

STUDENT HANDOUT

SHEFFEY BIBLE COLLEGE
Course: Hermeneutics 101
Chapter 10 Student Handout
WHO CONTROLS THE MEANING?
Instructor: Dr. Ancel Presnell, Jr

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

WHAT YOU SHOULD LEARN FROM TODAY’S LECTURE

- Understand who controls meaning in Scripture
- Distinguish authorial intent from reader response
- Define meaning and application
- Understand how communication affects interpretation
- Learn how meaning is determined through language and context
- Identify valid theological principles

I. INTRODUCTION TO MEANING

Meaning is the foundation of all interpretation.

Key Principle:
Interpretation begins with who controls meaning

Notes:

II. AUTHORIAL INTENT VS READER RESPONSE

Two approaches to interpretation.

Key Principle:
Meaning comes from the author—not the reader

Notes:

III. COMMUNICATION

Scripture is communication from God.

Key Principle:
We must seek the author’s intended message

Notes:

IV. BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

God is the ultimate author.

Key Principle:
Meaning is objective and not personal opinion

Notes:

V. DEFINITIONS

Author — both the human writer and the divine Author (God)
Meaning — what the author intended to communicate
Application — how the reader responds to that meaning

Key Principle:
Meaning comes first; application follows

Notes:

VI. INTERPRETIVE JOURNEY

Steps connected to meaning.

Key Principle:
Theological principles are part of meaning

Notes:

VII. DETERMINING WHAT THE AUTHOR MEANT

Meaning is communicated through language and context.

Key Principle:
Context determines meaning

Grammar — the rules governing how words function in a sentence
Syntax — how words are arranged and relate to one another
Word Meanings — the range of meanings a word can have
Literary Context — the surrounding text and flow of thought
Historical Context — the cultural and historical setting of the passage

Notes:

VIII. THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Move from specific meaning to universal truth.

Key Principle:
Principles must be timeless and applicable

Notes:

IX. PURPOSE

Understanding why the text was written.

Key Principle:
Purpose helps reveal meaning

Notes:

CLOSING SUMMARY

Meaning in Scripture is determined by the author, not the reader. Because the Bible is God's communication, we must carefully study grammar, syntax, word meanings, and context to discover His intended meaning. Only then can we correctly apply that truth to our lives.

THINGS TO KNOW (EXAM ANCHORS)

- Author controls meaning
- Authorial intent vs reader response
- Bible as communication
- Meaning is objective
- Application is subjective but limited
- Author includes divine and human
- Meaning precedes application
- Grammar defined
- Syntax defined
- Word meanings (semantic range)
- Literary context defined
- Historical context defined
- Context determines meaning
- Theological principles must be universal
- Purpose reveals meaning

ASSIGNMENT

Read Chapter 11 in *Grasping God's Word* in preparation for the next lecture.