

HERMENEUTICS

The science and art of interpreting Scripture.

NOT “What does this mean to me?” but “What does this mean?”

Context, Context, Context

Never isolate a verse from its surroundings. Consider the immediate context, chapter, book, and historical/cultural context.

1. OBSERVATION — What Do I See?

Slow down and examine the text before drawing conclusions.

Look for: repeated words • themes • commands • questions • comparisons/contrasts • cause & effect

Key: Resist the urge to jump immediately to application.

2. INTERPRETATION — What Does It Mean?

Determine the author's intended meaning.

Ask: What was the author communicating? What would the original audience have understood? How does the surrounding context help?

Key: We want to discover the meaning of Scripture, not impose our opinions upon it.

3. CORRELATION — How Does It Fit?

Compare Scripture with Scripture. Use clearer passages to help understand difficult ones and interpret individual passages in harmony with the whole Bible.

4. APPLICATION — What Do I Do?

Once we understand what Scripture means, ask how its truth should transform us. What should change in my thinking or behavior? What should I believe, repent of, obey, or trust? Who can I share this truth with?

Key: Correct application flows from correct interpretation.

The Goal: Transformation

God's Word calls us to respond to Him and increasingly become like Christ.

Don't just ask: “What did I learn?”

Ask: “How should God's truth change me?”

WEEK 3: HERMENEUTICS: Listening Guide

WHAT IS HERMENEUTICS?

- Hermeneutics is the science and art of _____ Scripture.
- A better question than “What does it mean to me?” is: “What does it _____?”
- The goal is to understand what the biblical _____ intended to communicate.
- Context. Context. Context. Never isolate verses from their surrounding passages.

THE INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY METHOD

1. OBSERVATION — “_____?”

- Carefully examine the text _____ drawing conclusions.
- Look for repeated words, key themes, commands, questions, comparisons/contrasts, and cause-and-effect.
- Resist jumping immediately to application.

2. INTERPRETATION — “_____?”

- Ask what the author was _____ and what the original audience would have understood.
- Interpret the passage within its surrounding **context**.
- Avoid forcing personal opinions onto the text.

3. CORRELATION — “_____?”

- Compare Scripture with _____.
- Use clearer passages to help understand more difficult passages.
- Interpret individual verses in harmony with the whole Bible.

4. APPLICATION — “_____?”

- Application comes _____ observation and interpretation.
- Ask: What should I believe, repent of, obey, or trust? Who can I share this with?
- Correct application flows from correct _____.

COMMON ERRORS : Reading preferences into the text • Ignoring context • Jumping straight to application • Isolated proof texts

NOTES
