

Bible 101

Night 2

9.9.2020

1. We believe that the Bible Is God's Word to Humanity.

A. All of Scripture is inspired by God.

2 Timothy 3:16 (CSB)

¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness,

1. All of Scripture means all of Scripture.
2. The Old Testament is equally inspired as the New. (Many believers equate the New over the Old which is a mistake).
3. Paul's letters is equal with John or Mark (some segments elevate Paul over the others).
4. Jesus' Words are just as inspired as Psalms, Leviticus, or any other book).

B. There is great profit in reading, studying, understanding, and applying Scripture.

1. Profit for teaching.
2. Rebuke (test, expose, convict)
3. correction (reform, improve)
4. training in righteousness (right position with God and with people).

C. The Assemblies of God, and most evangelical groups, believe in the Verbal, Plenary inspiration of Scripture.

1. Verbal, meaning that God communicated the Scripture to the authors in a way that received it faithfully.
2. Plenary, meaning full and complete.

a. There are no missing books, visions, or teachings that would add understanding to our view of God.

b. Although the fullness of God cannot be captured in human words, God has given a complete picture of His character and the way to salvation through the Bible.

2. A lot is at stake in reading the Bible correctly.

A. Bad interpretation has bad results.

1. Consider the churches in the hills of KY and WV that handle snakes.

2. Leaders like Jim Jones and groups like Waco claimed biblical backing.

B. Interpretation also effects our practice as churches.

1. For example, what about women serving in ministry?

2. Should Christians consume alcohol?

3. Is homosexuality a sin, or is adultery the only sexual sin that matters?

4. Is speaking in tongues for everyone, no one, or doesn't matter?

5. These are all issues of interpretation and the results matter.

C. Sincerity does not prevent heresy.

1. Just because you are sincere doesn't mean you are right.

2. Just because you are confident doesn't mean you are right.

3. We will talk more about this at the end.

Exploring the rule of hermeneutics.

Rule #1: Context determines meaning.

A. No one likes their words taken out of context.

1. The context is what provides the meaning of our words.
2. Example: "I'm going to kill you" is an appropriate thing to say to a spider but is assault if said to a person.
3. In 1 Corinthians, Paul writes "Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die".
 - a. If we take that out of context and make it apostolic teaching, then we shouldn't worry about anything.
 - b. But when we understand that the context is a quotation of what false-teachers had been saying, the meaning is completely different.

B. How do I find the context?

1. Read the whole.
2. Know what comes before and after.
3. Define any words, references, illustrations you don't understand.
4. Brush up on your history.

C. Fun, absurd example:

1. I believe it is biblical for Christians, and especially, young Christians to drink only milk.
2. And the spiritual leader should serve milk at Church every Sunday.

[1Co 3:2 CSB] 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, since you were not yet ready for it. In fact, you are still not ready,

3. Tell me why that is wrong?
4. Your answer is dealing with context.

Rule #2: Let Scripture interpret Scripture.

A. For centuries a common method of understanding Scripture is what we call allegory.

1. Allegory looks for the hidden, spiritual meaning.
2. That sounds like a good idea, but it is actually a terrible way to understand Scripture.
 - a. Some of the great Church Father's like Origen and St. Augustine believed this was the best way to understand Scripture.
 - b. Augustine's Commentary on the Good Samaritan

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho; Adam himself is meant; Jerusalem is the heavenly city of peace, from whose blessedness Adam fell; Jericho means the moon, and signifies our mortality, because it is born, waxes, wanes, and dies. Thieves are the devil and his angels. Who stripped him, namely; of his immortality; and beat him, by persuading him to sin; and left him half-dead, because in so far as man can understand and know God, he lives, but in so far as he is wasted and oppressed by sin, he is dead; he is therefore called half-dead. The priest and the Levite who saw him and passed by, signify the priesthood and ministry of the Old Testament which could profit nothing for salvation. Samaritan means Guardian, and therefore the Lord Himself is signified by this name. The binding of the wounds is the restraint of sin. Oil is the comfort of good hope; wine the exhortation to work with fervent spirit. The beast is the flesh in which He deigned to come to us. The being set upon the beast is belief in the incarnation of Christ. The inn is the Church, where travelers returning to their heavenly country are refreshed after pilgrimage. The morrow is after the resurrection of the Lord. The two pence are either the two precepts of love, or the promise of this life and of that which is to come. The innkeeper is the Apostle (Paul). The supererogatory payment is either his counsel of celibacy, or the fact that he worked with his own hands lest he should be a burden to any of the weaker brethren when the Gospel was new, though it was lawful for him "to live by the gospel"[1]

- c. This interpretation is terrible.
- d. It misses Jesus' original meaning.

e. The meaning is also completely dependent upon Augustine's personality and experience.

B. Rule #2 seeks to find the meaning from the Bible itself.

1. Matthew 13 tells the Parable of the Sower.
2. Jesus uses imagery like seed and sowing.
3. But then, Jesus tells us what everything means.
4. We don't have to allegorize the meaning because Jesus explained the answer.

C. Sunday, I explained that Amos 9 refers to a harvest.

1. All through Scripture, the harvest refers to both physical fruit and people.
2. I let the Bible define the terms and explain what things mean.

D. When you come across imagery, especially apocalyptic imagery, look and see if that imagery is used and explained elsewhere.

1. Daniel and Revelation use similar imagery.
2. Isaiah uses the same terms and expressions throughout.

Rule #3: Genre influences interpretation.

A. Each book of the Bible is written in a genre.

1. Genre is a category and style of literature.
2. Some of the main genres are:
 - a. Narrative (story)
 - b. History
 - c. Epistle/letter
 - d. Prophecy
 - e. Apocalypse
 - f. Law

g. Parable

h. Wisdom/Poetry

3. Each genre is unique and has its own rules: How to Read the Bible for All its worth is great at explaining this.

B. We don't read all genre the same.

1. Newspapers are written differently than a scientific journal.

2. A song is interpreted differently than a speech.

C. It makes sense that we would read different books differently.

1. Apocalypse uses imagery that needs to be interpreted.

2. But you don't interpret the details of history the same way.

3. A "Garden" in the Song of Solomon is a different kind of garden in Matthew.

D. When we set out to interpret a passage, we need to know what genre the passage is.

1. The Genre will determine the tools you use.

2. We will spend time in this Group working through different genres and how to interpret them.

Rule #4: The plain meaning is, usually, the correct meaning.

A. If the passage makes sense the way it is written, then that is often the meaning.

1. This is dependent upon genre.

2. Poetry can be a little tricky.

3. Parable, Prophecy, and some others are too.

4. But in narrative, history, and epistle, the plain meaning is usually the intended meaning.

B. This is often challenging:

1. What about Jesus' teachings on divorce?
 2. Often the same people that will claim Scripture is clear that women can't be in ministry will justify what Jesus says about divorce.
- C. What do I do if the "plain" meaning contradicts other places?
1. First, let Scripture interpret itself.
 2. Second, ask what is said about the topic elsewhere in Scripture.
 3. Third, ask questions of the culture and history.

Rule #5: Seek first to understand, then to apply.

- A. We tend to jump from reading to application.
1. But the first step is to understand.
 2. Somethings can't be fully applied until they are understood.
 3. You can't know the application if you don't understand the interpretation.
- B. Read for understanding.
1. Understand what is happening.
 2. Who the audience is.
 3. What the occasion or reason for the Book is.
 4. Understand the passage as, first, a message from God to a particular people, in a particular place, at a particular time.
- C. Dig for principles.
1. Principles are those things that are true no matter who says it and where it is said.
 2. Principles are like handles that help us "carry" the weight of the text.
 3. Then apply the principles to your situation or culture.

Rule #6: Don't base doctrine on an isolated text.

A. Doctrine is a belief or set of beliefs.

1. We believe that Jesus is the Perfect, Sinless Son of God.
2. We believe in a literal heaven and a literal hell.
3. We believe that salvation is by grace, through faith in Jesus.
4. We believe that Divine Healing is for today.
5. We believe that every believer should be Baptized by the Holy Spirit.
6. We believe that Jesus is returning someday soon.

B. 1 Corinthians 15:29 is an example of an isolated text that leads to bad doctrine.

1. Paul refers to a Baptism for the Dead.
2. But nowhere else is this mentioned.
3. Yet, the Mormon church allows proxy or vicarious baptisms for dead loved ones to make sure they go to heaven.

C. Doctrine and Practice should be based on 2 or more Scriptures and their clear teachings.

1. Doctrine should have clear support throughout Scripture and in various places.
2. A reverse example from above is Paul's admonition for women to be silent in church.
 - a. What does Scripture say about women in other portions?
 - b. We know that Hannah prayed at the Tabernacle, aloud.
 - c. We know that many of Paul's supporters and fellow servants were women (Romans 16 is an example).
 - d. Be careful not to base doctrine on one passage.

Rule #7: Understanding is a process, not an event.

A. We all must recognize that we are not perfect and not perfectly mature.

1. Therefore, I understand can and will change.
2. Our understanding should deepen and mature as we grow in Christ.
3. Part of maturing is recognizing more and more that we do not know everything.

B. Don't be discouraged if you don't know all the answers.

1. And don't make up answers.
2. Be ok with questions that drive you to study and discover.
3. Don't delegate your personal study to someone else (like pastor, evangelist, or author).

C. Humanities' understanding is fallible.

1. We are not perfect.
2. Our translations, commentaries, preaching, and prophecy has the potential to be wrong.
3. We are all to test the teaching and the Spirit and subject it to the authority of Scripture.

D. Sincerity is not enough to make something true.

1. Right now, a lot of people are paying attention to a guy named Dana Coverstone and these terrible visions prophecies he is giving.
2. No doubt he is sincere, but that doesn't make him right.
3. John Lindell did an excellent job back in a sermon that demonstrates how basic rules of interpretation and sound thinking can provide amazing perspective. [Link below.](#)

4. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/no-fear-guided-into-the-future-pastor-john-lindell/id201590229?i=1000485220510>

E. You don't have to correct every error, but you also don't have to believe everything you read/hear.

Definitions of Hermeneutics and Related Terms

HERMENEUTICS

The science (principles) and art (task) by which the meaning of the biblical text is determined.

EXEGESIS

The determination of the meaning of the biblical text in its historical and literary contexts.

EXPOSITION

The communication of the meaning of the text along with its relevance to present-day hearers.

HOMILETICS

The science (principles) and art (task) by which the meaning and relevance of the biblical text are communicated in a preaching situation.

PEDAGOGY

The science (principles) and art (task) by which the meaning and relevance of the biblical text are communicated in a teaching situation.¹

¹ Donald K. Campbell, "[Foreword](#)," in *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth*, ed. Craig Bubeck Sr. (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1991), 20.