

Interpreting the Scriptures

Student Manual

Interpreting the Scriptures

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Note to Users: The following course is intended to be studied in conjunction with the book *Interpreting the Scriptures* by Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin.

Lesson 1-4 Introduction to Hermeneutics

I. Is the Bible an open or a closed book?

- A. The Bible is a closed book to _____ (I Cor. 2:14; II Cor. 4:3-4).
- B. The Bible is an open book to _____ (John 16:13; I John 2:27).
1. The _____ is clear to all (Compare: II Pet. 3:15-16).
 - a. The Bible was written to _____ (John 20:30-31; I Pet. 2:1-3).
 - b. The Bible was given to enlighten everyone from _____ to adults (II Tim. 3:14-15).
 - c. The Bible in and of itself is able to direct people to _____ in Christ (I John 1:1-4).
 - d. The Bible is written in a language that is fundamentally _____.

When it comes to the overall clarity of the Bible, one author put it this way to illustrate what is being said.

“Consider this statement: ‘Go to the Kroger store and buy 10 pounds of potatoes.’ Now we might reasonably ask which Kroger store and which kind of potatoes. If we were unfamiliar with American culture, we might even ask what a potato is and how much a pound is. But would it ever be acceptable to interpret this statement to mean: ‘Go to the Himalayan Mountains and meditate on your navel?’ Would it be correct to say no one can be confident he understands this statement?

“Now consider this statement: ‘He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him’ (John 3:36). We might reasonably ask who the Son is, what ‘believe’ means, or if ‘believe’ and ‘obey’ are being used synonymously. But would it ever be acceptable to interpret this statement to mean: ‘It doesn’t matter what religion you believe because everyone goes to heaven?’ Would it be correct to say that no one can be confident he understands this statement?”

- e. The main message of the Bible is continually _____.

James Sire puts it this way...

“When it comes to the central core of the Christian faith . . . the biblical evidence is overwhelming. The deity of Christ, the triune nature of God, the creation of the world by God, the sinfulness of all humanity, salvation by grace through faith, the resurrection of the dead—these and many other such matters are clearly taught in scripture.” --James Sire, *Scripture Twisting* (InterVarsity Press, 1980, pp. 12-13)

R.C. Sproul puts it this way...

“The Bible is basically clear and lucid. It is simple enough for any literate person to understand its *basic message*. This is not to say that all parts of the Bible are equally clear or that there are no difficult passages or sections to be found in it. Laymen unskilled in the ancient languages and the fine points of exegesis may have difficulty with parts of scripture, but the essential content is clear enough to be understood easily.”

--R. C. Sproul, *Knowing Scripture* (InterVarsity Press, 1977, p 15.)

2. There is revelation reserved for those with a “_____” (Mt. 13:12-17).
3. There is revelation reserved for those who _____ (Pro. 25:2; Mt. 5:6).
4. There is revelation reserved for certain _____ in God’s program (Dan. 12:4, 9; Rom. 16:25-27; Eph. 3:5; Col. 1:26; Rev. 5:1-2).

II. What does the word “hermeneutics” mean?

A. The simplest definition of “hermeneutics” is “the science or art of interpretation.”

1. It is a science because it involves the _____ by means of the recognition and application of ordered principles of research.
2. It is an art because it involves the _____ of knowledge and natural ability to the task of interpretation.

B. Other definitions include:

The science of interpretation, or of finding the meaning of an author’s words and phrases, and of explaining it to others. –Webster’s Dictionary

Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation theory. Traditional hermeneutics - which includes Biblical hermeneutics - refers to the study of the interpretation of written texts, especially texts in the areas of literature, religion and law. –Wikipedia

Essentially, hermeneutics involves cultivating the ability to understand things from somebody else's point of view, and to appreciate the cultural and social forces that may have influenced their outlook. Hermeneutics is the process of applying this understanding to interpreting the meaning of written texts and symbolic artifacts (such as art or sculpture or architecture), which may be either historic or contemporary. –Unknown

General hermeneutics refers to the various sets of rules which are used in the interpretation of materials presented through many forms of communication. Communication is the transmission and reception of thoughts and feelings in a medium common to both sender and receiver. All forms of communication, including speech, literature and the arts, present subject matter which require interpretation by the proper application of rules of general hermeneutics. –Conner, Malmin, pp. 3-4

C. Biblical hermeneutics differs from other hermeneutical forms in several ways.

1. Biblical hermeneutics deals principally with applying hermeneutical principles to _____.
2. Biblical hermeneutics deals with interpreting words from _____ as opposed to other forms that seek to interpret communication from man to man.

D. A biblical encouragement toward hermeneutical study can be found in II Timothy 2:15.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

1. We must be _____.

This means that we must “exert ourselves with earnest diligence” because there are obstacles and difficulties involved. Other translations say...

Study... --Amp

Earnestly endeavor... --ABUV

Do your best... --NIV

Work hard... --NLT

2. We must do it to please and be approved of by _____.

Other translations say it this way...

Earnestly seek to commend yourself to God... --Wey

Try hard to show yourself worthy of God's approval... --NEB

Aim first at winning God's approval... --Knox

Work hard so God can approve you... --NLT

Concentrate on doing your best for God... --Msg

3. We must be willing to do the _____ of it (I Tim. 5:17-18).

The word "labor" in this passage literally means "to feel fatigue."

4. We must rightly divide or be _____ in our use of the word.

To rightly divide literally means to "cut straight." This implies that there is a proper interpretation of what is being said. Other translations state it this way:

Ever cutting a straight path for the message of truth. --Mon

Driving a straight furrow, in your proclamation of truth. --NEB

Rightly laying out the Word of Truth. --Alf

Correctly analyzing the message of truth. --Ber

Skillfully handling the word. --Rhm

Accurate in delivering the message of truth. --TCNT

Declaring the word of truth without distortion. --Con

Laying out the truth plain and simple. --Msg

Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth. --Amp

Be eager [or, diligent] to present yourself approved to God [as] a worker with no need to be ashamed, cutting straight [fig., teaching accurately; or, interpreting correctly] the word of truth. --Analytical-Literal Translation

5. When we do not rightly divide the word of God we can end up _____.

This implies that an accurate interpretation is _____ for the person who will take this role seriously.

III. Why is the application of hermeneutical principles necessary?

There are several possible gaps that can occur between the sender and the receiver in communication.

- A. Historical Gap. In that the interpreter is separated from his materials in _____ there is a historical gap.
- B. Cultural Gap. In that the interpreter's _____ is different from that of his text there is a cultural gap.
- C. Linguistic Gap. In that the text is usually in a different _____ than that of the interpreter there is the linguistic gap.
- D. Geographical Gap. In that the document originates in another _____ from the interpreter there is the geographical gap and the biological gap (the flora and fauna).

The goal of biblical hermeneutics is to ascertain as closely as possible the meaning _____ by the original author. We want the interpreter to remain _____ the authority of the text instead of imposing his or her meaning on the text.

IV. Why is hermeneutics so important for the leader?

Hermeneutics is important for many reasons. It is important...

- A. Because when the Bible is correctly interpreted it has _____ (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12).
- B. Because many people misuse the Bible to support personal _____ (II Pet. 1:20-21).
- C. Because many _____ in Christianity are based on poor hermeneutics.

You wonder how Christians who share the same Bible can have so much diversity among them. There are four primary reasons for this:

1. They have a different view of the Bible and _____.
2. They operate with different hermeneutical _____.
3. They approach the Scriptures with _____ ideas.
4. They have a _____ theology that marginalizes much of the Bible.

- D. Because most _____ are the result of poor hermeneutics (II Pet. 3:16).

E. Because _____ will be a major problem in the end times (I Tim. 4:1-2; II Tim. 4:1-4; Mt. 24:4-5).

1. There will be many false and deceptive _____ (Mt. 24:5; Mark 13:6).

2. There will be many deceptive _____ (Mt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; II Th. 2:9).

3. There will be many false and deceptive _____ (I Tim. 4:1).

F. Because there is no perfect _____ or translation of the Bible (See Appendix).

V. What beliefs about the Bible form the basis for our hermeneutic?

A. This study of hermeneutics accepts the view of plenary, verbal inspiration.

The following is a doctrinal statement taken from our course Basic Doctrine (See Basic Doctrine I, The Doctrine of Scripture):

We believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration of the accepted canon of the Scriptures as originally given and that they are infallible and uniquely authoritative and free from error of any sort in all matters with which they deal, including scientific and historical as well as moral and theological issues.

This statement contains three important words: plenary, verbal and inspiration.

1. The word “plenary” means “full” or “_____.” Plenary inspiration means that the entire Bible is totally inspired by God.

a. Inspiration does not merely apply to portions of the Bible, but it applies to the _____.

b. Inspiration does not merely apply to doctrinal issues, but it applies to every _____.

2. The word “verbal” means “relating to _____.”

a. Verbal inspiration means that God not only gave the subject matter to be recorded, but the _____ that are used are inspired of God (Jer. 1:9; I Th. 2:13; I Chr. 28:11-12,19).

b. Verbal inspiration _____ that the writers were in a trance and that their personalities were totally overruled by the Spirit.

c. Verbal inspiration means that the Scripture is perfectly inerrant (_____) in all of its words and every one of its words (John 10:35b; Mt. 5:17-19; Acts 24:14).

3. The word “inspiration” means “God-breathed” (II Tim.3:16-17; II Pet. 1:21; II Sam. 23:2).

B. This study of hermeneutics accepts as fact that there are no _____ in the Bible.

Most “apparent” contradictions are the result of two things.

1. We lack _____ regarding some aspect of the texts in question.

2. We are bringing _____ or biases to the work of interpretation.

C. This study of hermeneutics accepts the view that the Bible is _____ given to us by the _____.

“For 40 different men to write 66 books in three languages over a period of 1600 years and have them become one harmonious book is humanly impossible. The unity and progression of thought together with the absence of contradiction indicates that the Bible really had only one author.” --Kevin Conner

1. The New Testament is an _____ of the Old Testament.

The New is in the Old contained
The Old is in the New explained

Or,

The New is in the Old concealed
The Old is in the New revealed

2. The New Testament _____ understood without the Old Testament.

3. The Old Testament _____ understood without the New Testament (I Pet. 1:10-12).

You cannot understand one without the other. You cannot understand the eternal purpose of God without both testaments working together. You see the Bible is one book.

VI. What is the relationship between revelation, illumination, inspiration, interpretation and application?

- A. **Revelation** is the act of God's _____ or transmitting His knowledge to man (Deut. 29:29).
- B. **Illumination** is the divine ability to _____ that which is given by revelation (I Pet. 1:10-12; Luke 24:32, 45).
- C. **Inspiration** of Scripture is the divine ability to _____ revelation without making a mistake (II Pet. 1:21).

“Inspiration is the strong, conscious inbreathing of God into men, qualifying them to give utterance to truth. It is God speaking through men, and the Old Testament is therefore just as much the Word of God as though God spoke every single word of it with His own lips. The Scriptures are the result of divine inbreathing, just as human speech is uttered by the breathing through a man’s mouth.” -- Great Doctrines of the Bible, William Evans

- D. **Interpretation** of Scripture is the process of discovering what the Scriptures actually say based on the application of principles or _____ of interpretation.
- E. **Application** of Scripture is the act of putting the specific revelation into the context of our individual _____.
- F. The believer receives **illumination** on the **revelation** which was given by **inspiration** and makes **application** to their life situation based on proper biblical **interpretation**.

VII. What are some errors in thinking that can affect one’s interpretation of the Bible?

There are many common errors in thinking that can have a strong affect on how we look at the Bible and interpret it. Here are four such errors.

- A. Simply believing that having a _____ is enough (Rom. 10:2).
- B. Simply believing that if I _____ and ask the Holy Spirit He will give me the correct interpretation.
- C. Simply believing that every commentator or every pastor who has expounded a particular passage has done so _____ (Acts 17:11).
- D. Simply believing that such accuracy is not really _____.

VIII. What are some of the factors that make interpreting the Bible a challenge?

- A. There are things _____ that compound the problem.

1. We all have _____ that can cloud our perspective and limit our openness to the truth (Mt. 15:6).
 2. We all have personal _____, preferences and theological persuasions that can stand in the way of a pure reading of the text.
 3. We all have certain _____ that can influence how we read a particular passage.
- B. There are things in _____ that compound the problem.
1. God used a wide variety of _____ to communicate His message.
 2. God used a wide variety of _____ to communicate His message.
 3. God used many different _____ of communication to His people (Heb. 1:1).

The following list is taken primarily from *Interpreting the Scriptures* by Conner/Malmin (pg.5-6)

Ways God Has Spoken

- a. **Dreams** – A succession of images, thoughts or emotions passing through the mind during sleep (Num. 12:6; Joel 2:28; Mt. 1:20).
- b. **Visions** – Something presented to the mind through other than natural means of sight while awake; seeing with the eyes open in the spiritual world; a supernatural appearance that conveys a revelation (Num. 12:6; Joel 2:28; Hos. 12:10; Acts 2:17; Acts 9:10, 12).
- c. **Angel of the Lord** – Generally spoken of as a “theophany,” which is a manifestation and revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ before His incarnation; a manifestation or appearance of God to man (Gen. 18; Ex. 3; Judges 6 and 13; Dan. 10:16).
- d. **Similitudes** – A shape, form of, model or pattern; a resemblance or likeness similar to the real; a person or thing resembling a counterpart (Num. 12:8; Deut. 4:12, 15, 16).
- e. **Types** – A thing embodying qualities characteristic of a particular person; the mark or impression of something to be imitated or avoided; an instance, sample, or specimen serving for illustration (Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 10:6, 11; Heb. 8:5).

- f. **Copies** – A thing formed after some pattern, a thing resembling another, its counterpart; emblematic of the real (Heb. 9:24; I Pet. 3:21).
- g. **Shadows** – A faint and imperfect representation; an imitation of something having form without substance; a dark figure or image cast on a surface by a body intercepting the light; a foreshadowing (Col. 2:17; Heb. 8:5; 10:1).
- h. **Examples** – A part of something; taken to show the character of the whole, a pattern or model, as of something to be imitated or avoided; an instance, sample, exhibit or specimen serving for illustration (Heb. 8:5; II Pet. 2:6).
- i. **Signs** – A token used in place of that which it represents; a signal to draw attention to something; a mark or a symbol having a specific meaning (Ex. 7:3; Is. 8:18; Ezek. 14:8; Mt. 12:39; John 12:33; Rom. 4:11).
- j. **Allegories** – A comparison sustained through numerous details; a symbolic narrative presenting an abstract or spiritual meaning using material forms; a story in which people, things and happenings have another meaning, usually a moral lesson (Gal. 4:24).
- k. **Mysteries** – That which is secret and can be known only to the initiated; truth which can be known only by revelation (Rom. 16:25; I Cor. 2:7; Eph. 5:32; I Tim. 3:16; Rev. 1:20).
- l. **Puzzles or Riddles** – A hidden saying, the meaning of which must be discovered; a knot of speech which must be unraveled; an obscure utterance which must be clarified. A puzzling question framed so as to require ingenuity in answering it; an enigma needing solution (Num. 12:8; Judg. 14:12-19; Ps. 49:4; 78:2; Ezek. 17:2).
- m. **Proverbs** – A short didactic saying embodying a truth; a sentence briefly and forcibly expressing some practical truth (Ps. 49:4; Pro. 1:6; John 16:25; II Pet. 2:22).
- n. **Parables** – A short story conveying some truth or lesson by a comparison; an earthly story with a heavenly meaning (Mt. 13:3, 10, 13, 34, 35; Mark 3:23; Luke 8:10; Heb. 9:9).
- o. **Voice of Words** – The audible voice of the Lord in actual words; audible communication, utterance (Gen. 3:8-9; Num. 7:89; Deut. 5:22-28; Ps. 103:20).
- p. **Prophecy** – To speak under inspiration concerning the present (forth telling) or concerning the future (foretelling); to either proclaim or predict (Ezra 5:1; Hos. 12:10; Heb. 1:1; I Pet. 1:10-12; II Pet. 1:20, 21).

- q. **Writing** – To communicate through inscriptions; to use letters for characters as visible symbols of ideas and words (Ex. 31:18; 32:16; I Chr. 28:19; Dan. 5:5).

In addition, there are many other factors which lead to the conclusion that the interpretation of Scripture is of utmost importance. These fall into two main groupings:

- r. **Symbolic Group** – This includes areas such as interpretation of names, significance of numbers, and all other symbols used in the Bible.
- s. **Figures of Speech Group** – Included here are metaphors, similes, hyperboles, idioms and others.

IX. What qualifications are needed for the effective interpretation of the Scripture?

There are several general qualifications for the interpreter including:

- Being a true believer (John 3:1-2; I Cor. 2:14-16; I Pet. 1:23),
- Living in submission to the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:7:16; I John 2:20, 27),
- Having a passionate heart toward the Word (Job. 23:12; Ps. 119:47; Jer. 15:16),
- Having a renewed mind (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23),
- Having a spirit of faith (Heb. 11:3, 6),
- Being a person of prayer and meditation (Ps. 1:2; Acts 6:4),
- Accepting the concept of total inspiration of the Scripture (II Pet. 1:21),
- Being diligent in the work at understanding (II Tim. 2:15),

Some more specific qualifications include the following.

- A. An effective interpreter must have a high level of reverence and _____ toward the Word of God.
- B. An effective interpreter must be _____ before the Word of God (Jam. 1:21).
- C. An effective interpreter must be _____ with the Word of God.
- D. An effective interpreter must recognize the relationship of the Old Testament to the New Testament.

X. What is the relationship of the Old Testament to the New Testament that serves as an important foundation to biblical hermeneutics?

- A. The Old Testament Scriptures serve as the _____ upon which New Testament believers built.

1. The Old Testament was the Bible of the Early Church.
 2. The early apostles promoted the scripture of the Old Testament.
 - a. They gave themselves to the word (Acts 6:4).
 - b. They acknowledged the authority of the word (Acts 15:15-18).
 - c. They stressed the value of the word in assisting the people of God in fulfilling destiny (II Tim. 3:15-17).
 3. The Old Testament scriptures were written for the New Testament believers.
 - a. They were written for _____ learning (Rom. 15:4).
 - b. They were written to be an example for the people of faith at the _____ (I Cor. 10:6, 11).
- B. The Old Testament and the New Testament reflect God’s method of revelation— _____, then the spiritual (I Cor. 15:46; Rom. 1:20).

As God has unfolded His purposes throughout history He seems to have followed the principle of the **natural preceding and foreshadowing the spiritual** (I Cor. 15:46). God has used the natural things of creation to teach us of spiritual things (Rom. 1:20). He has used visual means (things clearly seen) to help us understand spiritual realities (things not seen).

1. The Old Testament dealings of God reflect that which is seen or the _____ expression of God’s plan.
2. The New Testament reflects the _____ or that to which the natural pointed.

The Old Testament priests *serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things...* Hebrews 8:5

Hebrews 9:1-28 speaks of the first covenant, the Old Testament tabernacle with its priesthood and its sacrifices as being symbolic (vs. 9), unable to cleanse the conscience (vs. 9), temporary (vs. 10) and copies of the true (vs. 23, 24). It speaks of the new covenant which came in Christ as being greater, more perfect (vs. 11) and able to purge the conscience (vs. 14).

Hebrews 10:1-23 speaks of the Old Testament law as a shadow of good things to come as opposed to the very image (vs. 1).

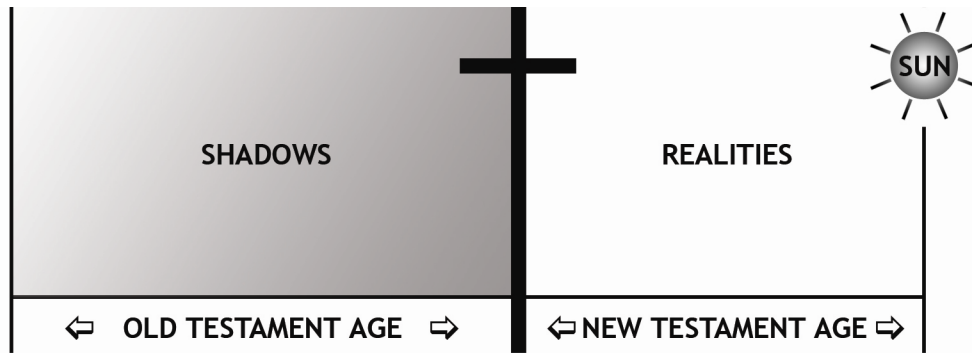
Old Covenant	New Covenant
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Natural	Spiritual
Flesh	Spirit
Shadow	Image
Figures	True
Visible (Seen)	Invisible (Unseen)
Made with Hands	Not Made with Hands
Patterns	Heavenly Things
Observed by Sight	Observed by Faith
Temporal	Eternal

The above chart illustrates the relationship of the Old to the New (See: Rom. 1:20; I Cor. 15:40-54; II Cor. 4:18; 5:1; Heb. 8:5; 9:1-28; 10:1-23).

3. In the Old and New Testaments we are confronted with _____ of things—first the natural, then the spiritual.
 - a. There is a natural birth and a spiritual birth (John 3:3-6; I Pet. 1:23).
 - b. There is a natural circumcision and a spiritual circumcision of the heart (Col 2:11-13; Phil. 3:3).
 - c. There is a natural Israel and a spiritual Israel (Gal. 6:16; Rom. 9:6).
 - d. There is a natural Jerusalem and a spiritual Jerusalem (Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22).
 - e. There is a natural temple and a spiritual temple (Eph. 19-22; I Pet. 2:5).
 - f. There is a natural priesthood and a spiritual priesthood (Heb. 7:1-28; I Pet. 2:5).
 - g. There are natural sacrifices and spiritual sacrifices (Heb. 13:15; I Pet. 2:5).
 - h. There are natural enemies and spiritual enemies (II Cor. 10:4; Eph. 6:12).
- C. We must realize that the cross of Christ is the _____ between the natural and the spiritual.

When Jesus came He came as the transition point in history. This transition point has more significance than a mere change in the human calendar. This transition marks the entry into the age of fulfillment (See Chart).



1. Jesus came to fulfill the letter of the law and introduce the spiritual principle that operated _____ the law.
2. Jesus introduced us to _____ in the new covenant.

Once Jesus brought in the true or the realities, there was no more need for the shadow. In fact, to go back to the shadow after the true has been manifest is to _____ and to _____ what God has provided in Christ.

Notice the “Better Things” that the writer to the Hebrews highlights for us:

- A. Better Revelation (Heb. 1:1-4)
- B. Better Hope (Heb. 7:19)
- C. Better Priesthood (Heb. 7:20-28)
- D. Better Covenant (Heb. 8:6)
- E. Better Promises (Heb. 8:6)
- F. Better Tabernacle or Temple (Heb. 9:11)
- G. Better Blood (Heb. 9:11-14).
- H. Better Sacrifices (Heb. 9:23)
- I. Better Possessions (Heb.10:34)
- J. Better Country (Heb. 11:16)

XI. What is the most important result of all hermeneutical study?

The Bible has been given to us to make us “wise unto salvation.” The whole purpose of the Bible is to introduce us to God and to direct us back to God. The tragedy is that we can become experts in our knowledge of the Word and our interpretation of the Word but miss the God of the Word. We can use the Word as a weapon on people or we can use it to bring life and salvation to the world.

Note: For more information regarding the history and development of hermeneutics and various hermeneutical methods employed by some, see the recommended text, *Interpreting the Scriptures*.

Appendix, Lesson 1-3 Bible Translations or Versions Chart

Translation or Version	Reading Level	Summary	Methodology of Translation Passage Comparison of Matthew 4:19
King James Version (KJV)	12	The now classic English translation of the Bible dating from 1611. Though difficult for many to understand because of its sometimes archaic language, it is loved for its familiarity and poetic beauty.	Literal And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.
New International Version(NIV)	7	This popular translation seeks to balance the concerns of literal and dynamic equivalence translation philosophies.	Literal with freedom to be idiomatic “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”
New Living Translation (NLT)	6	Authoritative text with a fresh, clear style that is enjoyable to read. A leading thought-for-thought translation that accurately communicates the meaning of the original Greek and Hebrew texts.	Dynamic Equivalence Jesus called out to them, “Come, be my disciples, and I will show you how to fish for people!”
New King James Version (NKJV)	7	A translation that updates the language of the KJV while preserving its basic literary structure.	Literal Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”
New American Standard Bible (NASB)	10	Translates the original text as literally as possible, preserving word-for-word equivalency and original sentence structure in English wherever possible.	Strictly literal And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)	7	Translation sponsored by the National Council of Churches of Christ. Generally literal word-for-word philosophy.	Literal And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.”
New American Bible (NAB)	7	The official translation of the Roman Catholic Church in America. This fairly literal translation includes the deuterion-canonical books in all editions.	Literal He said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.”
Contemporary English Version (CEV)	5	A dynamic equivalence translation that avoids difficult vocabulary and sentence structures to produce a straightforward translation that’s understandable to the modern reader.	Dynamic Equivalence Jesus said to them, “Come with me! I will teach you how to bring people in instead of fish.”
The Living Bible (TLB)	8	Paraphrase by Kenneth Taylor that communicates the essential message of God’s Word to the average English reader. Simplifies theological language so it’s easy to understand.	Paraphrase Jesus called out, “Come along with me and I will show you how to fish for the souls of men!”
The Message	5	A colorful paraphrase by Eugene Peterson that seeks to capture the message of the original text in a creative and impacting way.	Paraphrase Jesus said to them, “Come with me. I’ll make a new kind of fisherman out of you. I’ll show you how to catch men and women instead of perch and bass.”

Lesson 5 Bridging the Gaps

I. What is the most significant challenge when it comes to studying the Bible?

The most significant challenge to fully understanding the Bible is bridging the _____ that exist between the contexts in which the Bible was written and our present day context.

A. The _____ Gap

If we are to understand the Bible in its context, we need to know some things relative to the languages in which the Bible was written.

1. We need to know what _____ meant when they were written down by the author.
2. We need to know the idiomatic expressions and _____ that are used in the Bible and what their contemporary equivalents are.
3. We need to know the origin, formation and _____ of the words (etymology).
4. We need to know the significance of different _____ constructions as to how they have a bearing on the meaning of the text.
5. We even need to understand the _____ (i.e. poetic, historical, prophetic, apocalyptic, etc.) in which a passage is written to better understand its present day application.

B. The _____ Gap

The Bible was written in the context of an eastern and agrarian culture that is not consistent with the culture of most of those reading the Bible today.

God is not interested in the duplication of biblical culture, but He is interested in the principles by which the culture operated. In order to understand the principle behind the practice, we must understand certain things.

1. We must understand what the _____ of the day was and how it has a bearing on the passage in question.
2. We must understand the _____ of culture including such things as transportation, cooking, clothing, tools for farming, weapons of warfare,

housing and animal life (e.g. taxation, balances and scales, weights and measures, raising sheep, etc.).

- a. How big or little was the woman's offering (Mark 12:42)?
 - b. How valuable is a sparrow (Mt. 10:29, KJV)?
 - c. How expensive was the bonfire that was built by those confessing their deeds (Acts 19:18-19)?
 - d. How much manna was gathered and placed in the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 16:33)?
3. We must understand the _____ of the society in which the verses were written including such things and marriage customs, biblical trades, economics, legal requirements, civil laws and other social customs.
 4. We must be able to distinguish between the cultures that are referenced including the cultures of the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans and, of course, the Jews.

C. The _____ Gap

The various books of the Bible were written in an historical context that is much different than the world of today.

1. We must understand the _____ world and the relationship of the various nations to each other.
2. We must understand the _____ and religious forces that were at play in the time when the books were written.

D. The _____ Gap

The story of the Bible took place in various geographical settings that are totally unfamiliar to the average reader of the Bible.

1. We must understand the _____ of the land.
2. We must understand the plant and _____ of the land.
3. We must understand the _____ and weather patterns of the land.
4. We must understand _____, rivers and seas.
5. We must understand the proximity of one _____ to another.

II. What are some of the tools that will help to bridge the communication gap?

The following are some of the basic tools with which the serious Bible student should become familiar.

A. Concordances

1. A concordance is a compilation of all of the places a certain _____ in the Bible.
2. A concordance can be used to find a passage when you know some specific words in the passage for which you are looking.
3. A concordance can be used to find all of the places where a certain word occurs.
 - a. If you are using a modern language concordance, it will tell you all of the places where that _____ language word occurs.
 - b. If you are using an original language concordance (i.e. Greek or Hebrew) it will tell you where all of the places are where that _____ language word occurs in the Bible.

B. Lexicons

Lexicons are dictionaries of words that help you to understand the _____ of words as they are used in the original languages.

C. Bible Dictionaries or Encyclopedias

Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias are a wonderful resource for _____ information and _____ of biblical material. These books function just like other dictionaries and encyclopedias except they focus on topics that are specifically related to the Bible.

D. Bible Handbooks

Bible handbooks are books that are meant to be _____ with your personal Bible reading. They often give insights into a variety of things including archeological findings, relevant historical data, background to the Book and many other useful bits of information.

E. Bible Atlases

Bible atlases are _____ that help you understand many things about the geographical world of Bible times. Atlases offer information on topography, rainfall, weather patterns, proximity of nations, areas of land mass and distances for travel.

F. Commentaries

Commentaries are written by scholars who try to expand a persons understanding concerning what is being read in the Bible. They are organized by chapter and verse of the books of the Bible.

G. Manners and Customs of the Bible

There are many such books that help the student of the Word to discover any customs that might have a bearing on the passage under study. They can be very helpful in unlocking the true intended meaning of the passage.

Resources for Bridging the Gap

THE LINGUISTIC GAP:

Concordances:

1. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* (Abingdon). For those who study from the KJV Bible.
2. *Zondervan's Exhaustive Concordance* (Zondervan). For those who study from the NIV Bible.
3. *The NASB Exhaustive Concordance* (Thomas Nelson). For those who study from the NASB Bible.
4. *New Englishman's Greek Concordance* (Baker)
5. *New Englishman's Hebrew & Chaldee Concordance* (Baker)
6. *Young's Analytical Concordance* (Eerdman's)

Lexicons:

1. *Greek-English Lexicon*, Arndt & Gingrich (University of Chicago Press)
2. *New Thayer's Greek - English Lexicon* (Baker)
3. *New Gesenius Hebrew Lexicon*, Gesenius (Baker)
4. *Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Zondervan)
5. *Greek-English Lexicon*, Liddell & Scott (Oxford)

Word Studies:

1. *The Expanded Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, John R. Kohlenberger III (Bethany House)

2. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Harris, Archer, Waltke (Moody)
3. *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Colin Brown (Zondervan)
4. *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, Rienecker & Rogers (Zondervan)
5. *Word Studies in the New Testament*, M.R. Vincent (Eerdman's)
6. *Expositor's Greek Testament*, W. Robertson Nicoll (Eerdman's)
7. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, A.T. Robertson (Broadman Press)
8. *Christian Words*, Nigel Turner (Nelson)
9. *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, R.B. Girdlestone (Eerdman's)
10. *Synonyms of the New Testament*, R.C. Trench (Eerdman's)
11. *Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek*, Bruce Metzger (Theological Book Agency, Dist.)
12. *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament*, Nigel Turner (T&T Clark)
13. *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses*, E. Burton (T&T Clark)
14. *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, E.W. Bullinger (Baker)
15. *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, Moulton & Milligan (Eerdman's)
16. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Kittel, Ed. (Eerdman's)

Grammars:

1. *New Testament Greek for Beginners*, Machen (MacMillan)
2. *Manual Grammar of the Greek Testament*, Dand & Mantey (MacMillan)
3. *Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew*, J. Weingren
4. *Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, A.T. Robertson (Broadman Press)

THE CULTURAL GAP:

1. *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*, Gower (Moody Press)
2. *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, J. Freeman (Logos International)
3. *Harper's Encyclopedia of Bible Life*, Miller, Miller, Bennett, Scott (Harper & Row)
4. *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*, A. Edersheim (Eerdman's)
5. *Life and times of Jesus the Messiah*, A. Edersheim (Eerdman's)
6. *Insights into Bible Times and Customs*, Weiss (Moody)
7. *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, Jeremias (Fortress Press)
8. *All the Holy Days and Holidays of the Bible*, H. Lockyer (Zondervan)
9. *All the Trades and Occupations of the Bible*, H Lockyer (Zondervan)
10. *The Bible and Archaeology*, J.A. Thompson
11. *Ancient Israel*, R. DeVaux (McGraw Hill)
12. *The Temple*, A. Edersheim (Eerdman's)
13. *Eerdman's Handbook to the World's Religions*, (Eerdman's)
14. *The Land and the Book*, W.M. Thompson (Harper & Brothers)

Bible Dictionaries:

1. *The New Bible Dictionary*, M.C. Tenney (Zondervan)
2. *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, (Moody)
3. *Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, M.C. Tenney (Zondervan)

4. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, (Eerdman's)
5. *Bible Dictionary*, Smith (Holt, Rinehart, Winston)

Biblical Interpretation:

1. *Interpreting the Scriptures*, Conner & Malmin (Bible Temple Press)
2. *Biblical Hermeneutics*, Terry (Zondervan)
3. *The Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, Ramm (Baker)

THE GEOGRAPHICAL GAP:

1. *The Oxford Bible Atlas*, (Oxford Press)
2. *The Wycliffe Historical Geography of Bible Lands*, Pfeiffer & Vos (Moody)
3. *All the Animals of the Bible Lands*, G. Cunsdale (Zondervan)
4. *Geography of the Bible*, D. Baly (Harper & Brothers)
5. *The MacMillan Bible Atlas*, (MacMillan)

THE HISTORICAL GAP:

1. *New Testament History*, F.F. Bruce (Anchor)
2. *Survey of Israel's History*, L. Wood (Zondervan)
3. *New Testament Times*, Tenney (Eerdman's)
4. *Jerusalem in the Times of Jesus*, Jeremias (Fortress)
5. *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, A. Edersheim (Eerdman's)
6. *Old Testament Bible History*, A. Edersheim (Eerdman's)
7. *The Archaeology of Cities on Western Asia Minor*, Yamauchi (Baker)
8. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*, Unger (Zondervan)
9. *The Archaeology of the New Testament*, Unger (Zondervan)
10. *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, (Kregel)
11. *Bible Archaeology*, G.E. Wright (Westminster Press)
12. *General Bible Introduction*, H.S. Miller (Word Bearer Press)
13. *Bible Survey*, Wm Hendriksen (Baker)
14. *The Books & The Parchments*, F.F. Bruce (Pickering & Inglis)
15. *Introduction to the Old Testament*, E.J. Young (Eerdman's)
16. *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament*, Unger (Zondervan)
17. *Introduction to the New Testament*, Thiesen (Eerdman's)
18. *Introduction to the New Testament*, Vols., Zahn (Kregel)
19. *New Testament Survey*, Tenney (Eerdman's)
20. *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*, Bernard (Pickering & Inglis)

Note: The above resource list was extracted from *Bible Research*, by Ken Malmin and Team, pg. 19-20.

Lesson 6 Foundations for Biblical Study

I. What are some of the things that will help to lay a foundation for deeper biblical study?

As you approach the idea of deeper Bible study there are some important foundations to lay in your own experience of the Bible (Note: The following points taken from unpublished notes by Lanny Hubbard entitled *Committed to the Study of God's Word*).

A. A general _____ of the Bible.

Sources for further study:

School of Ministry courses:

Old Testament Survey Course, Bill Scheidler

New Testament Survey Course, Bill Scheidler

B. An understanding of the _____ and main events of the Bible.

Sources for further study:

Chronological Charts of the Old Testament, John Walton

Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament, Wayne House

C. An understanding of the _____ of the Bible.

Sources for further study:

New International Encyclopedia of Bible Words, Lawrence Richards

The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Colin Brown

New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, Willem VanGemren

D. An understanding of _____.

Sources for further study:

School of Ministry courses:

Basic Doctrine I

Basic Doctrine II

The Holy Spirit

II. What are some of the principles of interpretation that will help me to rightly divide the word of God?

There are a few simple guidelines that can help us not to get off track in the area of biblical interpretation.

- A. Let _____ interpret scripture (Acts 17:11).

- B. Interpret individual passages of scripture in the light of _____ scriptures.

- C. Interpret the text _____ unless something in the text suggests that it cannot be taken literally.

Someone has said it this way, “If the plain sense makes sense, seek no other sense or you could end up with complete nonsense.”

When it seems obvious that the literal meaning cannot be the true meaning the interpreter should look for other factors that might be present including: figures of speech, idioms, symbolism, etc.

The following methods for distinguishing determining whether or not a passage is to be taken literally or figuratively are offered by John Mulholland in *Principles for the Eschatological Interpretation of the Apocalypse* (Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1959, pp. 222-235).

1. Always use the literal sense unless there is some _____ for departure (Example: Revelation 7:1-8).

2. Use the figurative sense when the passage is _____ to be figurative (Example: Zechariah 12:6).

3. Use the figurative sense if the literal involves _____ (Examples: Jeremiah 1:18).

4. Use the figurative sense if the literal commands _____ action (Example: John 6:53).

5. Use the figurative sense if the expression fits into one of the classes of the _____ (Example: Zechariah 12:2).

6. Use the figurative sense if the literal involves a _____ with other clear parallel passages.
 7. Use the figurative sense if the literal involves a contradiction in _____.
 8. We could add one more and that is, use the figurative sense if the literal sense in any way violates what we understand about the _____ and nature of God.
- D. Interpret the unclear passage in light of the _____ passages.
- E. Pay careful attention to the _____ of the verse. A text out of context is a pretext.
- F. Look for _____ of the text that will help bring out meaning.

(Note: The following points adapted from unpublished notes by Lanny Hubbard entitled *Committed to the Study of God's Word* and *Grasping God's Word*, Duvall and Hays).

1. Repetition of Words.

Look for words and phrases that repeat. Key words will help you understand the main thrust of the passage (e.g. I Corinthians 13, love; I Corinthians 14; edify).

2. Contrasts.

Look for ideas, individuals, and/or items that are contrasted with each other. In Galatians 5 the works of the flesh are contrasted with the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-26).

3. Comparisons.

Look for ideas, individuals, and/or items that are compared with each other. Look also for similarities.

4. Lists. Note where the text mentions more than two items.

5. Cause and effect.

Look for the cause for certain effects or the effects brought on by various causes. There may be more than one effect from a single cause mentioned in the text.

6. Conjunctions. Notice terms that join units including "and," "but," "for."

7. Verbs.

Determine the action involved and whether a verb is active or passive. Pay special attention to imperatives.

8. Pronouns. Be sure to identify the proper antecedent for each pronoun.

9. Tone of the Author.

Is the author giving an admonition, exhortation, warning, promise, encouragement or judgment?

10. Questions.

The word of God poses many thought provoking questions. As we meditate on the question we better understand what is being intended in the text (I Cor. 1:13, Gal. 3:1-5, Rom. 6:1).

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I Corinthians 1:13

G. Look for divine _____ that apply to any age, any people, anywhere.

III. What are some practical guidelines to ensure that you get the most out of your study?

(Note: The following points adapted from unpublished notes by Lanny Hubbard entitled *Committed to the Study of God's Word*).

A. Always start a study project with _____.

B. Read the passage _____. Read it in several translations to get different perspectives.

C. Establish the _____ of the passage. Determine which verses before the passage and after it are necessary to understand it.

D. Research _____ material related to the passage.

1. Who is the author of the passage?
2. To whom was the passage written?
3. When was the passage written?

E. Discover the _____ of the passage.

1. What are the key or repeated words of the passage?
2. Are any unique words used in the passage?
3. Who is speaking in the passage?
4. Who is being spoken to?
5. Are there any cultural, ceremonial, geographic, or historical issues in the passage?
6. What persons are mentioned in the passage?
7. What are places mentioned in the passage?
8. What events are mentioned in the passage?
9. What objects are mentioned in the passage?
10. What symbols are used in the passage?
11. Does the author give any advice to the readers?
12. Does the author give reasons for his advice?
13. Are any contrasts or comparisons made in the passage?
14. Are any lists given?
15. Are there any summary statements given in the passage?
16. What is the author's tone of the passage?

F. Evaluate the passage:

1. What is the purpose of the passage?
2. What is the main point of the passage?
3. How does the passage relate to the rest of the book?
4. How does the passage relate to the other books of the testament?
5. How does the passage relate to the rest of the Bible?

Putting this into practice

The following example is adapted from an unpublished article by Lanny Hubbard titled *Committed to the Study of God's Word*.

Example: Ephesians 5:4

I. Pray and ask for God's help.

II. Read the passage in at least two translations

...neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. –NKJV

Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. –NIV

Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes--these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. –NLT

III. What are the boundaries of the passage?

The immediate paragraph seems to be 5: 3-5. These verses include a list of different behavior that should not be part of the Christian's life. The conclusion is that people who live this way do not inherit the Kingdom of Christ (v.5). The idea of acceptable and non-acceptable behavior goes back to Eph 4:1. Here verses 1-16 talks about the lifestyle that should accompany the saints. They should live in a way that is worthy of their calling. The result of this godly lifestyle is that it produces unity in the bond of peace in the church (v.3), and that every member is contributing to the success of the whole group. Verses 17-19 describe the life that should no longer be practiced by a believer. The end of that lifestyle is selfishness and greed. These are the very things that will tear apart the church. Verses 20 –24 shows how each believer was to replace their old way of living with a new one. They could not continue to live like they did before they came to Christ. In verses 25-32 there are some practical examples given of how this transformation should look. In the list of examples given is the issue of how people talk to each other (v. 29). In context, inappropriate conversation between members of the church resulted in grieving the Holy Spirit. Appropriate conversation would please Him because it produced the desired results. Chapter 5 begins with the admonition for the saints to imitate God. As His children they should reflect the way He relates to others in His love. Living this way may mean a sacrifice for them, but Jesus was their example to follow. In the end, they should reflect His life.

IV. What is the background for this material?

A. Who is the author? Paul

B. To whom was the passage written? To the church in the city of Ephesus.

C. When was the passage written?

It was written about A.D. 58-60 during Paul's imprisonment in Rome. Paul himself was already paying the price to be a follower of Jesus.

D. What is the literary form of the passage?

It is an epistle. The epistles were designed to communicate the doctrine of the Church and to trouble shoot specific problem in different churches.

V. What is the content of the passage?

A. What are the key or repeated words in the passage?

The key word in this passage is “thanks.” This is contrasted to the other forms of unacceptable talk.

B. Are there any unique words?

There are four unique words in this passage.

1. *Aiskrotos* – This word literally means *ugliness*; figuratively *indecent behavior*, to act in defiance of social and moral standards, with resulting disgrace, embarrassment.
2. *Morologia* – This word means “foolish talk, idle talk, useless or silly speech, talk which is both foolish and stupid.”
3. *Eutrapelia* – This word means vulgar speech, (1) in a good sense *pleasantry, wittiness, urbanity*; (2) in a bad sense *coarse joking, clowning around, vulgar talk*.
4. *Aneeko* – This word means *it is fitting or right; what is proper, one’s duty*.

C. What are the cultural, geographic, or historical issues in the passage?

Ephesus was an important port town in Asia Minor. The city experienced a tremendous amount of traffic from merchants, traveling business people, and athletes because of the trade industry. These travelers came from all over the world, and during the stay at Ephesus they would indulge themselves in the city life of that place. Because of the immoral nature of many of these activities, and the highly competitive nature of the industry, the language of the people became very coarse. Ephesus became known around that part of the world for its city talk. Those people who grew up in that environment developed a manner of speak that was vulgar, and full of personal put-downs. Many of them continued talking this way, even after they got saved and entered the Church. That competitive spirit which was designed to beat or discredit others did not work in the church where the believers were to encourage each other on to greater success. The tactics of the world didn’t fit in the church. As a result, the believers needed to learn how to talk a new way.

D. Does the author give any advice to the readers?

Yes. In regard to the issue of speech and immoral actions he says the following.

1. Certain things should not even be spoken about by saints (vs.3).
2. There is a distinct behavior that is proper and fitting of saints (vs.3-4).

3. Christians are not to let themselves be deceived about these things (vs.6).

E. Does the author give a reason for his advice? Yes.

1. People who do these things do not inherit the Kingdom of Christ (vs.5).
2. These forms of conduct will bring the wrath of God (vs.6).

F. Are there any contrasts made in the passage? Yes.

All the forms of wrong speech mentioned in verse 4 are contrasted to “giving thanks.” This implies that the wrong speech focuses on the speaker and what he or she desires. Correct speech focuses on others and reflects a mindfulness of all the blessings that have been provided for the believers.

G. What is the tone of the passage?

The author is not harsh or condemning, but he is straightforward and practical. The language does not present the material as a casual suggestion or personal option.

VI. Evaluation of the passage.

A. What is the purpose of the passage?

It is to clearly define what behavior should be part of the believer’s life. The culture of Ephesus had produced a lifestyle that did not honor God or reflect His nature. The inappropriate aspects of their lifestyle needed to be exposed and then new acceptable forms of behavior were to replace them. This is the embodiment of the “putting off” and “putting on” process mentioned in the wider context of this verse.

B. What is the main point of the passage?

There is a lifestyle that fits people who have the truth. This implies that there is also a lifestyle that is not compatible to people who know and believe the truth. To believe one way and live another does not demonstrate the sincere, integral life that characterizes both God and the Christian.

C. How does the passage relate to the rest of the book?

The following are all passages in Ephesians that deal with mouth and speech issues: Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29, 31; 5:6, 12, 19, 32; 6:19-20.

D. How does the passage relate to other books in the same testament?

The following passages all speak about people’s conversations: I Timothy 4:6, 12; 6:3-4; II Timothy 2:14, 17. Paul wrote all these verses and they were written to Timothy who was in Ephesus at that time. This reinforces how much the issue of

speech was affecting that church. Paul refers in Titus 2:1 to speaking things that are *fitting* of sound doctrine. In Colossians 3:17 also says that whatever is done in word or deed should be done in thanksgiving to the Lord.

E. How does this passage relate to the whole Bible?

In the New Testament, James 3 is one of the clearest passages about the power of the tongue. In the Old Testament the book of Proverbs has much to say about speech: Proverbs 4:24; 6:16-19; 8:13; 10:8, 11, 19, 31, 32; 12: 5, 6, 13, 15; 17:27; 18:8, 21, 23; 21:23; 29:20. It is very apparent that the Scripture has much to say about the wrong use of the tongue.

F. How can we apply this verse?

Paul was writing to a city that had a very sinful culture. This really showed up in the way people talked to each other. The influence of their entertainment, athletics, and business, created a style of talk that was immoral course, nonsensical, and full of off-colored humor. The people of the city gained a reputation for their type of speech. When some of them got saved, they came into the church, but they still retained their old way of talking. Paul states that this type of communication is very wrong and actually is counterproductive to what God wanted to happen in the Church.

Today we live in a culture that is very affected by our entertainment, the influence of professional athletics and the business world. As people get saved today, they come into the churches with a manner of speech that they used in the world. Often the old way of speaking is retained by these people, but more interesting is that more preachers are using this style of speech from the pulpit. Some say they do it to be relevant to our culture, but are we supposed to copy the culture of imitate God as Ephesians 5:1 says. The church in Ephesus was being negatively affected by culture. God wanted the culture to be positively affected by the church. When Paul wrote to Timothy, the pastor of the Church at Ephesus, he told him to be an example in how he talked. A leader should reflect the nature of God not the culture around them. The world may despise us for how we act, but that should not distract us from having a life consistent with the God we serve.

Lesson 7 The Context Principle

I. What does the term “context” mean?

- A. The term “context” comes from a combination of two Latin words and literally means to “_____.”
- B. In the medium of writing it refers to the relationship of a particular passage to the rest of the text that _____ it.
- C. In the broadest sense the actual context may go well beyond the written text to include the surrounding aspects that were present when the material was _____.

Webster says that “context” is “the parts of a discourse that surround a word or passage that can _____ on its meaning.”

II. What categories apply to context as it relates to biblical texts?

There are four primary categories of context as it relates to the biblical text.

- A. There is the _____ context.

There are four categories relative to the Scripture context.

- a. The _____ Bible, both Old and New Testament

This means that the Bible must be seen as a complete entity.

- b. The Old or New _____

The Old and New Testament represent different covenants established on either side of the cross. In light of that, verses in the New Testament are interpreted differently from those in the Old Testament.

- c. The _____ of the Bible

Each book of the Bible was written into an historical context to a specific people with a specific purpose.

- d. The _____ Containing the Text

This is the relationship of a passage to the text in which it is located. Any verse of the Bible is immediately surrounded by other verses.

Bible ⇔ Testament ⇔ Book ⇔ Passage ⇔ Text ⇔ Words

B. There is the _____ context.

This is the relationship of a passage to the historical setting in which it was written. What was the date for the writing of the book and what events were happening at that time? At that time in history, what was the nature of the original reader's relationship to God? Who was the author?

C. There is the _____ context.

Every verse of the Bible was written in a certain cultural context. Discovering the cultural context is discovering what the passage meant to that people, at that time, in that place and in that cultural setting.

The cultural context includes things like the political, religious, economic, legal, agricultural, architectural, dietary, and other social issues.

D. There is the _____ context.

The literary context refers to the literary style or genre of the book or section in which a passage is located. Scholars identify over six different styles used in the Bible but the overarching theme is that each genre of Scripture has a different set of rules that apply to it.

The most common styles used are narratives, histories, prophecies, letters, poetry and apocalyptic writings.

III. What are some questions to ask when using the context principle?

The following is adapted from an unpublished article by Lanny Hubbard titled *Committed to the Study of God's Word*.

When studying any specific text, ask questions regarding each of the following areas:

A. The Verse

- What do the words mean that are used in the verse?

B. The Passage

- How does the text relate to the surrounding verses?
- Which verses before and after make up the immediate context?

- How do the surrounding verses help me understand my text?
- Does the verse begin, develop or end a section?

C. The Book

- What is the purpose and message of the book?
- How does the passage fit into the outline and development of the book?
- Is the meaning I am giving to the verse consistent with the rest of the message of the book?
- Does it make sense?

D. The Testament

- Are there other passages in other books that are similar in message or structure?
- Is the meaning I am giving the passage consistent with or contradictory to things said in other books in that testament?

E. Whole Bible

- Is the meaning I am giving to a passage consistent with or contrary with the rest of Scripture?
- How does the passage relate to the rest of Scripture? Is it similar or dissimilar?

IV. What are some examples of the misuse of the context principle?

A. I Corinthians 15:32

The Bible says, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”

Compare: I Pet. 4:3-4

B. John 12:32

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. –KJV

C. Proverbs 23:7

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he. –KJV

Expanding the context and read Proverbs 23:6-8 from a couple of other translations...

Do not eat the food of a stingy man, do not crave his delicacies; for he is the kind of man who is always thinking about the cost. "Eat and drink," he says to you, but his heart is not with you. You will vomit up the little you have eaten and will have wasted your compliments. –NIV

Don't eat with people who are stingy; don't desire their delicacies. "Eat and drink," they say, but they don't mean it. They are always thinking about how much it costs. You will vomit up the delicious food they serve, and you will have to take back your words of appreciation for their "kindness." –NLT

D. II Corinthians 10:3-5

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...

E. Ephesians 6:12

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

F. Ephesians 4:27

...nor give place to the devil.

...and do not give the devil a foothold. –NIV

Lesson 8

The Comparative Mention Principle

I. What is the Comparative Mention Principle of biblical hermeneutics?

The Comparative Mention Principle “is that principle by which a certain verse or group of verses may be interpreted by comparing and/or contrasting it with another _____ or group of verses” (Conner/Malmin pg. 59).

Comparing involves examining other _____ passages to find additional light relating to your passage.

Contrasting involves examining other passages which deal with the same subject but from an _____ viewpoint.

A. Within the comparative principle is the idea of using the _____ to interpret Scripture.

The Westminster Confession states that “The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself and, therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture... it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.”

B. Within the comparative principle is the idea of interpreting the unclear from the _____.

We want to be sure that whatever doctrinal convictions that we have are based on clear verses that can be supported by _____ verses. We never want to base a conviction on an _____ passage of Scripture.

There are four places in the New Testament where people received this experience, Acts 2, 8, 10 and 19.

In three of these instances we see that those who received this baptism all “spoke in tongues.”

1. The initial outpouring on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4).

“And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

2. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:44-48).

For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Acts 10:46

3. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the men of Ephesus (Acts 19:1-6).

And they spoke with tongues, and prophesied. Acts 19:6

In the fourth instance, it is not clear what supernatural sign was present even though it is clear that something dramatic happened. In this instance, it was the Samaritans who were baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-21).

“And when Simon saw that through the laying on of hands the Holy Spirit was given...” Acts 8:18

There is no specific mention of “speaking in tongues” in this passage. However, one has to wonder what Simon saw. Whatever it was, Simon the magician was so impressed that he offered Peter money for the power to do whatever was done.

After Peter rebuked Simon for a wrong heart, he explained to Simon that he had “neither part nor portion in this matter” (Acts 8:21). The word that is used for “matter” here is the Greek word *logos* which means “utterance or speech.”

By using the comparative mention principle and the guideline of interpreting the unclear by the clear you have to conclude that the thing that Simon saw was the same thing that was present in the other clear passages, that is, the evidence of “speaking in tongues.”

- C. Within the comparative principle is the idea of _____ witnesses forming the basis for a doctrine (II Cor. 13:1).

Example

Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead? I Corinthians 15:29

Is Paul indeed advocating that people who have died can be helped by a believer standing in for them and being baptized in their place?

1. This cannot be the case because there is only “_____” or one verse for this teaching (See chart below).

Rite	Commanded	Practiced	Unfolded
Water Baptism	Matthew 28: 19	Acts 2:38, 41	Colossians 2:12
Communion	Luke 22:19	Acts 2:42	I Corinthians 11:23
Foot-washing	John 13	None	None
Baptism for Dead	None	I Corinthians 15:29 Mentioned Only	None

2. This cannot be the case because this _____ other clear doctrines of the Bible.
 - a. The Scripture teaches that death is final (Heb. 9:27).
 - b. The Scripture teaches that there are no second chances after death (Luke 16:19-31; Eccl. 11:3; Ezek.18:19-32).
 - c. The Scripture teaches that our eternal destiny is determined on the basis of what we do in and with this life (I Cor. 3:10-15).
 - d. The Scripture teaches that heaven and hell are eternal states (Rev. 20:10; 22:5).
3. This cannot be the case because a careful reading of the passage will show that Paul is not talking about his own practice or the practice of _____.

It is important to watch the pronouns in this passage (See: I Thessalonians 5:1-11).

- D. Within the comparative principle is the idea that Scripture does not _____ scripture.

II. What is an example of comparing verses of Scripture?

Comparing involves examining other like passages to find additional light relating to your passage.

The Brazen Serpent

- It was made by Moses for the healing of the Israelites (Num. 21:9).
- It was later worshiped by Israelites and became idolatry (II Kgs. 18:3-4).
- In the New Testament it became a symbol of Christ (John 3:14-15).
- In the New Testament it became a symbol of Christ on the cross (John 12:32).

III. What is an example of contrasting verses of Scripture?

Contrasting involves examining other passages which deal with the same subject but from an opposing viewpoint.

The Tree of Faith

Jeremiah 17:5-6

Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the LORD. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited."

Jeremiah 17:7-8

"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit."

Compare also with Psalm 1

Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.

Psalm 1:4-6

The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

IV. What is an example of comparison and contrast?

The Two Builders

When you examine these two accounts of Jesus' story given on two different occasions, you can see both similarities and differences.

Matthew 7:24-27

Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be

Luke 6:46-49

But why do you call Me "Lord, Lord," and not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded

like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.

on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.

A. These passages contain many similarities.

1. Both passages point out the same characteristics of the wise and foolish man.
2. Both passages refer to the floods.
3. Both passages end up with the house of the wise man standing and the house of the foolish man being destroyed.

B. These passages contain some notable differences.

Matthew	Luke
No mention of digging	The wise builder “dug deep”
Rain, Flood, Winds	Flood, Stream
The foolish man “built on sand”	The foolish man “build on earth”
No specific mention of foundation.	The foolish man built without a foundation.
No mention of intensity of storm.	The stream beat vehemently
No use of a similar term.	Immediately it fell

Lesson 9

The Progressive Mention Principle

I. What is the first mention principle?

“The First Mention Principle is that principle by which the interpretation of any verse is aided by considering the _____ its subject appears in Scripture” (pg. 55).

The text goes on to say that, “the first time a thing is mentioned in Scripture it carries with it a meaning which will be consistent throughout the entire Bible” (pg. 55).

In the text, the first mention principle is seen in the following ways.

- It is seen as an _____ to interpretation (pg. 55).
 - It is seen as an “in _____” guideline (pg. 55).
 - It is seen as a principle that does not operate _____ (Pg. 56).
 - It is seen as a principle that should not be _____, rather kept in its proper perspective (pg. 56).
- A. The first mention principle is discussed here because it has a definite _____ the progressive mention principle. As Conner/Malmin put it (pg.55)...

The first mention can be seen as:

1. A *key* which unlocks the door into full truth.
 2. A *gateway* into the path of truth.
 3. A *guide* to discovering the truth in its progressive unfolding.
 4. The *first link* in a long chain of revelation.
 5. A *seed* which has within it the full truth that is to be developed in all subsequent mentions.
- B. The first mention principle can be applied to words, concepts, symbols, persons, places and themes.

Example : God (Gen. 1:1)

1. In this verse, God tells us much about Himself that is critical to our understanding. What does this first verse reveal to us about God?
 - a. God is infinite (Ps. 90:1-2).
 - b. God is eternal (Is. 44:6).
 - c. God is omnipotent (Heb. 11:3; Ps. 33:6-9).
 - d. God is a compound unity.

This is seen in the very first word used for “God.” It is the word *Elohim*. This name for God occurs in the Bible over 2500 times. It is a very unique word in many ways.

- This word is a noun in the plural form.
- This word though plural is always accompanied by a verb in the singular.

2. In this verse, God refutes many of the philosophies of man.
 - a. Atheism (Ps. 14:1; Rom. 1:28)
 - b. Pantheism (Isaiah 42:5)
 - c. Polytheism (Deut. 6:4; Is. 43:10-11; 44:6)
 - d. Fatalism (Evolution)
 - e. First Cause (Prime Mover)

II. What is the progressive mention principle?

The Progressive Mention Principle as stated in the text is “that principle by which the interpretation of any verse is aided by a consideration of the progressive mentions of its subject in Scripture” (pg. 65).

- A. The progressive mention principle presupposes that the Bible is _____ and, therefore must be approached in that light (Is. 46:9-11).
- B. The progressive mention principle acknowledges God’s _____ of teaching or revelation (Is. 28:13).
- C. The progressive mention principle accepts that God has revealed truth to man by means of a progressive, _____ of the individual themes of the Bible.

Most themes in the Bible begin in Genesis and end up being consummated in the Book of Revelation. Note the following:

Contrasts between Genesis and Revelation	
Genesis	Revelation
First Paradise Closed (3:23)	New Paradise Opened (21:25)
Dispossessed thru Sin (3:24)	Repossessed thru Grace (21:24)
Curse Imposed (3:17)	Cursed Lifted (22:3)
Tree of Life Lost (3:24)	Tree of Life Regained (22:14)
Beginning of Sorrow and Death (3:16)	End of Sorrow and Death (21:4)
A Garden where defilement entered (3:6-7)	A city where nothing defiled can enter (21:27)
Dominion Forfeited in Adam (3:19)	Dominion Restored in Christ (22:5)
Evil Triumphs in Serpent (3:13)	Lamb Triumphs over Serpent (20:10)

1. The Seed of the Woman becomes Christ and His Church (Gal. 3:16, 19, 29).
 2. The garden or paradise of God gives way to the foursquare city of God, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10-21).
 3. The creation of the first heavens and earth give way to the creation of the new heavens and earth (Rev. 21:1).
 4. The rivers in the garden become the river of life for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:1-2).
 5. The tree of life gives way to the ultimate tree of life (Rev. 22:2, 14).
 6. The serpent introduced in Genesis is ultimately cast into the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:2-3).
- D. The progressive mention principle carries with it an intrinsic _____.

The progressive mention principle by its very nature cautions that the themes of Scripture cannot be fully understood from a single reference or even from a _____ of references.

III. What are some examples of the application of this principle?

- A. The first example has to do with the struggle between the Seed of the Woman and the seed of the serpent (Genesis 3:15).

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

From the fall of Adam and Eve into sin and the promise given to them by God of the Seed of the Woman Who would crush the seed of the serpent, there was a continuing struggle between the two seeds right up to the coming of Messiah. In the Book of Genesis, this struggle is seen in the following ways:

1. The struggle was foretold by God Himself (Gen. 3:15).
2. Satan seeks to destroy the first offspring of Eve by entering the heart of Cain who kills his brother Abel (Gen. 4).
3. Eve brings forth another son named Seth (appointed) who becomes the promise bearer (Gen. 4:25-26).
4. The line of Cain produces an anti-Christ progeny.

5. The line of Seth produces a godly line leading to Noah.
6. Satan seeks to corrupt the whole human race seen in the ungodliness of Noah's day (Gen. 6:1-7).
7. God destroys the seed of the serpent in the flood and preserves the godly seed through Noah (Gen. 6:8-9).
8. Noah gets off of the ark with his family including three sons—Shem, Ham and Japheth (Gen. 9:18-19).
9. Ham sins against his father and becomes an instrument of Satan to perpetuate the seed of the serpent (father of anti-Christ nations), culminating in Nimrod—the father of Babylon (Gen. 10:8-10).
10. God thwarts Satan's design by judging Nimrod's kingdom and confounding the languages at Babel (Gen. 11:4-9).
11. The seed line of Shem continues through to Abram who God called out to be His covenant partner in the earth (Gen. 11:10-32; 12:1-3).
12. Abraham now becomes the channel through the Messiah is to come. Notice the promises to Abraham and his seed (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:5-6; 17:4-8; 22:15-18).
13. The promises given to Abraham extend to Isaac and his seed (Gen. 24:60; 26:2-4).
14. Isaac has two sons, Jacob and Esau. Esau is the firstborn and rightful heir to the promise, but because he despised his birthright the promises passed to Jacob (Gen. 25:29-34; 28:13-14).
15. From Jacob the promise of the Seed of the Woman extended to his son Judah (Gen. 49:8-10; 38:8-9).

The Seed of the Woman culminates in Christ and ultimately in the Church (Rom. 1:3; 4:13; 9:8; Gal. 3:16, 19, 29). The final struggle between the Seed of the Woman and the seed of the serpent comes at the end of the age. Fortunately the Church ultimately prevails and Satan's head is crushed (Mt. 16:18; Rom. 16:20).

B. The second example has to do with the progressive mention of "Zion" in the Bible.

This example is taken from the text (Conner/Malmin, pg. 68-69).

1. The stronghold of Zion is reclaimed by David and becomes the City of David (II Sam. 5:6-9).
2. The Ark of the Covenant is brought into the Tabernacle of David in Zion, the City of David (II Sam. 6:12-19).
3. Zion is spoken of prophetically as God's holy mountain where He sets His King, referring to Jesus the Son of God (Ps. 2:6).
4. Mount Zion is spoken of prophetically as the city of our God, the city of the great King and the joy of the whole earth (Ps. 48:1-2).
5. Zion is seen as the perfection of beauty from which God will shine (Ps. 50:2).
6. God proclaimed His special love for Zion (Ps. 87:2-3).
7. Isaiah prophesied that Zion would be a place from which the word of the Lord would go forth and nations would be reached (Is. 2:2-3).
8. Isaiah prophesied that God would lay a foundation stone in Zion (Is. 28:16).
9. Zechariah prophesied that God would dwell in the midst of Zion (Zech. 2:10).
10. The King Jesus comes to Zion as a fulfillment of prophecy (Mt. 21:4-5).
11. Jesus is the foundation stone and rock of offence that is laid in Zion (Rom. 9:33; I Pet. 2:6-8).
12. Mount Zion is seen as in conjunction with the Church of the Firstborn and Heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22-24).
13. Ultimately the Lamb stands with the redeemed on Mount Zion (Rev. 14:1).

Lesson 10

The Complete Mention Principle

I. What is the complete mention principle?

The complete mention principle is defined as “that principle by which the interpretation of any verse is determined upon a consideration of the complete mention of its subject in Scripture” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 71).

“No single verse relevant to any specific subject can be left out in formulating the doctrinal teaching on that subject. Each relevant verse is an integral part of the whole, supplementing, adding to, clarifying and illuminating the others” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 72).

II. Why is the complete mention principle so important?

A. The complete mention principle is important because of the fact of _____ revelation.

Unless you see what came before and what comes after together with what you are looking at, you will not have a full understanding of God’s revelation.

B. The complete mention principle is important because the rest of what the Bible says often brings _____ to the particular passage being studied.

Example: Jesus (John 1:14)

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

1. Jesus exemplified grace, that is, He was the kind, compassionate, forgiving minister of mercy.
 - a. Jesus reached out to the untouchable (Mark 1:40-41).
 - b. Jesus extended forgiveness to an adulteress (John 8:10-11).
 - c. Jesus was moved by compassion for a bereaved widow (Luke 7:12-15).
 - d. Jesus freely ministered to the demon possessed (Mark 5:1-19).
 - e. Jesus disregarded His personal need and touched the sick (Mt. 14:12-14).
 - f. Jesus showed genuine concern for the natural needs of people (Mt. 15:32).
 - g. Jesus was moved by the need for shepherding a fainting and weak people (Mt 9:36).

2. At the same time Jesus exemplified truth, that is, He was the rebuking, correcting and cleansing minister of justice (Luke 17:3).
 - a. Jesus rebuked cities and villages (Mt. 11:20-24).
 - b. Jesus rebuked Pharisees (John 8:43-44; Mt. 15:7; 23:13-33).
 - c. Jesus drove out the money changers from the temple (John 2:13-17).
 - d. Jesus corrected His own disciples (Mark 8:33; Luke 9:51-56; 24:25).
 - e. Jesus rebuked entire local churches (Rev. 2:4-5; 2:14-16; 2:20-23; 3:1-3; 3:14-22).
- C. The complete mention principle is important because it help you to emphasize what God _____.

III. What are some of the hurdles to overcome relative to the complete mention principle?

Perhaps the most significant hurdle is being willing to _____ that is involved in looking at all of the verses.

IV. What is the process for applying the complete mention principle?

- A. Discover the _____ that relate to your topic.

For this you will use cross references, concordances, topical Bibles and Bible Dictionaries.

- B. Look up the verse and ask yourself questions relative to each new verse.

1. What does this verse _____ to an understanding of this concept?
2. What _____ of this concept does this verse emphasize?
3. Does this verse _____ my overall perspective on this subject?

V. What are some examples of the complete mention principle?

- A. Contentment (Greek #714, 841-842)

1. There are two main words that are rendered “content” or “contentment” in the New Testament.
 - a. The Greek word *arkew* (#714) which literally means “to ward off, to avail or to be satisfactory.” It is translated “be content, be enough, suffice and be sufficient.”

- b. Two related Greek words *autarkeia* (#841) and *autarkes* (#842) come from the above word and literally mean “self-satisfied, contented and content.” These words are translated “contentment, sufficiency, content.”
2. There are eleven verses in the New Testament that use these words.

Let us look at them in order and see what each verse adds to our understanding of this concept.

Matthew 25:7-9

*Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise answered, saying, “No, lest there should not **be enough** for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.”*

Luke 3:12-14

*Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Collect no more than what is appointed for you.” Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, “And what shall we do?” So he said to them, “Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and **be content** with your wages.”*

Contentment has to do with the very practical issues of life.

John 6:5-7

*Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not **sufficient** for them, that every one of them may have a little.”*

When the needs outnumber the resources, Jesus is able to make up for that which is not sufficient by virtue of His supernatural involvement in our lives.

John 14:7-9

*“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.” Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is **sufficient** for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”*

Sometimes the thing that we want is staring us in the face if we would but open our eyes to it.

II Corinthians 9:6-8

*But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all **sufficiency** in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.*

We will never be able to minister or give from an abundance unless we come to a place where we can be content with what we have.

II Corinthians 12:8-10

*Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is **sufficient** for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

Sometimes God keeps us in a place of dependency so that more of Him can be seen in us. The grace of God operating in our lives will give us the ability to be content even when we are not totally satisfied with how God has made us or the lot that He has dealt us in life.

Philippians 4:10-13

*But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to **be content**: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

Everything does not have to be perfect for us to have contentment. It is a state of the mind not our circumstances that control personal contentment. I can go through seasons of poverty, hunger and need and still be content. I can go through seasons of blessing, plenty and abundance and I can be content. I can do all of these things because I have Christ strengthening me to do so.

I Timothy 6:6-10

*Now godliness with **contentment** is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall **be content**. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

The attitude of contentment is a real plus in our life. It keeps us free from being vulnerable to serious problems particularly as it relates to money. So often we make bad judgments out of a covetous desire to have more and more. When we are content, we don't take the bait as easily as when we are discontent. This verse reminds us that when our lives are compared to what we actually brought into the world and what we actually leave with, we have much for which to be thankful.

Hebrews 13:5-6

*Let your conduct be without covetousness; **be content** with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"*

Sometimes we live without contentment because we focus on what we do not have rather than on what we have. Those who constantly dwell on what they do not have are most likely not giving thanks for what they do have. They are not counting their blessings. Real contentment is not dependent upon poverty or wealth but on an inner attitude of the spirit. A man who is not content with little will not be content with much.

Actually if we understand what we have as believers, we would see that we are indeed prosperous.

If someone is prosperous and successful it means many things including the following:

- Having godly offspring (Gen. 32:12).
- Having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:11-13).
- Meeting godly goals in life (Ezra 6:14; Ps. 20:4).
- Experiencing rest from personal enemies (II Chr. 14:7b).
- Having favor and high esteem before God and man (Pro. 3:3-4).
- Having good friendships (Eccl. 4:7-12).
- Being free from bondages that enslave (Rom. 8:21; Gal. 5:1).
- Knowing a deep inner peace and rest in the spirit (Pro. 3:2; 17:1; Ps. 29:11).
- Having physical health and strength (III John 2).
- Having an abundance of material goods (Deut. 28:1-14).
- Having respect from those who know you (Pro. 11:16 NIV).
- Having a long, enjoyable and satisfying life (Ps. 91:14-16; Pro. 10:27).
- Having personal security for the future (I John 2:16-17).

Furthermore, having contentment frees us from covetousness and fear of the future. If we have a proper relationship with the Lord, we have all that we need. This verse also challenges us to keep the eternal perspective in mind. What is the worst that man can do to us? Kill us? So what, we will forever be with the Lord.

III John 1:9-10

*I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not **content** with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church.*

Discontentment can test the true motives of people. When you have not accepted your role in God's plan for your life, you find it necessary to find fault with others who are in prominent places of ministry.

- B. For other examples please refer to the text, *Interpreting the Scriptures* by Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin.

Lesson 11

The Covenantal Principle

I. What is the covenantal principle of biblical interpretation?

The covenantal principle of biblical interpretation is “that principle by which the interpretation of a verse or group of verses is determined by a consideration of its _____ setting” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 77).

- A. A covenant is a formal, solemn and _____ or contract, usually under seal, between two (or more) parties.
- B. The word “covenant” in the Hebrew literally means a “_____” and refers to the process of formalizing an agreement by the principal parties passing between pieces of flesh (Gen. 15:17; Jer. 34:18-19).
- C. The word “covenant” in the Greek means a disposition or arrangement of any sort which one wishes to be _____.
 - 1. It can refer to a testament or _____ which deals with the last disposition which one makes of his earthly possessions after his death.
 - 2. It can refer to a binding compact, _____ or covenant (Ezek. 20:37).
- D. God Himself has entered into many covenants _____.

II. What are the kinds of covenants that God has made with man?

There are two principle types of covenants that God has made with man.

- A. There are _____ covenants.

A conditional covenant as it relates to God is a “covenant in which God obligates Himself to fulfill the promises of the covenant _____ man’s obedience to the conditions set forth by God. A covenant whose fulfillment is dependent upon man’s fulfilling certain conditions” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 78).

The operative words in a conditional covenant are “_____ you will... _____ I will” (Ex. 19:5-6; Ex. 15:26 with Deut. 28:58-62).

- B. There are _____ covenants.

An unconditional covenant is a covenant that has _____ attached to it. It is a covenant where the principal party involved makes promises that are not

dependent on anything but the _____ of the person making those promises (Tit. 1:2).

An unconditional covenant as it relates to God is a “covenant in which God obligates Himself to fulfill the promises of the covenant regardless of man’s response; a covenant whose fulfillment is _____ upon man’s fulfilling certain conditions” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 77).

The operative words in an unconditional covenant are “_____” (Gen. 9:8-16; 12:2-3).

As you interpret the Bible, especially the Old Testament, you must deal with a conditional covenant differently than you do an unconditional covenant.

III. What are the principle covenants that God has made with man?

There are nine principle covenants that God has made with man.

- A. The Everlasting Covenant (Heb. 13:20-21)
- B. The Edenic Covenant (Gen. 1:26-30)
- C. The Adamic Covenant (Gen. 3:1-24)
- D. The Noahic Covenant (Gen. 8-9)
- E. The Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:-3; 15; 17; 22)
- F. The Mosaic Covenant (Ex. 20-40)
- G. The Palestinian Covenant (Deut. 27-30)
- H. The Davidic Covenant (II Sam. 7:4-29; Ps. 89)
- I. The New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Mt. 26:26-29; Heb. 8-9)

In order to interpret the passage properly it is important to be aware of the covenant that is in play in the passage.

IV. What are the principle elements of divine covenants?

All of God’s covenants have three to five common elements that parallel the marriage covenant (See Chart).

God's Covenants	Marriage Covenants	Description of Elements of Covenants
Promises	Vows	This is where commitments are made that form the basis of the covenant.
Sacrifice	Death to Self	A symbolic death must take place to ratify the covenant between parties.
Seal or Sign	The Ring	An enduring seal is used to reflect the enduring nature of the covenant.
Feast	Feasting	A time of rejoicing to celebrate the new relationship that is formed.
Sanctuary	The Home	A place of relationship where the promises of the covenant are fulfilled.

A. Example 1: The Noahic Covenant (Gen. 8-9)

1. Promises – “I will never again destroy the earth” (Gen. 9:1-11).
2. Sacrifice or Blood – Noah offered a sacrifice (Gen. 8:20-21).
3. Sign or Seal – God set the rainbow in the clouds (Gen. 9:12-17).
4. Feast – Not specifically mentioned.
5. Sanctuary – The cleansed earth would be the place where the covenant would be fulfilled.

B. Example 2: The New Covenant

1. Promises – “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you” (Ezek. 36:26; Jer. 31:31-34; John 7:37-37; 14:15-17; 16:5-15).
2. Sacrifice or Blood – Christ’s blood was shed to ratify the covenant (Luke 22:20).
3. Sign or Seal – The Holy Spirit within (John 14:17; Eph. 1:13-14).
4. Feast – The celebration of communion (I Cor. 11:23-26).
5. Sanctuary – The Church, the temple of the living God (Eph. 2:20-22; Heb. 3:6).

V. How does one use the covenantal principle in interpretation?

- A. Determine if the passage has covenantal _____.
- B. Determine which _____ or covenants are involved.
- C. Determine whether or not the covenant is _____ or unconditional.

- D. Determine whether this covenant is _____ in the New Covenant.
- E. Interpret the covenant from the perspective of _____ of Christ and the New Covenant.

All of the covenants have a symbolic aspect to them. Most of the elements of each covenant point to and are fulfilled in the elements of the New Covenant. For instance, the blood of the covenants invariably point to Christ and his sacrificial shedding of blood on Calvary.

VI. What are some examples of the application of the covenantal principle?

The following examples are taken from the text, *Interpreting the Scriptures*, pages 81-82.

A. The Edenic Covenant

To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. Revelation 2:7b

Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Revelation 22:14

In order to arrive at a proper interpretation of these verses, the Edenic Covenant must be referred to because it is under this covenant that the tree of life is first mentioned. Adam and Eve forfeited their right to eat of the tree of life when they failed to fulfill the condition of the Edenic Covenant by eating of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Thus they did not “overcome” because they did not “do His commandments” and lost the “right to the tree of life (Genesis 2:8-17; 3:22-24). As the purpose of God comes full circle, the overcomers will once again have access to that which was lost.

B. The Adamic Covenant

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. Romans 16:20

In order to understand the full implication of this verse it must be considered in the light of the Adamic Covenant. After the entrance of sin into the human race, God said to the serpent, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Gen. 3:15). The verse in Romans points toward the ultimate fulfillment of the prophetic word of the Adamic Covenant. Thus, this verse draws its significance from the fact that it is a reiteration of the first Messianic promise of redemption.

C. The Noahic Covenant

And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. Revelation 4:3

This verse must be interpreted in connection with the Noahic Covenant. The first rainbow was placed in the heavens to be a reminder to God and man that God would never again destroy the whole earth with a flood (Gen. 9:8-17). The rainbow around the throne in Revelation shows that God is keeping the seal of the Noahic Covenant constantly before Him, proving His faithfulness to His promise.

D. The Abrahamic Covenant

If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:29

It is impossible to properly interpret this verse without recognizing what is involved in the Abrahamic Covenant. As previously noted, Abraham was to be the father of two seed lines—natural and spiritual (Gen. 13:16; 15:5). To these two seed lines there were two sets of promises—natural and spiritual. The natural promises pertained to land, seed and possessions (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:16-18). The spiritual promises pertained to the Messiah and His ministry to all the nations of the earth. These promises included justification by faith and the reception of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:8, 14). Thus, this verse is stating that the person who belongs to Christ is Abraham's seed and is in covenant relationship with God, being an heir of the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant through Christ.

E. The Mosaic Covenant

So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. Colossians 2:16-17

The subject matter of this verse can only be understood by relating it to the Mosaic Covenant. Under this covenant, Israel was commanded to observe Sabbath days, festival months, times of convocation, and Sabbath and Jubilee years (Leviticus 23, 25). In Galatians, Paul is referring back to these observances belonging to the Law Covenant. For the Colossian believers who lived under the New Covenant keeping these observances would have been reverting back to and placing themselves back under the Mosaic Covenant.

F. The Davidic Covenant

He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end. Luke 1:32-33

This verse must be interpreted with respect to the promise of the Davidic Covenant. This promise is basically four-fold, relating to:

1. A Seed
2. A House
3. A Throne
4. A Kingdom

The verses in Luke prophesied that this four-fold promise would find its fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ, the son of David.

G. The New Covenant

Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah--not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Jeremiah 31:31-33

This prophecy can only be understood by linking it with its fulfillment when Messiah established the New Covenant. The days that Jeremiah prophesied of are shown to be days of Messiah, in which He established the New Covenant.

Lesson 12

The Ethnic Division Principle

I. What is the ethnic division principle of biblical interpretation?

The ethnic division principle is “that principle by which the interpretation of any verse or passage of Scripture is determined upon consideration of God’s appointed _____” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 85).

II. What are the key ethnic divisions that have a primary influence on biblical interpretation?

A. There are many terms that are used throughout the Bible to refer to groups of people.

A. Peoples (Gen. 28:3; Josh. 4:24; I Kgs. 8:60; John 12:32; Rev. 7:9)

B. Households (Josh. 7:14)

C. Families (Gen. 10:32; I Chr. 16:28; Ps. 96:7; Jer. 2:4)

D. Tribes (Josh. 11:23; Ps. 78:55)

E. Nations (Gen. 10:32; II Chr. 20:6; Ps. 2:8; 47:8)

F. Languages (Gen. 10:20; Dan. 7:14; Rev. 7:9)

B. There are _____ or classes of people that have special relevance when interpreting the Scripture (I Cor. 10:32).

1. The Gentiles

The term “Gentiles” is used in the Bible to refer to all those who are _____ covenant relationship with God. Some other terms that are used in the Bible to reference this group of people include “the heathen, the lost, the nations, the uncircumcised, foreigners, aliens and strangers” (See: Ephesians 2:11-12).

- Gentiles in the flesh
- Uncircumcised
- Without Christ
- Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel
- Strangers from the covenants of Promise
- Having no hope
- Without God in the world

- Far off
- Enmity with God

2. The Children of Israel

The Children of Israel were a nation that arose out of the natural seed of Abraham. They are sometimes referred to in the Bible as Hebrews, Jews, Judah and Israel. The Children of Israel were chosen by God from among the nations to be His instrument in the earth to mediate His purposes to the world (Gen. 12:1-2; Ex. 19:4-6; Deut. 7:6-8).

- They began as a _____ nation that came forth out of Egypt (Deut. 4:34).
- They continued as a united nation until the death of _____ (I Kgs. 11:11-13).
- After the death of Solomon the nation or kingdom was _____ into the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah) (I Kgs. 12:20).
- Under Jereboam, Israel (Northern Kingdom) set up an alternate and idolatrous system of worship and was eventually judged by God at the hands of the Assyrians and taken into captivity. Eventually they were scattered abroad and _____ as a nation (Deut. 4:27).
- Judah (Southern Kingdom) experienced backsliding as well, was eventually judged by God at the hands of the Babylonians and was taken into _____.
- Under Ezra and Nehemiah a remnant of the people of Judah returned to Jerusalem to _____ the city and a temple. However, many of them stayed in Babylon or were scattered among the nations of the world.
- Eventually this is the people who were in the land when Jesus came to Jerusalem. They were called “_____” because they were primarily made up of a remnant of the tribe of Judah.

This history is important because many of the prophets who prophesied did so in the context of a particular season or to a particular segment of people. When studying the Old Testament, questions must be asked, “Does the verse to be interpreted refer to...

- The United Nation of Israel,
- Israel, the Northern Kingdom (10 tribes), or

- Judah, the Southern Kingdom (2 tribes plus Levites).

See: Appendix, Old Testament Timeline

3. The Church

The Church was founded by Jesus and the Apostles as the culmination of the Old Testament order. Now the Church is composed of _____ Jew and Gentile who have received Christ as their Lord and Savior (Eph. 2:14-18).

- a. The Church is the New Testament expression of the people of God. As such they are:
 - The “called out ones” of the Lord.
 - Objects of grace rescued by God (Eph. 2:8-10).
 - Called out of bondage (Eph 2:1-3).
 - Delivered by virtue to the application of the blood of the Lamb to the doorposts of their hearts (I Cor. 5:7).
 - To be distinct from the nations in order to be God’s instrument in the earth (John 15:18-19; 17:14-17; I Cor. 4:13; II Cor. 6:14-18).
- b. Both believing Jews and Gentiles together make up the Church which is God’s chosen people, holy nation, priesthood and peculiar people (Ex. 19:1-6; I Pet. 2:4-9).

III. What is the relationship of the Children of Israel to the Church?

- A. Both Israel and the Church were chosen by God to be His instruments and channels of His blessing to the rest of the world.

God applied unique descriptions to His unique people. Israel was the natural expression of God’s people that God intended to flow into and become the foundation for the spiritual expression of God’s people.

God demonstrated this by referring to Israel and the Church in the same ways.

1. Peculiar People (Ex. 19:5-6)

The word peculiar here refers to “a special, precious, private possession”. It is something that is exclusively individual that is set apart because of its special

value from all other things. In the Old Testament, God referred to Israel as a peculiar people (Deut. 14:2, 26:18; Ps. 135:4). In the New Testament this title is used of the Church (I Pet. 2:9).

2. My People

God has only called two groups of people “My People.” In Exodus when God saw the children of Israel in cruel bondage and their cry came up to Him He distinguished them as being His unique and private possession by calling them His people. In the New Testament this place of unique possession is ascribed to the Church (Heb. 8:10; I Pet. 2:9-10).

3. The Children of God

God has only called two groups of people the “Children of God.” As a Father He has a family that He is in the process of bringing to maturity. This family is made up of children who are peculiar in that they have a different heritage than those around them. Heredity does make a difference. The children of Israel were different because they had a different father—not Abraham but God.

In the Old Testament dispensation it was possible to have Abraham as your natural father and not be considered a child of God (John 8:39, 44). It was also possible not to have Abraham as your natural father and yet be considered a child of God (Mt. 1:5). The qualifications for being God’s children in the Old Testament were not natural but they were spiritual (Heb. 11; Rom. 9:6-8; 11:20).

In the New Testament, the Church is referred to as the “children of God” (Rom. 8:16). The qualifications are the same in both testaments. We all become the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. Natural heritage is not important, but spiritual heritage is very important. Because of our spiritual heritage we become the “called out,” separated, unique, chosen children of God.

God’s Title Applied	To OT Israel	To the NT Church
My People	Ex. 6:6-7; 3:7; 5:1	I Pet. 2:9-10
Children of God	Is. 63:8	Rom.8:16
Peculiar People	Ex. 19:5-6	I Pet. 2:9

B. Both Israel and the Church share many of the same names and titles.

Term Used	Old Testament	New Testament
A Chosen People	Deut. 10:15	I Pet. 2:9
A Holy Nation	Ex. 19:6	I Peter 2:9
People of God	Ps. 100:3	II Cor. 6:16
A Priesthood	Ex. 19:6	I Pet. 2:9
God’s Treasure	Ex. 19:5	Mt. 13:44

Bride or Wife	Is. 54:6; 62:5	II Cor. 11:2-3
God's Vineyard	Is. 5:7	Mt. 20:1; Jn. 15:5
Israel	Is. 44:6	Gal. 6:16
God's Flock	Jer. 23:3	I Pt. 5:2
A House	Ezek. 18:31	I Tim. 3:15
A Light	Is. 60:1,3	Mt. 5:14
God's Witness	Is. 43:10	Acts 1:8
A Church	Acts 7:38	Gal. 1:13

IV. Why is the understanding of the relationship of Israel and the Church so important?

A. If we do not understand this relationship, we will not see the church throughout the _____.

- Both Old and New Testament saints make up the walls of the new _____ that came together to form a spiritual habitation of God (Eph. 2:19-22).
- Both Old and New Testament saints are _____ into a spiritual body and have become partakers of the same promise (Eph. 3:6).

Paul described it this way (Eph. 2:14-20):

The former condition of the Gentiles.

- Gentiles in the Flesh
- Uncircumcision
- Without Christ
- Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel
- Strangers from the Covenants of Promise
- Having No Hope
- Without God in the World
- Far Off
- Enmity from God and Man

The present condition of the Gentiles.

But Now...

- In Christ Jesus
- Made Nigh by then Blood of Christ
- At Peace with God and Man
- Made One With the Jew

- Middle Wall of Partition Broken Down
- Enmity Abolished
- One New Man
- Both Reconciled to God in One Body
- Preaching of Peace to Those Which Were Far
- Both Have Access to the Father

The new relationships that results:

- No More Strangers and Foreigners
- Fellow Citizens with the Saints
- Of the Household of God
- Jew and Gentile Joined Together

3. Both Old and New Testament saints anxiously await the Second Coming where old and new will be _____ and for eternity to enjoy the blessings of salvation (Mt. 8:11).

The Church of Jesus Christ is not a _____ for Israel. Israel was the foundation on which the Church was built. The New Testament Church represents a _____ or the _____ of all that the Old Testament foretold.

- B. If we do not understand their relationship, we will not see or understand the Old Testament prophecies concerning _____ (Heb. 12:22-23).

If we are going to find the church in the Old Testament, it will be as we understand this—that prophecies concerning restoration before the end of the age apply to the church and not a national system, a natural temple or animal sacrifice (Is. 2:1-4; 4:2-6; 62).

Jesus became the transition point in history when all that is natural gave place to the spiritual. To go back to the natural after experiencing the spiritual is to reject the truth.

- C. If we do not understand their relationship, we will put all of our energies into building _____ and neglect the spiritual or the real.

For more information on this theme consult the course Walking in Present Truth, Lesson 8-9.

V. What did Paul say about the relationship between Jews, Gentiles and the Church?

In Romans 11:15-24 Paul tries to help us understand what happened from a spiritual point of view by using the illustration of two trees. In a sense all of the history of mankind can

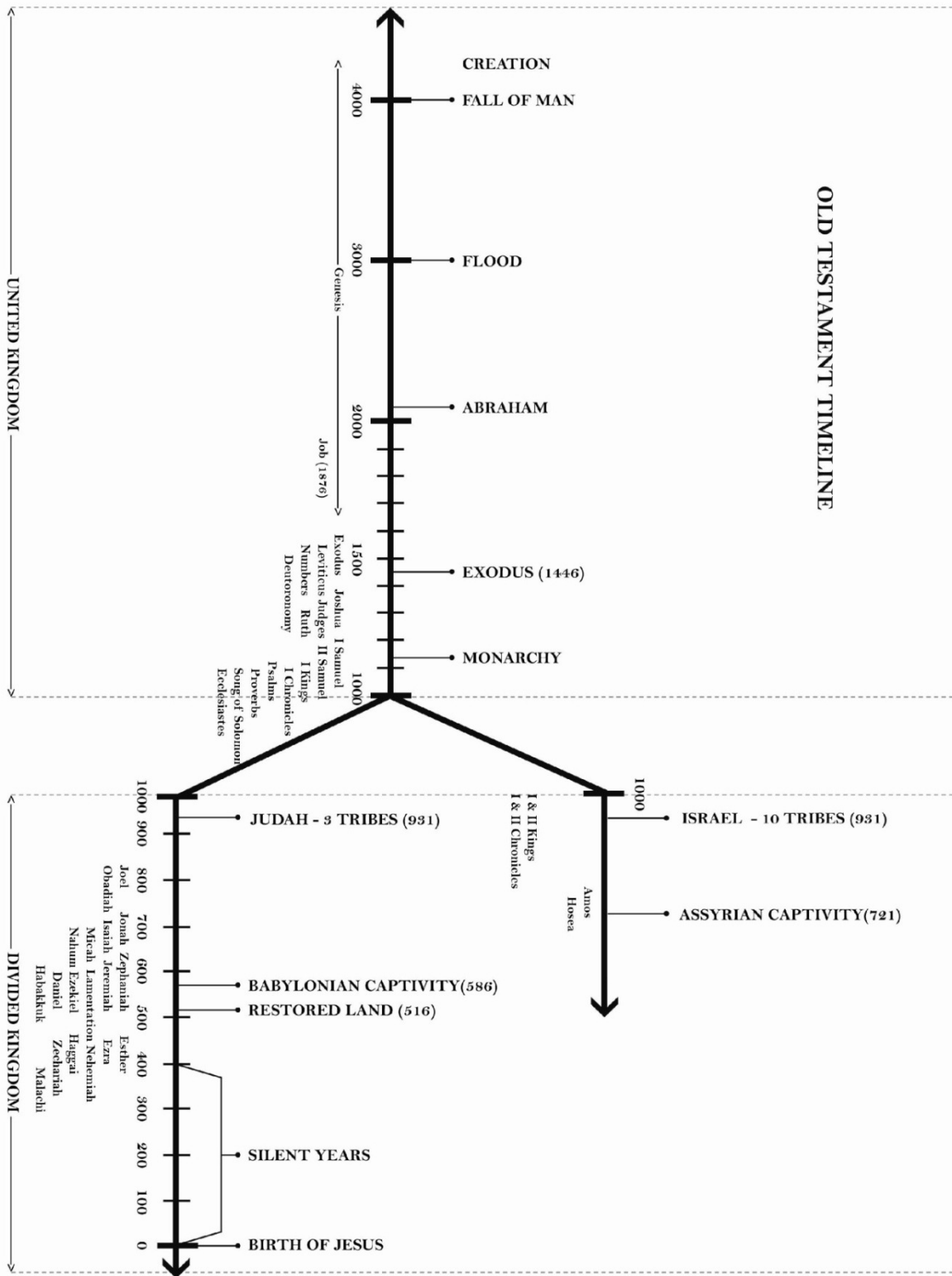
be summarized with the illustration of these trees. All mankind finds themselves as a branch on one of these trees.

A. There is one _____.

There is but one tree of faith that is composed of both believing Jews and believing Gentiles. That tree of faith is the true Church that God sees when He looks down from above.

B. There is also a tree of _____ or could we say a tree of _____.

There is one wild olive tree that is composed of both unbelieving Jews and unbelieving Gentiles. Everyone in the wild olive tree is to be seen as a potential transplant into the tree of faith through evangelism.



Lesson 13

The Chronometrical Principle

I. What is the chronometrical principle of biblical interpretation?

The chronometrical principle of biblical interpretation is “that principle by which the interpretation of a verse or passage is determined upon a consideration of the chronometrical setting” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 93).

This word “chronometrical” is an English word that is built from two Greek words meaning “_____” and “_____.”

This principle is sometimes referred to as the _____ principle and it acknowledges that during different periods of time, God has chosen to deal in a particular way with man in respect to sin and man’s responsibility to God.

II. What are the various words used that reflect issues of time?

There are many biblical words that express natural elements of time.

Such as:

- Time (s)
- Season (s)
- Day (s)
- Night (s)
- Week (s)
- Month (s)
- Year (s)
- Age (s)

A. Sometimes these words are _____ in their meaning.

B. Sometimes these words are used in a more _____ sense.

1. Note the phrases that simply use the word “day” to refer to a season of time as opposed to a literal day:

- The day of calamity (II Sam. 22:19; Ps. 18:8)
- The day of your fast (Is. 58:3)
- The day or time of trouble (Job 38:23; Ps. 20:1; 59:16)
- The day of adversity (Pro. 24:10; Eccl. 7:14)
- The day of affliction (Jer. 16:19)

- The day of doom (Job 21:30; Pro. 16:4; Jer. 17:17)
 - The day of trial (Ps. 95:8-11; Heb. 3:8)
 - The day of vengeance (Pro. 6:34)
 - The day of punishment (Is. 10:3)
 - The day of rebuke (Hos. 5:9)
 - The day of grief and desperate sorrow (Is. 17:11)
 - The day of distress (Obad. 1:14)
 - The day of salvation (Is. 49:8; II Cor. 6:2)
 - The day of prosperity (Eccl. 7:14)
2. Other words associated with the passing of time are used in much the same way.
- Appointed seasons (Ezek. 45:17)
 - The time of trouble (Neh. 9:27; Job 38:23; Ps. 37:39)
 - The time of singing (Song 12:2)
 - The time of punishment (Jer. 8:12)
 - The time of the promise (Acts 7:17)
 - The time of healing (Jer. 14:19)

C. Sometimes these words suggest spiritual and _____ aspects of time.

1. Note the phrases that simply use the word “day”:
- The day of the Lord (Is. 2:12; 13:6, 9; Joel 2:1; I Th. 5:2)
 - The appointed day (Hos. 9:5)
 - The last days (Gen. 49:1; Acts 2:17; II Tim. 3:1; II Pet. 3:3)
 - The day of His manifestation (Luke 1:80)
 - The day of the Lord’s sacrifice (Zeph. 1:8)
 - The day of His wrath (Job 20:28; Ps. 110:5; Pro. 11:4; Rom. 5:2)
 - The day of the Lord’s vengeance (Is. 34:8; 61:2)
 - The day of His fierce anger (Is. 13:13; Lam. 1:12)
 - The day of judgment (Mt. 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36)
 - The day of redemption (Eph. 4:30)
 - The day of visitation (Luke 19:44; I Pet. 2:12)
 - The day of His coming (Mal. 3:2)
 - The day of our Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1:8; 5:5; II Cor. 1:14)
 - The day of His power (Ps. 110:3)
2. Note other words associated with the passing of time are used in much the same way.
- The time of Jacob’s trouble (Jer. 30:7)
 - The times of the Gentiles (Ezek. 30:3; Luke 21:24)

- The time of the latter rain (Zech. 10:1)
- The time of harvest (Mt. 13:30)
- The time of reformation (Heb. 9:10)
- The times of restoration (Acts 13:21)
- The time of the end (Dan. 8:17; 11:35; 12:4)
- The end of the ages (I Cor. 10:11; Heb. 9:26)
- The time of the dead (Rev. 11:18)

III. What are the dispensations of time that are relevant to the biblical interpretation?

There are a couple of different ways to look at the dispensations of time. The word dispensation means “an administrative system or management.”

- A. God’s interaction with man can be seen from a purely _____ point of view (See Conner/Malmin, pg. 97).

Biblical chronological ages include the following:

1. The Eternal Past (Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90:1-2; Rev. 1:8)
2. The Age of Creation (Gen. 1-3; Is. 40:28; Col. 1:16-17)
3. The Pre-Flood (Antediluvian) Age (Gen. 4-8; II Pet. 3:6-7)
4. The Age of the Patriarchs (Gen. 8-50; Acts 7:12)
5. The Age of the Law (Hos. 11:1; Gal. 3:23-25)
6. The Messianic Age (Heb. 1:1-2; 9:26)

Christ ushered in a new age of the Spirit and an age of grace. This is sometimes also called the Church Age. The Old Testament refers to this age as the last days (Compare Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:16-17). These last days extend from the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus up to the Second Coming of Christ (I cor. 10:11).

7. The Ages to Come and/or the Eternal Future (Mark 10:30; Luke 18:29-30; 20:34-36; Eph. 1:21; 2:7; 3:20-21).

- B. God’s interaction with man can be seen from a _____ point of view.

“God’s plan of redemption is one, but through the ages His method of dealing with man in regard to his sin has varied. These various dispensations or arrangements cannot be separated from the covenants. They, in fact, find their very basis in the

covenants. Each of these redemptive covenants was a particular arrangement between God and man, having its own distinctive emphasis” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 99). These include the following:

Dispensation	Related Covenant
Dispensation of Innocence	Edenic Covenant
Dispensation of Conscience	Adamic Covenant
Dispensation of Human Government	Noahic Covenant
Dispensation of Promise	Abrahamic Covenant
Dispensation of Law	Mosaic Covenant
Dispensation of Grace	New Covenant
Dispensation of the Kingdom	Everlasting Covenant

IV. How does the interpreter use the chronometrical principle in biblical interpretation?

The interpreter should determine the following in order to make proper application of the passage in question:

- A. Determine whether or not the passage has a _____ ascribed to it.
- B. Determine whether the time element used is to be interpreted _____, symbolically or prophetically.
- C. Determine the _____ that relates specifically to the passage under consideration.
- D. Recognize that different _____ apply to different dispensations.
 1. You cannot apply the rules of the Adamic Covenant to the Noahic covenant.
 - a. Under the Adamic Covenant man was not allowed to eat meat, but under the Noahic covenant they could (Gen. 1:30; 9:3).
 - b. Under the Adamic Covenant man was not allowed to execute murderers, but under the Noahic Covenant they could (Gen. 9:6).
 2. You cannot take the rules from the Mosaic Covenant and apply them to the New Covenant.
 - a. Under the Mosaic Covenant man was required to keep certain feasts that were prophetic of what would come in Christ. In the New Covenant or Church Age these do not apply (Col. 3:16-17).

- b. Under the Mosaic Covenant man was to offer animal sacrifice to deal with his sin issues. These sacrifices are unacceptable under the New Covenant in the Church Age (Heb. 10:1-10).
 - 3. You cannot take the rules from the Church Age and apply them to the Ages to Come.
 - a. In this present age or the Church Age we live lives according to the laws of nature which include marrying, eating and drinking. These laws will not apply to the Eternal Age (Mt. 22:30).
 - b. In this present age or Church Age we are bound by certain human limitation that will not carry over into the Age to Come, including sickness and death (Rev. 21:3-4).
- E. Determine to what degree the passage applies to the present time or dispensation in which we live.

Lesson 14

The Breach Principle

I. What is the breach principle of biblical interpretation?

The breach principle of biblical interpretation is that principle by which a certain verse or passage in Scripture is aided by a consideration of certain breaches, either breaches of _____ or breaches of _____ (Conner/Malmin, pg. 103).

II. What are some of the words that help us to understand the concept of “breach”?

There are some words that will help us to define what is meant by “breach” in this context.

Note: All English definitions are taken from *Funk & Wagnall’s Standard Dictionary*.

A. Breach

1. The act of breaking; infraction; infringement.
2. Violation of duty, right or legal obligation.
3. A gap or break as in a wall, dike, etc.
4. A rupture of amicable relations.

B. Gap

A break in continuity; an interruption; a period in chronology or a range of phenomena about which nothing is known.

C. Interruption

To interrupt is:

1. To cause a delay or break in.
2. To break the continuity, course or the sameness of.

D. Delay

1. To put off to a future time; postpone; defer.
2. To cause to be late; detain.
3. A temporary stoppage or stay.

E. Interval

1. An open space between two objects; distance between points.
2. The time that intervenes between two events or periods.

F. Intermission

A temporary cessation; interruption.

G. Hiatus

A gap or opening; break, with a part missing (like the link of a chain).

H. Pause

1. The temporary cessation of action or speech.
2. A calculated measure of silence.

III. How can we illustrate this general principle from the Bible?

The breach of Uzzah is a good illustration of a breach principle (II Sam. 6:8; I Chr. 13:11; 15:13).

A. Purpose Attempted (II Sam. 6:1-2; II Chr. 13:1-4)

Shortly after David took authority as king over all of the tribes of Israel he consulted with his leaders concerning bringing the Ark of the Covenant from obscurity to the City of David. He did this because he wanted to be able to inquire of the Lord continually during his administration.

B. Purpose Breached

David and his designated leaders assembled 30,000 people; they went to get the Ark from the house of Abinadab; they put it on a new cart being driven by Uzzah and Ahio and they proceeded on to Jerusalem. While in route, the oxen stumbled and Uzzah reached out his hand to try to steady the ark. As soon as he touched the Ark, he was struck dead (II Sam. 6:6-8; I Chr. 13:9-11).

And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God. And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perezuzza [the breach of Uzzah] to this day.

I Chronicles 13:9-11, KJV

This breach ended up producing a delay, a temporary stoppage, a _____ and an interruption in the plan of David.

C. Purpose Accomplished

David had done the wise thing to stop what he was doing and try to figure out why God showed apparent disfavor concerning his declared purpose. As he sought the Lord he realized that he was trying to do a good thing in a wrong way. He was patterning his moving of the Ark after the Philistines (I Sam. 6:7-9) rather than according to the divine plan (Num. 4:15; Josh. 3:3, 8-13; I Chr. 15:15). David declared the reason for the breach or stoppage (I Chr. 15:12-15).

This interlude or breach in the original plan lasted three months. After David adjusted his plan to align with the ordinances of the Lord, he experience full success (II Sam. 6:12-15; I Chr. 15:16-28).

As we look at breaches that have a bearing on God's declared purposes, the thing that they will all have in common is that God's breach of promise has always been based on _____ to perform according to the conditions of God's word or promise.

IV. Where are some of the places in Scripture where we see the breach of promise in operation?

“Breach of promise” is defined in the dictionary as “failure to fulfill a promise, especially a promise to marry.”

The following illustrations are drawn from the text, *Interpreting the Scriptures* (pages 104-105).

A. The breach concerning entering the Promised Land (Num. 13:34).

1. Land Promised (Gen. 15:13-21; 22:16-18; 28:13-15; Ex. 3:15-17; 13:5; Ps. 105:8-12; Deut. 1:8)

God had promised the land to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendents. There came a point in time where God was prepared to deliver on the promise. There was a time for Israel as a nation to enter into the promised possession.

2. Man's Failure (Num. 13:31-33; 14:1-10)

Because the spies that were sent into the land focused on the size of the giants rather than on the power of their God who delivered them from the Egyptians, they gave a bad report that robbed the people of faith. As a result they rebelled against God's command to “go.”

3. God's Breach of Promise (Num. 14:22-23, 31-34)

Because of their unbelief the generation that rebelled against His purpose would not enter in. God declared a 40 year delay, interruption, pause or gap in the fulfillment of His original promise. This 40 year period was “the breach period.”

After the number of the days in which you spied out the land [of Canaan], even forty days, for each day a year shall you bear and suffer for your iniquities, even for forty years, and you shall know My displeasure [the revoking of My promise and My estrangement]. Numbers 14:34, Amp

4. Land Entered (Josh. 3:17)

The next generation responded to the Lord’s challenge to go and successfully entered the land under the leadership of Joshua (Josh. 3:17).

B. The breach concerning dominion in the land

1. Dominion Promised (Gen. 15:18-21; 22:16-18; 24:60).

God promised the descendants of Abraham that they would have dominion over the Canaanites. However, when they went into the land they were not to make any concessions to these enemies or worship their gods (Deut. 28:14; 30:1-20; Josh. 23:11-13).

2. Man’s Failure (Josh. 9:14-15; 15:63; 16:10; 17:12-13; Judg. 2:11-19).

Upon the death of Joshua a new generation arose that did not follow the challenge that had been given them by God. As a result they went into seasons where they were actually oppressed by the nations that they had previously conquered.

3. God’s Breach of Promise

The ultimate expression of God’s breach is that the children of Israel forfeited the land altogether (II Chr. 36:15-16). Again, this was based on their disobedience to God’s commands (Jer. 25:1-14). They did not fulfill the conditions for keeping the land (Deut. 28:1-68).

4. End Result

Under Ezra and Nehemiah a remnant returned to the land. Even though they were under the domination of other world powers they had a certain amount of autonomy. The most important thing is that as a nation they were cured from idolatry. After the temple was rebuilt, there is no evidence that the Jews in Palestine ever practice idolatry again.

V. Where are some of the places in Scripture where we see the breach of time in operation?

When God revealed His purposes to and through the prophets, they were caught up in what has been spoken of as “the prophetic perspective.” They would see things from God’s perspective or point of view. As a result of this, they would sometimes group together certain passages of Scripture, prophetic events, and include the past, the present and the future as one. They were viewing things from God’s eternal present.

“The Old Testament prophets did not always understand their own utterances concerning the coming of Christ. They searched what was meant by their prophecies. They tried to discover the time of fulfillment of the Spirit’s utterances through them when He spoke of the “sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” It was revealed to them that their prophetic words were not just for their generation but also for future generations (I Pet.1:10-12).

“Various passages in the prophetic books view mountain peaks of events as being all together with no valleys between. Their historical fulfillment has proven that there is a “time gap” or breach of time involved in their fulfillment. This is especially true concerning events pertaining to the first and second comings of Christ. This area of “time element” is what makes the interpretation of prophecy so difficult” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 110).

A. Isaiah 61:1-2

Note: This example is taken from the text, *Interpreting the Scriptures*, pages 111-112).

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God...

Jesus read this verse in the synagogue shortly after His baptism at the Jordan. It was more or less His inauguration speech relative to His ministry.

And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.” Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He

began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Luke 4:17-21

Notice that Jesus indicated that this moment was the fulfillment of the word given by Micah hundreds of years earlier. However, when you look at the way Jesus quoted Micah, He actually stopped in mid-verse and did not finish the Micah prophecy. Micah’s prophecy had been about both the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God. Jesus mentioned the acceptable year, but not the day of vengeance.

That is because Micah was prophesying in God’s eternal present and saw no gap between the two days. In the outworking of Micah’s prophecy there are actually two time zones being referenced—the first coming which is referred to as the acceptable year and the second coming which will be more associated with the day of vengeance.

B. The Two Resurrections

Note: This example is taken from the text, *Interpreting the Scriptures*, pages 111-112).

1. When you read most of the Scripture verses about the resurrection of the dead they seem to imply two events taking place at the same time—the resurrection of the just and the unjust (Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15).
2. However, in the Book of Revelation where more detail is given there seems to be a breach, gap or space of time between the two events (Rev. 20:4-6). Therefore, one is called the first resurrection and the other one is called the second resurrection.

VI. How is the breach or gap principle to be applied?

The following five points are offered by Conner/Malmin:

- A. Determine whether the verse of passage under consideration is in any way related to a breach.
- B. If a breach is intimated, discern the true nature of the breach as well as its cause and boundaries.
- C. Make a distinction between a breach of promise and a breach of time.
- D. Due to the limited relevance of this principle to most passages of Scripture, the interpreter must not apply it unless the context demands it.
- E. This principle must be used in harmony with all of the other principles.

Lesson 15

The Christocentric Principle

I. What is the Christocentric principle of biblical interpretation?

The Christocentric principle of biblical interpretation is that principle by which the interpretation of a certain verse or passage in Scripture is aided by an underlying awareness that _____ of the entire Old and the New Testament is Christ—the Messiah.

This principle is sometimes called the _____ Principle

- A. The entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is _____ (History).
- B. The entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is an unfolding of the plan of _____.
- C. The entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments, relates the unfolding struggle between the _____—the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15).

The Seed of the Woman	The Seed of the Serpent
Children of Light	Children of Darkness
Mystery of Godliness	Mystery of Iniquity
Spirit of Truth	Spirit of Error
Children of Promise	Children of the Flesh
Kingdom of God	Kingdom of Satan
Life	Death
Godly Seed or Line	Ungodly Seed or Line
Christ	Antichrist

- D. The entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments, could be labeled the *Book of the _____ of Jesus Christ*.

II. What is the biblical basis for this principle?

- A. The biblical basis for this principle is the testimony of _____ (John 1:45).
- B. The biblical basis for this principle is the testimony of _____ (Acts 10:43).
- C. The biblical basis for this principle is the testimony of _____.
 - 1. This is seen by Jesus' prophetic declaration (Ps. 40: 7; Heb. 10:7).
 - 2. This is seen by Jesus' personal implications.

There are several occasions where Jesus implied that he was connected to the patriarchs of old.

- a. Abraham (John 8:56-58)
 - b. Moses (John 5:45-47)
 - c. David (Mt. 22:45)
3. This is seen by Jesus' literal statements (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39).

Jesus said that we cannot comprehend or understand the Scriptures unless we _____.

D. The biblical basis for this principle is the testimony of the _____.

Jesus was constantly affirmed by the Gospel writers as the _____ of that which was _____ in the Old Testament.

1. Christ indicated that He came to _____ the law (Mt. 5:17-18; Luke 24:44).
2. The Gospel writers referred often to Jesus' _____ of Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah who was to come.

The phrase, "that it might be fulfilled" occurs about thirty-three times in the New Testament particularly as it relates to Christ.

The following are just a few of the prophetic words which were fulfilled in relation to Jesus final week before His crucifixion.

The Old Testament Prophets

- Jesus would come on a donkey (Zech. 9:9; Mt. 21:5; John 12:15).
- There would be plots to kill Jesus (Ps. 2:2; Mt. 21:38).
- Jesus would reestablish the temple as a house of prayer (Is. 56:7; Mt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46).
- Jesus would be sold for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12; Mt. 26:15).
- Jesus would be smitten and His followers would scatter (Zech. 13:7; Mt. 26:31; Mark 14:27).

- Jesus would be silent in the face of accusation (Is. 53:7; Mt. 26:63; 27:14; Mark 15:28).
- Jesus would be hit with the palm of their hands (Is. 50:6; Mt. 26:67; Luke 22:64).
- Jesus would be beaten severely (Is. 53:5; Mt. 27:26).
- Jesus would be spit upon and have His beard plucked (Is. 50:6; Mt. 26:67-68; 27:30).
- Jesus would be numbered among transgressors (Is. 53:12; Mark 15:28; Luke 22:37).
- Jesus would intercede for those who crucified Him (Is. 53:12; Luke 23:34).
- Judas would regret his actions and the pieces of silver would be thrown in the sanctuary (Zech. 11:13; Mt. 27:5).
- The betrayal money would buy a potter's field (Zech. 11:13; Mt. 27:7).
- There would be darkness over the whole land (Amos 8:9; Mt. 27:45; Mark 15:33).
- Jesus would be buried in a rich man's tomb (Is. 53:9; Mt. 27:57-60).
- Jesus' side would be pierced (Zech. 12:10; John 19:34).

The Book of the Psalms

- The people would sing hosannas (Ps. 118:25-26; Mt. 21:9; Mark 11:7-11; Luke 19:38; John 12:13).
- The children would proclaim praise (Ps. 8:2; Mt. 21:16).
- Jesus would be betrayed by a friend (Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; Mt. 26:49-50; John 13:18).
- Jesus would be condemned by false witnesses (Ps. 35:11; 109:2-3; Mt. 26:59-60; Mark 14:57-58).
- Jesus would be hated without a cause (Ps. 35:19; John 15:24-25).
- Jesus would be mocked (Ps. 22:7-8; Mt. 27:31; Luke 23:35).

- Jesus would thirst on the cross (Ps. 69:21; John 19:28).
- Jesus would be offered gall and vinegar to drink (Ps. 69:21; Mt. 27:34; Mark 15:36; John 19:29).
- Jesus' garments would be divided by the casting of lots (Ps. 22:18; Mt. 27:35; John 19:24).
- Jesus would be stared at on the cross by His enemies (Ps. 22:11-13; Mt. 27:36).
- Jesus would be looked up by His relatives from afar (Ps. 38:11; Luke 23:49).
- Jesus would be reviled (Ps. 22:7-8; Mt. 27:39).
- People would wag their heads at Jesus (Ps. 22:7-8; 109:25; Mt. 27:39).
- Jesus would be indicted for trusting in God (Ps. 22:8; Mt. 27:43).
- Jesus would be pierced in His hands and feet (Ps. 22:16; Zech. 13:6; John 20:25).
- Jesus would cry out because of His forsakenness (Ps. 22:1; Mt. 27:46; Mark 15:34).
- Jesus would commit His spirit to the Father (Ps. 31:5; Mark 23:46).
- Jesus' bones would not be broken (Ex. 12:46; Psalm 34:20; John 19:32-36).

III. How is Christ seen in the Scriptures?

A. Christ is seen as the subject of the book of _____.

In Genesis Christ is seen in the following:

1. The Tree of Life (Gen. 2:9; John 6:54)
2. Adam (Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 5:17)
3. The Seed of the Woman (Mt. 1:22-23; Luke 1:35)
4. The Coats of Skin (Gen. 3:21; Rom. 5:12-21)
5. The Curse Bearer (Gen. 3:14-19; Gal. 3:13-14).

Notice the following:

The Curse	Christ's Relationship to the Curse
Ground Cursed	Christ became a curse (Gal. 3:13)
Eat in Sorrow	Christ was a man of sorrows (Is. 53:3)
Thorns & Thistles	Christ was crowned with thorns (Jn. 18:8)
Sweat	Christ sweat drops of blood (Luke 22:44)
Return to Dust	Christ brought to dust of death (Ps. 22:15)
Flaming Sword	Christ was pierced with a sword (Zech. 13:7)
Man to Die	Christ tasted death for every man (John 18:14)
Cut off from Tree of Life	Christ is the tree of Life (John 6:47-58; 14:6)

6. Isaac (Heb. 11:17-19; John 3:16; I John 4:9)
 7. The Lamb in the Thicket (Gen. 22:13).
 8. Jacob's Ladder (Gen. 28:12; John 1:51)
 9. Joseph
- B. Christ is seen in the rest of the Pentateuch.
1. He is our deliverer, mediator and lawgiver as seen in the life of Moses.
 2. He is the fulfillment of the Aaronic priesthood.
 3. He is the fulfillment of the Tabernacle types.
 4. He is the fulfillment of the five Levitical offerings.
 5. He is the Smitten Rock
 6. He is the Manna from Heaven
 7. He is the fulfillment of the feasts of Israel.
 8. He is the embodiment of the law of God.
- C. Christ is seen in the Historical Books.
1. He is our Joshua.
 2. He is the Captain of the Lord's Hosts.
 3. He is our Judge/Deliverer.
 4. He is the Angel of the Lord.
 5. He is our Boaz/Near Kinsman.
 6. He is our King.
 7. He is our Shepherd.
 8. He is our Nehemiah/Restorer.
- D. Christ is seen in the Psalms.
- E. Christ is seen in the Prophets.

- F. Christ is seen in the Gospels.
- G. Christ is seen in the Book of Acts.
- H. Christ is seen in the Epistles.
- I. Christ is seen in the Book of Revelation.

IV. How is the Christocentric principle of biblical interpretation to be applied?

There are several steps in the process of applying this principle.

- A. Decide if there are any Christocentric aspects to the verses in question.
- B. Look for the specific features in the text that seem to point to Christ.
 - 1. If you are in the Old Testament, is there a clear reference to the one who _____—the Messiah (Deut. 18:15; Is. 9:6-7; Zech. 3:8).
 - 2. If you are in the Old Testament, is there a New Testament reference that applies this to _____—the Messiah (I Cor. 10:4).
 - 3. If you are in the Old Testament is there a New Testament reference that _____ the symbolic application to Christ (Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 15:45).
 - 4. If you are in the New Testament, does it state that an event is the _____ of something from the Old Testament (Mt. 2:14-15; Hos. 11:1).
- C. Be careful not to extend parallels beyond the clear meaning of the rest of the Scripture.

Lesson 16

The Moral Principle

I. What is the moral principle of biblical interpretation?

The moral principle of biblical interpretation is that principle of interpretation that assists the interpreter in extracting _____ from the passage under consideration and applying them to our contemporary world.

This principle is implied in several New Testament Scriptures:

A. I Corinthians 10:5-11

But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

B. John 21:24-25

This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

C. Romans 15:4

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

D. II Timothy 3:14-17

But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

II. What is a moral truth or principle?

A. The dictionaries define "moral" in several ways.

1. A _____ or principle contained in or taught by a fable, a story or an event.
 2. A _____ or a lesson to be learned from a story or event.
 3. A concisely expressed _____ or general truth; a maxim.
 4. A moral is an _____ that is drawn from a story or incident.
- B. The dictionary defines “moralize” as to derive a moral from something, to make moral reflections concerning something or to explain something in a moral sense.

III. Why do we need to apply the moral principle to the Scripture?

We need to apply the moral principle because not all of the timeless truths presented in the word of God are _____ (Pro. 25:2).

Many things the Bible tells us are presented in clear statements of truth, concise instructions and unmistakable language. However, much of what is presented is cloaked in a certain amount of mystery and must be discovered from the application of the moral principle.

In many cases the truths extracted will be drawn from how they lived, reacted to circumstance in their lives and interacted with others.

As the text states, “Behind each historical event in the Scripture lies a moral—a spiritual lesson—which is designed _____” (Conner/Malmin, pg. 121).

IV. How is the moral principle of biblical interpretation applied?

- A. The moral principle can be applied to nearly _____ passage of the Bible.
- B. The moral principle can be overlaid _____ all of the other principles.
- C. The moral principle can be flexible to the degree that _____ moral principle can be drawn from the same passage.
- D. The moral principle must _____ or come into conflict with the application of the other hermeneutical principles and clear biblical theology.

V. What is an example of the application of the moral principle of biblical interpretation?

If you study the early life of David, you find some great lessons for leaders. Note the following chart that utilizes the moral principle to extract principles of leadership from the life of David.

The following information was extracted from *The Making of a Leader*, by Frank Damazio, page 161.

Reference	David's Experience	Leader's Experience
I Samuel 17:34-36	David applied his past experience of killing the lion and the bear to his present problem of Goliath.	Leaders must also learn to apply what they have learned from their own experiences to their present challenges and dilemmas.
I Samuel 17:38-39	David did not trust in Saul's armor to bring him the victory over Goliath.	Leaders must not trust in the ability of the flesh or a religious system, but in the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring victories in their lives.
I Samuel 17:40	David used a weapon he had used effectively in the past to kill Goliath (a sling with five smooth stones).	Leaders must trust God to use and trust the training they already have in their ministry.
I Samuel 17:45	David came to Goliath in the name of the Lord.	Leaders must make use of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ against the power of the devil.
I Samuel 17:46	David confessed confidence that he would defeat Goliath.	Leaders must make the positive confession of spiritual victory, through the finished work of Jesus Christ.
I Samuel 18:25-27	David doubled the required dowry of 100 Philistine foreskins to marry the princess Michal.	Leaders must strive to do more than the Lord requires of them.
I Samuel 19:2, 8-10	David remained faithful to his charge of commanding Saul's army, even in the midst of Saul seeking to kill him.	Leaders must remain faithful to the call and ministry which God has given them, even in the face of trials and tribulations.
I Samuel 19:18	David kept company with godly people like Samuel.	Leaders must fellowship often with godly Christians and good spiritual leaders in the Body of Christ.
I Samuel 20:42	David kept the Lord his God in the midst of his relationships.	Leaders must keep Jesus Christ in the center of all their friendships and associations
I Samuel 22:2	David did not show respect of persons in whom he allowed to become a part of his army in the cave of Adullam.	Leaders must treat all people equally in the sight of God, and not favor the rich or educated over the poor or uneducated.
I Samuel 30:6	David took courage in the Lord when his followers wanted to kill him.	Leaders must gain their strength and joy directly from the Lord at all times. Otherwise he will become discouraged when a different source of strength and joy is taken away from him.

Appendix, Lesson 16, The Moral Principle

The Virtues of Christ

compiled from Bill Gothard

Character	Definition	Opposite
Alertness Mark 14:38	Ability to anticipate right responses to that which is taking place around me	Unawareness
Attentiveness Heb. 2:1	Showing the worth of a person by giving since attention to his words	Unconcern
Availability Phil. 2:20-21	Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I am serving	Self-centeredness
Boldness Acts 4:29	Confidence that what I have to say or do will result in lasting benefit	Fearfulness
Cautiousness Pro. 19:2	Knowing how important right timing is in accomplishing right actions	Rashness
Compassion I Th. 3:17	Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others	Indifference
Contentment I Tim. 6:8	Realizing God has provided everything I need for my present happiness	Covetousness
Creativity Rom. 12:2	Approaching a need, a task, an idea from a new perspective	Under-Achievement
Decisiveness James 1:5	The ability to finalize difficult decisions based on the will and ways of God	Double-Mindedness
Dependability Psalm 15:4	Fulfilling what I consented to do even if it means unexpected sacrifice	Inconsistency
Determination II Tim. 4:7-8	Purposing to accomplish God's goals in God's time regardless of the opposition	Faint-Heartedness
Diligence Col. 3:23	Visualizing each task as a special assignment from the Lord and using all my energies to accomplish it	Slothfulness
Discernment I Sam. 16:7	Seeing through a surface problem to root causes	Judgment
Discretion Pro. 22:3	The ability to avoid words, actions and attitudes which could result in undesirable consequences	Simple Mindedness
Endurance Gal. 6:9	The inward strength to withstand stress to accomplish God's best	Giving Up

Enthusiasm I Th. 5:16, 19	Expressing with my spirit the joy of my soul	Apathy
Fairness Luke 6:31	Looking at a decision from the viewpoint of each person involved	Partiality
Faith Heb. 11:1	Visualizing what God intends to do in a given situation and acting in harmony with it	Presumption
Flexibility Col. 3:2	Not setting my affections on ideas or plans which may be changed by others	Resistance
Generosity II Cor. 9:6	Realizing that all I have belongs to God and using it for His purposes	Stinginess
Gentleness I Th. 2:7	Expressing personal care appropriate to another's emotion need	Harshness
Gratefulness I Cor. 4:7	Making known to God and others in what ways they have benefited my life	Unthankfulness
Hospitality Heb. 13:2	Cheerfully sharing food, shelter, and spiritual refreshment with those God brings into my life	Loneliness
Humility James 4:6	Recognizing that God and others are actually responsible for the achievements in my life	Pride
Initiative Rom. 12:21	Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before I am asked to do it	Unresponsiveness
Joyfulness Pro. 15:13	The exultation of my inward being that results from genuine harmony with God and with others	Self-Pity
Love I Cor. 13:3	Giving to other's basic needs without having as my motive personal reward	Selfishness
Loyalty John 15:13	Using adversity to confirm my commitment to those God has called me to serve	Unfaithfulness
Meekness Psalm 62:5	Yielding my personal rights and expectations to God	Anger
Obedience II Cor. 10:5	Freedom to be creative under the protection of divinely appointed authority	Willfulness
Orderliness I Cor. 14:40	Preparing myself and my surroundings so that I will achieve the greatest efficiency	Disorganization
Patience Rom. 5:3-4	Accepting a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it	Restlessness

Persuasiveness II Tim. 2:24	Guiding vital truths around another's mental road blocks	Contentiousness
Punctuality Eccl. 3:1	Showing high esteem for other people and their time	Tardiness
Resourcefulness Luke 16:10	Wise use of that which others would normally overlook or discard	Wastefulness
Responsibility Rom. 14:12	Knowing and doing what both God and others are expecting from me	Irresponsible
Reverence Pro. 23:17-18	Awareness of how God is working through the people and events in my life to produce the character of Christ in me	Disrespect
Security John 6:27	Structuring my life around what is eternal and cannot be destroyed or taken away	Anxiety
Self-Control Gal. 5:24-25	Instant obedience to the initial promptings of God's Spirit	Self-Indulgence
Sensitivity Rom. 12:15	Exercising my senses so that I can perceive the true spirit and emotions of those around me	Callousness
Sincerity I Pet. 1:22	Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives	Hypocrisy
Thoroughness Pro. 18:15	Knowing what factors will diminish the effectiveness of my work or words if neglected	Incompleteness
Thriftiness Luke 16:11	Not letting myself or others spend that which is not necessary	Extravagance
Tolerance Phil. 2:2	Acceptance of others as unique expressions of specific character qualities in varying degrees of maturity	Prejudice
Truthfulness Eph. 4:25	Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts	Deception
Virtue II Pet. 1:5	The moral excellence and purity of spirit that radiates from my life as I obey God's Word	Impurity
Wisdom Pro. 9:10	Seeing and responding to life situations from God's frame of reference	Natural inclinations

Lesson 17

Identifying Figures of Speech

I. What is a figure of speech?

- A. “A figure of speech is a use of a word that diverges from its _____ meaning, or a phrase with a specialized meaning not based on the literal meaning of the words in it.” –Wikipedia
- B. “A figure is simply a word or sentence thrown into a particular form, _____ its original or simplest meaning or use” (Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in the Bible*).
- C. Figure of speech is the term used to describe the various uses of language that depart from _____ construction, order or significance.

II. Why are figures of speech used in communication?

Figures of speech are used in language for several reasons:

- A. To _____ to the communication.
- B. To say something in a _____.
- C. To bring _____ to the communication.
- D. To add _____ to a point being made.

III. How does one identify a figure of speech?

- A. Figures of speech can be identified when the _____ does not make sense?
- B. Figures of speech can be identified when the _____ makes it clear?

IV. What are some of the most common figures of speech used in the Bible?

For a thorough listing of figures of speech in the Bible you can consult an exhaustive work by E.W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in the Bible*.

A. Simile

A simile is a word or phrase that suggests a _____ between two things. It is usually accompanied by the words “like” or “as.” The use of simile suggests that the things being compared have something in common or they resemble each other.

See: Isaiah 50:7; Psalm 1:3-4; Matthew 23:27; Luke 10:3; Revelation 1:14-15

B. Metaphor

A metaphor is a word or phrase that normally means one thing but is applied to another thing in order to suggest a _____. It is fundamentally the same as a simile but it does not use the words “like” or “as.”

See: Psalm 84:11; Ezekiel 36:26; Matthew 5:13-14

C. Hyperbole

Hyperbole is the use of an _____ statement that is used to reinforce a point. It is used for effect and is not meant to be taken literally.

See: Matthew 19:23-24; Matthew 7:3-5; Matthew 5:29-30; Luke 14:26;
Deuteronomy 1:28; Judges 20:16; Psalm 6:6

D. Personification

Personification is a poetic device which represents inanimate _____ as if they were human. It ascribes human qualities to things such as the parts of the human body, animals, produce of the earth, kingdoms, countries, cities or any other inanimate object.

See: Genesis 4:10; Psalm 35:10; Psalm 68:31-32; Isaiah 24:23; Isaiah 42:11;
Isaiah 55:12

E. Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism is the ascribing of human characteristics or actions to _____. We know that God is Spirit and does not have a human body, but the Scripture is written in terms that man can understand. As a result there are verses that will speak of God’s arm, fingers, face, mouth, eyes, heart, voice, feelings and actions as though He were human.

See: Psalm 33:6; Psalm 130:2; Psalm 8:3; II Chronicles 16:9; Isaiah 52:10; Matthew 18:10

F. Synecdoche

Synecdoche is a figure of speech that involves a transfer or the substituting of a part for the whole or the whole for the part.

1. Substituting of a _____ for the part.

- a. A passage may at times refer to all, when it means the “greater part.”

So the LORD did this thing on the next day, and all the livestock of Egypt died; but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one died. Exodus 9:6

The context of this passage reveals that this could not be meant to include every single animal included in God’s description (Ex. 9:3) because in the later plague there are still animals around to get boils (Ex. 9:10).

In this case it all clearly means “the greater part” or “all kinds of livestock.”

And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD. Jeremiah 26:9

The context of this passage reveals that “all of the people” does not mean every single person but most of the people. When you read further in the chapter there were those who stuck up for Jeremiah (Jer. 26:16).

- b. A passage may at times refer to all or every as types or kinds and not individuals.

And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh... Joel 2:28

The “all flesh” here does not mean every single person, but it most likely means all kinds of people.

And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.

John 12:32

This verse does not mean that every single person will be saved if Jesus would go to the cross. It means that all sorts of people from all sorts of conditions, nations and language groups. What Jesus did on the cross was not simply for the Jewish nation, it was for all people.

- c. A passage may at times use a universal negative or positive as a generalization that requires clarification.

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. Luke 2:1

This census was not done in every single country of the world. It is to be clarified as that part of the world over which Rome had authority.

If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions... I Timothy 6:3-4

Obviously the man in question here does not know “nothing.” The thought requires clarification by the context. This man “knows nothing” as it pertains to that which he is purporting to teach. He is not to be taken seriously.

For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. I Corinthians 4:17

Obviously Paul did not preach in every church and every city in the world. However, in every church and city that he did preach in he taught the same things.

- d. A passage may substitute a broader term for a narrower meaning.

So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. Genesis 6:12

The word “flesh” here is a broad term but is most likely a reference to the narrower term “mankind.”

And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15

The word “every creature” is not meant to include the animals for which there is no salvation, but it is most likely a reference limited to “all people.”

2. Substituting of a _____ for the whole.

In this case the opposite is true. The following are a couple of examples.

- a. “Many” is often substituted for “all.”

Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah 53:12

Other clear passages indicate that Christ died for all (II Cor. 5:14-15).

- b. “Men” is often meant to mean both men and women.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful... Psalm 1:1

- c. “Bread” is often used to mean “food.”

To break bread really means to have a common meal together even though things other than bread might be eaten.

G. Euphemism

A euphemism is the substitution of a cultured, less offensive or a _____ for a more harsh or direct one.

The Bible contains many similar expressions, particularly with regards to subjects dealing with death, bodily functions and reproduction.

1. The Bible speaks of sexual relations as “lying with a woman” (Gen. 4:1).
2. The Bible speaks of death as “falling asleep” or “going to our fathers in peace” (Gen. 15:15; John 11:11; Acts 7:60).
3. The Bible speaks of someone taking care of his bodily function as “relieving himself” or “covering his feet” (Judg. 3:24; I Sam. 24:3).

H. Irony

Irony is a figure of speech related to _____ when what is said is in fact the opposite of what is meant.

See: Genesis 3:22; Judges 10:13-14; II Samuel 6:20; I Kings 18:27; I Corinthians 4:9-10

Recognizing and properly interpreting all of these figures of speech will help us to understand the true meaning of any given passage.

Lesson 18

Interpreting the Symbols

I. Why is it so important to have strict guidelines for the interpretation of symbols?

There is perhaps no other area that has generated so many wild and strange doctrines as that of the interpretation of symbols. The Bible is a book of symbols, but symbols must be interpreted in the light of all of the other principles of biblical interpretation. Types and symbols must never be seen as the _____, they should only be used to _____ and support the clear teaching of the Bible.

II. What is a symbol and how does it relate to biblical study?

A. There are several definitions of “symbol” that help us to understand the meaning.

“A symbol is something such as an object, picture, written word, sound, or particular mark that represents _____ by association, resemblance, or convention.” –Wikipedia

“Something chosen to stand for or represent something else, usually because of a _____ in qualities or characteristics.” –Funk & Wagnalls

“An object used to typify a quality, abstract idea, etc. (The oak is a symbol of strength).” –Funk & Wagnalls

B. The interpretation of symbols plays a significant part in biblical study.

God often used the language of the symbol to help impart divine truth. The Bible actually implies that God created much of what we see to be symbolic of things that He wanted us to learn and to understand (Rom. 1:18-21).

C. The proper interpretation of any passage of Scripture is only possible when the symbolic language contained in that verse is _____.

Not all Bible verses contain symbolic language. However, when symbolic language does occur, it must be interpreted in order to understand the full meaning or intent of the passage.

III. What are the primary categories of symbols that are used in the Bible?

Note: The following categories are taken from *Interpreting the Scriptures* by Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin.

There are seven primary categories of symbols that are used in the Bible—symbolic objects, creatures, actions, numbers, names, colors and places.

A. Symbolic Objects

In the Scripture, God often used inanimate objects (whether God-created or man created) as symbols.

Examples: Psalm 18:2; Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 18:10; Hosea 7:8; I Corinthians 5:6-8

B. Symbolic Creatures

In the Scripture, God often used living creatures, whether plants or animals as symbols.

Examples: Hosea 7:11; Luke 13:32; I Peter 1:24; John 1:29; Matthew 3:7

C. Symbolic Actions

In the Scripture, God often used, prescribed or recorded actions that are meant to be symbolic in nature.

Examples: Joshua 1:3; Psalm 141:2; Ezekiel 4:4-13; Acts 21:11

D. Symbolic Numbers

In the Scripture, God often attributed symbolic significance to certain numbers.

“Some numbers seem to suggest certain concepts because they are frequently used in association with the concept (e.g., six is often associated with evil, Rev. 13:18; Dan. 3:1; seven is often associated with perfection, Gen. 2:2-3; Rev. 1:12; 4:5; 5:1; 8:1; 15:1; 16:1; forty is often associated with testing as in Moses’ forty years in Midian, Israel’s forty years in the wilderness, Jesus’ forty days of temptation). However, this kind of association is no basis for making the numbers mean something other than their normal, literal meaning. Though the length of Jesus’ temptation is associated with the concept of testing, He was tempted for forty literal days.”

—Dr. Stephen R. Lewis, *Hermeneutics*, pg. 110

Examples: Matthew 18:21-22; Matthew 19:28; Revelation 13:18

E. Symbolic Names

In the Scripture, God often used names to be symbolic of individuals or nations. In Scripture a name is often significant of the nature, character, experience or function of a person.

Examples: Genesis 25:25-26; I Samuel 4:21; I Samuel 25:25; Matthew 16:18

The name “Peter” comes from “petros” which means “a rock, a piece of a rock or a pebble.” The characteristic of a pebble is that it can be moved or picked up for the purpose of throwing. The rock on which the church is built is “petra” which means “a large, massive rock, a cliff or a ledge.” The rest of the New Testament tells us that the “petra” is Christ (I Cor. 10:4). The characteristic of this “rock” is that it is firm, solid and immovable.

F. Symbolic Colors

In the Scripture, God often attributed symbolic significance to colors.

Examples: Isaiah 1:18; John 19:2-3; Revelation 3:4-5

G. Symbolic Places

In the Scripture, God often attributed symbolic significance to places. Most of the time these places were actual localities, but they came to mean something well beyond the natural locality.

Examples: Genesis 11:9; Hebrew 12:22; Revelation 17:4-6; Revelation 21:10

For a fuller development of these symbols refer to *Interpreting Symbols and Types* by Kevin J. Conner.

IV. What are some important guidelines to remember when interpreting symbols?

A symbol is a tool that utilizes a visible, concrete object to represent something that is more intangible and abstract.

When dealing with symbols follow these guidelines.

A. Be sure that the passage or word in question _____ a symbolic interpretation.

The literal sense should always be understood to be the right sense unless...

1. Another verse of Scripture clearly interprets the sense symbolically.
2. The literal sense makes no sense at all.

B. Acknowledge the three fundamental elements of symbolism (Conner/Malmin, pg. 126-127).

1. The significance of the symbol is based upon the _____ and characteristics of that which is being used as a symbol.
2. A symbol is meant to represent something _____ from itself.
3. The link between that which is used as a symbol and that which it symbolizes is the characteristic _____.

C. Separate the three parts of the symbolic reference.

1. The _____ or the actual symbol employed
2. The _____ or that to which the symbol refers
3. The _____, the connection, the resemblance or the common characteristics of the two

D. Determine the _____ of the symbolic comparison.

As a rule the Scripture will interpret itself (Rev. 1:20).

The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

Be sure to understand the limitations of the symbol based on other verses that confirm the comparison.

E. Be sure that the interpretation of the symbol is consistent with the other principles of interpretation especially the _____ principle.

F. Keep in mind that some symbols are used of more than _____.

Lesson 19-20 Interpreting Types

I. Why is it so important to have hermeneutical guidelines for the interpretation and application of types?

When it comes to the study of types in the Bible it is critical that the interpreter follow careful guidelines. The study of types is similar in this respect to the realm of symbols in that there is a certain _____ aspect to interpretation that can lead to an over emphasis on the type or the manipulation of the type to confirm a spurious doctrine.

II. What does the word “type” mean and how is it used relative to the field of biblical interpretation?

A. There are various definitions of the word “type” as it relates to the field of biblical study and interpretation.

1. “Typology...is a Christian form of biblical interpretation that proceeds on the assumption that God placed _____ of Christ in the laws, events, and people of the Old Testament.” –George P. Landow, *Biblical Typology*

2. “A type, in its primary and literal meaning, simply denotes a rough draft or less accurate model from which a more perfect image is made; but in the sacred or theological sense of the term, a type may be defined to be a symbol of something _____, or an example prepared and evidently designed by God to prefigure that future thing. What is thus prefigured is called the ‘antitype.’”

–Thomas Horne, *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*

3. “A type is a _____ cast on the pages of Old Testament history by a truth whose full embodiment or antitype is found in the New Testament revelation.”

–Wick Broomall

4. “A type is a person or thing in the Bible which in the foreknowledge of God was designed to represent or _____ some person, thing, or event that should appear in the future.”

–Carl Harwood, *Handbook of Bible Types and Symbols*, pg. 7

5. “A type is a real, exalted happening in history which was divinely ordained by the omniscient God to be a prophetic picture of the good things which He purposed to bring to fruition in Christ Jesus.” –Wayne Jackson

6. A type is a biblical person, thing, action, event, ceremony, object or structure that prefigures an “antitype” of the same in the New Testament.

B. The Bible gives its own definition of the word “type.”

1. The English word “type” comes from the Greek word “*typos*.”

This Greek word can mean some of the following depending on the context.

- The mark of a stroke or blow, print
- A figure formed by a blow or impression
- The impress of a seal
- The stamp made by a die
- A figure, form, image or mold
- An example to be imitated
- A pattern in conformity to which a thing must be made
- A counterpart
- A person or thing prefiguring a future person or thing (Messiah).

2. The Greek word occurs sixteen times in the New Testament.

- a. It is used of the nail _____ in Jesus hands (John 20:25).
- b. It is used of _____ of false gods (Acts 7:43).
- c. It is used of the _____ found in the Tabernacle of Moses (Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5).
- d. It is used of Adam as a _____ of Christ (Rom. 5:14).
- e. It is used of the experiences of the Children of Israel serving as an _____ to us (I Cor. 10:6, 11).
- f. It is used of people providing a _____ or example for others to follow (Phil. 3:17; I Th. 1:7; II Th. 3:9; I Tim. 4:12; Tit. 2:7; I Pet. 5:3).

III. What does the word “antitype” mean and how does it relate to the interpretation of types?

- A. There are various definitions of the word “antitype” as it relates to the field of biblical study and interpretation.

1. “One that is _____ by or identified with an earlier symbol or type, such as a figure in the New Testament who has a counterpart in the Old Testament.” –Wikipedia

2. “The person or thing represented or foreshadowed by an _____ or symbol.” –Webster

B. The Bible gives its own definition of the word “antitype.”

1. The English word “antitype” comes from the Greek word “*antitupon*.”

This word can mean some of the following depending on the context.

- A thing formed after some pattern
 - Something in the Messianic times which answers to the type
 - A thing resembling another, its counterpart
2. The Greek word occurs twice in the New Testament (Heb. 9:24; I Pet. 3:21).

C. There is a close correlation between the type and the antitype.

1. The antitype and the type are _____ upon each other.
2. The type is a prefiguring and _____ the antitype.
3. The type is the historical _____ that foreshadows a future reality (antitype).
4. The type is an Old Testament _____ of a New Testament reality (antitype).
5. The antitype is always the _____ of the type.
6. The antitype is always _____ or superior to the type.
7. A type in the Old Testament never points to another _____ in the New Testament.
8. There is normally a _____ from type to antitype of the lesser to the greater, of the material to the spiritual and of the earthly to the heavenly.

Note the following chart giving examples of type and antitype:

Type	Antitype
Rock Moses Struck (Ex. 17:1-6)	Christ (I Cor. 10:4)
Adam (Gen. 1-3)	Christ (Rom. 5:14)
Aaronic Priesthood	Christ’s Priesthood (Heb. 7-8)
The Sabbath	Rest in Christ (Col. 2:16-17)
Noah’s Ark (Gen. 6-8)	Baptism (I Pet. 3:20-21)
The Passover Lamb (Ex. 12)	Christ (I Cor. 5:7)

IV. Why is the study of types sometimes devalued in biblical interpretation?

There are two primary reasons for this attitude toward typology.

- A. Many people who use typology use it _____ to the point where they see types in everything.
- B. Many modern scholars have arisen from a liberal biblical theology that has a low view of the _____ of Scripture.

Many modern theologians tend to dismiss the _____ elements of the Scriptures. Since typology relates to prophecy and the fulfillment of prophecy they tend to negate its importance.

V. What are the three main categories into which biblical types can be organized?

There are three primary categories into which biblical types fall.

A. Historical

Types that fall into the category of historical types can be divided into four subcategories.

1. Events

In this case an actual historical event from the Old Testament Age is used to prefigure some experience in the New Testament Age.

Examples:

- a. Abraham's sacrifice of his only begotten son Isaac prefigured the Heavenly Father's offering or smiting of His Only Begotten Son at Calvary (Gen. 22:2; Heb. 11:17-18).
- b. Moses and the Children of Israel crossing the Red Sea (I Cor. 10:1-11) prefigured the experience of the New Testament believer coming out of the world system.
- c. The lifting up of the serpent on a pole to bring healing from the snake bite prefigured the lifting up of Christ on the cross as the embodiment of sin so that mankind could be healed from the bite of the serpent, the devil (Num. 21:9; John 3:14).

- d. The experience of Jonah in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights prefigured Christ’s death, burial and resurrection experience (Jon. 1:17; Mt. 12:40).

2. Persons

In this case an historical figure from the Old Testament Age is used to prefigure something or someone in the New Testament Age.

Examples:

- a. The first man Adam is seen as a type of Christ who is the last Adam and the federal head of a new race (Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 15:45-49).
- b. Isaac the only begotten son of the Old Testament is a type of Christ who is the Only Begotten Son in the New Testament.

Others: Melchizedek, Joseph, Joshua, David

- c. Nimrod who was the father of several antichristal nations can be seen as a type of antichrist (Gen. 10:8-11).

Nimrod	Antichrist
His name means “rebel”	He is called the “lawless one” (II Th. 2:8)
He exalted his will against God	He will do the same (Dan. 11:36-38)
He is called “mighty” four times	He will come with signs and wonders (II. Th. 2:9).
He was a hunter of the godly.	He is called a bloody and deceitful man (Ps. 5:6).
Nimrod was a king with a kingdom	He will have his kingdom as well (Dan. 11:36)
His headquarters was in Babylon	His is in spiritual Babylon (Is. 14:4; Rev. 17:3-5)
Nimrod was lifted up in pride	He will be lifted up (II Th. 2:4).
Nimrod had a united kingdom	He will as well (Rev.17:1-6)

Note: For more on Nimrod refer to the material in the course Genesis, Lesson 12.

3. Places

In this case an historical place from the Old Testament Age is used to prefigure something in the New Testament Age.

Examples:

- a. Egypt represents a state of bondage such as holds the sinner prior to his conversion (Rom. 6:17; I Cor. 10:1-11; Rev. 11:8).
- b. Jerusalem or Zion typifies the church and ultimately heaven (Gal. 4:21-27; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 21:2).

- c. Babylon, which held God's people captive in the Old Testament, pictures the condition of an apostate church that has departed from the simplicity of the New Testament pattern (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2-8).

4. Times

In this case an historical time or season from the Old Testament Age is used to prefigure a time or season in the New Testament Age.

Example:

The days of Noah (Mt. 24:37) and the days of Lot (Luke 17:28) are typical and prophetic of the days preceding the Second coming of Christ.

B. Ceremonial

In this case a legal or religious practice, rite, covenant or ceremony from the Old Testament Age is used to prefigure something or someone in the New Testament Age.

Types that fall into the category of ceremonial types fall into at least six subcategories.

1. Temples or Tabernacles and their Furnishings

The veil of the temple is a type of Christ's flesh both of which were torn at the death of Christ (Mt. 27:51; Heb. 10:19-20).

2. Priestly Functions

High priestly functions of the Old Testament can be seen as prophetic of Christ's function as our Great High Priest (Heb. 9:6-12).

3. Sacrifices and Offerings

The sacrifices and offerings of the Old Testament can be seen as prophetic of Christ's once and for all sacrifice on Calvary (Heb. 10:11-14).

4. Feasts

The feast days and holy days can be seen to be prophetic of the experience of Christ and the Church (I Cor. 5:7-8).

5. Sabbaths, Festivals and New Moons

The Sabbaths and new moons can be seen to be prophetic of what was to be our experience in Christ (Col. 2:16-17).

6. Covenants

The covenants established in the Old Testament can be seen to be prophetic of the New Covenant and the Everlasting Covenant that would be established on the basis of the shedding of Christ's blood (Heb. 10:9, 29).

C. Official

In this case a legal or religious office from the Old Testament Age is used to prefigure something or someone in the New Testament Age.

The three relevant offices in the Old Testament were priest, prophet and king all of which were typical and prophetic of Christ and the Church who would enter into the spiritual reality of those anointed offices.

VI. What are some guidelines that should govern the interpretation of types?

There are several principles that should govern the interpretation of types.

- A. Be reasonably sure that the portion under consideration is meant to have _____ significance.
 - 1. One way to know this is when the Scripture makes a _____ statement regarding the comparison (Rom. 5:14).
 - 2. Another way to know is when the Scripture provides a pattern or "example-type" of interpretation that can be easily _____ (Eph. 5:23-24).
- B. Be reasonably sure that God _____ for or designed the type to be a prophetic preview of what was to come in the New Testament Age.
- C. Seek to discover the _____ and historical figure that will be later seen as a type.
- D. Seek to discover what _____ of the type have application to the antitype.
- E. Seek to discover the _____ of the type and antitype relationship.

VII. What are some biblical examples of the interpretation of types?

A. Types of Christ

When we say that someone is a type of Christ, we are saying that a person in the Old Testament behaves in a way that _____ to Jesus' character or actions in the New Testament. When we say that something is "typical" of Christ, we are saying that an object or event in the Old Testament can be viewed as _____ of some quality of Jesus.

1. Adam

The New Testament is clear that Adam was a type of Christ and that the marriage of the man and the woman is a type of Christ and the church (Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 15:46-47; Eph. 5:24-32).

The following chart summarizes the truth contained in this type.

Adam	Christ
First Adam	Last Adam
First Man	Second Man
A Living Soul	A Life-giving Spirit
Of the Earth, Earthly	Lord from Heaven
Made in the Image of God	The Express Image of His Person
Not Complete without Bride	Not Complete without Bride
Bride came out of Deep Sleep	Bride Came out of Death
Side Opened to Provide Bride	Side Opened to Provide Bride
Paid for Bride with Blood	Paid for Bride with Blood
Eve to Rule and Reign with Adam	Bride to Rule and Reign with Christ

2. Manna

Just as the Children of Israel lived off of the bread from heaven provided to them by the Father, we as believers live off of the bread that descended down from above—Jesus (John 6:31-33, 35).

Manna is discussed in Exodus 16. Note the comparisons between manna and Jesus—the Bread from Heaven.

Comparison	Manna	Jesus
Both were supernatural gifts from heaven	Ex. 16:4	John 6:31-33
Both referred to as "the glory of the Lord"	Ex. 16:7	Is. 40:5
Both came to where the people were	Ex. 16:13-14	John 1:11
Both were for all people	Ex. 16:16	John 3:16
Both were to be eaten or partaken of	John 6:31	John 6:48-58
Both were sufficient to meet the needs	Ex. 16:18	Ps. 23:1
Both were despised by mixed multitude	Num. 11:4-6	Is. 53:3

3. Isaac

Comparison	Isaac	Jesus
Birth Experiences		
Born in an appointed time	Gen. 18:14	Gal. 4:4-5
A child of promise	Gen. 17:15-16	Is. 7:14
Named before birth	Gen. 17:19	Mt. 1:21
Required a miracle birth	Rom. 4:19	Luke 1:35
Three mysterious visitors	Gen. 18:1	Mt. 2:1
Called only begotten son	Heb. 11:17-19	John 1:14,18
The Sacrifice		
Between the father and the son	Gen. 22:5-6	John 16:32
Took donkey to place of sacrifice	Gen. 22:3	Mt. 21:2-7
Performed by the father	Gen. 22:3	Is. 53:10
Involved a three days' journey	Gen. 22:4	I Cor. 15:3-4
Carried the wood for sacrifice	Gen. 22:6	John 19:17-18
Carried out on a mountain or hill	Gen. 22:2	Mt. 21:10
Fully yielded to will of the father	Gen. 22:6	Is.53:7
Freely laid down his life	Gen. 22:6	John 10:17-18
Bound to the altar	Gen. 22:9	John 20:25
Resurrection foretold	Gen. 22:5	Luke 18:32-33
Sacrifice attested by two witnesses	Gen. 22:3	Luke 24:3-5
Sacrifice was foundation for temple	II Chr. 3:1	I Cor. 3:11
Result multiplication of seed	Gen. 22:17)	John 12:24

4. Joseph (See Appendix)

B. Types of Christ and the Church

Adam and Eve,
 Isaac and Rebekah
 Ruth and Boaz (See Old Testament Survey, Lesson 9)

VIII. What are some additional cautions in relation to the interpretation of types?

A. Avoid _____ when confronting the types of the Bible.

There are three main extremes.

1. There is the extreme of _____ all types and shadows in biblical interpretation.
2. There is the extreme of turning _____ in to a type or shadow of something else down to the minutest detail.
3. There is also the extreme of purporting that only the types that are specifically _____ as types in the New Testament can be studied as types.

If this line of reasoning were applied to the Messianic prophecies, one would conclude that the only valid prophecies are those that are actually cited in the New Testament as such.

- B. Be sure never to use types as a _____ or basis for determining doctrine.

Appendix, Lesson 19-20, Joseph, A Type of Christ

The Life of Christ as Seen in the Life of Joseph	
Joseph	Jesus
1. Joseph means “increasing”.	1. Jesus increased. Luke 2:52
2. Born by and through a God-ordained miracle. His mother was barren. Gen. 28:31	2. Born by and through a God-ordained miracle.
3. Firstborn of his mother. Gen. 30:22-23	3. Firstborn of His mother. Mt. 1:25
4. Well-beloved of the father. Gen 37:2-3	4. Well-beloved of the Father. Col. 1:13
5. Lived in Hebron, the place of fellowship, with his father before he was sent to his brethren.	5. Lived in heaven, the place of fellowship with His Father before coming to earth. John 17:5
6. He was a son of his father’s old age. Gen. 37:3	6. He was the Son of Eternity. John 1:1-3; 17:5; Ps. 90:2.
7. He was a shepherd by occupation.	7. He was the Good Shepherd. John 10
8. He was given a coat of many colors signifying his noble birth. Gen. 37:3	8. He was anointed by the Spirit at Jordon signifying His noble birth. Mt. 3:16
9. Joseph hated evil. Gen. 37:2	9. Jesus hated sin. Heb. 1:9
10. He bore witness of evil. Gen. 37:2	10. Jesus testified against evil. John 7:7, 15:17
11. His brethren hated him without a cause. Gen. 37:4-5	11. They hated Him without a cause. Luke 4:28-39; John 15:25
12. They hated him the more because of his words. Gen. 37:8	12. They hated Jesus because of His words about Himself. John 5:18; 6:41; 8:40; 10:30-31
13. Dreams foretold a remarkable future. Gen. 37:5-11	13. Dreams foretold a remarkable future. Luke 1:31-33.
14. Joseph foretold a dual sovereignty involving the field and heavens. Gen. 37:5-11	14. Jesus foretold his earthly and heavenly dominion. Mt. 26:64; 28:18.
15. Joseph was envied by his brethren. Gen. 37:11	15. Jesus was envied by His brethren. Mark 15:10
16. He was sent forth by his father. Gen. 37:13	16. He was sent forth by His Father. John 3:16
17. He was perfectly willing. Gen. 37:13	17. He was willing. Phil. 2:5-7; Heb. 10:7
18. He was sent to seek the welfare of his brethren. Gen. 37:14	18. He was sent to seek the welfare of His brethren. Rom. 15:8
19. He was sent forth from the vale (peace) of Hebron (fellowship). Gen. 37:14	19. He was sent forth from the peace of fellowship with the Father.
20. Joseph sent to Shechem (shoulder) which implies a place of burden – bearing, service and subjection. It is also seen in connection with sin, sorrow, evil passion and blood shed. Gen. 37:14; 34:25-30.	20. Jesus was sent into the world, a place of sin and sickness. For Him it was to be a place of burden-bearing, service and subjection. Phil. 2:6-7; Gal. 4:4.
21. He became a wanderer in the field (world). Gen. 37:15	21. Jesus was merely a wanderer in this world. Luke 9:58; John 7:53-8:1.
22. He seeks until he finds. Gen 37:16-17	22. Jesus seeks the lost. Matt. 15:24; Lk. 19:10
23. He was conspired against. Gen. 37:18-20	23. Jesus also. Luke 19:46-47; 20:13-14; Mt. 12:14
24. His brethren believed not his sayings. Gen. 37:19-20	24. His brethren believed Him not. Mt. 27
25. They stripped off his garments. Gen. 37:23	25. Likewise. John 19:23-24; Mt. 27:28,35
26. He was put in a pit, empty and no water. Gen. 37:27 See: Zech. 9:11	26. Was in the heart of the earth for 3 days and 3 nights. Mt. 12:40
27. They sat down to wait and watch. Gen. 37:25	27. Sitting down they watched Him there. Mt. 27:36
28. He was taken out of the pit alive (glimpse of the resurrection). Gen. 37:28	28. Jesus was seen alive. Luke 24:23
29. Sold for 20 pieces of silver. Gen. 37:28	29. Sold for 30 pieces of silver. Mt. 26:14
30. His brothers didn’t want to be responsible for shedding blood themselves. Gen. 37:26	30. They wanted the Roman government to shed the blood of this man. John 18:28,31

31. He was sold by Judah, one of the twelve. Gen. 37:26-28	31. He was sold by Judas (anglicized form of Gk. equivalent), one of the 12. Mt. 26:14-16
32. The empty pit was inspected. Gen. 37:29	32. Empty tomb was inspected. Luke 24:24
33. Joseph's blood sprinkled coat is presented to his father. Gen. 37:31-32	33. The blood of Jesus Christ was presented to the Father.
34. Sold into Egypt as a slaved servant. Ps. 105:17; Gen. 39	34. Took upon Himself the form of a servant. Ex. 21:5-6; Is. 52:13; Phil. 2:7-8
35. The Lord was with him. Gen. 39:2; Acts 7:9	35. God was with Jesus. Acts 10:38; John 3:2
36. Joseph was a prosperous servant. Gen. 39:2	36. Jesus also. Ps. 1; Is. 52:13; 53:10
37. Joseph's master was well-pleased with him. Gen. 39:4	37. Jesus was pleasing to His Master. John 8:29
38. Because of his obedience he was given authority. Gen. 39:5	38. Jesus was given authority because of His obedience. John 5:30
39. The Egyptian house was blessed for Joseph's sake. Gen. 39:5	39. The world was blessed for Jesus sake.
40. Joseph was a goodly person (no sin is ever recorded in his life). Gen. 39:6	40. Jesus was a goodly person. He did no sin.
41. Tempted, but did not yield to sin. Gen 39. 7-10	41. Tempted in all points as we are, yet, without sin. Heb. 4:15; Mt. 4:1-11
42. He was falsely accused. Gen. 39:16-19	42. Likewise. Mt. 26:59-65
43. He attempted no defense. Gen. 39:20	43. Likewise. Is. 53:7
44. Put in prison to suffer with prisoners and transgressors. Gen. 39:20	44. In 'prison', the time of trial, numbered with the transgressors. Is. 52:12; Mt. 26
45. His feet were put in fetters. Ps. 105:18	45. His feet were pierced on the cross. Ps. 22:16
46. Joseph suffered at the hands of the Gentiles also.	46. Jesus also. Acts 4:26:27
47. Joseph, the innocent one, suffered many afflictions. Acts 7:9-10	47. Jesus as innocent and suffered much.
48. The Word of the Lord tried him until set time of fulfillment. Ps. 105:19	48. Word of the Father upheld Jesus until the set time. Heb. 10:12-13
49. Put in a place of death with two malefactors. Gen. 39:20; 40:1-4	49. Put in a place of death between two malefactors. Mark 15:27-28
50. One went to life, one went to death. Gen. 40:21-22	50. Likewise. Luke 23:39-43
51. Joseph won the respect of the jailor. Gen. 39:21	51. Jesus won the respect of the centurion. Luke 23:47
52. Joseph gave the credit for his accuracy to God. Gen. 40:8	52. Jesus likewise. John 12:49
53. Joseph desired to be remembered. Gen. 40:14	53. Jesus also. Luke 22:19
54. Taken up alive out of prison, King sent and loosed him, changed his raiment. Gen. 41:14; Ps. 105:20	54. Taken from prison and judgment, loosed from pains of death, his raiment in tomb. Is. 53:8; Acts 2:27-28; John 20:6-7
55. Joseph delivered by God. Gen. 45:7-9	55. Jesus also. Acts 2:24,32; 10:40
56. Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream by Word of Wisdom. Gen. 41:17-36	56. Jesus perfectly interprets the Word of the Father. Mt. 7:29; John 8:28
57. Joseph exalted at place of power. Gen. 41:39-40	57. Jesus exalted also. I Pet. 3:22
58. Joseph seen as a revealer of things to come. Gen. 41: 17-36	58. Jesus was the revealer of things to come. John 8:28; Rev. 1:1
59. Sits and rides in second chariot next to Pharaoh. Gen. 41:43	59. Will come in the chariots of His Father. Ps. 110:1; 104:3; Mt. 24:30
60. All were to bow the knee before the exalted Joseph. Gen. 41:44	60. At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow. Phil. 2:10-11
61. Pharaoh turns all authority and power over all people to Joseph. Gen. 41:44	61. All power over principalities and all flesh is His. John 17:2; Mt. 28:18; I Pet. 3:22
62. He sat down in the throne of another. Gen.	62. Jesus likewise. Rev. 3:21

41:39-40	
63. Joseph given a new name. Gen 41:45	63. Jesus also. Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:9-10
64. Joseph seen as Wonderful Counselor.	64. Jesus was a Wonderful Counselor. Col. 2:3
65. They were astounded at his wisdom. Gen. 41:37-39	65. Many were astounded at what Jesus said. Mt. 7:28-29; 13:54; John 7:46
66. After his exaltation, he took a Gentile bride to share his glory. Gen. 41:45	66. Even so Christ took the Church. Eph. 5:23
67. The marriage was arranged by Pharaoh. Gen. 41:45	67. The marriage was arranged by the Father. Mt. 22:2
68. He was 30 years old as he begins his life work. Gen. 41:46	68. He began His ministry at age 30. Luke 3:23
69. Joseph went out on his mission out from the presence. Gen. 41:46	69. Christ also. Luke 3:22
70. Joseph's ministry involved wandering. Gen. 41:46	70. Christ also. Mt. 4:23; 9:35
71. Famine strikes. Joseph opens storehouses, full, prepared for all. Gen. 41:56	71. Natural and Spiritual famine to come. Jesus has all fullness of bread ready and prepared. Amos 8:11; Rev. 6:5-6; Mt. 24:7; Col. 2:9
72. Joseph is seen dispensing bread to a perishing world. Gen. 41:55	72. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." John 6
73. All must get their bread from Joseph. Gen. 41:55,57	73. Jesus is the only way. Acts 4:12; John 14:6
74. Joseph had an unlimited supply to meet the needs of all. Gen. 41:49	74. Christ is sufficient to meet every need. Eph. 2:7; 3:8
75. His 10 brethren come to Egypt for bread (1 st visit). Gen. 42:3-5	75. Christ's brethren will have to come to Him or die. John 14:6
76. Joseph was unknown and unrecognized by his brethren. Gen 42:6,8	76. Jesus was rejected by His brethren the 1 st time. John 1:11
77. Joseph saw and knew his brethren. Gen. 42:7	77. Christ also. Jer. 18:17; Hos. 5:3
78. He knew the past history of his brethren. Gen. 42:33	78. He knew what was in man. John 2:24
79. Joseph made known to them a way of deliverance through substitution. Gen. 42:24	79. Jesus provided a way through substitution.
80. His brethren visit Egypt the second time. Gen. 43:1,2,10; Acts 7:13	80. The second time Jesus is made known to His re-gathered brethren. Is. 11:11-13
81. Time of weeping, reconciliation. Gen. 45:14-15	81. All families mourn apart for rejected son. Zech. 12:10-14; Rev. 1:7
82. When his brethren humbled themselves before him, and threw themselves on his mercy, he freely forgave. Gen. 44-45	82. Christ likewise. I John 1:9
83. Joseph is revealed as a Man of compassion.	83. Jesus was "moved with compassion".
84. He was acknowledged to be the savior and ruler of the people. Gen. 47:25	84. Jesus is both Lord and Savior. Phil. 2:10-11
85. That which was meant for evil, God meant for good. Gen. 50:20	85. All things work together for good, after His counsel. Acts 2:23-24; Rom. 8:28
86. His brethren ask forgiveness. Gen. 50:15-18	86. Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Zech. 13:1; Jer. 31:34
87. Joseph's brethren go forth to declare his glory. Gen. 45:9, 13	87. Christ's also. Is. 66:19
88. Joseph's brethren bow down before him as a representative of God. Gen. 50:18-19	88. Christ's also. Rev. 5:14
89. Gives all honor into hands of the King.	89. He turns all back to the Father. I Cor. 15:24

Note: The above chart is taken from School of Ministry course, *Genesis*, Lesson 23.

Lesson 21

Interpreting Parables

I. What is a parable?

A. A parable is a short, simple story from which a _____ can be drawn.

1. A parable is usually a _____ story that could be true.
2. A parable draws from images and events that would be _____ to the listener.
3. A parable is constructed of symbolism that must be _____ to be understood.
4. A parable is aimed at communicating a spiritual _____.

B. The concept and use of parables is found in both the Old and the New Testament.

1. The Hebrew word that is often translated parable in the Old Testament is *mashal* (4912).

a. This word literally means a parable, similitude, proverb, song or poem.

The word parable is usually used of an extended story with a moral, while a proverb is a sentence, opinion or saying containing ethical wisdom.

b. This word is translated “parable, proverb, oracle or saying.”

c. This word is used most often in connection with the Book of Proverbs.

The Book of Proverbs is a collection of short, pithy statements that are intended to teach practical principles of living.

d. Most of the other times that it is used it is speaking of an incident in someone’s life becoming a proverb (II Chr. 7:19-22).

2. The Greek word that is often translated parable in the New Testament is *parabole* (3850).

a. This word literally means “a placing of one thing by the side of another.”

It is used in the Bible both literally and metaphorically to refer to the following (Thayer’s):

- A comparison of one thing with another, likeness or similitude

- An example by which a doctrine or precept is illustrated
 - A narrative, fictitious but agreeable to the laws and usages of human life, by which either the duties of men or the things of God, particularly the nature and history of God's kingdom are figuratively portrayed
 - An earthly story with a heavenly meaning
 - A pithy and instructive saying, involving some likeness or comparison and having preceptive or admonitory force
- b. This word is translated figure, symbol, parable or proverb.
- C. Parables were perfected in the ministry and teaching of Jesus.

II. Why did Jesus speak in parables?

- A. Jesus switched from clear, well-outlined teaching to teaching in parables.
1. When Jesus began His teaching He was simple, clear and direct (See: Matthew 5-7).
 2. In the latter half of His ministry, Jesus' teaching became veiled in symbolism that required _____ (Mt. 13:34-35).
 - a. The disciples of Jesus immediately picked up on the switch in style (Mt. 13:10).
 - b. The disciples themselves needed interpretation to understand this new style (Mt. 13:36b).
- B. Jesus made the change for specific reasons.
1. Jesus spoke in parables _____ from those who were closed to the truth.
 - a. The religious leaders had just accused Jesus for the second time of being inspired by the devil (Mt. 12:24, Also: Mt. 9:34; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15).
 - b. Jesus had just warned the leaders that they were verging on blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (Mt. 12:31-32).
 - He warned them not to stand against God (Mt. 12:28, 30).

- He warned them to change their hearts (Mt. 12:33-35).
 - He warned them about impending judgment for the careless words that they were speaking (Mt. 12:36-37).
- c. Jesus decided that He was not going to cast pearls before swine (Mt. 7:6).
 - d. Jesus would turn from those who were closed and focus on those who were open to His message.
2. Jesus spoke in parables _____ for those we were open to the truth (Mt. 13:10-17).
 3. Jesus taught publicly to the multitudes in parables, but He called His disciples to Him privately to _____ the parables (Mt. 13:36).

III. What are some of the keys to interpreting the parables?

A. Parables must _____ as such by the interpreter.

Most parables are clearly designated as such, but some are not as clearly designated. One way to identify a parable is watching for the word “like” in a passage just before a story is told (Matthew 13).

B. Parables must be understood based on the _____ of when it was spoken.

1. This includes the _____ context.

2. This includes the _____ context.

C. Parables must be understood as _____ without too much emphasis on the particulars.

D. Parables must be interpreted with the application of other hermeneutical principles including the context principle, the symbolic principle and the moral principle.

E. Parables must not be used as a _____ of doctrinal formulation.

IV. What are some examples of the application of these principles of interpretation?

A. The following is a partial listing of Jesus’ parables:

1. The two debtors (Luke 7:41-50)
2. Sewing a new patch on old garment (Mt. 9:16).

3. Putting new wine into old wineskins (Mt. 9:9-17).
4. Sower of seeds in the field (Mt. 13:3-23).
5. The wheat and the tares (Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43)
6. The mustard seed (Mt. 13:31-32)
7. Leaven (Mt. 13:33)
8. The treasure hidden in the field (Mt. 13:44).
9. The pearl of great price (Mt. 13:45-46)
10. The dragnet (Mt. 13:47-50)
11. The instructed scribe (Mt. 13:52)
12. The good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37)
13. The rich fool (Luke 12:16-21)
14. The barren fig tree (Luke 13:6-9)
15. The great supper (Luke 14:15-24)
16. Building a tower (Luke 14:28-30)
17. Going to war (Luke 14:31-33)
18. The lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7; Mt. 18:10-14)
19. The lost coin (Luke 15:8-10)
20. The prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32)
21. The unjust steward (Luke 16:1-8)
22. The rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)
23. The unprofitable servants (Luke 17:7-10)
24. The persistent widow (Luke 18:1-8)
25. The Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:10-14)
26. The unforgiving servant (Mt. 18:23-35)
27. The householder (Mt. 20:1-16)
28. The two sons (Mt. 21:28-31)
29. The vineyard (Mt. 21:33-44)
30. The marriage supper (Mt. 22:2-14)
31. The faithful and wise servant (Mt. 24:45-51)
32. The wise and foolish virgins (Mt. 25:1-12)
33. The talents (Mt. 25:14-30)

B. Many of Jesus parables were given as general instruction concerning principles of the Kingdom of God.

1. The parables of building a tower and going to war teach us that we need to count the cost before we engage in a project or a conflict (Luke 14:28-33).

Note the context of this parable:

Multitudes were following Jesus and He wanted them to know the cost of following Him to be sure that they were willing to pay the price (Luke 14:25-27).

Moral: Before you set out on any endeavor be sure to count the cost so that you can _____ what you start.

2. The parable of the two debtors teaches us that the greater sense of personal unworthiness or need that we have the greater our _____ will be for what God has indeed done for us (Luke 7:41-50).

Note the context of this parable:

A sinful woman who had been forgiven by Jesus washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. When the Pharisee who had invited Him to dinner showed contempt for this, Jesus explained why she was so appreciative.

Moral: Those who are forgiven much _____.

3. The parable of the unforgiving servant teaches us that we must be agents of God's mercy in the same way that He has demonstrated His mercy toward us and that we should be anxious to forgive others no matter how big we perceive their offense toward us to be (Mt. 18:21-35).

Moral: Forgive others _____ that you want God to forgive you.

4. The parable of the rich fool teaches us that the possessions that we have are not merely for the purpose of lavishing greater and greater luxury on ourselves, but we are to use them to glorify God and to _____ (Luke 12:13-21).

Moral: Use your money wisely while you are alive because it will not help you after you _____.

5. The parable of the talents teaches us that God has given every one of us something that we can use for Him or invest in the kingdom of God. He not only expects us to use what He has given us, He expects a return on what He has given to us (Mt. 25:14-30).

Moral: Use it or _____.

C. Many of Jesus' parables were given as an indictment of the religious leaders of the day.

1. The parable of sewing a new patch on old garment (Mt. 9:16) and putting new wine into old wineskins (Mt. 9:9:17) teach that you cannot take Jesus New Covenant teachings and just add them to the laws and traditions under the Old Covenant.
2. The parable of the barren fig tree teaches that when Jesus came to the nation of Israel He expected to find a certain type of fruit, but He did not find it (Luke 13:6-9). He searched for three years in His ministry yet did not find it.

John the Baptist was the first to warn the leaders of their lack of fruitfulness (Mt. 3:8-10).

Later on in Jesus ministry He cursed a fig tree that was all leaves but bore no fruit (Mt. 21:18-19).

3. The parable of the great supper teaches us that the Jews and the religious leaders who were the first ones invited to the supper made every excuse not to come. Eventually the invitation went out to “whosoever will may come” (Luke 14:15-24). Ultimately the original invitees who made excuses never tasted of the prepared meal.
4. The parable of the two sons again represents the religious leaders and the publicans, sinners and rebellious (Mt. 21:28-32).
 - a. The first son represents those were rebellious at first but later repented and responded in obedience.
 - b. The second son represents the religious leaders of the day who “say and do not” (Mt. 23:3). They make a good profession, but they do not follow through.
5. The parable of the vineyard is one of the clearest parables that Jesus told relating to the religious leaders of the day and they did not miss His intent (Mt. 21:33-46).

There are several things that Jesus revealed in this parable.

- a. Those who work the vineyard are not the actual landowners; they are merely stewards who will have to give an account.
- b. God expected there to be fruit from His vineyard.
- c. Those in charge of the vineyard mistreated the servants (prophets) sent by the owner.
- d. The religious leaders of the day knew that Jesus was the Son of God and rightful heir. They did not kill Him out of ignorance, but out of jealousy.
- e. Because of their rejection of the Son, the vineyard would be put into the hands of another nation that would bring forth the desired fruit (I Pet. 2:8-9).
- f. The foundation of this new order would be personal brokenness and a right relationship to the Stone that the builders (religious leaders) had rejected.

Lesson 22

Interpreting Narratives

I. What is meant by “narratives”?

When we speak of the narrative portions of the Scripture, we are referring primarily to the historical portions of the Scripture. Approximately thirty-five percent of the Bible is narrative.

The word “narrative” is preferred over the term “story” because “story” often carries the idea of something being _____ or not based in reality.

“One of the primary faith confessions of both Christianity and Judaism is that God has chosen to reveal Himself in extraordinary ways in human history, yet in the ordinary events and circumstances in which human beings live and work. Those extraordinary encounters with God within ordinary human history are the heart of the Biblical witness to God.” –Dennis Bratcher

II. What makes narratives unique when it comes to biblical interpretation?

A. Narratives are records of significant _____ events. This includes:

1. Significant world events.
 - a. Creation
 - b. Flood
 - c. World Conquests
 - d. Birth and Life of Christ

2. Significant events in God’s dealings with His people.
 - a. Fall of Man
 - b. Establishing of Covenants
 - c. The Exodus
 - d. History of Israel
 - e. Birth of the Church

3. Significant events in the life of key individuals.
 - a. Adam and Eve
 - b. Noah
 - c. Abraham
 - d. Jacob
 - e. Joseph
 - f. Moses

- g. David
- h. Elijah
- i. Jesus
- j. Paul

B. Narratives of the Bible are records of what took place, not necessary what _____ taken place.

This means that the interpreter will be required to make a _____ on that which is taking place in the passage based on the other clear teachings of the Bible.

C. Narratives are usually _____ or limited in that they do not contain anyone's full story nor do they cover any event in its entirety.

God has given us enough to lead us to a correct understanding of Him and His purposes for our lives (II Pet. 1:2-4).

D. Narratives do not teach doctrine _____.

Whatever truths that are extracted from them will come in the form of inference and _____. The fact that narratives teach indirectly does not mean, however, that the narratives should be taken lightly or that they should be seen to be any "less-inspired" than the rest of the Scriptures (II Tim. 3:16).

E. Narratives of the Bible are preserved for us _____ about how God relates to man, how man is to relate to God and how man can better enter into and fulfill the ultimate purpose of God.

"Biblical narratives tell us about things that happened—but not just any things. Their purpose is to show God at work in his creation and among his people. The narratives glorify him, help us to understand and appreciate him, and give us a picture of his providence and protection. At the same time they also provide illustrations of many other lessons important to our lives" (Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 79).

F. Narratives of the Bible are history, but they are _____ than history.

III. What is the value or purpose of narrative?

The narratives of Scripture can serve the believer in many ways.

A. The narratives provide an account of God's redemptive _____ for man worked out in history.

- B. The narratives help us to see history through _____.
- C. The narratives provide examples to us of other men and women of faith from whom we can _____ (Heb. 11:2).
- D. The narratives provide _____ illustrations of divine truth.
- E. The narratives assist New Testament believer in _____ the positive example or the mistakes of others.
- F. The narratives can be a great tool to help people _____ important spiritual lessons.

IV. What process is involved in interpreting the narratives?

- A. Seek to understand the _____ of the narrative.
 - 1. This includes understanding the _____ setting of the narrative.

This includes such things as:

- Specific places
- Geography
- Objects
- Activities
- Customs
- Social Values
- Politics
- World Events
- Etc.

- 2. This includes understanding the various _____ involved in the narrative.
- 3. This includes the _____ and how this narrative fits into God's plan of the ages.

- B. Seek to understand the _____ of the narrative in question.

To do this you will have to _____ the account in its entirety including that which comes before, that which follows and any other parallel accounts of the same event. As you read you will be asking certain questions that will help you to better understand what is actually happening.

- 1. Who are the principle characters?

2. How are they related to each other?
3. What is the flow of action?
4. Who is acting and upon whom is the action being made?
5. What is the point of conflict or tension?
6. How does the story come to a place of resolve?
7. How does this event relate to what has gone before? To what follows?
8. Is there anything in the recording of this event that reflects God's attitude toward the person or the action?
9. Are there any other verses that shed light on this passage?

C. Seek to discover what _____ are at play in the narrative.

“As part of our engagement with the story and part of our response to it, we need to ask how the narrative engages human needs, wants, longings, sins, failures, ambitions, emotions, all of those things that are a part of human existence.” – Dennis Bratcher

D. Seek to understand any key or unique _____ that are used by the writer to record this event.

E. Seek to _____ in the narrative.

F. Seek to determine what part of the narrative has meaning for us _____.

V. **What are some cautions when it comes to interpreting the narratives?**

There are some cautions that the interpreter must be aware of when interpreting the narrative portions of the Scripture.

- A. Do not seek a _____ interpretation of a natural event unless the Bible itself instructs to do so (I Cor. 10:1-11).
- B. Understand that most, but _____, narrative material is presented in a chronological or sequential way.
- C. Focus on what the narrative says, not on what _____ the narrative to say.

Lesson 23

Interpreting Prophecy

I. What is prophecy?

A. The definition of the word prophecy.

Prophecy is the supernatural ability to receive a message initiated by God and the grace to speak it forth.

1. Prophecy is to be initiated _____ (Jer. 23:16-22; Ezek. 13:1-3).
2. Prophecy is God speaking to His people through _____ (Ex. 4:15-16; 6:28-7:2).

B. The two main types of prophecy

1. _____ (Heb. 1:1-2a). Forth-telling is speaking forth a declarative message from God that does not involve prediction.
2. _____ (Amos 3:7-8). Foretelling is speaking a predictive word from God dealing with the future.

II. Why is it so important to study the prophets?

A. The Old Testament prophets were _____ through which to speak to His people (Heb. 1:1-2a; II Kgs. 17:13).

B. The Old Testament prophets prophesied concerning _____ and the Church.

1. Jesus declared that the entire Old Testament was about Him (Luke 24:25-27, 44-49; Matt. 5:17-18).
2. The Early Church recognized that the main message of the prophets was Jesus (Acts 7:51-53).
3. Paul was aware of the fact that the prophets spoke of Christ and the Church (Rom. 1:1-3; Rom. 16:25-27).

C. The New Testament writers made extensive use of the Old Testament prophets.

D. The Books of the Prophets make up over _____ of the Bible.

III. What are some of the names and titles of prophets in the Old Testament?

There are various names ascribed to the prophets in the Old Testament.

A. Man of God (I Sam. 9:6; I Kgs. 12:22; 13:1; II Kgs. 5:8).

Even though there were female prophets as well, this title emphasized the separation of these individuals _____ and their upright lifestyles.

B. Seers (I Sam. 9:9; II Sam. 24:11; II Kgs. 17:13; I Chr. 26:28; 29:29; II Chr. 16:7, 10; 33:18; Is. 29:10; 30:10; Amos 7:12).

This title indicates that these individuals saw into the ways of God, had foresight into the workings of God and had _____ in regard to the plan of God.

C. Messengers of the Lord (II Chr. 36:15-16; Is. 42:19; Mal. 3:1).

This title highlights the fact that these individuals were ambassadors and official _____ of God entrusted with a message from God to be delivered to His people.

D. Servants (II Kgs. 9:7; 17:13, 23; 21:10; Ezra 9:11; Jer. 7:25; 25:4; 29:29; 44:4; Ezek. 38:17; Dan. 9:6, 10).

This title reflects the nature of all of God's ministers who are love-slaves to the Lord and servants to the people of God.

E. Prophets (Ex. 4:15-16; 7:1-2; Jer. 15:19; II Pet. 1:21).

The prophet was to be a _____ for the Lord. God would give His word to them and they would speak it to the people.

IV. What is the background and development of the ministry of the prophet in the Old Testament?

A. The concept of the prophetic ministry has its roots in the _____.

1. In early times a spirit of prophecy came upon godly men such as _____ and Noah (Jude 14-15; Gen. 9:25-27).

2. _____ was the first man in the Old Testament to be called a prophet (Gen. 20:7; Ps. 105:9-15).

3. Isaac and _____ were also used by God relative to prophecy (Gen. 27, 48-49; Heb. 11:20-21).

4. _____ was also anointed to prophesy in relation to his sons (Gen. 50:24; Heb. 11:22).
- B. The prophetic office was established and defined by two main figures in the Old Testament—_____.
1. Moses laid the _____ for this ministry in the Old Testament.
 - a. He provided the definition of a prophet and the criteria for _____ this ministry (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:19-22).
 - b. He provided a mature _____ of the prophetic ministry (Num. 12:6; Deut. 18:15-18; 34:10-12).
 2. Samuel _____ this ministry to a place of prominence in Israel.
 - a. He functioned on a _____ of prophetic ministry (I Sam. 3:19-21).
 - b. He became the first of a _____ of prophets (Acts 3:24; 13:20).
 - c. He established _____ of the prophets where the prophetic gifts would be cultivated and developed (I Sam. 10:5, 10; 19:20).
 - d. He laid the foundation for the prophet's ministry to _____ and governmental leaders (I Sam. 10:1; 16:13).
- C. The prophetic office remained strong through Malachi. Even though the words of the prophets were often disregarded, they served as a _____ to the nation.
- D. The period of the Old Testament ends with no strong prophetic voice and what is referred to as the 400 “_____.” The silence is broken with the “voice of one crying in the wilderness” (Mark 1:3).

III. What are the differences in expression among the various prophets in the Old Testament?

- A. There were prophets of _____.

Many of the prophets could be classified as prophets of guidance. Moses, Samuel, Elijah and Elisha would fall into this category. These prophets operated primarily in realms of guidance, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, miracles and declaring God's word and His will to His people. These were people who were in close relationship to God and were, as a result, consulted in areas of guidance and

direction. Some of these were prophets of Scripture, but most of them were only oral prophets.

B. There were prophets of _____.

Some of the prophets in the Old Testament could be classified as prophets of vision. Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah are the main examples of this type. These prophets are characterized as those who “saw” the Word of the Lord. God gave them visions and they recorded what they saw. In most cases what they saw had to do with the future of people and nations. The Revelation of John reflects this same type of prophetic ministry.

C. There were prophets of _____.

A few prophets were prophetic in an unusual way. The lives of these prophets became a testimony and the principle message that they carried. Jonah’s principle prophecy was his three days and three nights’ experience in the belly of the whale (Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Luke 11:29-32). Although Hosea would also fall into other categories because of his prophetic words, he also lived a life of prophetic actions that were to speak to the nation (Hosea 1).

D. There were prophets of _____.

The prophets of Scripture are the ones with which we are the most familiar because of their writings that have come down to us. These prophets did no miracles; they simply spoke the Word of the Lord. These prophets include two categories, the Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets. The classification of these prophets has nothing to do with the importance of their message. The classification is only given based on the volume of the prophecies that we have from them.

1. The Major Prophets

The Major Prophets (or former prophets, as they are sometimes called) include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.

2. The Minor Prophets

The Minor Prophets (or latter prophets, as they are sometimes called) include all of the rest of the prophetic books from Hosea to Malachi.

IV. What are some important guidelines in understanding prophecy?

A. It is important to understand the _____ of the prophecy. We can do this by asking some of these questions.

1. When was the prophecy given?
2. Who was the prophet?
3. What is the historical context into which it was spoken?
4. For whom was the prophecy intended?
5. What meaning did it have for those who first heard it?
6. What was God's purpose in giving the prophecy?
7. What is the result that God was trying to produce with this prophecy?

- B. It is important to discern if the prophecy is declarative or _____ in nature.

Much of the material found in the prophetic books of the Bible came in the form of a message from God to a people who needed adjustment, encouragement or rebuke. In this case the significance of the passage is not in its application to some future event but in its instructive nature about God and His expectations of His people.

Other portions are clearly predictive and have to do with the future. This look into the future can be for the purpose of promise, warning, blessing or judgment.

- C. It is important to discern if the prophecy is _____ or unconditional in nature.

- D. It is important to discern if the prophecy is to be taken _____ or figuratively.

The bulk of the prophetic material in the Bible is meant to be interpreted literally. However, there are portions that are obviously very figurative and symbolic. The prophets of vision are particularly figurative in their language. They use the language of _____ and therefore must be interpreted with the guidelines discussed under Lesson 17 and 18.

- E. It is important to understand that prophets are noted for speaking in hyperbole or _____ terminology for the purpose of a radical effect.

The language of the prophet is the language of _____. As a result there is a tendency to use hyperbole for the sake of emphasis. If one is not aware of this speaking style the passage might appear to be a falsehood and one might come to the conclusion that the prophet is lying (Jer. 4:23-27).

- F. It is important to discern whether or not the prophecy has _____ applications.

1. Many of the prophetic words of the Bible have _____ application.

- a. The _____ application.

Does this prophecy have a literal and historical meaning and application to the times in which the prophet spoke?

- b. The _____ application.

Does this prophecy have further meaning and application relative to the First Coming of Christ and the Church? Does the prophecy have to do with the future of nations and people groups?

- c. The _____ application

Does this prophecy have an ultimate meaning and application for those living in the last days prior to the Second Coming of Christ?

2. A good example of multiple applications is the prophecy of Joel found in Joel 2:28-32.

- a. The historical or local application.

When Joel gave this prophecy it was intended to mean something in his literal and historical setting to the people to whom he spoke. The people of Judah were going to experience a natural judgment for their sins (Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14).

- b. The prophetic application.

When Joel gave this prophecy he also directed their attention to a season of outpouring and visitation that would come to them in connection with the coming of the Messiah (Joel 2:28-32). In fact the apostles in the Book of Acts applied the verses in Joel to the experience that they had on the Day of Pentecost when God poured out His Spirit and visited His people in such a dramatic way (Acts 2:17-21).

- c. The ultimate application

When Joel gave this prophecy he also directed their attention to the days immediately preceding the Second Coming of Christ and the Day of the Lord. When you read this passage carefully, not everything in this passage applies to what transpired on the Day of Pentecost. The prophecy included many natural signs that in other portions of the Scripture are associated with the end times (e.g. wonders in heaven, signs in the earth, sun turned to darkness, moon to blood).

- G. It is important to recognize the _____ nature of most prophetic utterances.

1. Prophets did not always prophesy in a _____ progression of thought.

The prophecies of any given prophet may be a compilation of bits of fragmentary revelation.

2. Prophets did not always prophesy events in _____ order.

The prophecies of any given prophet may refer to future events in random order.

- H. It is important to determine how to view the predictive aspects of the prophecy.

The following is quoted from *Interpreting the Scriptures* by Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin pages 157-158.

“In dealing with predictive prophecy the interpreter must ultimately come to grips with the problem of fulfillment. He must answer the questions: ‘Who or what was the prophet actually speaking of?’ and ‘When is the prophecy actually fulfilled?’ The following are some suggestions in applying this guideline:

1. If the prophecy has been fulfilled, it should be studied in connection with materials that clearly indicate its fulfillment.
2. If the prophecy has been partially fulfilled, the interpreter should search for the reason.

Could it be that the hearers were only partially obedient? Or could it be that the prophecy, though having only one sense, may have more than one fulfillment?

3. If the prophecy is yet unfulfilled, the interpreter must proceed with caution in determining its eschatological significance.
To begin with, he should look for interpretive clues based on the clear teaching of the rest of Scripture. Then he should determine the time element by using the questions given in the Chronometrical Principle.

- I. It is important to remember that Scripture does not _____ itself.

If another passage of scripture appears to contradict your interpretation of a prophecy one of two things must be done.

1. You must explain why that passage does not contradict your interpretation of the prophecy.
2. You must re-evaluate your interpretation of this passage in light of other clear passages of Scripture.

- J. It is important to apply the other hermeneutical principles to the passage under consideration (See Conner/Malmin pages 154-157).

This would be particularly true of the breach principle, the covenantal principle, the ethnic division principle, the chronometrical principle and the symbolic principle.

Lesson 24

The Application of Hermeneutics

I. How can we apply the principles of hermeneutics to verses of the Scripture?

Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Matthew 24:40

Other translations:

Two men will be working together in the field; one will be taken, the other left. –NLT

Two men will be in the same field, but only one will be taken. The other will be left. –CEV

A. The Context Principle

1. The Verse

- a. Who is speaking in this verse?

Jesus is clearly the speaker in this verse (See verse 4).

- b. To whom is this verse addressed?

Jesus was speaking directly to His disciples as an answer to a direct question (See verse 3).

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

- c. What does the verse literally say?

The verse simply says that one out of two men in a field will be taken and one out of two men will be left. It does not say where, why, when or how they will be taken. The verse does not specifically define the field as belonging to someone or as being in a particular place.

- d. What are the key or repeated words of the passage?

There are no repeated words in the verse, but in the wider context two words recur—“taken” and “left.”

The primary meaning of the word “taken” (Strong’s #3880) is “to take to, to take with one’s self, to join to one’s self” (Thayer’s Lexicon).

The primary meaning of the word “left” (Strong’s #863) is “to let go, to send away, to leave, to leave remaining” (Thayer’s Lexicon)

- e. Are any unique words used in the passage?

There are no unique words in this passage. A unique word is an unexpected word, a word that is used outside of its normal context or a word that is rarely used in biblical literature.

- f. What persons are mentioned in the passage?

No specific people are mentioned only two unidentified men.

- g. What are the places mentioned in the passage?

No specific city or place is mentioned in this verse, only a field that is being planted, cultivated or harvested.

- h. What events are mentioned in the passage?

No specific event or place is mentioned in this verse; however, in the context this incident has some relationship to the flood of Noah (See verses 36-39).

- i. What objects are mentioned in the passage?

There are no objects mentioned in this verse.

- j. Are there any cultural, ceremonial, geographic or historical issues in the passage?

There may be some historical and cultural practices alluded to in this verse. In the Roman domination of the world, people were familiar with the idea of some taken and others left. It was Rome’s custom that when it conquered or disciplined a people they would take some people and leave some people. They would often take the rebellious, the educated and the powerful into captivity, slavery or death. They would leave much of the population in the land and establish Roman rule over them within their own natural borders.

2. The Passage

- a. How does the text relate to the surrounding verses?

This verse is inseparably tied to the surrounding verses and cannot be understood without them.

- b. Which verses before and after make up the immediate context?

The immediate context of this verse is verse 36-44 of the same chapter.

“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

c. What is the wider context of this verse?

The wider context of this verse goes all the way back to verse 1 of the same chapter where Jesus leaves the temple area in disgust and indicates prophetically that the temple will be destroyed (verse 1-2). The context actually extends through all of chapter 25. All of these verses are part of the same dialogue.

On the basis of Jesus’ comment, the disciples asked Jesus three questions (vs. 3).

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

In this verse they asked about three things:

- When will these things be (Most likely a reference to the destruction of the temple)?
- What will be the signs associated with the Second Coming?
- What will be the signs or marks of the end times or the end of the age?

The rest of this chapter together with the subsequent chapter is Jesus’ answer to these questions. Jesus focused on the signs of His coming and the end of the age. Therefore we could say that this material is eschatological in nature. In this chapter...

- He indicated that the end times would be times of great deception through a proliferation of false ministries, doctrines and signs and wonders (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 23-24).

- He indicated that there will be wars and rumors of war with nations rising up against nations (Mt. 24:6-7).
- He indicated that there will be natural disasters including famines, earthquakes, widespread and unusual diseases (Mt. 24:7).
- He indicated that there will be a general and widespread persecution against Christians leading to the torture, death and even the apostasy of some (Mt. 24:9-10).
- He indicated that the spiritual world climate will be negative with lawlessness abounding and the love of many growing cold (Mt. 24:12-13).
- He indicated that the spiritual climate among the people of God would be positive in that the Gospel would go forth powerfully (Mt. 24:14).
- He indicated certain things about the time of His return. The time would be cut short (Mt. 24:22); when He came He would come quickly (Mt. 24:27); and when He came it would catch people by surprise (Mt. 24:36-44, 50).
- He indicated that when He came back there would be signs in the heavens (Mt. 24:29), He would return in the clouds with power and great glory (Mt. 24:30) and He would return at the sound of a trumpet (Mt. 24:31).
- He indicated that His return would be mourned by those who rejected Him (Mt. 24:30).
- He indicated that there would be a gathering together of the elect and a judgment on the wicked (Mt. 24:31; 50-51).
- He indicated how people must anticipate His return, that they should guard against deception (Mt. 24:4), be ready at all times (Mt. 24:44) and be watchful in prayer (Mt. 24:42).

d. How do the surrounding verses help me understand my text?

The surrounding verses make it clear that Jesus is using this statement to increase our personal readiness relative to His return.

3. The Book

a. Who is the author of the book?

This book was written by Matthew, one of the twelve disciples. He was a tax collector when Jesus called him and would have been considered a Roman collaborator.

- b. When was this book written?

While the date of the writing is not certain, most scholars place the date of the book somewhere between 50-69 A.D. It is clear that he wrote this book before the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D.

- c. What is the purpose and message of the book?

The Gospel of Matthew was clearly written for the Jewish reader. The purpose of the Gospel of Matthew seems to be to substantiate the fact that Jesus was indeed the Messiah for whom the Jews were waiting. He seeks to show that the coming Messiah was coming to reign over a spiritual kingdom and not a natural kingdom.

- d. How does the passage fit into the outline and development of the book?

This passage is toward the end of Matthew's Gospel after Jesus has experienced much rejection by those to whom He came. His crucifixion was imminent and so was His ascension into heaven. As Jesus approached the end of His ministry he seemed to focus on the things that would prepare His disciples for His departure and His subsequent return at the end of the age.

B. The Comparative Mention Principle

1. Are there other parallel passages in other books that are similar in message or structure?

Yes. There is another passage in Luke that reflects directly on this passage. Luke 17:22-37 deals with the same general theme (the Second Coming) and uses a similar illustration.

Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. 23 And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. 24 For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. 25 But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. 26 And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they

built; 29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. 31 In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. 34 I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36 Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." 37 And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

2. Is the meaning I am giving the passage consistent with or contradictory to things said in other books in that testament?

C. The Progressive Mention and Complete Mention Principle

Are there other references in both Old and New Testament that relate to this verse?
Yes!

1. There are other cross references from the Old Testament that assist in understanding.
 - Genesis 6-9 – The Days of Noah
 - Genesis 18-19 – The Days of Lot
2. There are Second Coming passages in the New Testament that assist in understanding.

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words. I Thessalonians 4:13-18

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements

*will melt with fervent heat?*¹³ *Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.* II Peter 3:10-13

D. The Covenantal Principle

Since Jesus is dealing with the time of the end, the primary covenant in play is the New Covenant.

E. The Ethnic Division Principle

Jesus is speaking to the Jewish people; however, the context makes it clear that all people on the earth are represented in His comments.

F. The Chronometrical Principle

The passage in which this verse is found is eschatological in nature. The key chronometrical language in the passage is found in the questions asked by the disciples regarding the future particularly the end times. In addition, all of Jesus' answers reflect events that will take place in the future, most of which will immediately precede His Second Coming.

G. The Breach Principle

The breach principle does not come into play in this passage.

H. The Christocentric Principle

Christ is the central theme of this portion of Scripture because it deals with His purpose, His return and His ultimate judgment of mankind.

I. The Moral Principle

The focus of the moral principle would be the application to the present. In this case the emphasis would be on what it takes to be ready for the return of Christ so that you can be on the correct side of the one taken or the one left.

A careful study of the context and the parallel verses tell us that in order to be on the positive side of this experience the believer needs to be prepared. The believer is prepared in the following ways.

1. The believer must watch out for deception (Mt. 24:4).
 - a. The believer must not go after those who say "Christ is in the desert" (Mt. 24:23-26).

- b. The believer must not be misled by signs and wonders (Mt. 24:11, 24 Compare: Mt. 7:15).
- c. The believer must be sober and alert and avoid spiritual drowsiness (I Th. 5:3-8).

For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

- 2. The believer must not allow fear to come in when natural signs begin to unfold (Mt. 24:6; Luke 21:26-28).

And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. Matthew 24:6

- 3. The believer must keep his or her behavior excellent among the heathen as a testimony (I Pet. 2:11-12).

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

J. Symbolic Language

There is no question that Jesus is simply using a natural illustration of two individuals who are just going on with the normal affairs of their work life. This is confirmed by the other illustration of two women grinding at the mill. As such the passage needs to be taken literally.

K. Figures of Speech

There are no figures of speech in this passage.

L. Conclusions

What do I conclude about the passage?

- 1. The two people represent two classes of people that will be living on the earth when Jesus comes back.

- a. There will be those who are unprepared for Christ's coming.
 - They are living their lives oblivious to spiritual things (Mt. 38-39).
 - They are evil servants who live for themselves and inflict injury on others (Mt. 24:48-51).
 - They are foolish ones who are asleep spiritually (Mt. 25:1-13).
 - They are unfaithful and unjust in the stewardship (Mt. 35:14-30).
 - b. There will be those who are prepared for Christ's coming (Refer to the Moral Principle above).
2. The person that was "taken" in Jesus story is most likely the unprepared one.
 - a. Who was taken in relationship to the days of Noah? Was it not the people that were eating and drinking?

So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive.
Genesis 7:23

- b. Who was taken in the days of Lot? Was it not the people of Sodom including some of Lot's household that were living in sin?

In Jesus parable of the sower, the tares were bundled together and burned before the wheat was harvested (Mt. 13:24-30).

3. The person that was "left" in Jesus story is most likely the prepared one.
 - a. Who was left or remained alive on the earth after the flood of Noah?
 - b. Who was left after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah?
4. This verse has often been used to support the idea of a pre-tribulation rapture. After this careful study, one has to ask the question, "Does it really support the idea of the righteous being taken out while the unrighteous remain?"

Some holding a pre-tribulation view see the one taken in the rapture, while the other is left behind.

The post-tribulation view does not equate these verses with the rapture, but with the separation of believers and unbelievers at the time of the judgment. In this view God takes the wicked in judgment leaving the righteous to enjoy the eternal kingdom or the 1000 year millennium.

II. How do we apply the truths found in the Scriptures to our lives?

Every single verse in the Bible has been given to us by God for our learning and every verse is, therefore “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:16-17).

A. The Word of God can be applied literally.

Much of the Bible needs little or no interpretation. God’s word is practical and applicable to our lives as soon as we read it. This means we must be hearers and doers of the Word.

B. The Word of God can be applied in principle.

Some Scriptures are very tied to the historical issues of culture, geography and customs of biblical times. Many of these Scriptures cannot be applied directly, but must be studied to determine the divine principle that is in play.

C. The Word of God can be applied prophetically.

Paul seems to imply that all of that which has been recorded has a special prophetic significance to those who are living in the end times (I Cor. 10:11). Looking at the Scripture prophetically is looking at it in light of God’s Eternal Purpose and how we fit into it in our day.

D. The Word of God can be applied devotionally.

The Bible is a living book. While it is important that we operate within the context of proper principles of interpretation, God will often speak to you in ways from the Word of God that will stretch that interpretation. This is not the type of application that is preached to others, but it is application based on how God has spoken to you as an individual from His Word. This application of the Word cannot be seen as interpretation. True interpretation of the Word will apply to all people of all time. However, this is a very legitimate way to read the word for personal growth and enrichment.