



Hermeneutics Defined

The Analogy of Faith

The analogy of faith means that Scripture interprets Scripture. No part of Scripture can be interpreted in a way that puts it in conflict with another part of Scripture.

Literal Sense

To interpret something literally is to pay attention to the letters and words used.

Grammatical-Historical

This principle goes beyond looking at the literary forms to considering grammatical constructions and the historical context of the book or passage under study.

The grammatical structure determines whether a collection of words should be considered a question (an interrogative), a command (an imperative), or a declarative (an indicative).

- Acts 1:8
- Romans 1:1
- Romans 1:16

The historical context considers the setting and situation in which the book was written.

Summary

1. The goal of the analogy of faith, Scripture interprets Scripture, is to keep the whole Bible in view so we do not suffer the effects of exaggerating one part of Scripture to the exclusion of other parts.
2. The goal of the literal sense is to keep us from fanciful interpretations by examining the literary forms of Scripture.
3. The goal of the grammatical-historical method is to focus on the original meaning of the text so we don't read into the Bible our own ideas from the present.



Hermeneutics Implemented

Read the Bible as a Book

Read the Bible like any other book. The Bible is filled with words and sentences, so grammar is important.

Read the Bible Existentially

Reading the Bible existentially is to get passionately and personally involved in what you are reading.

Interpret the OT in Light of the NT

Interpret the Old Testament in light of the New Testament. This rule flows from the analogy of faith.

- Amos 9:11

- Acts 15:13-18

Interpret Narrative by Didactic

Interpret narrative passages of Scripture by didactic passages of Scripture. This rule flows from the analogy of faith.

- A didactic statement is a declarative statement that is teaching something.
 - 1 John 4:8

- Narrative is telling us what happened, not necessarily what we should believe or do.

- Phenomenological language describes things as our eyes see them. The biblical writers describe what they see, not necessarily what is actual.
 - Genesis 3:17-19

Interpret the Implicit by the Explicit

Interpret implicit passages by explicit passage. This is tied to the previous rule because we often find implicit meanings in narrative passages. This means it also is a part of the analogy of faith.

- Genesis 22:11-12



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- Psalm 139:1-4

 - John 3:16

Interpret the Unclear in the Light of the Clear

Interpret unclear passages in light of clear passage.

- 1 Corinthians 15:29

Distinguish Between Principle and Custom

We have to be able to distinguish between principle and custom.

1. Examine your text for apparent areas of custom.
 - Deuteronomy 25:4
 - 1 Corinthians 9:9

2. Allow for Christian distinctives in the first century.

3. The creation ordinances are indicators of transcultural principles.