the United States

HIS565 - Social World of Christianity: Greece and Rome

LDR577 - Leadership: Succession Planning

## DOCTORAL DEGREES

### DOCTOR OF BIBLICAL STUDIES:

The Doctor of Biblical Studies (DBS) degree is a thirty-nine-hour program consisting of thirteen courses for 39 doctoral hours of credit. The entire course of study is offered online and can be completed from anywhere with access to the internet. The coursework is intended to be done in a ministry setting, allowing students to put their studies to immediate practical use. Students can therefore complete a doctoral degree without having to leave their present ministry. Most courses have a ZOOM component, simulating an in-class experience.

Occasional hybrid short-course versions of our regular courses will be offered in various locations around the United States every year. These two-day intensives allow students to experience a classroom environment and complete the remainder of the course online. Although not required, Sunset strongly encourages students to take advantage of as many short-courses as possible, as there is no substitute for in-person classroom instruction.

The coursework normally requires a minimum of two and a half years to complete. A student may take up to two courses per trimester. There are three trimesters per year. SIBIGS (Sunset International Bible Institute Graduate School) semesters begin in January, May, and September. Trimesters are fourteen weeks in length. A maximum of six years is allowed for completion of the DBS degree.

## DEGREE PLAN:

BIB701: The Gospels

BIB702: Writings of Paul

LDR703: Seminar in Leadership

MIN704 Seminar in Counseling

MIN705: Seminar in Preaching

MIN706: Seminar in Evangelism & Missions

BIB707: The Holy Spirit

BIB708: Salvation Theology

BIB709: Restoration Theology

BIB710: Revelation

BIB713: Individual Study in the Biblical Text

BIB714: Individual Study in the Biblical Text

*(One of the following courses)*

MIN733: Advanced Church Growth (or)

BIB715: Individual Study in the Biblical Text

## DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY:

The Doctor of Theology (THD) degree is a forty-eight-hour program consisting of ten courses (30 credit hours) and 18 dissertation credit hours for 48 doctoral hours of credit. The entire course of study is offered online and can be completed from anywhere with access to the internet. The coursework is intended to be done in a ministry setting, allowing students to put their studies to immediate practical use. Students can therefore complete a doctoral degree without having to leave their present ministry. Most courses have a ZOOM component, simulating an in-class experience.

Occasional hybrid short-course versions of our regular courses will be offered in various locations around the United States every year. These two-day intensives allow students to experience a classroom environment and complete the remainder of the course online. Although not required, Sunset strongly encourages students to take advantage of as many short-courses as possible, as there is no substitute for in-person classroom instruction.

The Doctor of Theology Program includes a dissertation requirement of a minimum of 18 credit hours. The coursework normally requires a minimum of four and a half years to complete. A student may take up to two courses per trimester while completing required coursework, but may only register for one dissertation class (3 credit hours) per term after the initial coursework is complete. Students who complete the coursework section of the THD program (30 credit hours) will receive a Master of Theology Degree (ThM). During the dissertation phase, students must develop, submit, and pass a dissertation proposal before a three-professor panel under the direction of the student's doctoral advisor. Once the proposal is approved, students may begin writing their dissertation under the supervision of their doctoral advisor. Once the doctoral advisor approves a dissertation, the student must defend the dissertation before a three-professor panel.

If a student requires more than six terms to complete a dissertation, the student can reenroll in BIB721. There is no limit to how many dissertation hours a student may complete, but all THD coursework (courses and a minimum of 18 dissertation hours) must be completed before the eight-year deadline.

There are three trimesters per year. SIBIGS (Sunset International Bible Institute Graduate School) semesters begin in January, May, and September. Trimesters are fourteen weeks in length. A maximum of eight years is allowed for completion of the THD degree.

## DEGREE PLAN:

BIB701: The Gospels

LDR703: Seminar in Leadership

MIN706: Seminar in Evangelism & Missions

BIB708: Salvation Theology

BIB709: Restoration Theology

BIB710: Revelation

BIB711: Old Testament Theology

BIB712: New Testament Theology

BIB713: Individual Study in the Biblical Text  
(One of the following courses)

MIN733: Advanced Church Growth

or

BIB715: Individual Study in the Biblical Text

BIB716: Dissertation 1

BIB717: Dissertation 2

BIB718: Dissertation 3

BIB719: Dissertation 4

BIB720: Dissertation 5

BIB721: Dissertation 6



# ADMISSIONS

## MASTER'S DEGREE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Applicants to the MBS program should be aware that this MBS program is primarily an advanced credentialing and training program for those involving themselves in ministries of the churches of Christ, and all MBS courses will therefore reflect a Christian, Biblically-oriented worldview.

A bachelor's degree from a recognized institution is required to be considered for admission to the Graduate School. Students who hold a bachelor's degree in an area other than biblical studies, bible, or religion, and who do not hold a previously completed master's degree, may be admitted, but will need to take a minimum of 12 hours (4 courses) in textual courses (from BIB 509, 510, 526, 527, 528, and 529) as electives to receive their degree.

## GRADUATES OF SCHOOLS OF PREACHING:

Applicants who have a graduation diploma from a school of preaching associated with churches of Christ but who do not have a bachelor's degree are welcome to enroll in SIBI's program for degree fulfillment. The process typically involves the completion of a ministry portfolio and one three-hour course. For students who fulfill all other requirements, completion of this degree fulfillment program will academically qualify them both for the BBS bachelor's degree from SIBI and satisfy the bachelor's degree requirement for admission to the Graduate School.

## APPLICANTS WHO HOLD A PREVIOUSLY COMPLETED GRADUATE DEGREE:

Applicants who have previously completed a graduate degree (M.A., M.S., M.Ed., M.Div.) in any field may request transfer credit for up to 15 hours to be applied from previous coursework. Transferred credits may be applied toward 15 required elective hours. Transfer courses must be in a related field to biblical studies (theology, philosophy, psychology, sociology, etc.), and will be evaluated for credit on a case-by-case basis. Students will still need to complete at least 15 graduate hours with SIBI - the introductory course, foundation courses, four core courses, the capstone research course, and any other unfulfilled credit hours to equal a total of 36 total hours.

## TRANSFERS STUDENTS FROM OTHER GRADUATE SCHOOLS WITHOUT A COMPLETED GRADUATE DEGREE:

Students who are seeking transfer credit from another graduate school will need to submit transcripts of previous completed graduate work. Up to eighteen graduate hours may be awarded on a case-by-case basis from courses in related fields.

## NON-DEGREE SEEKING AND AUDIT STUDENTS:

Students who wish to take selected classes but who do not wish to enroll in a formal degree plan are welcome to do so. Tuition must be paid for the courses at the present rate. If a non-degree seeking student wishes to enroll in the MBS, previously completed courses will be applied to his or her degree plan. Courses may be converted to credit status if (1) the coursework was completed successfully and (2) all tuition and fees have been paid.

Audit students will be permitted to participate in short courses. An audit fee of \$75 must be paid upon registration. Completed audit classes may not later be converted to credit if an audit student enrolls in the MBS. For degree completion, all audited courses must be taken again for credit.

## DOCTORATE DEGREE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Applicants to the DBS and THD programs should be aware that these programs are primarily an advanced credentialing and training program for those involving themselves in ministries of the churches of Christ, and all graduate courses will therefore reflect a Christian, Biblically-oriented worldview.

A Master's degree from a recognized institution in Bible, Ministry, Theology, or a related field is required to be considered for admission to either doctoral program

## ENGLISH PROFICIENCY:

English proficiency is required for admittance into all degree programs. For students who have difficulty with English or with writing, additional coursework may be required.

## ADMISSION PROCEDURE:

Admission to the SIBI Graduate School is not limited to certain times of the year. An application for admission may be filed at any time. Application information and forms are maintained and updated on the SIBI website ([www.sunset.bible/masters](http://www.sunset.bible/masters)). A completed application with the appropriate recommendations and all requested transcripts is required for consideration of admission.

Non-degree seeking and audit students are exempt from regular admissions procedures and may enroll directly in their chosen courses. Non-degree seeking students should enroll by contacting Sean McNeil at [sean.mcniel@sibi.cc](mailto:sean.mcniel@sibi.cc).

## PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES:

Tuition for SIBI Graduate Programs is paid on a per-course basis. Sunset reserves the right to increase tuition levels for future courses as needed. Before being enrolled in a course, the tuition for that specific course must be paid. Once a course has started, there are no refunds. If a student chooses to drop a course, \$100 of the tuition paid will be credited toward a future course.

Students are responsible for purchasing and obtaining textbooks. Students are also responsible for the costs associated with short courses (travel, housing, and meals). At present there are no funds available through SIBI to assist with these costs, however, many congregations have expressed a willingness to help their staff members with the cost of obtaining a graduate degree. Representatives from SIBI's Graduate School are available to speak with a congregation about this possibility.

No diplomas, grades, academic references, or transcripts will be provided without all financial obligations having been met.







# COURSEWORK:

## ENROLLMENT:

The SIBI website will keep a current list of courses being offered. Some courses are offered only at certain times of the year, while others may be offered more frequently. Commonly offered courses are listed in this catalog with brief course descriptions. For Master's programs, BIB501 Introduction to Graduate Studies is to be taken first, and coursework in that class can be started at any point after admission to the program. All other courses are offered in each of the three trimesters - January, May, and September. Please take note that there are required courses which all Master's students must take, and there are elective courses from which you may choose. Short courses are normally offered in Lubbock in the January semesters and at various locations throughout the United States once during the summer and fall semesters. The SIBI website will have the specific dates, times, and locations. The enrollment process involves five steps:

**First**, pay and enroll for your classes at <https://www.sunsetonline.org>. If you need to pay over the phone you can contact Sean McNeil, 806-788-3236.

**Second**, order your textbooks as listed in the syllabus. You may contact the Sunset Bookstore at 806-788-3280. There is a 20 percent discount for Sunset graduate students at the SIBI Bookstore. However, you are free to purchase your textbooks through any source you choose.

**Third**, you should send an email to the individual professor to ensure that he knows of your enrollment in his course. You should start this process well in advance of each course offering.

This enrollment process applies to all categories of students: regular degree seeking, non-degree seeking, and audit. Enrollment is not automatic upon acceptance, nor is enrollment in your next course(s) automatic upon completing each course. **You will need to follow this process for each and every course that you take at SIBIGS.** If you have questions, feel free to contact the Registrar (Sean McNeil, [sean.mcniel@sibi.cc](mailto:sean.mcniel@sibi.cc)) or the Dean of the Graduate School (Kerry Williams, [kerry.williams@sibi.cc](mailto:kerry.williams@sibi.cc)).

## ONLINE COURSES:

All classes offered by Sunset Graduate School may be completed online. The online education portal used by Sunset is Moodle. The portal allows students to complete assignments for classes, view grades and transcripts, and communicate with instructors and other students. Sunset's Moodle portal is available at [sunsetonline.org](http://sunsetonline.org). New students should create an account there. Enrolled students receive an email with upcoming course offerings prior to the start of each term.

## COMPLETING COURSEWORK:

An email will be sent by the graduate dean several weeks in advance to inform students of upcoming course offerings. It is expected that each student will proceed through the graduate programs at a reasonable and steady pace. If a student does not enroll for any coursework for multiple semesters, he/she will be placed on Academic Suspension. The course syllabus will contain information on the course requirements. You can obtain the syllabus for each course on the SIBI website ([sunsetonline.org](http://sunsetonline.org)). Coursework should be submitted on [sunsetonline.org](http://sunsetonline.org). The themes and papers involved in each course are to conform to the format required by the individual instructor (most use either the MLA or Turabian/Chicago styles). The 501 Introduction to Graduate Studies course will equip students in the use of the Turabian manual of style for research. You should keep a backup of all of your work in case a difficulty arises.

Each regular course is expected to take fourteen weeks to complete, and all coursework is due at that time. After this period, the course is closed for the student. If a student does not finish his or her work by the end of a term, the student must reenroll and take the course again in order to receive credit. In this circumstance, the course tuition would need to be paid again.

## SHORT COURSES:

Sunset strongly encourages students to take advantage of short-course opportunities. The course syllabus will contain information on the course requirements for short courses. Such courses will require reading in advance of the class time, research, and written assignments. Information will be available to each enrolled student well in advance of the start date. These advance assignments are to be completed before the short course begins. One short course is held each semester in varying locations. The January trimester short course is conducted in conjunction with the annual Vision Workshop in Lubbock. Summer and fall short courses are held in different locations throughout the United States. An email will be sent by the graduate dean several months in advance to inform students of upcoming short course offerings and locations. The course sessions will be held for two consecutive days from noon of the

first day and throughout the second day for a total of 9 hours of in-class instruction. You are responsible for arranging for transportation, meals, and housing costs while attending short courses. Each course will likely have follow-up research, reading, or written assignments to complete the course. All coursework is due by the end of the semester in which the course is offered.

## GRADING:

Each faculty member is in charge of assigning grades under the oversight of the Graduate School administration.

The grading scale is uniform for all classes.

90-100% = A      80-89% = B

70-79% = C      Below 70% = Failure

A course grade below a C will not be counted as completion of the course. It is not acceptable to complete part of a course's assignments and then to request being excused from the remaining coursework on an "as-good-as-completed" basis. If the required work is not completed to the instructor's satisfaction, no credit will be given for the course.

## FINAL COURSEWORK – CAPSTONE COURSE:

The final course in all SIBI Master's programs is MIN600 Research Project. MIN600 is designed to evaluate the research and writing skills students have attained through previous coursework, and to provide them an opportunity to produce a major writing project in summary of their studies. The course consists of one major writing project of 30-50 pages on a topic agreed upon by the student and instructor. Completion of MIN600 serves as the student's final examination of their degree program and qualifies him/her for graduation.

## FINAL COURSEWORK – DISSERTATION:

The Doctor of Theology program requires students to write and defend a doctoral dissertation. Student's will be assigned a doctoral advisor who will counsel and advise the student through the dissertation process. The dissertation process is broken up into several stages:

Completion of Coursework

Approval from doctoral advisor of a dissertation topic

Defense of a dissertation proposal

Writing of the dissertation

Dissertation defense

Dissertations must consist of a minimum of 150 pages and exhibit a scholarly contribution to the academic body of research. THD students must complete a minimum of 18 dissertation hours to be eligible for graduation.

# ACADEMIC POLICIES:

## TRIMESTER SCHEDULE:

Three trimesters are offered per calendar year: in January, May, and August. Each trimester is 14 weeks in length. Trimesters begin on the first Monday on or following the 12th day of the month (January, May, or August).

## GRADUATION:

When nearing completion of the required coursework, students should contact Kerry Williams, Dean of Graduate School ([kerry.williams@sibi.cc](mailto:kerry.williams@sibi.cc)) to begin the process leading to graduation. There are fees due in connection with graduation. All coursework, grades, fees, etc. must be completed and accepted before a degree and diploma will be awarded. All coursework, entering of grades, payment of fees, etc. must be completed a minimum of two weeks before graduation in order to be included in the graduation exercises. Graduation is held once each year in May at Sunset's Lubbock campus.

Students who cannot attend the graduation ceremony should contact us well in advance of the date so that alternative arrangements can be finalized. For students who have completed all degree program requirements but who have not yet participated in May graduation exercises, the SIBI Graduate School office will be glad to verify the completion of the degree to inquirers. This will enable the student who completes his/her degree at a point other than in May to list the degree on a resume or make application for further graduate study.

## SERVICES AVAILABLE AFTER GRADUATION:

Our association with students is not intended to end with graduation. We would like to continue to stay in touch and assist with future endeavors. There will be a Graduate School Alumni Association for students to participate in. Information about the Graduate School Alumni Association will be available on the SIBI website.

All students receive free transcripts with their diploma. Additional transcripts are available for a fee of \$15.00.

Upon request, employment references may be available from individual instructors or from the Graduate School administration.



to common  
judgment is a  
transmission  
of their  
as he is  
seek to be  
not seek a  
have not  
marriage, he  
marry will

spare you the  
entire to appoint  
From now on, it is  
as though they  
mourning as though  
and those who  
not rejecting and  
they had no part  
with the world as  
step with it for the  
is passing away

if you want to be  
unmarried man is  
the Lord, how to please  
married man is  
how to please his wife  
divided. And the  
woman is anxious about  
Lord, how to be holy in  
the married woman is  
how to please her  
own benefit

thinks the  
toward his  
are strong, and a  
be wishes, let them  
whichever is family  
being under no  
under control, and  
heart, to keep her  
well. So then he  
does well, and he  
will do even better.

1 Timothy 2:1-15  
Verses 1-15  
Mark 10:1-12

## ACADEMIC PROBATION:

A student who receives a C or F in two courses will be placed on academic probation. Any grade of C or F for a student on academic probation will result in the student's termination from Sunset's graduate program.

## TERMINATION:

A student can be terminated involuntarily for several reasons. Dismissal can be the result of the following:

- Persistent incomplete work
- Un satisfactory work
- Promoting false doctrine
- Moral transgression

Any such action will be handled on an individual basis and on a need-to-know basis. There will be no refunds in such cases.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

If there are issues which need to be resolved, discussion is encouraged. If this does not result in a solution, conflict resolution techniques should be pursued. This may include, but not be limited to, contacting an uninvolved third party for their review and recommendation. In areas involving unresolved conflict, the position of the administration of the SIBI Graduate School will be final.

## GRAMMAR/SPELLING/WRITING REMEDIAL NEEDS:

At the graduate level, one should be able to handle sentence construction, grammar, spelling, and general written communication skills in English at an above-average level. If this becomes a problem, remedial courses may be recommended or required. Such concerns will be handled on an individual basis.

## TRANSFER AGREEMENTS:

Sunset International Bible Institute Graduate School has an articulation agreement with Amridge University in Montgomery, Alabama, regarding transfer of SIBIGS credit into the Turner School of Theology accredited degree programs, including the M.A., M.Div., D.Min., and Ph.D. of Biblical Studies degrees.

# FINANCES:

## TUITION AND FEES:

There is no admission fee to apply for Sunset's graduate programs. To apply, fill out the application on [www.sunset.bible/graduate](http://www.sunset.bible/graduate).

The course tuition rate for Master's Degree programs is \$75.00 per credit hour (\$225.00 per course), and the tuition rate for Doctoral Degree programs is \$125.00 per credit hour (\$375.00 per course). Course tuition must be paid for a course before a student can begin his/her studies. Pay tuition online or contact the business office at (806)788-3236 to pay course tuition.

There are fees due in connection with graduation. The current graduation fee is \$100.00, with possible additional fees due. Contact the Graduate Dean or the Sunset finance department prior to graduation for complete graduation fee information.

Students are responsible for all book costs and expenses related to short courses.

## REFUND POLICY:

Any course not completed by the end of the given trimester or the period of Incompletion assigned by the instructor will be assigned a failing grade. Uncompleted coursework must be taken again for passing credit to be given. No tuition refund will be given, but a \$100 credit toward future coursework will be available for all uncomplete or failed courses.

## PAYMENTS:

The Sunset business office manages all payments of tuition and fees. Pay online or contact them at (806)788-3236 to make payment arrangements.





# ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

## ADMINISTRATION:

Tim Burow, President – [tburow@sibi.cc](mailto:tburow@sibi.cc)

Truitt Adair, Chancellor – [tadair@sibi.cc](mailto:tadair@sibi.cc)

Kerry Williams, Dean of Graduate School – [kerry.williams@sibi.cc](mailto:kerry.williams@sibi.cc)

Sean McNiel, Registrar – [sean.mcniel@sibi.cc](mailto:sean.mcniel@sibi.cc)

## FACULTY MEMBERS AND QUALIFICATIONS:

Gary Bradley – [judyg@mayfair.org](mailto:judyg@mayfair.org)

M.Th, Southern Christian University

D.Min., Southern Christian University

James Chaisson – [jpcsmcmjc@yahoo.com](mailto:jpcsmcmjc@yahoo.com)

BBS, Sunset International Bible Institute

MACCS, Knox Theological Seminary

Ed.D., Liberty University

David Henniger – [david.henniger@sibi.cc](mailto:david.henniger@sibi.cc)

BA, Harding University, 2002;

MS, Harding University, 2004;

D.Min., Andersonville Theological Seminary, 2005.

Kirt Martin – [kirt.martin@lcu.edu](mailto:kirt.martin@lcu.edu)

BS, Lubbock Christian University, 1975;

MS, Oklahoma State University, 1977;

Ph. D., Texas Tech University, 1999.

Daniel Smith - [dsmith@waterfordcoc.org](mailto:dsmith@waterfordcoc.org)

BA, Harding University, 2013

MBS, Sunset Graduate School, 2020

D.Min., Andersonville Theological Seminary, 2024

Bob Turner - [bturner@sunset.bible](mailto:bturner@sunset.bible)

BBS, Bear Valley Bible Institute, 1993

MBS, Bear Valley Bible Institute, 2008

D.Miss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2017

Kerry Williams – [kerry.williams@sibi.cc](mailto:kerry.williams@sibi.cc)

BA, Bethany Divinity College, 2002;

BS, Southern Christian University, 2005;

MS, Lubbock Christian University, 2006;

MS, Arkansas State University, 2016;

Ph.D., Arkansas State University, 2021

Rudy Wray – [rdwray@msn.com](mailto:rdwray@msn.com)

BA, American Christian Bible College, 1992;

BBS, Sunset International Bible Institute, 2009;

D.Min., Bakke Graduate University, 1998

# COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## MASTER DEGREE COURSES

### FOUNDATION COURSES:

#### *BIB501 – Introduction to Graduate Studies*

In order for a student to make the transition from undergraduate studies to graduate studies, it is essential for a student to have a basic and overall understanding of what is involved in graduate work. All incoming students must take BIB501 as their first course.

#### *BIB508 – Graduate Readings in Theology*

This study examines five classic works of Christian spirituality from ancient, medieval, reformation, and modern periods of church history.

### CORE COURSES:

#### *MIN502 – Preaching in the 21st Century*

Since Jesus gave the command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, preaching has been the center piece of the three-fold mission of the Church: (1) evangelism, (2) edification, and (3) equipping. This course is designed to upgrade, renew and take preaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century back to the place God intended.

#### *MIN532 – Practical Ministry in the Congregational Context*

Ministry is more than the transmission of Bible knowledge and public presentation. The successful minister must have practical expertise in conflict resolution, relationship building, time managements, and scheduling. This course addresses the day-to-day work of the minister in real world church settings.

#### *COU503 – Theology of Christian Counseling*

This course of study explores the student's understanding of the relationship of Christianity and counseling, with emphasis on the biblical basis of Christian counseling.

#### *COU570 – Conflict Resolution in the Church*

Conflicts in church are inevitable. The ability to navigate conflict is essential for successful ministry. This course presents strategies to avoid conflict and deal with them as they arise.

#### *MIN515 – Advanced Homiletics*

Topical, exegetical, textual, biographical and historical approaches to preaching are

all addressed in this study. Students evaluate and prepare sermons over the course of the term.

#### *MIN533 – Advanced Church Growth*

Church growth strategies are emphasized in this class. Practical ways to build up the body of Christ constitute the focus of this study.

### CAPSTONE COURSE:

#### *MIN600 – Research Project*

Students will choose a major writing project agreed upon with the instructor. This class completes a student's course of study in the MBS degree.

### BIBLE AND THEOLOGY ELECTIVES:

#### *BIB504 – Contemporary Issues in Theology*

This course is designed to address issues in the following areas of theology: eschatology, ecclesiology, and theology proper (the Trinity). The course addresses various issues within each of these areas; identifying which ones, and to what extent, they are impacting churches of Christ.

#### *BIB505 – Advanced Apologetics*

This course is designed to investigate Christian evidences beyond the historical evidences of Christ and the early church. The course will include an overview of the nature of Christian apologetics, archeology and the Bible, the evidences of intelligent design and the Creator from the sciences, and the use of Christian evidences in postmodern generations.

#### *BIB509 – Christ and His Church in Ephesians*

This thematic study the Ephesians is an investigation into Paul's presentation, by inspiration, of the centrality of Christ and the glory of His church.

#### *BIB510 Acts*

This study walks through the Book of Acts examining the history of the early New Testament Church.

#### *BIB517 – Advanced Hermeneutics*

This class is an in-depth study of hermeneutics: the branch of knowledge that deals with techniques of interpreting and applying ancient writings (specifically the Bible) to today.

### *BIB522 – Studies in Spiritual Warfare*

This course explores what the Bible teaches regarding the devil, angels, demons, the Holy Spirit and other topics of the spiritual world which are often overlooked.

### *BIB526-529 – Directed Readings in the Biblical Text*

This course is an independent study in which the student chooses a book of the Bible and works one-on-one with an instructor. Books and assignments will be directed by the instructor through email with the student. The class may be taken up to four times provided a different book of the Bible is chosen for each course. Multiple classes will appear on a student's transcript with consecutive course numbers.

### *BIB565 – Religious Worldviews*

An examination of religious thinking from varying viewpoints, this course establishes a defense of the Christian perspective.

### *BIB578 - Studies in the Godhead*

The nature and role of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are examined in this course.

## LEADERSHIP:

### *LDR575 - Leadership: Creating a Vision*

### *LDR576 - Leadership: Mediating Change in Adverse Conditions*

### *LDR577 - Leadership: Succession Planning*

## MINISTRY ELECTIVES:

### *MIN513 – Family Ministry Concepts*

The student will gain understanding of the theory of family regarding a system perspective and will then examine how family ministry should be implemented.

### *MIN519 – Christian Education*

This course evaluates Christian education practices and procedures. Students learn to develop and evaluate an education plan for local churches.

### *MIN530 – Small-Church Ministry*

Small churches provide unique challenges for effective ministry. This class provides strategies to encourage and grow small congregations.

### *MIN531 – Advanced Youth Ministry*

This course addresses the distinct nature of working with young people in a congregational setting. Effective strategies for youth and family ministries will be examined through readings from scripture and contemporary experts.

### *MIN560 – Preaching Biblical Genres*

Expository preaching of different biblical genres is the focus of this course. The instructor will choose a specific genre and craft assignments to develop the student's preaching skills appropriately.

### *MIN561 – Effective Topical Preaching*

Topical preaching can be effective if preachers understand its purpose and how to craft sermons with meaningful, well-organized content. This class instructs students on the development and delivery of quality topical lessons.

## CHURCH HISTORY ELECTIVES:

### *HIS520 – Restoration History: Stone & Campbell*

This course examines early restoration history, particularly the lives of Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone. Students will be equipped to better understand the evolution that the restoration movement has undergone through the past two hundred years, and how the founders' actions and views have impacted present day churches.

### *HIS535 – History of Churches of Christ in the United States*

This course explores the history of the Restoration Movement through the lens of acapella churches of Christ.

### *HIS565 – Social World of Christianity: Greece and Rome*

Christianity was born in the midst of Greek and Roman society. To fully understand the cultural dynamics of the early church, it is imperative that we have a working knowledge of the history and culture of the time. This course examines Greek and Roman society and how they impacted the founding of Christ's Kingdom.

# DOCTORAL COURSES

## TEXTUAL COURSES:

### *BIB701 – The Gospels*

This course examines the four gospels to gain a deeper understanding of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

### *BIB702 – Writings of Paul*

This course examines some of Paul's New Testament letters to gain a deeper understanding of Pauline theology.

### *BIB707- The Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in the lives of believers, the communicator of God's Word, and the seal of salvation. This course engages in an in-depth study of the Holy Spirit.

### *BIB708 – Salvation Theology*

This study explores biblical teachings on salvation.

### *BIB709 – Restoration Theology*

The Restoration Movement seeks to recreate the primitive church of the New Testament. This course explores the heritage of the Restoration Movement, how cherished beliefs and doctrines were developed, and conflicting view of restoration.

### *BIB710 – Revelation*

This course provides an in-depth study of the Revelation.

### *BIB711 – Old Testament Theology*

This study provides an overview of Old Testament theology.

### *BIB712 – New Testament Theology*

This study provides an overview of New Testament theology.

### *BIB713/BIB714/BIB715 – Independent Study in the Biblical Text*

This one-on-one course is coordinated with the assigned professor. Students choose an approved topic and fulfill requirements assigned by the professor.

### *BIB716-BIB721 - Dissertation*

## LEADERSHIP COURSES:

### *LDR703 – Seminar in Leadership*

This study explores Church leadership at an advanced level.

## MINISTRY COURSES:

### *MIN704 – Seminar in Counseling*

This course researches advanced techniques in Christian counseling.

### *MIN705 – Seminar in Preaching*

Effective preaching is a skill that must be developed for effective ministry. This seminar aims to develop students' pulpit skills.

### *MIN705 – Seminar in Evangelism and Missions*

Techniques and strategies for evangelism, church growth, and mission work are explored in this study.

### *MIN733 – Advanced Church Growth*

This course examines tools and strategies to encourage growth in the local church.

# ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2024-2025

## TRIMESTER SCHEDULE:

Sunset Graduate School has three trimesters per academic year. Trimesters are fourteen weeks in length.

### 2024:

1st Trimester – January 15th through April 19th

2nd Trimester – May 13th through August 17th

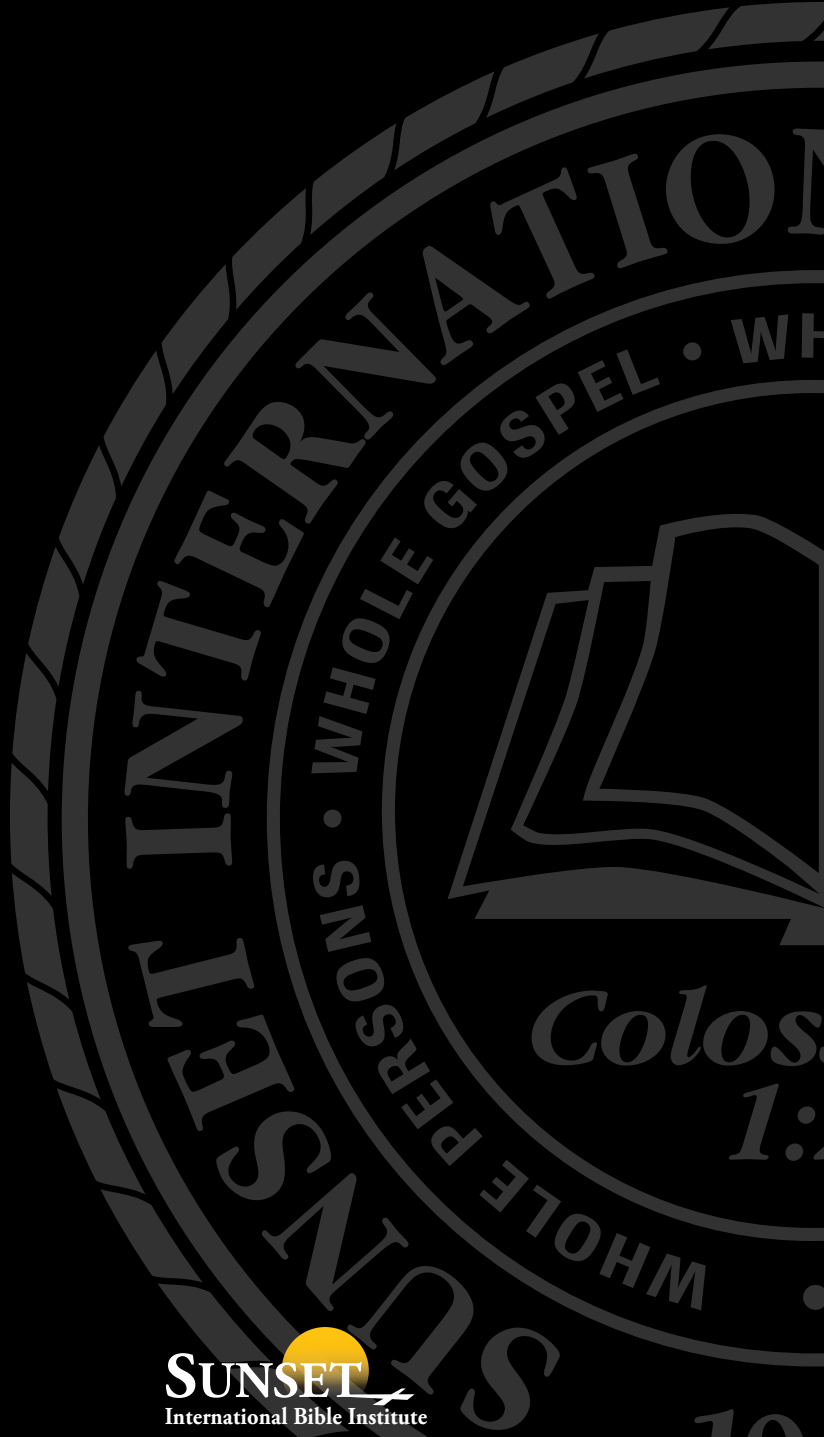
3rd Trimester – September 9th through December 14th

### 2025:

1st Trimester – January 13th through April 19th

2nd Trimester – May 12th through August 16th

3rd Trimester – September 8th through December 13th



**SUNSET**  
International Bible Institute