

Hermeneutics - Part 3

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Introduction:

A. The Bible has two authors.

1. God.
2. Man.

B. We need something of the Spirit in us in order to understand what the Spirit wrote. (Romans 8:2)

1. The Spirit gives us illumination of what the Word means.
2. The Spirit gives understanding where we cannot understand.
3. How does this work?

I. What principles can we use in order to understand the Word?

A. There are rules we can acknowledge.

1. From principles we can devise methods of understanding.
2. Following God's rules is helpful.

B. God hides his truth from the wise but reveals it to the simple. (Matthew 11:25)

1. Jesus speaks the words of truth.
2. Jesus was the perfect teacher.
3. Yet some people do not understand Jesus' words because God the Father hides truth from some people.
4. When God hides something no one can find it.
5. I may write something on the board but if it is not legible no one can interpret it.
6. Only the Spirit of God can interpret the truth of God.
7. Some men with great brilliance work hard on the Bible and conclude that God is dead.
8. It is a hermeneutical fact that God hides his truth from some people.

C. From whom does God hide truth?

1. He is not capricious.
2. God hides his truth from the wise and prudent.
3. God divides interpreters into two categories. (Matthew 16; 13; I Corinthians 2)
 - a. The wise and prudent.
 - b. The simple, the babies.
4. How do you interpret these facts?
5. From Genesis 1 God has been proclaiming the same truth.
6. All things have been delivered to Jesus.
7. We need to learn from Jesus because all truth is in Jesus.

II. What is the job of the interpreter?

A. We need to stand on the side of the simple one to whom God reveals his truth.

1. Intelligence is not important here.
2. Character is important for God looks on the heart.
3. The wise thinks he understands but he is foolish.
4. We need to guard against thinking we can understand the Bible without God's help.
5. We need to become like little children in order to understand God's word.

B. Make a biblical study of how man knows things, epistemology. (Matthew 13; 16 Luke 24)

1. God's wisdom is not like that of the world, but is hidden. (1 Corinthians 2:6)
2. God's wisdom is hidden in Christ. (Colossians 2)
3. If the rulers of the world had understood the word of God they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
4. God has prepared good things for them that love him and has revealed these things to his children by his Holy Spirit.
 - a. The Spirit gives illumination.
 - b. The Spirit also makes us holy.
 - c. Only the spirit of a man knows the things of a man.

d. I need something that no one has offered to do for me because no one knows what I need.

d. Only the Holy Spirit knows what a man needs.

5. The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God.

a. He cannot perceive spiritual things.

b. People that operate on natural equipment cannot understand spiritual things.

III. Hermeneutics leads one to the following.

A. Means of correct interpretation.

1. I need to only meet God's conditions for understanding truth.

a. Some people with no education understand God's truth well.

b. We need to be taught by God himself.

2. I need to be like a baby.

B. What does the heart of a baby look like?

1. God will reveal his truth to anyone who in his heart says, "I can't understand it but I am committed to obey God."

2. God will reveal his truth to anyone who says in his heart, "I can't understand it but I'm expecting you to show me."

3. God reveals his truth to anyone who says in his heart, "I can't but I'm asking you to do it."

4. God reveals his truth to anyone who says in his heart, "I can't understand it but I'm asking you to give me understanding. (Ephesians 1:15-19)

C. Do you lead a man to be sure he's committed to God?

1. Don't get him to be introspective but get him to commit himself to God.

2. The one committed to God will receive truth from God.

3. We have not because God never promised is not biblical. We have not because we ask not in answer to prayer. (Ezekiel 37:8)

IV. The human aspect of the Scriptures, where we need to use our heads, is also important.

A. We don't go into Bible study head first, but we do need to use our heads.

1. Linguistics.

2. Semantics.

3. We might analyze Scripture differently but language does have laws to be followed.

- a. I was raised in Charlotte North Carolina.
- b. A man from Mississippi invited me to dinner.
- c. I said to him what I often said to my brother, "Pass me the bread."
- d. He passed me the corn bread and I told him I didn't ask for that.
- e. He disagreed and we had a fight.
- f. I was asking for a piece of bread but bread to him meant corn bread.
- g. He misunderstood what I asked, or I miscommunicated what I wanted.
- h. When we talk about Christ we might think we know what it means but the person listening to us may hear something else.

4. We violate the first law of language when we presume a word means what we want it to mean.

- a. If we don't have common background experiences our words might have different meanings.
- b. We need to learn cross cultural communication.
- c. Isaiah wrote about 600 B.C. in Palestine using Hebrew.
- d. When we pick up his book today we need to be sure we use his words correctly.
- e. Maher-shalal-hash-baz was Isaiah's son's name.
- f. We need to get the cultural context of Isaiah down before we communicate it to others.
- g. You might not become a scholar but you can take cultural study seriously.
- h. Every Bible student needs a good Bible dictionary like the International Bible Encyclopedia.
- i. This sounds demanding but we can do our part.

B. The first rule of Bible study is to stand in the shoes of the original writers.