

## Session 2 - Biblical studies, Hermeneutics, Inductive Bible study

### Biblical Studies

“It is crucial for our faith and growth that we become increasingly skilled at learning to read the Bible well. But in one very important sense we should not strive for gaining mastery over the text of the Bible at all. This is because we are not its master, but rather the reverse; the Bible is to have mastery over our own lives, even to the point of calling upon us to sacrifice our petty interests to its higher and nobler demands.” Ray Lubeck

### **Biblical overview**

- Authors
- Books
- Canon
- Autographs, Manuscripts
- Textual criticism
- Variants

There are many “versions” of the Bible. Crucial to pick a good translation.

Ex. 1 Corinthians 7:36

NKJV - But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry.

NASB - But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin *daughter*, if she is past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry.

NIV - If anyone is worried that he might not be acting honorably toward the virgin he is engaged to, and if his passions are too strong and he feels he ought to marry, he should do as he wants. He is not sinning. They should get married.

MSG - If a man has a woman friend to whom he is loyal but never intended to marry, having decided to serve God as a “single,” and then changes his mind, deciding he should marry her, he should go ahead and marry. It’s no sin; it’s not even a “step down” from celibacy, as some say.

## **Spectrum of translation - literal, dynamic, free**

- Original language
- Receptor language
- Historical distance
- Mathew 17:27 - Shekel or silver coin? Matt 20: Denarius or days wage?
- **Literal translation** - The attempt to keep as close to the “Form” of Greek and Hebrew, both in words and grammar, as can be conveniently put into understandable English. Translators based on formal equivalence will keep the historical distance intact at all points. The problem is that understandable English is not the goal of a good translation, the goal is good contemporary English.
- **Dynamic equivalent** - The attempt to keep the meaning of the Hebrew or Greek but to put their words and idioms into what would be the normal way of saying the same thing in English. Such translations sustain historical distance on all historical and factual matters but “update” matters of language, grammar and style.
- **Free translation** - The attempt to translate the ideas from one language to another, with less concern about using the exact words of the original. Sometimes called a paraphrase, tries to eliminate as much of the historical distance as possible and still be faithful to the intent of the original text.

"Our view is that the best theory of translation is the one that remains as faithful as possible to the original and receptor languages, but when something has to give, it should be in favor of the receptor language - without losing the meaning of the original language." Gordon Fee

## **Hermeneutics (Art and science of interpretation):**

- We see the world and interpret based on the framework we bring to it.
- Appropriate actions are culturally defined.
- Idioms are groups of words having a meaning not deductible from the individual words.

- Humor is culturally relevant.
- Semantic range of meaning of the word.
- There can be great interpretation and great misinterpretation.

“Antidote for bad interpretation is not no interpretation, but good interpretation, based on common sense guidelines.” Gordon Fee

### **Hermeneutical bridge**

“As those who voluntarily undertake this journey seeking not to impose themselves upon its world but to discover its riches, we are not disappointed. In willingly choosing to read the Bible, we are transported to another world, filled with strange phenomena like miracles, angelic announcements, prophets who speak the very words of God, and earth-shaking appearances by God, yet also with people who are surprisingly similar to ourselves. When we put the book down, we return home to our “normal” world, but we have been changed through the experience of our cross-cultural encounter. We have encountered new ways of thinking and different venire of our travels. Our minds have been opened to new possibilities and enticing alternatives to our ways of living.... When we read the Bible in this way, with eyes of faith, we not only see this more fantastic country, we also see this familiar “normal” world in fresh and new ways.” Ray Lubeck

### **Dollar Bill Game**

**Exegesis - Goal to determine the author's intended meaning of the original text.**

CONTEXT IS KING - Historical and Literary context

## **5 Technical steps**

1) Identify the Genre of the text (the Literary Form)

3 Meta-Categories (Literary types)

- Narrative (44%)
- Discourse (23%)
- Poetry (33%)

7 Genres

- Apocalyptic - Apocalyptic employs a style of writing that is highly symbolic, concerning end-of-the-world events. It incorporates angelic messages, visions, mysterious numbers, and concerns the fate, not just of Israel or the Church. but also of the whole heavens and the earth. It depicts all the forces of evil as pitted against God and those who are aligned with him.
- Epistle - The epistles are letters written by leaders of the early church to churches or individuals. Just as modern letters follow a predictable pattern, whether business letters or personal letters, so biblical epistles have a predictable format.
- Gospel - The gospels tell the story of the earthly life and ministry of Jesus, his preaching, miracle working, fulfillment of earlier biblical passages, death, resurrection, and the establishment and growth of the earthy church.
- Prophecy - Biblical prophecy is any writing in which the author speaks on behalf of God. Contrary to many people's use of the term prophecy, it most often is not about the future. Instead, the genre of prophecy includes anytime the author either directly says or implies, "Thus says the Lord..." Prophecy is used to communicate God's commands, accusations of sin, calls to repentance, threats of punishment, comfort, and promises of future blessings.

- Psalms - Psalms are poetic songs, found in a number of places besides just the biblical book of Psalms. They are always poetic they are frequently prayer to God, and they express praise, thanksgiving, and lament (grief), both of individuals and a larger group.
- Story - Stories record an event or series of events that have taken place. The features of story overlap with narrative.
- Wisdom - Wisdom literature offers insights on how to live. The human authors have gained these perspectives by observing patterns within the world around them. Readers of wisdom literature discover insights, values, perspectives, and skills for godly success that emerge from the fear of the Lord.

## Forms

### 2) Establish literary context

“Literary context means first that words only have meaning in a sentence, and second that biblical sentences for the most part have full and clear meaning only in relation to preceding and succeeding sentences.” Gordon Fee

- Word, sentence, paragraph, chapter, book, Bible.
- Analyze for laws of composition (See PDF)
- Word study (Lexicon and/or biblical dictionary)
- Parallel Bibles
- Old Testament References

### 3) Outline the Progress of Thought (Think paragraphs)

“We simply cannot stress enough the importance of thinking paragraphs, and not just as natural units of thought but as the absolutely necessary key to understanding the argument in the various epistles.” Gordon Fee

### 4) Establish Historical context (Consult a good commentary)

“Historical context has to do with the time and culture of the author and audience, that is, the geographical topographical, and political factors that are relevant to the authors setting.” Gordon Fee

ARO - Author, Recipient, Occasion (See beginning of chapter in ESV Study Bible)

### 5) Develop a "Thesis Statement" and summarize your results.

Most important contextual question you can ever ask - and it must be asked over and over of every sentence and paragraph is “What is the point? We must trace the authors train of thought. What is the author saying and what is he saying it right here? Having made the point, why is he saying what he says next?” Gordon Fee

**Contextualization - Goal to bring the significance of the passage from the first century to today.**

- 1) Contextualization begins with sound exegesis. A text cannot mean what it never meant!

Exegesis vs. Isogesis

“Starting with the here and now have read into the texts “meanings” that were not originally intended.” Gordon Fee

- 2) Take careful note of the original cultural & historical situation compared to today.

3) What is the comparable teaching elsewhere in Scripture? Are Scriptural statements on the issue uniform or diverse? Is this a major issue throughout Scripture or a peripheral one?

“The Holy Spirit cannot be brought into the process to contradict what is said, since the Spirit is the one who inspired the original intent.” Gordon Fee

4) Decide whether to apply the passage directly (at the surface level) or indirectly (at the level of principle).

5) If cultural factors are dominant, determine the general biblical principles/truth being taught.

6) Identify situations that are truly parallel in the modern context and apply the passage accordingly.

7) Draw a conclusion: How does this passage relate to the person/church today?

**Proclamation (Homiletics) - Goal: To clearly and accurately share both the meaning and significance of the passage with your audience.**

1) Evaluate your audience (Exegete of culture and crowd).

2) Turn your exegetical outline into an expository outline: Seek for simplicity, clarity, memorability.

### 3) Order of teaching

#### 4) Develop a clear and strong introduction and conclusion.

“I have two convictions. The first is that no amount of advice on Bible reading technique can compensate for hearts and minds that are not willing to humbly follow God. Such readers will not receive God’s Word in the way it is intended. Isaiah was commissioned to deliver a message to his kind of people: “Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing but not perceiving” (Isaiah 6:9). The second conviction is more optimistic. I am certain that if willing readers will draw upon the following methods and strategies for following the Bible, then they stand on the threshold of a new dynamic of experiencing God. What lies ahead is the very real potential, not only for a different way of reading the Bible, but also for a changed life.” Ray Lubeck

### **Leading Inductive Bible Study**

1) Print the passage to study. Read it a few times.

2) Do your own OIA of the text:  
Observation

Interpretation

Application

3) Consult outside resources (Parallel Bible, Commentary, Biblical Dictionary, etc)

4) Preparing for a Bible Study Worksheet (See PDF)

How to Do Inductive Bible Study (See PDF)

OIA Map (See PDF)