

# **CLASS NOTES - HERMENEUTICS**

**Taught By Robert Stapleton**



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## **HERMENEUTICS**

### **Robert Stapleton**

#### **CLASS DESCRIPTION:**

1. A study of the principles of Biblical interpretation. The course is designed to be of value to the student in ascertaining Bible authority and weighing the legitimacy of various human innovations.

#### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. The following books are to be read during the quarter with a reading log kept and critique written of both books.
  - A. Ascertaining Bible Authority, Roy Deaver.
  - B. Hermeneutics, D.R. Dungan.
2. Instructions concerning reading log.
  - A. Keep a typewritten log of your reading, with dates and chapters read.
    1. Your log should be submitted to instructor no later than the beginning of class day during the finals week – late papers count one grade per day off.
  - B. Your log will count for 10% of your total course grade.
3. Instructions concerning critiques.
  - A. Each should be composed of three to five pages, double-spaced.
    1. Watch your grammar and spelling.
  - B. Critique should be turned in no later than the beginning of class day during the finals week – late papers count one grade per day off.
  - C. Critiques will count for 20% of you total course grade.
3. Tests:
  - A. Two scheduled tests will be administered.
    1. Each will account for 35% of your total score.
    2. Any additional credit will be at the instructor's discretion.
4. Memory Verses:
  - A. The following verses are to be committed to memory:

Genesis 3:15  
Jeremiah 10:23  
John 4:24  
Acts 1:8  
Romans 15:4  
Colossians 3:17  
2 Timothy 2:15  
2 Timothy 3:16, 17

- B. Memory work should be done in the ASV, ESV, KJV, or NKJV unless the instructor grants permission to use another version.
5. Suggested Reading:
  - A. Rightly Dividing The Word I & II, Terry M. Hightower, Editor
  - B. Principles of Interpretation, Clinton Lockhart

## **HERMENEUTICS**

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#### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. The Lord asked a vital question concerning understanding the Scriptures – “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” Luke 10:26.
  - A. That same question needs to be answered today.
    1. This is where Hermeneutics comes in.
2. In our study of God’s Word an attitude of study similar to the study of other books should be found – i.e. a search for the truth.
  - A. It should be understood that God does not inspire the interpretation.
    1. His Word is inspired, but man’s interpretation is not.
      - A. Thus the need to apply proper rules when it comes to such matters.
3. Definition of Hermeneutics: “The science of interpretation.”
  - A. Derived from the Greek word “Hermas”, the messenger of the gods and the interpreter of Jupiter.
    1. Every Hermas was an interpreter.
  - B. Sacred Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation of the Scriptures.
    1. It is the application of the principles of hermeneutics which results in the bringing out of the meaning of any writing which might be otherwise difficult to understand.

#### **BODY:**

1. In consideration of Biblical Hermeneutics of first importance is the question; do you read and study the Bible?
2. Secondly, is the question, how do you do so in view of your attitude concerning its authorship?
  - A. Do you believe it to be the words of men?
    1. Or, do you believe it to be the Word of God?
    2. This is an absolute key in relation to one’s interpretation.
3. Third, how do you read and study in respect to being submissive to the Bible – John 7:17?
  - A. People often twist or “wrest” the scriptures to justify their practices - 2 Peter 3:16.
  - B. The person who is submissive to the Word allows it to dictate his direction.
4. Fourth, how do you read and study in view of the approach and methods of study?
  - A. Numerous ineffective and harmful approaches exist.
    1. A haphazard, random, unplanned reading, which cannot be properly referred to as study.
      - A. Judas hanged himself - Matthew 27:5.
        1. “Go, and do thou likewise.” - Luke 10:37.
      - B. Jesus was baptized in the Jordan - Matthew 3:13-16.
        1. The water of the Jordan was running water.
        2. Jesus left us an example - 1 Peter 2:21.

3. Therefore, all baptisms should be in running water.
2. Ignoring the context and historical relevance.
  - A. "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled;" therefore the end of the world is to be before 2000.
    1. Whoops, missed that one didn't they?
  - B. "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?" - 1 Corinthians 11:22.
    1. Thus, no eating or kitchens in the meeting house.
    2. Yet the early Christians met in their homes and ate there - Acts 21:7, 11; 12:12.
3. A failure to distinguish between the different dispensations.
  - A. Seen in the Sabbath verse "Blue Laws."
  - B. Deuteronomy 22:5 and pant suits worn by women.
4. A failure to properly consider the different types of material and languages found within the Bible.
  - A. Deuteronomy 23:17, 18 - "Thou shalt not bring...the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow..."
    1. Figurative speech.
  - B. Isaiah 35:8 - "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." (emphasis mine, r.w.s.)
    1. Poetic language here, as the opposite is the actual way.
5. The purpose of the study of Hermeneutics is to learn how to effectively read and study God's Word.
5. We have an inspired pattern for the training of servants of the Lord - Ezra 7:10.
  - A. Ezra "set" his heart:
    1. To seek the Law of the Lord.
      - A. This is an upward look, a looking toward God, a look into the "Bible."
        1. It is a seeking of the Lord's will for our lives, as the answer to what is His will is only found in the Word of God.
    2. To do it.
      - A. This is an inward look of introspection.
        1. I.e., am I practicing God's will?
        2. Am I doing my level best to meet my potential?
    3. To teach it.
      - A. This is an outward look at or toward others.
        1. Addresses the question of how can I communicate the Gospel to others in an effective way?
6. In seeking to be a proper servant of God there must be an accurate "exegesis" of His Word.
7. As we consider Biblical Hermeneutics we must address the question of why is it so important?
  - A. Why can't we just study it "any ole way"?
    1. The answer is clear:

- A. One's personal eternal destiny is dependant on a correct interpretation.
  - B. Those who hear you preach have, to a large degree, placed their eternal destiny in your hands - 1 Timothy 4:16.
  - C. The Scriptures are the only source of Divine authority for matters pertaining to "life and godliness" - 2 Peter 1:3.
  - D. The unity that God would have His people to have is based upon a proper understanding of the Scriptures - John 17:17-23; 1 Corinthians 1:10.
2. The importance of understanding the different "branches" and "aspects" of Bible study.
- A. It is important, as we approach this study, that we understand the various terms used and their definition.
    - 1. Interpretation - all inclusive process by which one arrives at the meaning, understanding, and relative values of the text under consideration.
    - 2. Exegesis (εκ αγω) - literally, to lead out, to bring forth the meaning from the original author to the original audience.
      - A. Moses - Deuteronomy - second generation.
      - B. Paul - 1 Corinthians - church at Corinth.
  - 3. Hermeneutics - science of interpretation, seeking a meaning for the current time.
    - A. ερμηνια - interpretation, translation.
      - 1. 1 Corinthians 12:10 - interpretation of tongues.
      - 2. 1 Corinthians 14:26 - each had an interpretation.
    - B. ερμηνευω - to interpret, to translate.
      - 1. John 1:38 - "Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master)."
      - 2. John 1:42 - "Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."
      - 3. John 9:7 - "Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.)"
      - 4. Hebrews 7:1, 2 - "Melchisedec,...being by interpretation King of righteousness."
    - C. Perhaps we can best sum it up this way, specifically and technically, hermeneutics is the branch of Biblical study concerned with conveying the relevant meaning of the Biblical text to our current time and situation.
8. Five Essential Aspects of Exegesis:
- A. Exegete Lexically:
    - 1. I.e. the study of words, their meaning and use in the text under consideration.
    - 2. An understanding of the words as the original author and audience did.
    - 3. Thus, the need to compare to the original languages of which the Bible was written.
  - B. Exegete Syntactically:
    - 1. Syntax is the study of the case structure, sentence structure, grammatical structure, use of phrases, idioms, and such as is related to the original languages.
      - A. Thus the identification of the subject, verbs, object, and all relating

- adjectives, and adverbs related to the text.
2. This must be done in view of the original writing, not the present translation, in order to understand as the original audience did.
  3. The failure to do so is what has resulted in the mass confusion in the area of Biblical interpretation.
  4. The matter of Textual Criticism plays an important role in this if properly applied.
    - A. The problem has been that many of those using Textual Criticism have done so, not to understand what the Bible says, but to try to find a way to destroy what it says.
- C. Exegete Historically:
1. An accurate understanding of the situation surrounding the original author and audience is paramount to a proper understanding of the Scriptures.
  2. An understanding of the Jewish and Gentile backgrounds will assist one greatly in understanding the Scriptures.
  3. An understanding of the historical background of the writers of the books of the Bible will assist greatly.
  4. Failure to properly understand the history and cultural aspects often lends itself to improper interpretation.
- D. Exegete Contextually:
1. The immediate context must be identified; along with a proper understanding of the context of the entire book the text under consideration is found.
  2. A failure to do so will result in foolish errors.
    - A. Nahum 2:4 - "The chariots shall rage in the streets" - some see traffic jams here.
    - B. Isaiah 3:18 - "round tires like the moon" - tire rationing.
    - C. Zechariah 14:12 - "Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth" - Hal Lindsey sees an atomic war here.
- E. Exegete Harmoniously:
1. I.e. to exegete in a way wherein every passage of Scripture is presented in a way in which it is harmonious to all others.
  2. A failure to do so will result in contradictions.
    - A. The doctrine of "faith only" contradicts James 2:24.

9. Four Levels of Bible Study:

A. Level or Type	Question	Method	Action
Historical - Literary	Who, what, why when, where, how?	Exegesis	Dig out, lead out meaning
Theological	What does this mean?	Exposition	Bring out
Practical	How does	Application	Work out

	it apply to me?	Hermeneutics	
Presentation	How can I best teach it?	Homiletics	Lay out

10. Ten Step Method of Exegesis: (Presented with ten questions and correlative statements)

Question	Statement
A. Are there any textual problems?	Settle the text.
B. What are the meanings of the words?	Do word study.
C. What are the significant grammatical or syntactical constructions?	Understand the grammar and syntax.
D. What is the historical background?	Study the history.
E. What is the context of the passage?	Place the passage in its context.
F. What is the Christian foreground relating to this passage?	Know how the early church applied the passage.
G. How has the passage been handled by the translators?	Study the best translations.
H. How do commentators view the text?	Study commentator's view.
I. What is the most accurate translation?	Study translations.
J. What are your conclusions?	Arrive at a correct exegesis.

11. Hermeneutical Questions and Principles:

- A. Under which covenant is the scripture applicable?
  - 1. Patriarchal
  - 2. Mosaical
  - 3. Christian
- B. What type of material is under study?
  - 1. Historical - narrative.
  - 2. Prophetic.
  - 3. Illustrative.
  - 4. Hortatory - injunctive - urging a course of action.
- C. How does the Bible teach?
  - 1. Command.
  - 2. Example.
  - 3. Necessary inference.
- D. How does the Bible bind?
  - 1. Command.
  - 2. Necessary inference.
- E. What are the different aspects of a command?
  - 1. Generic.
  - 2. Specific.
  - 3. Expedients inferred by a command.

12. The Bible is a Peerless Book:

- A. Because of its literary excellence.
- B. It is an inexhaustible source of truth (the Bible has yet to be wrong).
- C. Unique in never-failing inerrancy.



1. Example: Luke 3 describes:
  - A. A certain time - 15th year of Caesar Augustus.
  - B. A certain people - Herod, Pilate, Phillip, Annas, and Caiphas, to name a few.
  - C. A certain place - word came to John in wilderness.
  - D. A certain event - the world taxed.
  - E. Why does Luke go to so much trouble to describe the events if Jesus was a myth?
- D. Because of minute accuracy.
  1. Example: Isaiah 11 tells how Israel would be taken into bondage by Assyria.
    - A. In Chapter 13 he tells of the coming of Babylon to make Assyria its slave.
      1. This would be five years away yet it came to pass.
  2. Example: In Isaiah 45:1 we see the prophecy of Cyrus of Medes who crushes Babylon.
    - A. The Medes did not exist for 200 years and Cyrus was not born for 150 years.
      1. Yet it came to pass.
- E. Peerless because of completeness - 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:3.
- F. Alluding freshness.
  1. Relates to matters of every generation, including the present one.
- G. Marvelous power.
  1. Saving power - Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:21.
  2. Comforting power - 2 Corinthians 1:6.
  3. Joyful power of blessedness - Matthew 3-11.
  4. Wisdom giving power - 1 Corinthians 1:21.
  5. Courage giving power:
    - A. Where the Bible stands I stand.
    - B. Gives confidence - 1 Corinthians 1:20, 21.
    - C. Boldness - Acts 9:29; Romans 15:15; Ephesians 6:20; Hebrews 13:6.
  6. Power to inspire activity - 1 Corinthians 15:58.
  7. Power to equip men for service - 2 Timothy 3:16.
- H. Indispensability - Luke 17:10.
13. Response (Since it is peerless):
  - A. Believe every promise.
  - B. Study it.
  - C. Love it.
  - D. Get others to read it.
  - E. Teach it.
  - F. Live it.
14. Nine Axioms (Known self-evident fact due to observation):
  - A. God has spoken - 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.
    1. Was in the beginning - Genesis 1:1.
    2. Has full right to talk to us as Creator and Sustainer.
  - B. Bible is the revelation of His will.

1. The mind cannot create anything new.
2. The term "God said" used over 3,000 times in the Bible.
3. Facts of source of Bible:
  - A. Was the Bible written by:
    1. Good men?
    2. Bad men?
    3. God-directed men?
  - B. If written by bad men, they would not write of good things but of bad.
    1. So a man is, so is his heart.
  - C. If written by good men where is the authority to do so?
    1. By what authority does a good man write?
      - A. Consider 2 Peter 1:16.
        1. So these men were eyewitnesses to Christ and were inspired.
      - B. Consider 2 Timothy 3:16.
- C. The Bible has been accurately translated.
  1. We have:
    - A. Thousands of copies of Bible.
    - B. Numerous are very legible.
    - C. These were copies in nature of which our earliest is 350 A.D.
    - D. Lexionaires (transcription of services) from the sixth century.
  2. Compare to classical literature we have ten times as much proof as to the accuracy of the Bible.
    - A. We only have nine copies of "Caesar's Annals".
    - B. Of the Annals of Tacitus, written from 54 AD - 120 AD, we have 10 books plus two fragments of sixteen originals.
    - C. Of the History of Tacitus we have 4 ½ copies of 14 books with two volumes dating about the ninth and eleventh century.
- D. Bible is infallible - 1 John 2:21.
- E. The Bible is complete and final revelation.
  1. John 14:26 - Holy Spirit shall teach all things
  2. 1 Corinthians 4:6 - Don't go beyond that which is written
  3. Galatians 1:6 - Let him be an anathema who preaches false gospel.
  4. 2 John 1:9 - He who teaches wrongly hath not God.
- F. The Bible is intelligible.
  1. The Bible is valuable for its message.
    - A. It is not a charm.
    - B. It is written for people of old and still applies to us today.
  2. The Bible is fresh as today's newspaper.
  3. It is a revelation or uncovering of that which is hidden.
  4. In view of this, the Bible will:
    1. Break you down (uncover the real you) - James 1:23-25.
    2. Build you up again - Acts 20:32.
- G. The Bible can be understood by man.
  1. John 8:32 - know the truth.

2. John 12:48 - those who reject the word the same will judge him in the end.
- H. The Bible rightly understood is authoritative.
- I. The Bible demands submission.
  1. Man must follow all teachings of the Bible - James 1:21, 22.
15. For proper exegesis one must take into consideration:
  - A. The text.
  - B. The dates.
  - C. The authorship.
  - D. The purpose.
    1. The task of the exegete is historical in nature.
    2. Hermeneutics takes up interpretation where exegesis leaves off.
      - A. It seeks to appropriate or use the results of exegesis.
    3. The purpose of interpretation is to make relevant the exegesis.
      - A. Exegesis plus hermeneutics = interpretation.
16. Method of Exegesis
  - A. Takes in consideration:
    1. The text - authentic.
      - A. Authentic by text.
    - B. Variants (nothing which varies much from or changes the meaning of).
      1. 1 Timothy 1:3, 4 - dispensation - a system of revealed commands which regulates our faith.
      2. No variant will change any redemption policy of God.
      3. Most variants are determined by context.
  2. Language - get meaning of every significant word in passage.
    - A. Use a Greek-English parallel N.T.
    - B. Use concordance or Bible computer program.
      1. John 21:15 - different forms of love used herein.
        - A. Agape - active.
        - B. Phileo - emotional.
    - C. Word study.
  3. Context.
    - A. Authorship, date, distinction and purpose.
    - B. Larger context - the meaning as a whole.
    - C. Emphasize the meaning that is revealed.
    - D. Smaller context - the meaning as to specify.
  4. Background - Synoptic gospels written in general and specific background in view of different sects.
  5. Commentaries - compare with conclusion you have made.
17. How to approach the study of the Bible:
  - A. Treat Bible as a book.
    1. Read as a whole.
      - A. A single book is good but how much better it is to get overall view - to get a good picture.
    2. Purposefully.

- A. Come to understanding - especially something you need.
  - B. The Bible ceases to reveal new meaning.
- 3. Intelligently.
- 4. One Book - One Theme (the Bible).
  - A. God's salvation to sinful man through Christ.
    - 1. We are holy, though not of our own merit.
    - 2. We are blameless, but through the work of God.
  - B. God planned to give us salvation.
- 5. Library of 66 books.
  - A. Came to being by God (by guiding hand of God).
  - B. Many types of stories - all part of the whole.
- 6. Writers had:
  - A. Main purpose.
  - B. Subordinate purpose.
  - C. They were not dictated precepts by God, but men wrote by inspiration - 2 Peter 1:19-21.
- 7. Format, i.e., makeup of Bible.
  - A. Chapters - Stephen Langton - 1228.
  - B. Verses:
    - 1. O.T. Verses - R. Nathan - 1448.
    - 2. N.T. Verses - Robert Stephanus - 1551.
    - 3. The first printed Bible divided into verses was an Old Testament Latin edition by Pagninus, printed in 1528.
    - 4. The first complete English version of the Bible divided into verses was the Geneva Bible, printed in 1560.
  - C. Not everyone agrees on chapters and verse division.
    - 1. Example - Romans 8:1 - "Therefore" means in conclusion.
      - A. Conclusion of what?
        - 1. Chapter 7.
- 8. Chronology - written over 1500/1600 year span.
  - A. Yet it took place in an orderly manner.
- 9. General:
  - A. Writers - individuality and personality is expressed.
  - B. Place - customs and culture had determining factors in the explaining actions.
  - C. Perspective of author as to time is not static, may backtrack or skip over
    - 1. Note Acts 11:19.
  - D. Progression in revelation is to be expected from author to author, not all revealed in the beginning or at one time.
    - 1. It was given in stages as church needed it - 1 Peter 1:10-12; 1 Corinthians 13:8-10.
- B. Use common sense:
  - 1. Consider Ephesians 5:17.
  - 2. One of the most pathetic enemies of the Bible is the student who uses poor

reasoning.

- A. The Bible should be treated with logic and common sense as any ordinary intelligent writing.
  - 1. What is the proper place or purpose of reason?
    - A. Determine from evidence that the Bible is the Word of God.
    - B. Employ the powers to understand it.
  - 2. What is good thinking when dealing with that which is difficult to understand?
    - A. The mental activity whereby one observes facts to see how they are related.
    - B. It grasps the total picture in its true light.
    - C. It draws sound conclusions based on evidence.
  - 3. The weakness of mind in view of the violation of common sense.
    - A. Prejudice - it is common spirit of bias and partially to which all mankind is subject, more or less.
      - 1. Reasons for prejudice:
        - A. Involved in personal experiences.
        - B. Inclined to have favorite ideas.
        - C. Influences of past experiences and early training.
        - D. The effect of fear and feeling, as seen in I would go to the doctor but I'm afraid he would find something wrong.
      - 2. Preconceived opinion - this comes from the practice of supposing something exists or assuming something is true without sufficient study or proof.
        - A. Often the mind is made up before the Bible facts are seen.
        - B. This is a dangerous practice.
          - 1. It has given rise to many false ideas.
          - 2. It corrupts the attitude of the Bible student.
      - 3. Wishful thinking - some people wish so strongly that something, be true that they come to believe firmly that it is - Psalm 14:1.
        - A. Another form of this weakness is called "rationalism".
          - 1. This is searching for apparently logical reasons for doing what we want to do, or intend to do.
            - A. This borders on dishonesty.
          - B. Generalization - drawing sweeping conclusions from particular instances.
            - 1. Do not oversimplify your case.
            - 2. Do not overstate your case.
        - 4. Appeals to human authority.
          - A. The practice of throwing around the weight of big names of authorities, regardless of truthfulness and condition, in order to defend a point, usually biased.

1. Don't guess, use true scholarship.
  2. Don't use improper statistics because they can prove anything
  5. Appeals to popularity - strong motive.
    - A. Better known as "going along with the crowd".
    - B. Don't ever be afraid to stand alone if need be for the Truth.
  6. Fear of offending others - Mark 6:26.
    - A. King did not want to offend anyone.
    - B. Thus John was killed.
    - C. Consider Galatians 4:16.
- C. Ten Essential Attitudes:
1. Be willing to work - 2 Timothy 2:15; Philippians 2:19-22; 2 Timothy 3:14.
  2. Trust the Word of God - 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 2:13.
    - A. Turn from idols - 1 Corinthians 2:5.
    - B. Faith not in wisdom - 2 Corinthians 12:12.
  3. Show deep reverence for the Word.
    - A. Bibliolatry - having excessive reverence for the Bible to the point of worship.
    - B. Hebrews 12:18-26 - Israelites had awe.
    - C. Deuteronomy 12:32 - the command I command.
    - D. Do not worship the Bible, but accept the authority of it.
  4. Expect delight - Psalm 119:162.
  5. Love the Word - Psalms 119:97, 113, 159, 167.
  6. Desire to understand the Word - Psalm 119:130.
    - A. Give the light to the simple.
  7. Shun the perversion of the Word - 2 Peter 3:14-17.
    - A. The ignorant bend the Scripture to their own destruction.
    - B. Man is beguiled with enticing words - Ephesians 4:14.
  8. Under gird study with prayer - James 1:5; Matthew 7:7-11.
  9. Have a spirit of expectancy - 1 Thessalonians 5:27; 2 Timothy 2:7.
  10. Desire to be obedient - 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Hebrews 5:12-14; Luke 6:26.
- D. How to read the Bible:
1. Reading aloud.
    - A. When you read aloud you involve eye, voice, ear, and mind.
      1. We need to learn to read with inflection.
    - B. Read carefully.
    - C. Read repeatedly, go back and get message from "inside".
    - D. Read peripherally by reading context.
    - E. Read entirely; ignore chapter and verse, read the whole context.
      - A. Romans chapter 11 builds up to Roman chapter 12.
  2. Reflection.
    - A. Reflect purposefully - Acts 17:11, 12.
    - B. Reflect imaginatively, visualize.
    - C. Reflect humbly.

- D. Reflect prayerfully.
- E. Reflect patiently - Psalm 73:13-16.
- F. Reflect personally - Galatians 2:20.

18. Interpretation:

A. Methods of Interpretation:

1. Identification of harmful methods:

- A. Mystic - heathen idea; certain ones “in tune” with God can get “real” meaning from the Word.
  - 1. If the Bible does not mean what it says, there is no way by which we can know what it does mean.
- B. Allegorical method which views the Bible as a book of symbols, with each person drawing out lessons he thinks true.
  - 1. In the mystic method only a few have “touch” with God, but the allegorical method says everyone can interpret passages that he feels is true for him.
    - A. It is eisegesis in nature.
      - 1. “The interpretation of a text (as of the Bible) by reading into it one's own ideas.” Webster.
- C. Superstitious method - confuses all natural divisions, forms and conclusions from Bible thoughts, items, numbers, etc.
- D. Ecclesiastical method looks not to God, not to self; but to the church as the final authority.
  - 1. Seen in religions such as Catholicism.
- E. Dogmatic method - approaches the Bible to sustain, instead of obtain, doctrine.
  - 1. “Proof texting”.
- F. Rational method - rejects any principle out of harmony with human reason or experience.
- G. Literal method - forces the Bible to be literal where language clearly is figurative.
  - 1. Basically says you must take nothing figurative.
- H. Inductive method.
  - 1. Sometimes referred to Baconian reasoning.
    - A. Established and popularized by Sir Francis Bacon - 1561-1626, who believed that the only knowledge of importance to man was empirically rooted in the natural world.
  - 2. Reasons from all facts and instances available and draws conclusions necessarily or reasonably implied.
    - A. Sir Bacon: “induction required”.
      - 1. Collection of numerous facts.
      - 2. Facts carefully studied and compared.
      - 3. Whatever was “special” and “unacceptable” was rejected
      - 4. Contrary or negative instances duly weighed.
      - 5. No general conclusion until after all care and diligence was

exercised.

B. Rules for proper interpretation:

1. Every passage has but one meaning.
  - A. 1 Corinthians 1:10 - all speak the same things.
  - B. Psalm 16:10 - may have two applications - Acts 2:27.
2. Most simple and obvious meaning is usually the correct one.
3. Allow an author's own explanation to stand - John 7:37.
4. Interpret in harmony with the context - Isaiah 43.
5. Interpretation should conform to author's environment.
6. Each passage must be interpreted in harmony with all other passages - Matthew 4:4, 7.
  - A. 1 John 2:21 - truth does not lie.
7. One passage will often explain another passage.
8. Interpret in harmony with any idioms contained.
9. All passages on any given subject must be studied.
10. Observe proper balance of Scriptural truth.
11. Let plain passages determine difficult ones.
12. Rightly divide the book, dispensations, covenants, and settings.
13. Rightly divide the language.
14. Know the meaning of words and sentences.
15. Know the limit of divine revelation.

19. How to establish the Bible as authority:

A. How Christ's authority is expressed - four ways:

1. Direct statement - Mark 16:16.
  - A. Declarative.
  - B. Imperative - Acts 2:38 - commands with imperative must be carried out.
  - C. Interrogative - 1 Corinthians 1:13 - ask questions to make obvious.
  - D. Hortatory (exhortation) - Hebrews 6:1; Acts 2:40.
2. Implication .
  - A. Genesis 13:1 - Lot out of Egypt.
  - B. Matthew 3:16 - Jesus up from water.
  - C. Acts 22:16 - Sins were washed.
3. Approved Example.
  - A. Illustrated - Acts 8:26-39; Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:26; 1 Corinthians 11:17-20; 16:2.
  - B. Classified examples:
    1. Sinful then and now - Acts 5:1-12.
    2. Optional then and now.
    3. Obligation then and now - Acts 8:26; 20:7.
4. Expediency.
  - A. Criteria -1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:23.
    1. Must be authorized.
    2. Advantage, practicality.
    3. Respect authority of elders - Hebrews 13:7, 17.



B. Anything not included by specific instruction which is advantageous in doing God's will.

20. The nature of authority:

A. Generic - inclusive.

1. Genesis 6:14 - "Make" - why where others not mentioned?  
A. It is inclusive.
2. Mark 16:15 - "Go...preach".
3. Leviticus 10:1, 2; 6:12-13, 16:12-13.

B. Specific - Exclusive.

1. Genesis 6:14 - "gopher wood" - very specific.
2. Mark 16:15 - "the gospel".  
A. See 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.
3. Numbers 19:1 - "red heifer".
4. 2 Kings 5:10-12 - "Jordan".
5. 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17 - "fruit of the vine".
6. The Law of Exclusion appeals to nature of specific authority - Hebrews 7:12-14 1:5; Acts 15:24.

Scripture	Item	Authorized Obligation	Expediency	Not Authorized
Matthew 28:19, 20 2 Timothy 2:2	Teach	Impart information; truth	Pulpit, T.V. Films, Classes	Teach error Missionary Society
1 Corinthians 11:17 - 34; Hebrews 10:25	Assemble	Meet together; worship, exhort	Rent, own	No worship Corrupt worship
Matthew 28:19 Acts 10:47, 48 Romans 6:4, 5	Baptize	Water; immersion; remission of sins	Baptistery; immerser	Sprinkling; infants; already saved
1 Thessalonians 5:17 Acts 2:42 1 Corinthians 14:15 I	Pray	In Christ's name God's will; in faith	Posture; length; number	Insincere; to be seen of men
Ephesians 5:19 Colossians 3:16	Sing	Song; teach; admonish; truth; spirit; understanding	Parts; leaders; book, tuning fork	Entertain; mechanical instrument; dancing

21. Completeness in authority:

- A. Christ has all authority - Matthew 7:28, 29; 17:1-5; Acts 3:22, 23; Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 1:1-3; Matthew 28:18.
- B. Judged by written Word - John 12:48-50.
- C. Do not change - 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3; 1 Peter 4:11; Galatians

- 1:6-9; 2 John 9.
22. Rightly divide the book - 2 Timothy 2:15.
- A. Amazing unity of the Bible.
  - B. Harmony seen in it.
    - 1. Purpose - man might be saved through an understanding of the Bible.
    - 2. Theme - how God saves man.
    - 3. Story - of the whole Bible - history (His Story).
    - 4. Structure - every book is essential to the Bible.
    - 5. Doctrine - all have designed place.
  - C. Division of the Bible.
    - 1. Old Testament - 39 books.
      - A. Divisions of the Old Testament:
        - 1. Law - Genesis - Deuteronomy 5.
        - 2. History - Joshua - Esther 12.
        - 3. Poetry - Job - Song of Solomon.
        - 4. Prophecy
          - A. Major - Isaiah - Daniel.
          - B. Minor - Hosea - Malachi
23. Rightly divide the language of the Bible:
- A. Types of language in the Bible:
    - 1. Literal - the most obvious meaning is usually the correct one.
      - A. Includes facts, names, places, events, commands.
    - 2. Figurative - words which mean other than the actual meaning.
      - A. Rules for determining figurative language:
        - 1. Involves impossibility or absurdity.
          - A. "Let the dead bury the dead" - Luke 9:60.
        - 2. Involves contradiction or inconsistency.
          - A. "He that believeth on me shall never die" - John 11:23-26.
            - 1. This means in spiritual death we will not be separated from God - 1 John 5:10.
        - 3. Involves immoral conclusion.
          - A. "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off" - Matthew 18:8.
          - B. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." - Luke 14:26.
            - 1. Compare to Matthew 10:37, 38.
        - 4. Implied by context.
          - A. "I am the true vine" - John 15:1.
          - B. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch" - John 15:6.
            - 1. A comparison is being made - not to be taken literally.
        - 5. Stated by writer - sometimes the writer will simply declare and explain

what he means.

A. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up...But he spake of the temple of his body." - John 2:19, 21.

B. "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" - John 7:38.

1. Jesus explains what He is speaking of in the next verse - "But this spake he of the Spirit..."

6. Common sense - involves reasoning of what is true of life.

A. Consider John 4:10-15.

1. When one gets thirsty he drinks.

A. One thing you know for sure is that you will get thirsty again.

2. This passage does not agree with common sense.

A. Failure to recognize figurative meanings of passages leads men to such errors as transubstantiations among other things.

1. Transubstantiation means across or change the subject or substance.

B. Figures of speech:

1. Parable - from "para", meaning to throw and "bole", meaning to caste alongside of.

A. An earthy story with a heavenly meaning.

B. How to interpret parables:

1. Study the occasion of the parable.

A. Lost sheep

B. Lost coin

C. Lost boy

1. See Luke 15

D. The emphasis on rejoicing over the lost.

1. The self-righteous Jews did not want Jesus to associate with sinners.

2. Consider the introduction to the parable.

A. Sometimes the gospel writer will explain with a brief statement before the parable his purpose in writing the parable - Luke 11:9.

3. Certain expressions at the end of the parable.

A. Persistent door knocker - man goes to get rid of him.

1. If this man will respond think what God will do?

4. Similar parables of similar importance.

A. When two or three parables speak about the same subject they reinforce the similar lesson

1. Luke 15:3 - sheep - search till found.

2. Matthew 18:12 - sheep - God rejoices over finding the one v. 14.

A. The first reinforces the second.

5. Always consider the context.
2. Fables - a fictitious narrative intended to enforce some useful truth or precept.
  - A. Deals only with the moral lesson, while parables have a spiritual lesson.
    1. Judges 9:6-21 - Jotham chides the men of Shechem on the selection of Abimelech as King.
    2. They made a bad choice, and he would destroy them.
3. Simile - a comparison which involves the use of "like" or "as".
  - A. Matthew 23:27 - "for ye are like unto whited sepulchers".
  - B. Matthew 3:16 - "and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove".
  - C. Isaiah 1:8, 9 - "And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers".
  - D. Isaiah 1:18 - "though your sins be as scarlet".
4. Metaphor - From "meta" meaning "over, beyond" and "pherein", meaning "to bring or carrying, to carry forth".
  - A. A word expressing similitude or comparison without the signs of comparison (i.e., like, as).
  - B. A metaphor sounds like it means what it says when in reality it is saying something to compare that to something else.
    1. Matthew 26:28 - "this is my body" - symbolic of body, making comparison without signs of comparison.
    2. 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 - Christ, leaven, lump - all are metaphors.
    3. Romans 6:3, 4 - "buried with him in baptism".
    4. John 15:1 - "I am the vine".
5. Allegory - from "allos" meaning "another" and "agorenein", meaning to speak in the assembly.
  - A. A comparison in which every detail has significance, and where the story told and the meaning are blended together.
    1. Galatians 4:21:
      - A. Hagar - Mt. Sinai.
      - B. Sarah - Jerusalem.
      - C. Isaac - children of promise.
    2. Genesis 17:18:
      - A. Ishmael - children of bondage.
      - B. Everything meant something.
    3. Psalm 80:8 - same lesson as allegory, you get the meaning as you go.
    4. Isaiah 5:1 - Isaiah explains the story he has told.
6. Riddle - an analogy that is written up as a puzzle.
  - A. Though not many are found.
    1. Judges 14:14
7. Hyperbole - from "hyper" meaning to throw and "bole" meaning over.
  - A. An evident exaggeration for the sake of effect.
    1. John 21:25 - "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."
    2. 2 Samuel 1:23 - "they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger

- than lions.”
- A. David’s lamentation stretches it a little.
8. Irony and sarcasm - sharp taunting remarks - sometimes involving ridicule.
    - A. 1 Kings 18:27 - “And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud:”
    - B. Matthew 27:29 - “King of the Jews”.
    - C. Matthew 27:40 - “If thou be the son of God”.
  9. Interrogation - asking a question for an effect which makes a very strong point without expecting reply.
    - A. Hebrews 2:3 - “How shall we escape?”
  10. Metonymy - from “meta”, meaning to change, over and “onoma” meaning “name”.
    - A. Thus a change in name, one used for another.
      1. Luke 16:29 - “let them hear them”.
      2. Ephesians 4:22 - “That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man”.
      3. Ephesians 2:14-16 - “one body” used for effect.
  11. Personification - saying personal attributes to inanimate objects.
    - A. Matthew 6:34 - “Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.”
      1. “Tomorrow” given a personal or living attribute as though it was living.
    - B. Psalm 65:13 - “The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.”
  12. Anthropomorphism - ascribing unto God human attributes.
    - A. Isaiah 59:1, 2 - God does not have ears or hands as we know of such.
    - B. Proverbs 15:3 - “the eyes of the Lord”.
    - C. Exodus 33:22, 23 - Moses shall see God's hind parts.
24. Covenants of the Bible:
- A. Covenant with Adam:
    1. First Party - Benefactor.
      - A. God - Genesis 1:28, 29; 2:15, 16.
    2. Second party - Beneficiaries.
      - A. Adam and Eve - Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:16.
    3. Conditions:
      - A. “Be fruitful, and multiple” - Genesis 1:28.
      - B. “Replenish the earth” - Genesis 1:28.
      - C. “Subdue it; and have dominion over” every living thing - Genesis 1:28.
      - D. Dress and keep the garden - Genesis 2:15.
      - E. Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil - Genesis 2:17.
    4. Promises:
      - A. Given the garden to live in, and every herb and tree for food - Genesis 1:29; 2:8, 9, 16.
      - B. “The tree of life” - Genesis 2:9, 16.

5. Mediator:
  - A. None.
6. Token:
  - A. Man created in God's image - Genesis 1:26, 27.
- B. Covenant with Noah before the flood:
  1. Before the Flood:
    - A. First party - Benefactor.
      1. God - Genesis 6:13.
    - B. Second Party - Beneficiaries.
      - A. Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives - Genesis 6:13, 18; 7:13.
    - C. Conditions:
      - A. Build an ark - Genesis 6:14-16.
      - B. Enter in with family - Genesis 6:18; 7:1.
      - C. Gather certain number of beasts, fowls, and creeping things - Genesis 6:19, 20; 7:2, 3.
      - D. Gather food to eat - Genesis 6:21.
    - D. Promises:
      - A. Noah's family saved from death - Genesis 7:23.
    - E. Mediator:
      1. None.
    - F. Token:
      1. The flood - Genesis 7:10-12, 17-24.
  2. After the flood:
    - A. First Party - Benefactor.
      1. God - Genesis 9:8, 12.
    - B. Second Party - Beneficiaries.
      1. Noah and his seed after him - Genesis 9:8-10.
    - C. Conditions:
      1. "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" - Genesis 9:1, 7.
      2. "Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat" - Genesis 9:4.
      3. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" - Genesis 9:6.
    - D. Promises:
      1. God will not "curse the ground any more" - Genesis 8:21.
      2. Nor "smite any more every thing living" - Genesis 8:21.
      3. Days and seasons will not cease - Genesis 8:22.
      4. Man shall rule beasts, fowls, and fish - Genesis 9:2.
      5. Every moving thing and herb for food - Genesis 9:3.
      6. No more flood to destroy the earth - Genesis 9:11.
    - E. Mediator:
      1. None.
    - F. Token:

1. God set the bow in the cloud - Genesis 9:12-17.
- C. Covenant with Abraham:
1. First Party - Benefactor.
    - A. God - Genesis 12:1; 17:1-3.
  2. Second Party - Beneficiaries.
    - A. Abraham and his seed to follow in all generations - Genesis 17:7.
  3. Conditions:
    - A. Go out of the country into a new land God would show - Genesis 12:1.
    - B. Walk before God and be perfect - Genesis 17:1.
    - C. Offer his son, Isaac, for a burnt offering - Genesis 22:2.
  4. Promises:
    - A. God would make of him a great nation - Genesis 12:2.
    - B. God would bless him and make his name great - Genesis 12:2.
    - C. "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" - Genesis 12:3.
    - D. In him all the families of the earth would be blessed - Genesis 12:3; 22:18.
    - E. "Unto thy seed will I give this land" - Genesis 12:7.
    - F. God would make his seed as the dust of the earth - Genesis 13:16.
    - G. Abraham would have a son - Genesis 15:4.
    - H. He would be a father of many nations - Genesis 17:4.
    - I. God would be a God to him, and his seed - Genesis 17:7.
    - J. His seed would possess the gate of his enemies - Genesis 22:17.
    - K. God would "give them Egypt to sojourn in" - Genesis 26:1-5.
    - L. God would return Abraham's seed to the Promised Land - Genesis 28:10-15.
  5. Mediator:
    - A. None.
  6. Token:
    - A. Circumcision - Genesis 17:10-14.
- D. The Law:
1. First Party - Benefactor.
    - A. God - Exodus 20:1.
  2. Second Party - Beneficiaries.
    - A. All Israel - Exodus 34:27; Deuteronomy 5:1-3.
  3. Conditions:
    - A. The Ten Commandments, plus all the statutes and judgments pertaining to private, social (or political), and religious life - Exodus 20 through Deuteronomy.
  4. Promises:
    - A. Israel shall be peculiar and holy nation - Exodus 19:5, 6.
    - B. God will give - Leviticus 26:
      1. Good harvests and ample food.
      2. Safety and peace.
      3. Deliverance from evil beasts.

4. Protection from and power over enemies.
5. Respect.
6. Growth in number.
7. His presence.
5. Mediator:
  - A. Moses - Deuteronomy 5:5.
6. Token:
  - A. Sabbath - Exodus 31:12-17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20.
- E. The gospel:
  1. First Party - Benefactor.
    - A. God - Romans 1:1, 16; Hebrews 1:1, 2.
  2. Secondary Party - Beneficiaries.
    - A. All the world - Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15, 16.
  3. Conditions:
    - A. Hear the gospel - Romans 10:13, 14; 1 Corinthians 15:1.
    - B. Believe in Jesus Christ - Mark 16:15, 16; John 20:30, 31; Acts 8:36, 37; 16:31; Romans 10:13, 14; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Hebrews 11:6.
    - C. Repent of sin - Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 17:30.
    - D. Confess faith in Jesus Christ - Acts 8:37; Romans 10:10; Philippians 2:11.
    - E. Be baptized into Christ - Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:36-39; 9:18; 22:16; Galatians 3:27.
    - F. Continue to grow in holiness as Christian - Matthew 28:20; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Peter 2:1-3; 2 Peter 1:5-11.
    - G. By worshiping the Lord - Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-26.
    - H. By praying and studying his Word - 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:8; 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 2:2; 1 John 1:9.
    - I. By teaching all men - Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:1-3, 29, 35; Colossians 3:16.
    - J. By being a good steward of all life - 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2; 6:19, 20; 16:2; 1 Peter 4:10.
    - K. Remaining faithful - Revelation 2:10.
  4. Promises:
    - A. Forgiveness - Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14.
    - B. Election - Romans 8:33.
    - C. Redemption - Romans 3:23-26.
    - D. Justification - Romans 8:1, 30, 31.
    - E. Grace - Ephesians 2:8, 9; 2 Timothy 2:1.
    - F. Salvation - 2 Timothy 2:10.
    - G. Hope - 1 Thessalonians 1:3; Ephesians 1:12.
    - H. Peace - 1 Peter 5:14.
    - I. Wisdom - James 1:5.
    - J. Protection and help - 1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:19.
    - K. Righteousness - Romans 3:21, 22; 5:17.
    - L. Inheritance - Galatians 3:26-29.



- M. Rest - Revelation 14:13.
- N. Victory - 2 Corinthians 2:14.
- O. Glory - 2 Timothy 2:10.
- P. Eternal life - Romans 6:23; 1 John 5:11.
- 5. Mediator:
  - A. Jesus Christ - 1 Timothy 2:5.
- 6. Token:
  - A. Gift of the Holy Spirit - Acts 2:38; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30.

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## **HERMENEUTICS – DUNGAN OUTLINE**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. Definition of Hermeneutics: "The science of interpretation." Derived from the Greek word Hermas, the messenger of the gods and the interpreter of Jupiter.
  - A. Every Hermas was an interpreter.
2. Sacred hermeneutics is the science of interpretation of the Scriptures.
  - A. It is the application of the principles of hermeneutics which results in the bringing out of the meaning of any writing which might be otherwise difficult to understand.

### **BODY:**

1. God expects man to use His book in becoming acquainted with his character, and in gaining knowledge of His will.
  - A. The Bible is to be used as other books.
    1. The Bible should be studied as other books are, with intent to understand the meaning.
    2. Few people study a history book in order to find fault.
  - B. The weakness in interpretation of the Scriptures is with man.
    1. Man is fallible, and his judgment is imperfect - Jeremiah 10:23.
    2. Few things have been written that have been understood exactly the same way by all who read it.
  - C. God does not inspire the interpretation.
    1. God's Word is inspired.
      - A. But man's interpretation of it is not.
    2. It is often incorrectly believed that the Holy Spirit directs men in their inquiries after the Truth.
      - A. It is believed that no hurtful mistakes will come to one's interpretation due to this doctrine.
      - B. However, the very best of Biblical Scholars differ widely in their views of the Word of God.
3. Truth is truth, and is never contradictory.

- A. For example, one and one is two no matter what one says or how one interprets this equation.
  - 4. The truth of the matter is, God does not guide by inspiration today.
    - A. If He did, the mistakes which now are made would not be made.
    - B. There is no reason that God should give special inspiration to interpreters today.
    - C. Truth is to be had by the same methods of study that are applied to any other branch of knowledge - Ezra 7:10; Deuteronomy 29:28; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Psalms 1:1, 2; 19:7; 119:34-105.
      - 1. One must read the word, study it day and night, get all its precepts in mind in this way, and then (and only then) may they assure themselves that they have more knowledge than the ancients.
- D. The Apostle Paul held this view.
  - 1. He said to Timothy, that although he had known the Holy Scriptures from his childhood which were able to make him wise unto salvation, he was to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly setting forth the word of truth - 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:15.
  - 2. He was to give attention to reading, exhortation, and teaching - 1 Timothy 4:13.
- E. A correct hermeneutics would go far toward the healing of the divisions of the religious world.
  - 1. There can be no doubt that God wants unity - John 17:11, 21-23; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:3-6.
  - 2. A wrong interpretation is not the only cause of division.
    - A. Selfish ambition cannot be removed by rules of interpretation.
      - 1. The application of the correct rules of interpretation will have little or no effect on the heart of one who is ruled by ambition.
    - B. Not all divisions are the result of ambition or a sectarian spirit.
      - 1. Among the purest of men, there are vast differences.
        - A. Not based upon dishonesty or general ignorance.
      - 2. Many have been born into these views and spend the rest of their lives wresting Scriptures in an attempt to sustain them.
  - 3. The Bible is not at fault for the state of man's interpretation of the Scriptures.
    - A. Many claim that the Bible is the source misunderstanding.
      - 1. They claim that the Bible teaches contradictory doctrines or is so unclear that man cannot understand what it says.
    - B. What must be understood is, if the Bible is God's Word it does not contradict itself.
      - 1. Nor is it so obscure that those who read it cannot understand it.
    - C. The Bible is God's standard of Truth and can be understood by those who wish to understand it - John 8:32.
  - 4. The problem is the method of interpretation that is used to come to an understanding of the meaning of the Scriptures.
    - A. When Scriptures appear to contradict, it must be understood that our

means of interpretation is wrong.

1. Truth is always truth, and cannot ever be wrong or contradictory.
- F. A sound hermeneutics would be the best possible answer to infidel objections to the Bible.
  1. A wrong interpretation of the Scriptures is not the only cause of unbelief.
    - A. Much of the infidelity present today is the result of impure hearts and bad lives.
  2. However, false interpretation is a strong support of unbelief.
    - A. Someone has said, "The Bible is its own best defense."
      1. But in order for this to be so, its teachings must be properly understood.
        - A. This, of course, cannot be without a correct knowledge of the principles of interpretation.
    - B. Due to the lack of a correct hermeneutics, men have believed that they have found discrepancies and contradictions in the Bible.
      1. If proper care and common sense were used in reading and study of the Bible, infidelity would find no place to set the sole of its foot.
  - G. The last great need of a sound exegesis is that we may find our way to heaven.
    1. To the question, "What must I do to be saved?" many answers are given.
      - A. They cannot all be correct.
    2. When people are told to turn to the Scriptures to find the answer they are not normally directed to the right place.
      - A. They are just as apt to go to the Old Testament as they are the New.
      - B. The same can be said in relation to the work and worship of church.
        1. Many will turn to the Old Testament to show what should be done in the worship of the New Testament church.
        2. All of this shows a woeful ignorance of a proper hermeneutics.
    3. Not only is the question of salvation at stake, but the assurance of pardon also.
      - A. One knows he has eternal life (1 John 5:13), while another hopes that he has a hope, but is only certain that he is not certain of anything respecting of his standing with God.
    4. Right methods of interpretation will serve to eliminate this confusion.
  2. Things which help us to properly understand the Word of God.
    - A. Good common sense.
      1. This is a natural qualification.
        - A. Someone has said that if a man lacks knowledge he can get it from his fellowman; that if he lack religion, he can have it by going to God and asking for it; but if he lack common sense, he has nowhere to go.
          1. This is not necessarily true.
          2. One can enhance his common sense should he desire such.
    - B. Faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures.
      1. Unbelievers can know some of what the Bible teaches.
        - A. However, those who doubt its inspiration will fail in coming to a proper understanding.

1. The condition of their mind is such that they will fail.
  2. Faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures will prompt a patient and thorough investigation of the Scriptures.
    - A. The Scriptures must be properly searched and divided - John 5:39; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.
- C. Mental industry is essential.
1. Acts 17:11, 12
  2. There is no essential difference between the study of the Scriptures and the study of any other subject, when it comes to the mental outlay necessary to succeed in understanding - 2 Timothy 2:15.
- D. A desire to know and do the truth.
1. There are those to whom the gospel has no more charms than pearls have for swine - Matthew 7:6.
  2. In order for there to be a proper understanding of the Scriptures, there must be good ground for the seed to be planted - Luke 8:15.
    - A. There must be a willingness to do the will of God that prepares the mind for the effort necessary to understand - John 7:17.
    - B. Acts 13:48 sets forth the proper attitude.
  3. Men can find what they look for, but what they do not want to see, it is difficult to make them understand.
- E. Spiritual purity.
1. Man's mind must be pure in order for him to properly see what God wants seen - Matthew 5:8.
    - A. To the evil, all things are evil.
    - B. Nothing is pure to the eye of lust.
  2. Such people do not wish to retain God in their minds - Romans 1:28.
  3. It is possible that men become so gross as to be removed even from the probabilities, if not from the very possibilities, of faith - 2 Timothy 4:3, 4; Acts 7:51-53.
  4. In Matthew 13:14, 15 we see both the teaching and the living picture of the ability to harden one's heart against the truth.
  5. If one seeks not God, they cannot believe - John 5:44; 8:44, 45.
    - A. This is not the original condition of man's heart.
      1. They had turned their hearts against God by turning them over to the control of Satan - 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12.
  6. When one fails to receive the truth, they will perish for believing a lie - 2 Corinthians 4:3, 4.
  7. The depth of one's depravity renders it more difficult to accept the pure thoughts of the Word of God - 1 Corinthians 2:14.
    - A. Here Paul writes members of the church, whom he calls saints.
      1. Yet, he condemns them for their carnality - 1 Corinthians 3:1-4.
- F. A correct translation would help produce a proper understanding.
1. Many translations of the Bible are not worth the paper they are printed on.
- G. A general and thorough education would help in the proper understanding of the

Scriptures.

1. A good knowledge of contemporary history will aid greatly.
  2. A good knowledge of the lands of the Bible will help.
  3. A knowledge of the customs of the people during Biblical times would aid one in a proper understanding of the Bible.
- H. We should expect to understand the Bible.
1. To many, the Bible is a sealed book, not to be understood, unless by some gift from God which will make it possible.
    - A. Timothy was commended by Paul for the things he had learned - 2 Timothy 3:14-16.
    - B. So were others - Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27.
  2. God has made a revelation of His will to us.
    - A. If we do not avail ourselves of the privilege of reading it and of knowing its contents, it is our fault.
      1. Ignorance is a sin against God and ourselves.
3. Things which hinder a correct interpretation of the Scriptures.
- A. A desire to please the world.
1. An inordinate desire to please the world.
    - A. Men become willing to sell their pulpit and themselves also, to the highest bidder - 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 Timothy 4:16; Galatians 4:16.
    - B. This bid from the ungodly becomes a bribe to blind them to the truth.
- B. The idea that the Bible is made the property of the priesthood.
1. This has been one of the great faults of the Catholic Church.
    - A. According to the decisions of their councils, the “laity” of the church should not read the Bible.
    - B. This enables them to establish a monopoly of interpretation.
      1. To the people, the Bible is not the book itself; but the meaning of the book, as interpreted by the priesthood, is to them the Bible.
  2. Protestantism has not improved much on this.
    - A. It is not “What does the Bible say on a given subject.”
      1. Instead, it is “What does the creed or catechism say?”
- C. Using the Bible to prove doctrines.
1. The Bible is not a book with which to prove doctrines.
    - A. It is the doctrine itself - 2 Peter 3:16.
- D. Making the Bible merely a book of wonders.
- E. Reading the Bible without intending or expecting to understand it.
1. Reading from a sense of duty.
    - A. Read on a daily basis only because one has to.
  2. Reading the Bible irregularly and without any system.
  3. Reading only favorite Scriptures.
- F. Interpreting from sinister motives.
1. This is done to save one's position or property.
  2. A wish to do as we please; to continue our customs, or begin new ones which we prefer.

3. Sectarianism (i.e. a bigoted attitude or prejudice).
  4. Moral or practical atheism.
- G. Thirst for distinction.
1. A desire to be known as persons of leading thought - 2 Corinthians 11:3.
4. The covenants that God has made between Himself and man.
- A. Definition of the word covenant – “an agreement formally made.”
1. I. e. an agreement formally made between two or more parties.
  2. Not all covenants are equal sided.
    - A. But all agreements are covenants.
- B. The need of discriminating between them:
1. One of the major problems in understanding the Scriptures is understanding that God has made covenants with certain people, in times past, that are not applicable to us today.
  2. No one can properly understand the Scriptures who does not know what law he is amenable to.
  3. Important points to be considered:
    - A. Each covenant that God has made with man may have things in common with all the others, and yet be distinct.
    - B. Language under one covenant may explain duties under another, in those features in which the two are alike.
    - C. Under all forms of divine law men have been required to worship God with a whole heart.
    - D. But these covenants do not require the same acts of obedience; nor do they promise the same things; nor do they belong to the same people - Romans 9:4, 5.
    - E. Language under one covenant may explain duties under another, in those features in which the two are alike - Romans 15:4.
      1. Such as the requirement to worship God with the whole heart - Exodus 34:4; Matthew 4:10.
      2. We are at liberty to obtain illustrations of obedience and disobedience during any dispensation of time.
        - A. But these must be understood as being illustrations and not commands.
          1. We are not to go to the slaughter of the Amalekites - 1 Samuel 15:18.
          2. We are not to march around the walls of Jericho - Joshua 6:2-5.
        - B. But we are to do the things which are now required of us.
  - F. The laws of each covenant are supposed to be complete in themselves.
    1. If one never sees the Law given to Moses, he could still know his duty toward God, by a careful and thorough study of the New Testament.
      - A. During N. T. times there were many Gentile congregations which had no knowledge of the Law of Moses.
- C. The several covenants considered:
1. The covenant made with Adam - Genesis 1:28, 29.

- A. Compare to Psalm 8:3-9; Hebrews 8-10.
2. The covenant with Adam and Eve after the fall - Genesis 3:15-21.
3. The covenant with Noah before the flood - Genesis 6:13-22.
  - A. In this text we have all the features of a covenant revealed.
    1. God made a contract with Noah to save him and his family, and required of them certain conditions to be kept.
4. The covenant with Noah after the flood - Genesis 9:8-17.
5. The covenant made with Abram respecting Christ - Genesis 12:1-3.
  - A. In one form or another, this covenant was renewed many times.
    1. It contained two thoughts, seemingly distinct at the first.
    2. Yet they are bound together as one.
  - B. The making of Abram a great nation was necessary in order to the coming of the Christ, and the preaching of the Truth.
  - C. The following Scriptures refer to this covenant - Genesis 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; Galatians 3:8, 16; Acts 3:25; Hebrews 11:8, 17, 18.
6. The covenant made with Abram concerning land - Genesis 13:14-17.
  - A. This covenant was referred to when Abraham first came into the land of Canaan - Genesis 12:7.
    1. It was afterward referred to as having been already made - Genesis 17:8; 24:7.
    2. Isaac was assured that it was because of Abraham's faithfulness that he should inherit the land - Genesis 26:4, 5.
    3. When Moses was taken up to the top of Pisgah and shown the good land, he was reminded that the contract which the Lord had made with Abraham was about to be fulfilled - Deuteronomy 34:4.
7. The covenant concerning circumcision - Genesis 17:9-14.
  - A. This ordinance was so distinctively Jewish that the apostles used the word circumcision many times to distinguish the Jews.
    1. The circumcision denoted the Jews while the uncircumcision denoted the Gentiles - Galatians 2:7, 8.
  - B. It is important to remember that a covenant implies obligations on both sides.
    1. If one party fails to keep his part of the contract, the other party is freed from all obligations.
      - A. God has plainly said that He will act this way - Ezekiel 33:11-16.
    2. This principle must be seen to be true today under the New Covenant - Matthew 7:21-23; Mark 16:16.
8. The covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai - Exodus 20:1-24.
  - A. It is sometimes denied that this was a covenant.
    1. But this comes from a failure to understand the meaning of the word.
      - A. A covenant does not have to be agreed upon by both parties involved.
      - B. For example, how many people agree to pay taxes?
        1. Yet, how many must pay?

- B. The purpose of this covenant was revealed to Moses when he was in Egypt trying to bring the people out from bondage - Exodus 6:3-8.
  - 1. This shows an anticipation of the covenant that God intended to make with this people at Mount Sinai, over His own name, Jehovah.
    - A. No former covenant had been completed in this name, but after this He was to known to them by this name - Exodus 34:27, 28.
- C. By referring to the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai, it will be seen that it has the form of a covenant.
  - 1. It is given to that people for a guide and a test of obedience.
  - 2. It was sealed with blood.
  - 3. And it was enjoined upon them.
- D. The law combines the purpose of those covenants of land and flesh, in order that the world could be prepared for Christ - Galatians 3:8,16-25.
- 9. The covenant of Christ made by Him and sealed with His own blood - Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13; 9:15; Matthew 26:28.
- D. The fundamental differences between the covenant made with Israel and the covenant made by the Christ.
  - 1. The change in the priesthood - Hebrews 8:4.
    - A. Christ did not claim to be priest while he was on earth.
      - 1. No Apostle ever implied that he was such while on earth.
    - B. The high priesthood under the law belonged to the tribe of Levi, the family of Kohath (Numbers 4:4; 7:9), and the particular family of Aaron.
      - 1. Jesus, however, was of the line of Judah, of which tribe Moses said nothing concerning the priesthood - Hebrews 7:14.
    - C. Men who were made priests had infirmity and needed an offering for themselves first before they officiated for the people.
      - 1. Now, though, we have a priest who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and made higher than the heavens - Hebrews 7:26-28.
    - D. Priests under the law discontinued by reason of death.
      - 1. Under the present covenant Christ remains a priest forever - Hebrews 7:23, 24.
    - E. Under the law one could become a priest without an oath.
      - 1. Christ, on the other hand, was made a priest with an oath - Hebrews 7:21.
    - F. Under the Levitical system men were made priests by the law of a carnal commandment.
      - 1. Christ was made priest by the power of an endless life - Hebrews 7:16.
    - G. The priesthood under the law belonged to the Law of Moses.
      - 1. The present priesthood to another covenant - Hebrews 7:11-13.
    - H. The high priest under the law was not a ruler, and could have no connection with the government in any matter not connected with religious service.
      - 1. Christ, though, is king as well as priest - 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14; Hebrews 4: 14-16.



2. Zechariah 6:12, 13 foretells of Christ as One who would sit and rule on His throne as priest.
2. There was a change in the atonement.
  - A. The blood of bulls and goats could not provide an everlasting forgiveness - Hebrews 10:4.
  - B. In Leviticus 16:8-11 we see an account of the annual atonement made for the people.
    1. In this account we find numerous features of typology, but the atonement differs in the following ways:
      - A. In the time of offering.
      - B. The priest making the sacrifice.
      - C. The blood that was offered.
      - D. The place where the offering was made.
      - E. And the results of the sacrifice.
3. Change respecting limitation.
  - A. The intent of universality of application was never thought of during the times of the law of Moses - Deuteronomy 4:7, 8.
    1. There are many evidences that the Law of Moses was never intended to reach beyond the nation to whom it was given.
  - B. The New Covenant was intended, from the very inception of it, to be universal.
    1. The first feature of the commission is, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." - Mark 16:15.
4. They differ in the promises.
  - A. Note carefully Hebrews 8:6.
5. The law was written on stones, but the new covenant is put into the minds and hearts of all who belong to it - 2 Corinthians 3:1-11.
  - A. The first covenant was outward and formal.
    1. The second one is inward and spiritual.
  - B. Those who belonged to the first depended on the figures, types and symbols, for their knowledge of the Lord.
    1. While those who belong to the second have had the Lord speak to them through His words that are spirit and life - Hebrews 1:1, 2.
6. All that are to have a place in the new covenant, shall know the Lord.
  - A. Jeremiah foretold this in Jeremiah 31:34.
    1. Paul quotes this in Hebrews chapter eight, and applies it to the New Covenant - Hebrews 8:8-13.
7. Sin shall be no longer remembered.
  - A. When it is once pardoned under the New Covenant they will no longer be held against the man again - Hebrews 10:17.
  - B. This was not the case under the Law of Moses.
    1. Sins were not perfectly blotted out - Hebrews 10:3, 4.
    - A. There was a remembrance of sin once every year - Hebrews 10:10.
8. Those that entered the Old Covenant were born into it by their natural

- parents.
- A. But those who enter the New Covenant do so by the new birth - John 3:3-7.
9. They differ in respect to form and place of worship.
    - A. Under the Old sacrifices were once to be brought to the door of the tabernacle, and there offered to the Lord.
      1. When the temple was built in Jerusalem, that was the place where offerings were to be made.
    - B. The Samaritan woman was anxious to know which was right - John 4:20-24.
      1. Jesus told her that the worship under the New Covenant did not belong to a single locality.
      2. And that any place would do, if the worship was in spirit and truth.
  10. The law has been abolished and the gospel remains.
    - A. This position is not readily accepted.
      1. After four centuries Christianity was little more than baptized heathenism, with lines of Judaism interwoven.
    - B. It is well to have the Scriptures clearly before us when we make such a statement.
      1. Acts 15:5
        - A. Here we have a demand made of the Pharisees, who had accepted the faith of Christians, that unless the Gentiles would be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, they could not be saved.
          1. Note Acts 15:20-29.
        - B. If these were under the law, they did not know it.
          1. Thus, the one who claims that we are still under the law assumes a wisdom which the inspired apostles did not possess.
        - C. Paul argues this question in several of his epistles.
          1. Ephesians 2:11-18
          2. Galatians 3:1
            - A. Actually, all of Galatians is largely occupied with a discussion of this subject.
            - B. Some teachers had bewitched them with the idea that they must keep the law - Galatians 3:1.
            - C. Paul objected, assuring them that all their religious blessings had come to them through the hearing of faith, and not through the commandments of the law.
        - 3. Galatians 3:15-29
        - 4. Galatians 4:21-31
    - 2. The largest division that is found anywhere is in the 24th chapter of Luke - the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalm - Luke 24:44.
    - 3. Colossians 2:13-17
      - A. Here Paul settles the question of the continuance of the Law as a rule by which Christians should live - 2 Corinthians 3:7-16.

- E. How can we know when the covenant of Christ began?
1. This is an extremely important question.
  2. There are several indicators within the Scriptures which impress upon us when this happened.
    - A. Christ lived and died a Jew.
      1. During the whole of his life he walked in obedience to that law - Matthew 5:17-19; Hebrews 4:15.
      2. Whatever there was in the Law, He proposed to keep it.
    - B. During his life, his kingdom was spoken of as being present, at hand, as if it had not yet been established, but would be in the near future.
      1. Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 16:28; Mark 1:14, 15; Luke 19:11-13.
      2. The kingdom was not yet established when He ascended into the heavens - Acts 1:6; John 18:36.
        - A. The answer that followed indicated that the kingdom was yet in the future - Acts 1:7, 8.
    - C. The kingdom was presented by the Savior, as having so come that men could press into it - Luke 16:16.
      1. The word kingdom does not always have the same meaning.
      2. It implies: (1) a king; (2) laws; (3) subjects; (4) penalties for disobedience, and rewards for faithfulness; (5) a throne and power for the king.
      3. In order to understand the use of the word kingdom in this text, we must see it in an unusual sense.
        - A. We must determine what plan John performed in his work.
        - B. Did he come to establish the kingdom or church?
      4. Rather, he came to introduce the King, and prepare a people for his reception - Luke 1:17; 76, 77.
        - A. He preached the approach of the kingdom.
      5. When the kingdom was preached in the days of John, it was preached not as having come, but coming - near at hand.
      6. Thus, when men pressed into it they pressed into that prepared condition which it was John's work to direct.
    - D. There was a gospel in the sense of good news respecting coming events.
      1. But there could be no gospel in the complete sense till Christ had come and been put to death, and had risen from the dead - 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.
      2. We cannot think of the kingdom or church as having come, while the gospel had not yet been preached in its fullness.
      3. The apostles could not have preached that He had risen till He had been redeemed from death.
      4. It was impossible for the church to have been instituted before the crucifixion of Christ.
    - E. The limits of Judaism were upon the disciples, during the days of the Savior.

1. In Matthew 10:5-7 we see Jesus' charge to the apostles to go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
  2. But when the Great Commission was given, after He had risen from the dead, all restrictions were removed.
    - A. Following this event they were to be witnesses of Him - Acts 1:8.
    - B. They were to preach the gospel to the whole world - Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16.
- F. The law and the priesthood were changed at the same-time.
1. Hebrews 7:11, 12; 8:1-4.
    - A. Christ was not a priest upon earth.
    - B. The law was not changed till He came into that everlasting priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.
      1. This He did not do until He ascended into the heavens, to make atonement for the sins of the whole world.
- G. The new law of the kingdom of the Christ should go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
1. Isaiah 2:1-3
    - A. Micah 4:1, 2 contains the substance of the foregoing.
  2. Many say this does not refer to anything that could have taken place in the days of the apostles, as it relates to the last or latter days.
    - A. However, the question that must be answered is, the last days of what?
      1. If Isaiah was prophesying about the world, then it would refer to the latter times of its history or being.
      2. But he starts to tell what awaits Judah and Jerusalem in the latter times.
    - B. Therefore, this prophecy relates to the latter times of that city and people.
      1. Before the Jews could be finally dispersed, and their city destroyed, the law should go forth.
        - A. Those changes came about in the year 70 A.D., and hence the law went forth before that time.
- H. The apostles had the keys of the kingdom - Matthew 16:13-19.
1. However, they were not at liberty to use them till after the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ - Luke 24:44-49.
  2. Following the resurrection of the Savior we see the fulfillment of that prediction was near.
    - A. But it was to wait until the heavenly endowment should come.
- I. No covenant could be in force till it was ratified by the death of the sacrifice appointed to that end - Hebrews 9:16, 17.
1. It would be impossible for the new covenant or testament, to be of force while Christ, who had been appointed as the covenant sacrifice, was living.
- J. Christ was the corner stone - Acts 4:11, 12.

1. Paul spoke of this fact - 1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:19-21.
  - A. A building cannot be constructed until the corner stone is laid.
- K. In all mentions of the kingdom after the day of Pentecost, it is spoken of as if it were in existence.
  1. The exception to this rule is where the kingdom is spoken of in its triumphant state, in the period of the judgment and everlasting reward.
    - A. In such locations the saints are waiting for the kingdom of God; not for its establishment upon the earth, but for the rewards for services rendered.
  2. Kingdom Scriptures - 1 Thessalonians 2:12; Colossians 1:13; Romans 14:16, 17; Revelation 1:5, 9.
  3. At times the terms kingdom and church are employed to express the same thought - Matthew 16:18, 19.
- L. The kingdom of Christ was set up on the first Pentecost following the Ascension of Christ.
  1. See Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13; Isaiah 2:1-3; Micah 4:1, 2; Joel 2:28, 29.
    - A. Jesus announces the fulfillment of this prophecy in John 14:15-17.
  2. The Lord re-announced the commission just before his ascension - Luke 24:47, 48; Acts 1:4.
    - A. He forebade them going out till they should receive the promise of the Father, that is - the heavenly Comforter, the Holy Spirit.
  3. Peter makes reference to Joel's prophecy and uses that prophecy in his sermon on Pentecost day - Acts 2:14-18.
  4. Also note carefully Acts 11:15.
- F. The trial as to the time of the establishment of the kingdom.
  1. If the kingdom was in existence during the time of John the Baptist, then there were two Laws in force at the same time.
  2. Those texts which place the establishment of the kingdom later than the time of John upon the earth, cannot be true.
  3. The Jewish limits or restrictions that were upon the apostles would be incomprehensible.
  4. If Christ had been king while on earth, then he would have been priest as well, for he became a priest after the order of Melchizedek, who was king and priest at the same time - Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 17, 21.
    - A. If he had been priest on the earth, he would have been high priest.
    - B. If he had been high priest, then there would have been two high priests at the same time, by divine authority - Hebrews 8:4.
  5. If John instituted the kingdom by the baptism of Jesus, then it was not set up at Jerusalem.
    - A. Therefore, a contradiction to the prophetic promise, and the clear teaching of Jesus himself - Micah 4; Joel 2.
  6. If the kingdom had been established at a time prior to the resurrection, then it could not have been unlocked by the keys held by Peter.

- A. For neither he nor any other apostle was at liberty to use such authority till the coming of the heavenly endowment - Acts 1:8.
- 7. If the church came into being prior to the death of the Savior, then it was built before the laying of the corner-stone.
- 8. If the Covenant of Christ was in force while the Savior was alive, then Paul's illustration must pass for nothing.
  - A. He thought that a covenant was of force only after the death of him that made it, not before - Hebrews 9:16, 17.
- 9. If the kingdom was established before the ascension of the Lord, then it was established without the apostles knowing it.
  - A. If they did commit such a blunder, why did Jesus not correct them?
- 10. If the church was established before that time, it was in existence before the gospel was, or could be, preached.
- 5. The value and use of History and Biography in the interpretation of the Scriptures.
  - A. The first question that must be asked is, "who was the writer of this book?"
    - 1. Was he an inspired man?
    - 2. Was he an educated man?
  - A. Luke was a physician (Colossians 4:14), and, therefore, writes from the perspective of a physician.
    - 1. Other apostles spoke of a man having leprosy who came to Jesus - Matthew 8:2, 3; Mark 1:39-41.
      - A. Luke spoke of him being full of leprosy (Luke 5:12), which indicated that he was in the third stage of leprosy.
    - 2. Mark spoke of Simon's wife's mother lying sick of a fever - Mark 1:30.
      - A. Luke spoke of her having a great fever - Luke 4:38.
    - 3. Matthew and Mark spoke of the man in the synagogue whose hand was withered - Matthew 12:10; Mark 3:1.
      - A. Luke spoke of his right hand being withered - Luke 6:6.
    - 4. Luke's profession is clearly seen in the statement of the prayer of Jesus in the garden - Luke 22:44, 45.
      - A. Jesus' "sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground" and the disciples were found "sleeping for sorrow."
  - 3. What religious bias or prejudice might be seen in the author?
    - A. It must be remembered that many of the characters of the Bible were not inspired, and did not claim to be.
      - 1. Their words are to be understood in light of their prejudices, and allowances to be made in relation to that fact.
    - B. The Bible is responsible for nothing but a faithful record of what was said and done.
    - C. The language of the worst men in history is to be found in the Bible.
      - 1. The sons of Belial have had their say - Judges 19:22.
      - 2. Satan himself has given his falsehood in his most attractive manner

- Genesis 3:1, 4.
- 3. The words of Bilhad, Eliphaz, and Zophar should not be taken as inspired of God in the sense that God lead them in their speech.
- 4. What of the style of the various authors?
  - A. The authors greatly differ in their manner of composition.
    - 1. As in the case of the authors of the Gospel accounts (i.e. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), each write concerning the life of Christ.
      - A. But they are different in many ways.
  - B. The eight writers of the entire New Testament exhibit many styles of composition.
    - 1. Paul, for example, is not only a logical writer but a very versatile one.
      - A. He seems to have a large vocabulary from which to make his selections of terms.
        - 1. A good illustration is seen in 2 Corinthians 3:6-12 where the Law and the Gospel are referred to by many different terms.
- 5. A writer usually condemns the evils which appear the most dangerous to him.
  - A. If the writer has been convellled from a particular doctrine, he is likely to write against it quite often.
    - 1. Paul serves as a classic example of this point as he deals with the distinction between Christianity and Judaism.
    - 2. Much of his writing deals with the fact that man is no longer under the Law, but under the Gospel of Christ.
  - B. Secondly, we should know to whom the writing is addressed.
    - 1. What is their history?
      - A. Where have they been?
      - B. What have they done?
      - C. From who have they descended?
      - D. If they had been Gentiles, carried away unto dumb idols (1 Corinthians 12:2), we should know it.
      - E. If they had been Jews, raised and trained in the Law and the traditions of the times, we should know it.
    - 2. We should know their education.
      - A. When Jesus said to the thief on the cross: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise," (Luke 23:43), he utilized the word paradise in the sense in which the thief and the people of that day would understand.
      - B. The Sadducees did not use this word at all.
        - 1. But the Pharisees did, and meant by it, a place of abode for righteous spirits between death and the resurrection.
    - 3. It is important to know their customs.
      - A. For example, it might be a shame for a woman in the city of Corinth to be unveiled - 1 Corinthians 11:5, 13.
        - 1. Thus Paul would have her to wear such.

2. But it does not follow that every woman in the world must wear a veil, or be regarded as unchristian.
- B. The same principle would apply to the eating of meats that had been offered to idols - 1 Corinthians 8:10.
4. We should know what the sins to which they have been addicted are.
  - A. Paul deals with the sin of fornication in the church at Corinth - 1 Corinthians 5:1-5.
5. We should know to what temptations were they subject?
  - A. Judiasm?
  - B. Heathenism?
  - C. Baptism in the name of Christ - Acts 18:24-19:5; 1 Corinthians 1:13?
  - D. Nicolaitanism - Revelation 2:6?
  - E. Were false teachers among them - 2 Peter 2:1?
  - F. Were they surrounded by foolish and vain talkers - Ephesians 5:4?
  - G. Were they faced with persecutions - 2 Corinthians 12:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:4.
- B. One must ask who is spoken of in the text.
  1. Knowledge of this is not as essential as the other points, yet it is of importance.
    - A. We read of various Herods in the N.T.
      1. Herod the Great, son of Antipater, an Idumean, born 74 B.C.
        - A. Reigned as King of the Jews from 37 to 4 B.C.
        - B. Sought to have Jesus put to death - Matthew 2:1-19.
      2. Herod Philip, son of Cleopatra, Tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis - 4 B.C. to 34 A.D. - Luke 3:1.
      3. Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee - 4 B.C. to 39 A.D.
        - A. Rebuked by John the Baptist for marrying Herodias, the wife of Philip. He had John beheaded - Matthew 14:3-12.
        - B. Referred to as "that fox" by Jesus - Luke 13:32.
        - C. Jesus stood trial before him - Luke 23:7-12.
      4. Herod Agrippa 1, King of Judea - 37 to 44 A.D.
        - A. He executed James - Acts 12:1, 2.
      5. Herod Agrippa II, Tetrarch of Chalcis and of northern territory - 48 to 70 A.D.
        - A. Paul made his defense before him - Acts 25:12 - 26:32.
    - B. In study of the gospel accounts and the book of Acts it is of great value to know the central figures.
      1. Knowing something about Pontius Pilate, Felix, Ananias, and Agrippa will assist one in their understanding of the Scriptures.
  - C. Knowing something about the character of the writings, or the kind of composition will assist one in properly understanding the Scriptures.
    1. Poetry, whether found in the Bible or elsewhere, is granted a license of extravagance.



- A. No one would think of interpreting the language of the poet as he does that of the essayist.
  - 1. Much of the Bible is poetry.
    - A. All of the Psalms, most of the book of Job, and a very large portion of the prophecies, are in poetry form.
  - 2. The simile - a figure of speech in which one thing is directly likened to another, as “we flew like the wind”.
  - 3. The metaphor - a figure of speech in which a word denoting one subject or idea is used in place of another to suggest likeness between them as in “the ship plows the sea.”
  - 4. The allegory - a story in which symbols are used to present moral truths - Galatians 4:22-31.
  - 5. The hyperbole - a figure of speech, obviously exaggerating.
- D. Knowing when the text was written is of importance.
  - 1. For example, if one asks what one must do to be saved the answer will depend upon what era of time that one lived in.
    - A. He would not get the same answer if he lived under the New Covenant as opposed to the Old.
      - 1. The rich young ruler asked Jesus what he had to do to inherit eternal life - Mark 10:17.
        - A. He was told by Jesus to practice the features of the Law - Mark 10:19.
      - 2. But when Jesus sent his disciples out to preach the gospel to the entire world he instructed them to preach otherwise - Mark 16:15, 16.
  - 2. The statement “My Spirit shall not always strive with man,” is quoted often as if it related to the present period of time.
    - A. When quoted most would look to the N.T. for its location.
    - B. However, this statement was made before the flood - Genesis 6:3.
  - 3. The statement, “Yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau” seems to indicate that God actually did hate Esau before he was born, and loved Jacob at the same time.
    - A. It further appears that He did so for no other reason than that He could - Romans 9:11-15.
    - B. But the original statement was made by Malachi, the last of the O. T. writers, when, in person, both Jacob and Esau had been dead for twelve hundred years - Malachi 1:2, 3.
      - 1. The language was not spoken concerning these men when they were infants, nor when they were come to maturity, but concerning their descendants.
        - A. The descendants of Jacob were favored over the descendants of Esau.
          - 1. There can be little question that the Israelites were favored over the Edomites - Genesis 36:9.
  - 4. The language of the thief on the cross is not understood by many persons, on

account of not noticing under what covenant he was living under when Jesus spoke to him on the cross - Luke 23:43.

E. Knowledge of the place of the writing or speaking is of importance.

1. If we could always know the surroundings, we would know a great deal about the intention of the writer.

A. If one understood the surroundings of Jesus when he made the statement found in Matthew 16:13-19 they would be less likely to misunderstand what Jesus meant when he stated, "Upon this rock I will build my church."

1. If we could see the disciples with their Lord in the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, and, therefore, looking into that city, we could easily see the illustration of the Master.

A. There was a city built upon the rock, and Jesus intended to build His church on a foundation just as solid as that.

2. When he proposed to give the keys into the hands of Peter, He intended to make him a gatekeeper - give him a post of honor, such as was probably held by someone plainly in sight.

B. With this in mind no would think that Jesus intended to build the church upon Peter.

1. They would understand that that a gatekeeper could not serve in the capacity of a rock foundation.

6. Rules for the interpretation of words and sentences.

A. Rules for the interpretation of sentences.

1. Always interpret according to the known purpose of the author.

A. When one fails to take this into consideration they often apply the language to topics not at all in the mind of the writer.

B. Ways to know the purpose of the author.

1. The speaker or writer sometimes states just what he wanted to accomplish by speaking or writing.

A. If we were in question as to the purpose of the two parables beginning the 18th chapter of Luke, we would only have to read verse one.

B. If we did not know the purpose of the three parables in Luke 15, the first and second verses would suffice to show their purpose.

C. Isaiah writes concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

1. This we learn from the direct statement of Isaiah himself - Isaiah 1:1, 2.

D. Luke states to Theophilus the exact purpose he had in mind when he began to write - Luke 1:1-4.

E. John tells us his purpose in writing the gospel of John - John 20:30, 31.

F. He tells us his purpose for writing 1st John - 1 John 1:4; 2:1; 2:26; 5:13.

G. Paul states clearly his purpose in writing his letter to the "saints that be in Rome" - Romans 1:16, 17.

2. Carefully consider the immediate context.
  - A. Difficult passages often are more easily understood if considered in their context.
3. The Bible, being the truth of God, must be harmonized with itself.
  - A. Oftentimes a doctrine is proposed, and then the proofs and counter-proofs are sought.
    1. If the proofs are more numerous than the counter-proofs, the doctrine is regarded as being sustained.
  - B. The failure here is in not seeing that counter-proofs that must be cast aside are inspired statements and must be treated as uninspired statements.
  - C. We must realize that no doctrine can be true if it is opposed to any clear statement of the word of God.
4. Light may be cast upon a doubtful or difficult passage by comparing it with other statements of the author on the same subject.
  - A. Paul, for example, dwells more or less on the same subject in several of his letters.
    1. In some cases he treats the subject more fully than in others.
      - A. We can therefore turn to the fuller treatment to see what he has in mind in the lesser locations.
5. Help may be had in the interpretation of sentences by examining the statements of other writers on the same subject, who are of equal authority.
  - A. If we agree that all the apostles were inspired, then all that they have all said concerning anyone thing must be true.
    1. 1 Peter 2:13-15 will be better understood if read in conjunction with Romans 13:1-7.
6. The use of common sense respecting the things which we know, of ourselves.
  - A. We must be cautious here so that we do not allow our whims to go against what the Word of God clearly states - 2 Corinthians 1:12; 11:3.
7. That which is figurative, must be interpreted according to the laws that govern figurative speech.
  - A. Literal language is not to be interpreted by figures.
    1. But figures are to be interpreted by that which is literal.
  - B. Almost any theory can be supported by the Scriptures, if we are at liberty to assume certain positions, and catch the sound of words from highly figurative locations.
    1. David declares that he is a worm - Psalm 22:6.
    2. Job declares that man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more - Job 14:12.
    3. The Jews made the Savior say that the temple which had been so long in construction, if it were destroyed, he would build it in three days - Matthew 26:61.
- B. Rules by which the meaning of words shall be ascertained.
  1. All words are to be understood in their literal sense, unless the evident meaning of the context forbids such.

- A. Figures are the exception.
- B. Literal language the rule.
  - 1. We are not to regard anything as figurative until we feel compelled to do so by the evident context.
- 2. Commands generally, and ordinances always, are to be understood in a literal sense.
  - A. The general who would issue orders in figurative language would certainly be misunderstood many times.
  - B. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine," (Matthew 5:16), which is an order in a figurative use of words.
    - 1. But in that case there is no probability of anyone failing to understand exactly what he meant.
  - C. He also said to Nicodemus, that a man "must be born again" - John 3:3, 7.
    - 1. But he does not leave any room for doubt as to the meaning of the words used.
  - D. In the giving of a law with ordinances, nothing but the plainest use of words is to be expected.
- 3. The literal meaning of a word is that meaning which is given it by those to whom it is addressed.
- 4. The Scriptures are supposed to give to some words meanings which they do not have in the classics, and therefore the Bible becomes a dictionary of itself.
  - A. It is proper that the scriptural use of a word should be examined.
    - 1. For example, the word elder occurs several times, with an official import.
      - A. The office intended by the word is determined by the context.
      - B. When considering 1 Timothy 5:1, 17, 19; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1, we discover that the office of bishop or overseer is intended.
    - 2. The word tempt, many times, occurs in the sense of induce to do wrong - James 1:13.
      - A. But generally, it has the meaning of to try, or prove.
- 5. Words of definite action can have but one meaning.
  - A. Jump, walk, run, sit, chop, dip, sprinkle, pour, shoot, hang, strike, etc., are definite words, and therefore but one meaning.
  - B. To shoot may mean to kill, or it may mean to wound.
- 6. The writer's explanation is the best definition that can be found.
  - A. He is supposed to know just what meaning he wished to put into the word.
    - 1. Emmanuel means, "God with us" - Matthew 1:23.
    - 2. Rabbi means, "master", or "teacher".
- 7. The proper definition of a word may be used in the place of a word.
  - A. The true meaning of a word will give the same sense that the word would give.
    - 1. Therefore, to remove the word and replace it with the definition, is easily done, and is a valuable method of understanding the word used.

8. By antithesis.
  - A. Many times two positions are matched one against the other.
  - B. A classic illustration of this is found in 2 Corinthians 3:6-14.
    1. Paul changes the terms several times on both sides.
      - A. However, by this rule we trace his meaning without any possibility of being mistaken.
  - C. In Paul's two double allegories (Galatians 4:22-31, and Romans 11:16-26), these opposites serve a valuable end.
9. By the general and special scope.
  - A. By the general scope, we mean the general range of mental vision, or the main purpose in the mind of the writer.
    1. By the special scope, we mean any sup-purpose having reference to any particular part of the general discussion.
10. Etymological construction will many times tell the meaning of the word.
  - A. Nearly all the names of Biblical characters had meanings.
    1. When they are constructed of more than one syllable, the meanings of the several syllables will give the meaning of the whole word or name.
      - A. Beersheba, from beer, wells, and sebah, seven, thus seven wells.
      - B. Bethel, from beth, house, and el, God, thus house of God.
11. The meaning of a word is frequently known by the words used in the construction with it.
  - A. We can determine whether the word wishes to convey action or transition.
12. We may have sometimes to study the history of a word in order to get its meaning at any particular time.
  - A. If we are asked what a word means, we must answer according to the time and place of its use.
    1. The English word "conversation" (Galatians 1:13; Ephesians 2:3; 4:22; Philippians 1:27) meant "manner of life" at the time of the writing of the King James Bible.
      - A. Presently it means speech.
    - B. All living languages are subject to such changes as this one.
13. Illustrations or parables may give the peculiar sense in which a word is to be understood in the Scriptures.
  - A. The young lawyer conceded that to love God and one's neighbor were the great commandments of the law - Luke 10:25-28.
    1. But to excuse himself, he was anxious to not know who his neighbor was - Luke 10:29.
14. In defining a definition nothing but primary meanings are to be used.
  - A. To eat means literally to chew and swallow.
    1. In translating this into another language, the word containing that thought must be used, and no other.
      - A. Failure to do so fails to properly get the point across.
7. Figurative language.
  - A. Rules on how we can know figurative language.

1. The sense of the context will indicate it.
  - A. Unless the meaning of the text or passage demands it to be figurative, it should be considered literal.
2. A word or sentence is figurative when the literal meaning involves an impossibility.
  - A. Jeremiah 1:18
    1. Literally we know that such was not the fact.
      - A. God had made this man to resemble these things in some respects.
        1. He should be strong and immovable like them, hence the comparison.
  - B. Psalm 18:2
    1. Literally it is impossible for God to be a rock, a tower, or a horn.
    2. The author did not expect the reader to understand this passage in a literal sense.
  - C. Matthew 8:22
    1. Those who are literally dead could not have buried anyone.
  - D. Revelation 6:13
    1. John did not see literal stars fall to the earth.
      - A. There are millions of these bodies, most of which are many times the size of the earth.
  - E. Matthew 26:26-28
    1. This was a literal impossibility.
    2. Metaphorically it was true, but literally it was not true.
    3. The language of Scripture may be regarded as figurative, if the literal interpretation will cause one passage to contradict another.
      - A. If we have two passages, and one is literal, the other must be understood in relation to the literal passage.
      - B. Further, if the literal interpretation of the two passages results in a contradiction, we are at liberty to regard the language of at least one passage as figurative.
        1. There is one possible exception to this rule.
        2. There are certain words that are used in more than one meaning.
          - A. The Bible teaches that the wicked perish - Psalm 49:10; 73:27.
          - B. Likewise, it teaches that the righteous perish - Ecclesiastes 7:15; Isaiah 57:1; Micah 7:2.
            1. The word perish here must be seen to carry two meanings.
    4. When the Scriptures are made to demand actions that are wrong, or forbid those that are good, they are supposed to be figurative.
      - A. Matthew 18:8, 9 does not teach the idea of a literal dismemberment.

- B. Luke 14:26 does not teach the concept of one hating his father and mother.
  - C. Jeremiah 25:27, 28 does not command drunkenness, instead we see God using their own conduct as a symbol of the destruction that was to come upon them.
- 5. A Scripture is to be considered figurative when it is said to be figurative.
  - A. John 2:18-22 serves as an example here.
- 6. A Scripture should be considered figurative when the definite is put for the indefinite.
  - A. This is seen many times in the Scriptures.
    - 1. Words such as day, hour, year, ten, one hundred, one thousand, ten thousand, and ten thousand times ten thousand are used in a non-literal way often - Job 20:28; Hebrews 3:8; Psalm 102:2; Jeremiah 31:31,32; 1 Peter 2:12; Luke 4:19; James 4:13.
- 7. When words are said in mockery they should be viewed as figurative.
  - A. In I Kings 18:27 no one has ever believed that Elijah meant to say that Baal was a god.
  - B. New wine, or sweet wine, would not make anyone drunk, and all knew that - Acts 2: 13.
  - C. Those who railed against Jesus did not intend to imply that Jesus saved others when they said what they did - Luke 23:35.
- 8. Figures of speech sometimes occur when we have to depend on the things we know, in order to decide if the language is figurative of literal.
  - A. The “water” that Jesus spoke of in John 4:10-16 was not literal water.
  - B. The “cup” that Jesus spoke of having to drink (Matthew 20:22, 23), was not a literal cup.
  - C. There are many other passages which clearly use words in this way - Isaiah 29:9; Jeremiah 8:14; Revelation 17:2; 1 Corinthians 3:2.
- B. Rules for the interpretation of figurative language.
  - 1. Let the author give his own interpretation.
    - A. When Ezekiel saw the vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:7), he gave the interpretation.
    - B. Jeremiah gave the interpretation of the text in Jeremiah 18:1-10.
    - C. John 2:19-22 has an explanation by the writer.
  - 2. The interpretation should be according to the general and special scope.
    - A. Psalm 19:7 serves to illustrate this point.
  - 3. Compare the figurative with the literal accounts or statements on the same things.
    - A. In doing this, it will be seen that we cannot make the figurative contradict the literal.
    - B. Compare Joel 2:28, 29 to John 14:26 and Acts 2:1-4.

- C. Jesus said that out of the believers should flow rivers of living water - John 7:37, 38.
- 4. By the resemblance of things compared.
  - A. Christ is represented as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world - Revelation 13:8.
  - B. In His trial and crucifixion He is presented to us as a sheep before the shearer and a lamb taken to the slaughter - Isaiah 53:7.
    - 1. When we consider the characteristics of a lamb, we are not at a loss to see the force and beauty of this passage.
      - A. But in Revelation, He is referred to as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" - Revelation 5:5.
    - 2. How is Jesus both a lion and a lamb?
      - A. The last figure sends us back to look for other qualities in Jesus other than those of gentleness and innocence.
        - 1. He is also mighty as well as meek.
- 5. The facts of history and biography may be made to assist in the interpretation of figurative language.
  - A. If we can know what the author or speaker has in mind, then, by an acquaintance with that person or thing, we can find the point and power of the passage.
    - 1. When Jesus was on the east side of the river Jordan, the Pharisees came and told Him that it would be better for Him to depart out of the coasts, lest Herod should kill Him - Luke 13:31.
      - A. Jesus said, "Go ye, and tell that fox..." - Luke 13:32.
    - 2. If we study the character of Herod Antipas, we would see the reason behind this statement of Jesus.
  - B. In the interpretation of prophecy especially, it is of great importance to be well acquainted with the facts of history.
- 6. Any inspired interpretation, or use of the figure, in an argument, or teaching, will decide its meaning.
  - A. If we concede that the writers of the New Testament were inspired of God, then we must accept any application of Scripture that they have made.
    - 1. To deny the exegesis of any passage is to deny the authority by which they spoke.
  - B. Isaiah 6:9, 10 is applied by Jesus in Matthew 13:14, 15.
    - 1. We may say that this had been the condition of that people for many centuries.
      - A. But we must acknowledge that the Lord's use of the language was correct.
  - C. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-8, we have an application of some Old Testament typology that is very instructive - Israel fleeing from bondage; being baptized into Moses; and that rock following them representing Christ.
- 7. We must be careful not to demand too many points of analogy.
  - A. Many have conducted their interpretation of figurative language as if it



was their calling to invent as many features of similarity as they could, and then demand a corresponding thought and purpose for such.

1. Many books have been written on the book of Revelation by such people.
8. It must be remembered that figures are not always used with the same meaning.
  - A. A lion may not always symbolize the same thought, nor a sheep, water, or fire always be employed for the purpose of expressing the calamity or blessing.
  - B. It is a grave error to believe that every time a certain word is used figuratively, it always means the same thing.
    1. The use of the word “Logos” in speaking of Jesus indicates this point - John 1:1.
      - A. To argue that every time the word is used, it must be in reference to Jesus is far from the truth.
    2. Because Jesus said that he was the bread from heaven, it does not follow that the word “bread” must always refer to him - John 6:31-35.
    3. The word “sheep” is often used as a symbol of innocence.
      - A. It often represents the children of God.
        1. Yet a ram is a sheep and serves as a symbol of a kingdom, and is offensive.
      - B. Many times sheep go astray - Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 50:6-17; Ezekiel 34:6-11.
9. Parables may explain parables.
  - A. In Matthew 13 we have seven parables for the purpose of causing the disciples to understand the nature of Christ's kingdom.
10. The type and antitype are frequently both in view at the same time.
  - A. It is common to say that a type is made of material things, and the antitype is always a spiritual thought or fact.
    1. The anointing with oil prefigured the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
    2. The washing under the law symbolized the spiritual purity that should be in all the people of God.
    3. The wilderness of wandering represented the journey of life.
    4. The bondage of Israel, in Egypt, symbolized man's bondage in sin.
    5. The Sabbath was a type of Christian rest in Christ - Hebrews 4:1-10.
    6. The flood symbolizes baptism under the new covenant - 1 Peter 3:16-21.

## **CONCLUSION:**

1. A proper understanding of the Scriptures is of utmost importance.
  - A. The Gospel preacher will study continually in order to be able to properly divide the Word of God - 2 Timothy 2:15.
2. Hermeneutics will play an extremely important role in one's correct understanding of the Scriptures.