



GRACE LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Class 5 Hermeneutics

REVIEW

Biblical foundations for Literal Hermeneutics

Homework: Acts 1:8

LITERAL/NORMAL HERMENEUTICS

Why?

"The literal method of interpretation is the usual practice in the interpretation of literature."
(Ramm)

Originalism

We seek to interpret Scripture according to the _____ that correspond to the way we _____ any written document.

The literal interpretation of a text is the _____ that is derived from the author's _____ determined within the original _____.

Inventions or Descriptions?

HERMENEUTICAL PILLARS

1. Grammatical

We seek to interpret Scripture in harmony with the way _____ works.

The meaning of Words (lexicology)

The form of words (morphology)

The function of words (parts of speech)

The relationships of words (syntax) Roy Zuck, BBI, 100

2. Historical

Circumstance and Setting

Biblical Writer

Initial Audience

Historical Setting (broadly)

3. Cultural

"Culture includes what people think and believe, say, do, and make" (Zuck, 79).

Questions to discover background material (GGW, 107)

- Who was the author?
- What was his background?
- When did he write?
- What was the nature of his ministry?
- What kind of relationship did he have with the audience?
- Why was he writing?
- Who was the biblical audience?
- What were their circumstances?
- How was their relationship to God?
- What kind of relationship did they have with each other?
- What was happening at the time the book was written?
- Are there any other historical-cultural factors that might shed light on the book?

4. **Contextual**

The golden rule: Context determines meaning.

Literary Context

Dangers of Ignoring Literary Context

5. **Cannonical**

Not to be confused with the system of Interpretation called “canonical.”
Scripture interprets Scripture. We must let the clear passages speak for the obscure.
We must stay within the bounds of Scripture and not impose tradition, creed, ideas on it.

TEXT BOOK REVIEW

General Principles of Hermeneutics From Others

Christopher Cone, *Prolegomena on Biblical Hermeneutics and Method*, 252.

1. God's word in its entirety is authoritative propositional truth.
2. Everyone bears personal responsibility to study all of it.
3. The study of God's word should affect lives, not simply increase knowledge (2 Tim. 3:16).
4. Man cannot appraise Scripture without the aid of the Holy Spirit and the mind of Christ.
5. Scripture is written in common language, bearing one meaning (univocal), and should be understood in its normative (literal historical grammatical) sense.

6. Context determines the meaning of words, including the verses immediately surrounding the text, the paragraph and chapter, the whole book, the historical and cultural setting, and the literary form.
7. Cumulative revelation determines context. It is God's word, and, therefore, He decides what it means; therefore, use Scripture to explain Scripture, rather than placing outside sources (church doctrine, theological conclusions, personal experience, etc.) above the authority of Scripture.
8. There is distinction between primary and secondary application, and we must be sure not to confuse the two.

Hodge's Rules. *Systematic Theology*. 1:187.

1. Words are to be taken in their plain historical sense.
2. Scripture is the work of one Mind - the divine mind (non-contradiction).
3. Guidance of the Spirit is needed.

Beware's Rules of Interpreting Prophecy. *Understanding End Times Prophecy: A Comprehensive Approach*, 21-30.

1. Interpret the prophetic passage literally.
2. Interpret by comparing prophecy with prophecy.
3. Interpret in light of possible time intervals.
4. Interpret in light of double reference (with great caution).
5. Interpret figurative language Scripturally.

The Results of a Consistently Literal Hermeneutic

- A. Submission to the authority of Scripture
- B. Recognition of cumulative revelation (progressive revelation)
- C. Awareness of doxological Centrality
- D. Normative Dispensational Conclusions
- E. Distinction between Israel and the Church

USE OF OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

"The Old Testament must not receive multiple meanings by being read through the eye of the New Testament." (Robert Thomas, 242).

"Clearly the NT sometimes applies OT passages in a way that gives an additional dimension beyond their grammatical-historical meaning. This does not cancel the grammatical-historical meaning of the OT; it is simply an application of the OT passage beyond its original meaning, the authority for which application is the NT passage." (Robert Thomas, 251).

Horne's classifications of the NT quotations by category.

1. Quotations that agree exactly with the Hebrew
2. Quotations nearly agreeing with the Hebrew

3. Quotations agreeing with the Hebrew in sense but not in words
4. Quotations that give the general sense but that abridge the material or add to it
5. Quotations taken from several passages of Scripture
6. Quotations differing from the Hebrew but agreeing with the Septuagint
7. Quotations agreeing verbatim with the Septuagint or changing the number of persons
8. Quotations taken from the Septuagint but with some variation
9. Quotations agreeing with the Septuagint in sense but not in words
10. Quotations differing from the Septuagint but agreeing exactly or nearly so with the Hebrew
11. Quotations differing from both the Septuagint and the Hebrew which were probably taken from some other translation or paraphrase.

“People who write books or magazine articles often quote other writings. They do so to support what they themselves are saying, to give an example or illustration of their viewpoint, to summarize their points, or to make comparisons or parallels between their material and that of someone else. For similar reasons — though in some cases slightly different — the human writers of the New Testament books quoted from the Old Testament” (Zuck, 260).

	Purposes of the Old Testament Quotations (BBI, 260-268).	Examples
1	To Point Up the Accomplishment or realization of an Old Testament Prediction	Matt. 1:22-23 w/ Isa. 7:14 Matt. 8:17 w/ Isa. 53:4 Matt. 4:14-16 w/ Isa. 9:1-2
2	To Confirm That a NT Incident Is In Agreement with an OT Principle	Acts 15:15 w/ Amos 9:11-12 Rom. 2:23-24 w/ Isa. 52:5
3	To Explain a Point Given in the OT	Acts 2:16-21 w/ Joel 2:28-32
4	To Support a Point Being Made in the NT	Matt. 22:32 w/ Ex. 3:6 Mark 10:8 w/ Gen. 2:24 Rom. 1:17 w/ Hab. 2:4 Rom. 4:7-8 w/ Ps. 32:1-2
5	To Illustrate a NT Truth	Rom. 10:16 w/ Isa. 53:1 1 Cor. 1:19 w/ Isa. 29:14
6	To Apply the OT to a NT Incident or Truth	Rom. 9:11-15 w/ Ex. 33:19 1 Cor. 9:9 w/ Deut. 25:4
7	To Summarize an OT Concept	Matt. 2:23 w/ Judge. 13:5
8	To Use Old Testament Terminology	Rom. 10:18 w/ Ps. 19:4 Lk. 2:34 w/ Ps. 37:15
9	To Draw a Parallel with an OT Incident	Rom. 11:5 w/ 1 Kings 19:18 Rom. 11:7-8 w/ Isa. 29:10 Rom. 8:36 w/ Ps. 44:22
10	To Relate an OT situation to Christ	Matt. 2:15 w/ Hos. 11:1 Matt. 2:17-18 w/ Jer. 31:15 Matt. 13:13-14 w/ Isa. 6:9-10

Did the NT Authors understand what they wrote?

1. Apparently they did not always fully comprehend all they wrote (e.g. Dan. 12:8-9).
2. Progress of revelation must be acknowledged (e.g. John 2:22 w/ 12:16)
3. Some passages may not have been recognized as prophetic until they were fulfilled (e.g. Mic. 5:2; Isa. 9:6-7).
4. The enlarging or heightening of passages in relation to Christ is another factor that suggests that God had in mind more than the authors knew.

Note: In the NT, the word “fulfilled” does not *always* mean the realization of a prediction (Zuck, 267).

LITERARY GENRES ¹

Entire books and smaller units within them are in varied Genres

1. **Legal** (aka Law - different from laws, as it is its own genre)
 - A. Material that contains commands for Israel. Exodus 20-40; Leviticus, portions of Numbers (chaps. 5-6, 15, 18-19, 28-30, 34-35) and almost all of Deuteronomy.
 1. Apodictic Law: Direct Commands - Ex. 20:3-17 (10 commandments)
 2. Casuistic Law: case-by-case law. “A condition setting forth a specific situation introduce the laws.” (Zuck, 127). Lev. 20:9-18, 20-21; Deut. 15:7-17. Ex. 23:4-5.

2. **Narrative**

“A story told for the purpose of conveying a message through the people and their problems” (Zuck, 128).

Narrative Patterns: A **problem** occurs near beginning, with increasing **complications** that reach a **climax**, then it moves to a **solution**, and solving the **problem**. (Zuck, 128).

Narrative is often historical in nature (historical books - Samuels, Kings, Chronicles)

Background or intro — Complication (problem)— Climax (solution to problem) — conclusion [Cotterell and Turner - Look for “peaking.”]

Six kinds of narratives (Zuck, 129)

- A. **Tragedy** - a story of the decline of a person from verity to catastrophe. *Examples:* Samson, Saul and Solomon
- B. **Epic** - a long narrative with a series of episodes unified around an individual or a group of people. *Example:* Israel’s wilderness wandering.
- C. **Romance** - a long narrative in which a romantic relationship between a man and woman is narrated. *Examples:* Books of Ruth; Song of Songs.
- D. **Heroic** - a narrative story built around the life and exploits of a hero or protagonist, an individual who sometimes is a representative of others or an example for others. *Examples:* Abraham, Gideon, David, Daniel, Paul
- E. **Satire** - a satirical narrative is an exposure of human vice or folly through ridicule or rebuke. *Examples:* Jonah.

¹ This section summarized from BBI, Zuck, 121-137.

- F. **Polemic** - a polemic narrative is an aggressive attack against or refuting of the views of others. *Examples*: Elijah's contest with the 450 prophets of Baal prophets (1 Kings 18:16-46).
3. **Poetry** - Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. Also in many prophetic books.
1. Psalms - all different kinds of psalms (cf. Zuck, 130)
4. **Wisdom literature** - Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes (Song of Songs). All wisdom literature is poetry, but not all poetry is wisdom literature.
- Two kinds: 1). Proverbial literature (e.g. Proverbs). 2). Reflective
5. **Gospels**
- "The Gospels are collections of stories, far more packed with action than is customary in narrative. The overriding purpose of the Gospel stories is to explain and praise the Person and work of Jesus... through his actions, through his words, and through the responses of other people to Him" (Leland Ryken, *The Literature of the Bible*, 275).
- Historical-biographical
6. **Epistles** (aka - letters, Logical discourse (Zuck).
- NT letters - Romans through Jude. Includes expository discourse (expounds truths/ doctrine) and hortatory discourse (exhortations to follow certain actions, develop characteristics, etc.).
- Usually written to a local church (1 Cor. 1:2), may be an individual (Philemon) or combination (1 and 2 Timothy).
7. **Prophecy**. Material that includes predictions of the future, at the time of writing, with injunctions often included to the audience to take heed to what is written and adjust their own course of life and conduct.
- Apocalyptic Literature* - form of prophetic literature that focuses on end times utilizing highly symbolic and figurative language in its descriptions of realities to come.

Hebrew Poetry

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

THE HERMENEUTICAL PROCESS IN ACTION

BOOK STUDIES

The following is suggested by Cone in *Prolegomena on Biblical Hermeneutics and Method*.
Approaching Individual Book Studies (Cone, 256).

1. First reading - for gleaning overall message, observation of standout words, themes, etc.
2. Second reading - for major thought, thematic, and dialogic divisions.
3. Third reading - further attention given to context and difficult passages.
4. Outline the book based on identified internal divisions.
5. Develop introductory material and setting by correlation using Biblical chronology (e.g., the relation of the ministries of Haggai and Zechariah to Ezra 5-6, and the Thessalonian letters to Acts 17-18).
6. Verify outline based on context gleaned in correlation.
7. Begin exegetical process for verse analysis.

SENTENCE STUDIES

Identifying Clauses / Sentences

- 1.
- 2.

What to Look for In Sentences

1. Repetition of Words
2. Contrasts (differences)
3. Comparisons (similarities)
4. Lists
5. Cause and Effect
6. Figures of Speech
7. Conjunctions
8. Verbs
9. Pronouns

PASSAGE STUDIES

Dr. G. Gunn suggests the following steps in exegeting a passage.²

1. Separate the paragraph into individual clauses.
 - g. Note the verbs and verbals (single underline)
 - i. Finite verbs
 - ii. Particles used as verbs of subordinate clauses
 - iii. Infinitives used as verbs of subordinate clauses
 - h. Note conjunctions (double underline)
 - i. Note relative pronouns
2. Use indentations to show coordinate / subordinate relationships.
3. Separate and indent smaller parallel sense units.

² BS 110 Applied Hermeneutics Notes.

- a. Prepositional phrases
- b. Infinitives
- c. Adjectives
- d. Appositives
4. Tag each line to indicate what kind of relationship it bears.
5. Develop an exegetical outline of the passage based on this diagram.
6. Develop homiletical outlines and ideas based on the exegetical outline.

Exegetical Outline: Colossians 3:1-4

- II. Keep seeking (devote serious effort to) the things above - 3:1
 - A. Who? Believers are raised with Christ. 3:1b. Cf. "raised up with Christ" cf. 2:12-13; 20
 - B. Union with Christ means that where Christ is, believers are.
 1. Christ is at the right hand of God
 2. We are in Christ (2:20; 3:1)
 3. We are seated with Christ in the heavenliness
- III. Believers are to set their mind (give careful thought) on things above, not earthly things-3:2
 - A. Believer's Death and Union with Christ - 3
 1. Died with Christ
 2. Life is identified with Christ
 - a) By God
 - B. Future Revelation of Believers with Christ - 3:4
 1. Christ's revelation
 2. Believer's union with Christ
 3. Believer's revelation
 - a) When Christ is revealed
 - b) Believer's will be revealed
 - (1) With Him
 - (2) In Glory

Teaching/Preaching Outline: Colossians 3:1-4

Set Your Mind on Things Above

- I. The Theological Grounds for our Thinking: Who We Are in Christ
 - A. Died with Christ
 - B. Raised with Christ
 - C. Seated with Christ
- II. The practical Impact of our Identity to our Thinking
How Believers Union and Identification with Christ impacts Our Thinking
Christ is the central focus of our thinking
 - A. Keep seeking - Give serious Effort to this
 - B. Why? Because our thinking should be grounded in our identity and location.
 - 1. (Above) Died/raised with Christ
 - 2. (Above) We are seated with Christ
 - C. Believer's thinking must be ...
 - 1. Intentional - word means "give careful thought"
 - 2. Properly located
 - a) On things above
 - (1) Our thinking must be in association with Christ and His person and work, and with Truth
 - b) Not on "earthly things" (what are these? See verse 5 for hint).
 - (1) Thinking is not be in the landfill of this world
 - 3. Theologically Anchored
 - a) You have died
 - b) You life is hidden with Christ
 - 4. What does this look like? (5-7)
 - 5. How do we do this? (8-17)
 - D. The Future Revelation of Believers
 - 1. Our thinking now is to be a prelude to the future
 - a) Because of our union with Him, when Christ will be revealed, we will be revealed
 - 2. Our thinking now is anchored in the past (Christ's death; resurrection)
 - 3. Our thinking now raises above the earthly things of life, sin nature, and a cursed world (whether circumstances change or not, our thinking can be wholesome, holy, pure, and anchored to Christ)
 - 4. A motivation for our thinking. Revelation in Glory: We will be revealed with Christ in glory one day.

WORD STUDIES

The Aim

The Process

1. Choose your words carefully
2. Determine what the word could mean
3. Determine what the word means in context

Semantic Range

Fallacies

1. English-Only Fallacy
2. Root Fallacy
3. Time-Frame Fallacy
4. Dump-truck Fallacy
5. Word-Count Fallacy
6. Word-Concept Fallacy
7. Selective-Evidence Fallacy

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books are listed in order of priority and recommendation.

Daniel Goepfrich. *Hermeneutics for Everyone: A Practical Guide for Reading and Studying Your Bible.*

Roy B. Zuck. *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practice Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth.*

J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible.*

Robert L. Thomas. *Evangelical Hermeneutics: The New Versus the Old.*

Christopher Cone. *Prolegomena on Biblical Hermeneutics and Methods.*

Christopher Cone. *Priority in Biblical Hermeneutics and Theological Method.*

Howard and William Hendricks. *Living By the Book.*

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Darrell Bock and Buist Fanning. *Interpreting the New Testament Text.*

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Charles Hodge. *Systematic Theology.*

Kenneth Birding; Jonathan Lunde; Stanley Gundry (Eds). *New Testament Use of the Old Testament.*