

Secrets to Great Bible Study *PART 2*

August 28 - October 9, 2019

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What Does It Mean?

In the previous course we learned several strategies for making observations in Scripture. We now know how to pick out key words and phrases that will help us break the Bible down into bite size pieces that are more easily understandable. In the last course we asked the question What Does It Say, but now we will ask the second question in the sequence; What Does It Mean?

2 Timothy 2:15 (HCSB)

*¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed, **correctly teaching** the word of truth.*

(This verse assumes there is a **correct** way to interpret Scripture)

Overview of this portion of the course

- 8 essential principles for proper biblical interpretation
- 4 C's of biblical interpretation
- How to use Bible study tools to enhance your Bible study interpretation
- How to get to the author's "original intent"

8 Principles For Biblical Interpretation

(Please refer to the *Principles For Interpretation Checklist* sheets)

HOW TO INTERPRET DIFFERENT BIBLICAL GENRES

What makes the Bible so unique is that it is written in different genres (Poetry, Wisdom, Prophetic, Narrative, Parables, Proverbs, Gospels, etc. If we are not careful we will interpret them all the same way. There are rules for interpreting each and we will look at several now.

A. Interpreting a Narrative (Story)

- a. Interpret the Plot (conflict, character development, content, etc)
- b. Determine the broader Theological Principles
 - Esther - "God can use specific people to do amazing things"
 - Joseph - "God takes the time He needs with us (13yr - Joseph in Egypt)"
 - Ruth - "God often blesses the more difficult decision in our lives"
 1. Ruth clung to Naomi (*Ruth 1:16*)
 2. Your God is my God and your people are my people
- c. What does this story teach me About God?
 - 2 Samuel 11 - 12 David and Bathsheba
 1. This section of Scripture written after David's adultery with Bathsheba and shows God's hand and blessing removed from David's life at this point. Shows family problems.
 2. Teaches us that God considers leadership a serious issue and will do what He needs to draw people back to Him.
- d. What are the Timeless Truths I see emerge from this story?
 - This includes the OT and the NT

B. Interpreting a Parable

- a. Determine the Context of the parable (what happened before and after?)
- b. Determine the Catalyst (why was this parable told?)
 - Jesus was the best story teller but not to just hear Himself speak
- c. Determine the Characters (who do the characters represent in the story?)
 - Luke 15:11-32 Parable of the Prodigal Son
 - There were two sons. One was rebellious and went off on his own. The other son was religious and wondered why he wasn't getting the blessing his younger brother did.
 - Rebellious son = could be Gentiles Religious son = could be Jews

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- d. Determine the Central Truth (what is the parable teaching me?)
- Luke 7:41-42 Who are the characters?
 1. Jesus was having dinner at a religious man's house and a sinful prostitute was eating with them. The religious man looked down on the woman "Jesus, You shouldn't be talking to this piece of garbage."
 2. The woman could represent the 500 pieces and the religious man 50 pieces. (The woman saw all her sin and admitted it.)
 3. Neither person could repay the Master. The Master is represents God and He canceled both their debts.
 4. Lesson: *only sinners answer the call for faith. Self-righteous people fail to see their need of it.*

C. Interpreting Hebrew Poetry

- a. KEY: Hebrew Poetry represents the Emotions of the biblical writer
- Psalm 139:19-22
 - David's use of the word "hate" shows him expressing his emotions about people who willfully go against God's will.
- b. Try to figure out, if possible, the context and time in which the Psalm was written.
- Psalm 51 and 32 were written shortly after David's adultery with Bathsheba and expresses his repentance of sin.

D. Interpreting Proverbs

- a. **KEY:** Remember these are principles not promises
- Proverbs 22:6 - this does not promise a child will not stray just because we raise them as Christians, but it is more likely they will not stray if we are teaching them the things of God.
 - Proverbs 21:17 - does this suggest that people who enjoy pleasure will be poor? NO. But, if you spend more time in pleasure than work you will not have much if any money.
- b. This is Wisdom Literature

E. **Interpreting Prophecy**

- a. Determine the People to whom the prophet was speaking
 - This is for the OT especially. Was it Israel or another nation?
- b. Determine the Period in which the prophet was speaking
 - Was it before Israel went into exile? During? After?
- c. Determine the major Problem the prophet was addressing

"I guarantee you will never read the Bible the same again"

Pastor Billy Beaver

My Notes from Session One

Pastor Beaver has gathered his thoughts from the following resources:

- The Holy Bible HCSB/NIV/KJV/NASB/ESV
- Parr, Allen - *Bible Study Made Easy* online course "privately enrolled"
allenparr.kartra.com
- Zuck, Roy B. *Basic Bible Interpretation*. Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries, 1991. WORDsearch CROSS e-book.
- Hendricks, Howard/Hendricks, William. *Living By The Book The Art and Science of Reading The Bible* 2007