



Gaining A Strategic Grasp of Scripture

Fundamental Principles of Bible Study

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Grace Life Bible Church

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Three Important Terms

- Hermeneutics— “science which furnishes the principles of interpretation.” (Ryrie, 89)
 - Grammatical-Historical Interpretation—“the meaning of each word is determined by grammatical & historical considerations.” (Ryrie, 86-87)
 - Normal Interpretation
- Exegesis—(to draw out) refers to the interpretation of a specific Biblical text based upon the component parts of the given text.
 - Correct exegesis is contingent upon sound hermeneutical principles.
- Eisegesis—(to draw in) is the act of interpreting a text by reading one's own ideas, agendas, or biases into it, rather than the meaning of the text itself. It's also known as "reading into the text"

Three Principles of Bible Study

- Literal Interpretation—the words on the page say what they mean and mean what they say.
 - Considers the normal usage of figures of speech.
 - Figures of speech offer a literal parallel to real truth.
 - John 1:29
 - Galatians 4:24
- Comparative Principle—the Bible must be studied by comparing scripture with scripture. The Bible is self-interpreting, and no portion of scripture is unrelated to the whole.
- Dispensational Method—the Bible can only be properly understood through dispensational Bible study.

Reasons For Rejecting the Allegorical Method.

- Destroys the issue of inspiration (every word is inspired by God).
 - II Timothy 3:16—all scripture i.e., all the *graphe* or that which is written down.
- Questions the integrity of God. Did God really mean what He said?
 - Jonah 1:17; Matthew
- Leaves us at the mercy of theologian's imagination.
 - Best to not Allegorize unless the text explicitly does so.

Comparative Principle

- II Peter 1:20—no passage of scripture is isolated or unrelated to the whole.
- I Corinthians 2:13—comparing scripture with scripture is superior to the use of commentaries.
- The Bible interprets itself and defines its own terms.
- Mark 16:15—Luke 24:47—Acts 1:8—all three verses put together offer a complete understanding.

Dispensational Method

- II Timothy 2:15—we are instructed in this verse to study God’s word, but we are also told how to conduct our study, rightly dividing the word of truth.
- The dispensational method seeks to answer the following questions:
 - 1) Who wrote it?
 - 2) When did they write?
 - 3) To whom was it written?
- To clearly demonstrate the need to rightly divide the word of truth and approach the Bible dispensationally let us consider the following question, Does the Bible contradict itself?

Does the Bible Contradict Itself?

- Genesis 17:10—must be circumcised.
- Leviticus 11:1-8—unclean food.
- Matthew 5:20—law required.
- Psalm 51:1—could lose the Holy Spirit.
- Matthew 26:28—ransom for many.
- Acts 3:20—prophecy made known since the world began.
- Galatians 5:6, 6:15 —don't need to be circumcised.
- I Timothy 4:4—no food unclean.
- Romans 6:14—not under the law.
- Ephesians 4:30—can't lose the Holy Spirit.
- I Timothy 2:4-7—ransom for all.
- Romans 16:25—mystery kept secret since the world began.

What is a Dispensation?

- “A distinguishable economy in the out working of God’s plan.” (Ryrie, 29)
- Our English word dispensation comes from the Greek word *oikonomia* which means house management.
- God has managed his house differently with different people during different times.
- A dispensation is not a period of time, but the act of dealing out or that which is dealt out.

Is the Word Dispensation In the Bible?

- Ephesians 3:2—Dispensation of Grace
- Ephesians 1:10—Dispensation of the Fullness of Time.
- Colossians 1:24-26—Dispensation of God committed to Paul.
- I Corinthians 9:17—Dispensation of the Gospel committed to Paul.
- Dispensational theology seeks to recognize how and where God's dealings with man have changed throughout history.
- This approach to Bible study is essential to ensure we are following God's instructions for today.
- Paul is the only Biblical writer to name specific dispensations.

Jesus Christ, the Same Yesterday, Today and Forever

- Hebrews 13:8—opponents of dispensational theology like to use this to support their position.
- God never changes, however, God’s program and dealings with men have changed, because man has changed.
- God had to change the way he dealt with Adam after the fall, not because God changed, but because Adam’s sin now separated him from God.
- God manages his house differently during different times.