



# Two Principles to Interpretation

- ◆ Make observations before making conclusions
  - ◆ Pray for enlightenment.
  - ◆ Ask questions about the text. Who, what, when, where and how are good to start with.
  - ◆ Resist trying to answer these questions at first.
- ◆ Determine the meaning of the questions and then the text.
  - ◆ As you work through the questions the meaning will begin to take shape.
  - ◆ Treat the passage like you would treat any piece of literature, use the literal, historical, grammatical process of interpretation.

# The LHG Method

- ◆ **Literal** = treat the text as the context demands. Genre helps define the literary context. But the words still have a normal meaning in their context. This means you take figures of speech seriously.
- ◆ **Historical** = this passage was written in a specific setting to a specific audience and that adds to the meaning. Tell you wife you love her is very different than telling your church you love them. The setting defines things.
- ◆ **Grammatical** = the lexical and syntactical relationship of the terms.



# Augustine and Allegory

- ◆ the traveler = Adam
- ◆ Jerusalem = the heavenly city from which Adam fell
- ◆ Jericho = Adam's resulting mortality
- ◆ the robbers = the devil and his demons
- ◆ stripping him = depriving Adam of his immortality
- ◆ beating him = encouraging Adam to sin
- ◆ leaving him half dead = Adam was dead spiritually but retained some knowledge of God
- ◆ the priest and Levite = the ineffective ministry of the old covenant
- ◆ the good Samaritan = Jesus Christ
- ◆ binding the wounds = restraining from sin
- ◆ the oil = the comfort of the Holy Spirit
- ◆ the wine = exhortation to do good works
- ◆ the donkey = the body of Christ
- ◆ the inn = the church
- ◆ the two coins = the two commandments of love
- ◆ the innkeeper = the apostle Paul
- ◆ the return of the Samaritan = the resurrection of Christ



## *Sensus Plenior*

- ◆ This means “fuller meaning” or “double-meaning.” It is the idea that there was a deeper, fuller meaning in the bible text than what the writer understood.

# 2 basic positions Christians believe about the Kingdom of God

- ◇ The first is it is basically spiritual
  - ◇ Jesus reigns in heaven.
  - ◇ The Kingdom is present on the earth in the Church
- ◇ The second is that it is both spiritual and physical
  - ◇ God is reigning now over all.
  - ◇ There is a future, physical reign of Christ on the earth.

# The OT and The KoG—Two Approaches

- ◆ Those who see the Kingdom of God as spiritual in nature will say that in some way key things in the Old Testament are changed or replaced.
- ◆ Those who see the Kingdom of God as involving a literal, earthly reign of Jesus Christ will say that the Old Testament promises are not changed; rather they will be fulfilled.



## Spurgeon Speaking on 1 Samuel 20:25

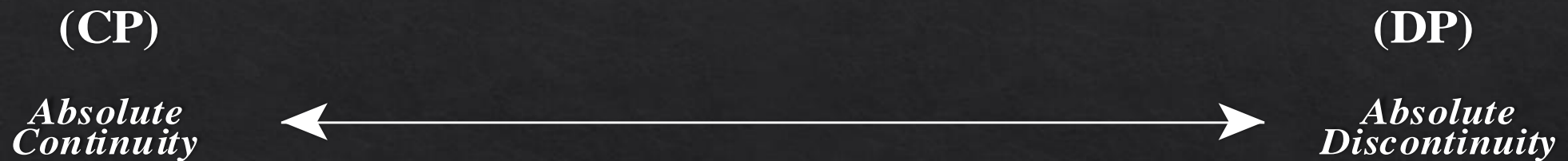
- ◆ His text as published from his notes: “And David’s place was empty.” — 1 Samuel 20:25
- ◆ The king sat on his seat as usual, the seat by the wall; then Jonathan rose up and Abner sat down by Saul's side, but David's place was empty — 1 Samuel 20:25

# Continuity & Discontinuity

- ◆ Definition: How does the Old Testament relate to the New Testament?
  - ◆ Is there a complete disconnect?
  - ◆ Is there a complete connection?
  - ◆ Or something in between?

# The Line of Continuum

*Figure 1*



- ✓ The more that you move toward “continuity” (CP) the more covenantal/non-dispensational you become.
- ✓ The more you move toward “discontinuity” (DP) the more dispensational you become.



- a “non-literal” approach to prophecy

O. T. Allis



- a “new kind of literal”

O. Palmer Robertson



- reinterpret in light of Jesus Christ

George Ladd



- OT prophecy is often fulfilled figuratively rather than literally

Anthony Hoekema



- the NT spiritualizes the OT prophecy

Kim Riddlebarger



# Simple Rules when Thinking about Interpretation

- ◆ Be suspicious when someone says that a passage does not mean what is plainly written down.
- ◆ When they are making an argument for their position look at the actual passages they reference.
- ◆ Be suspicious when told there is a deeper or spiritual meaning in some passage.
- ◆ Reject making the idea of literal = opposite of spiritual. It is not.

# Revelation 20:1-4

- ◇ <sup>1</sup> Then I saw an **angel** coming **down** from **heaven**, holding the **key** of the **abyss** and a great **chain** in his **hand**.
- ◇ <sup>2</sup> And he **laid hold** of the **dragon**, the serpent of old, who is the **devil** and **Satan**, and **bound** him for a **thousand years**;
- ◇ <sup>3</sup> and he threw him into the abyss, and shut *it* and sealed *it* over him, so that he would not **deceive** the **nations** any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be **released** for a **short time**.
- ◇ <sup>4</sup> Then I saw **thrones**, and they sat on them, and **judgment** was given to them. And I *saw* the **souls** of those who had been **beheaded** because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not **worshiped** the **beast** or his image, and had not received the mark on their **forehead** and on their **hand**; and they **came to life** and **reigned with Christ** for a thousand years.



# Simple Rules when Thinking about Interpretation

- ◆ Be suspicious when someone reads the New Testament backwards into the Old Testament.
- ◆ Jesus is not the meaning nor at the center of every Old Testament passage or story.
- ◆ Use caution when someone says that something in the Old Testament is no longer in force. Ask questions.
- ◆ The New Testament does not teach us how to interpret the Old Testament.
- ◆ Remember the difference between “Sense” and “Referent.”

# What All This Means....

- ◆ At Missio Dei we try not to go above, behind, under or around any passage of the bible. We let the text say what it says and go from there.
- ◆ This is a slower and harder method but we believe in the long run it produces the greatest dividend in biblical understanding God's plan and purposes.