

“Come to Me”

Matthew 11:28-30

INTRODUCTION

What is “*biblical hermeneutics*”?

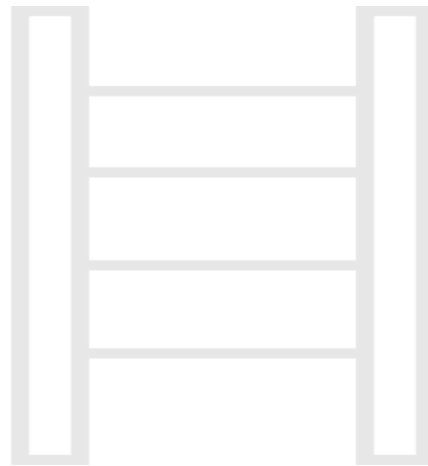
“hermeneutics” (her-meh-noo-diks)—comes from a Greek verb, *hermēneuō* which means “to TRANSLATE or INTERPRET”.

- Etymology: From the Greek god, Hermes, who served as a “messenger” between the gods and between the gods and mankind.

Practically speaking then, *Biblical Hermeneutics* is two-fold in its purpose:

- OBSERVATION and INTERPRETATION—Discover the ORIGINAL Meaning of the Text
 - *What was the Word saying to the readers THEN and THERE?*
- APPLICATION—Communicate the CONTEMPORARY Meaning of the Text
 - *What is the Word saying to us HERE and NOW?*

The Gospel Ladder



Jesus the Rabbi

Jesus is drawing on the picture of a Rabbi and his Talmidim.

The Hebrew word for disciple is talmid. This word stresses the relationship between rabbi (teacher or master) and disciple (student). A talmid of Jesus’ day would give up his entire life in order to be with his teacher. The disciple didn’t only seek to know what the teacher knew, as is usually the case today. It was not enough just to know what the rabbi said, but the foremost goal of any talmid was to become like the rabbi and do what the rabbi did.—Ray Vander Laan

Pastor John Mark Comer summarizes what the call of a Rabbi was to his Talmidim this way:

- Be with me
- Become like me
- Do what I would do

And this in fact, is exactly what Jesus did when He called His disciples (Mark 3:13-15).

Many people referred to Jesus as Rabbi: His disciples (Luke 7:40); Teachers of the Law (Matt. 22:35-36); Ordinary people (Luke 12:13); The rich (Matt. 19:16); Pharisees (Luke 19:39); Sadducees (Luke 20:27-28).

Jesus was the kind of first century rabbi that was sought by talmidim. Not only that, Jesus was rabbi believed to have **s'mikhah** (or authority) to make new interpretations. This is important! Only rabbis with s'mikhah could make a new interpretation of the Torah or “yoke”.

Jesus defends His authority (Matthew 5:17-20)

The Disciples as Talmidim

The decision to follow a rabbi as a talmid meant total devotion to becoming like the rabbi (be, become, do a I would do).

If a student wanted to study with a rabbi he would ask if he might "follow" the rabbi.

There were a few exceptional rabbis who were famous for seeking out their own students. Presumably this meant that the rabbi had observed, saw their seriousness about loving God, knowing and obeying the Torah. Essentially, that the rabbi believed in him.

Then Jesus walks up to a tax collector and says, “Follow Me.” *What?!?*

Not only that, but now in Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus now turns to crowds and invites them to become His talmidim.

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Questions for Personal Reflection/Group Discussion

1. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus the Rabbi chose *you*?
2. How does knowing the Gospel message help His teachings become easy and light?
3. How does knowing that Jesus is gentle and humble in heart, and will help us by His Spirit affect our pursuit of holiness?