

Milestone of Discipleship

Knowledge (2 of 2)

Understanding God's Word

Understanding God's Word is accomplished when we interpret the Bible historically and _____. The interpretation of Scripture is only concerned with one question: *What did the author mean by what he (or she) wrote?*

By "historically", I mean that we consider the culture, the period, and the historical circumstances in which a Scripture was written. By "grammatically," I mean that we consider the words (and only those words) being used to determine the _____ the writer is conveying.

"The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple." (Ps 119:130)

"God intended his written revelation to be understood. The clarity of Scripture depends on an all-wise God who knows how to express his revelation in a way that can be understood by all peoples and in all cultures and in all eras."¹

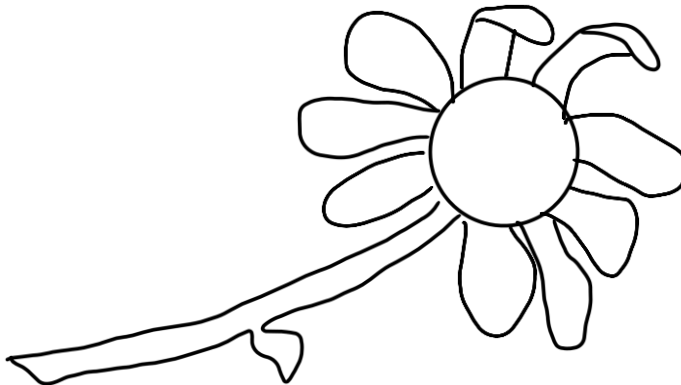
The science of interpretation is called _____. This science is a necessary method for believers to interpret God's word. With this knowledge, they can learn, apply, and live out the truths of God's Word in their daily lives.

What are the two pillars of a proper hermeneutic?

_____ and _____.

_____ of these pillars is necessary before a proper _____ can be made.

After a text is interpreted, it can be properly _____ to the life of the believer.



¹ William Barrick, *The Inerrant Word*, ed. John MacArthur (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 247.

A Contending Hermeneutic

There is a contending method of interpretation that is *not* a method that ZBC or RMF would endorse. This is often called a “Christ-centered hermeneutic”. It is a method of interpretation that adds one extra consideration to the science of hermeneutics: _____. I will give an example of what it looks like:

22 And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, ³and sent his servants^[a] to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ ⁵But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. ⁷The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ ¹⁰And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹“But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. ¹²And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matthew 22:1-14)

1. When it comes to parables, how many points did Jesus intend for each parable?
2. So what was the point of this parable, and how can we determine that it is the point?
3. What did Jesus mean when he stated that point?

The reason we do not use theology to interpret the Bible is that theology is the _____ of hermeneutics; it is not a _____ for hermeneutics. Using theology as an ingredient for hermeneutics is like using cake as one of the ingredients to make cake.

A related error is one called D.A. Carson calls “parallelomania”. This is when someone finds statements in one scripture and concludes that, since a similar statement is made in another passage, the interpretations are the same.

14 “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God;^[a] believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?^[b] ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. (John 14:1-3)

5 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ²For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, ³if indeed by putting it on^[a] we may not be found naked. ⁴For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.^[b] (2 Cor. 5:1-5)

Therefore, each text ought to be interpreted by observing the history and the words associated with it.

Grammar

Words find their meaning by their _____ with other words.

Bob ate the fish.

The fish ate Bob.

Pronouns should be _____ properly.

If pronouns are confused, the interpretation can be altered. At times, it can be easy to misidentify the subject by misassociating the pronoun. What practice might help to minimize that risk?

Figurative language is determined to be figurative under **two** circumstances:

- 1.** The author has stated that the language is figurative:

¹⁹ Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” ²⁰ The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple,^[a] and will you raise it up in three days?” ²¹ But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

2. It would be _____ for the reader to assume otherwise:

“So, Jesus again said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.’”
(John 10:7)

Unless either of these circumstances arises, the interpreter ought to assume the words are literal.

Can you think of any examples where people interpret God’s word figuratively without the text indicating it?

Application

With the historical grammatical interpretation complete, the disciple is ready to apply the passage to his or her life.

How many Interpretations (meanings) does a passage have?

How many applications does a passage have?

So long as the application is tied to the _____, that application is acceptable.

Let’s take an example from a popular story:

David and Goliath.

What would be an acceptable application one could draw from that story?

Observation of the history and the grammar will lead to the interpretation. Interpretation will lead to an acceptable life application.

Questions?