

Grasping God's Word

GHCC Adult Education: CLASS NORMS

COMMITMENT TO CONFIDENTIALITY Our Classes, while open, are considered CONFIDENTIAL when anything is shared that might be personal in nature. Please exercise discernment and avoid gossip.

COMMITMENT TO WELL-BALANCED CLASS SHARING We ask all class members to be aware of the amount of time they have shared, and to not monopolize sharing opportunities.

COMMITMENT TO STAYING ON TOPIC While much of theology is connected, we ask that questions/comments stay focused on the topic at hand. This will help accomplish class objectives, and will show respect for the other class participants.

COMMITMENT TO NOT INTERRUPT We ask that you do not interrupt when someone is talking during a class discussion.

COMMITMENT TO NOT TO FIX OTHERS The class environment provides the freedom to safely share and process theological ideas. While the teacher has the duty to safeguard sound doctrine and maintain an orderly classroom, we ask class participants to engage in gentle and kind interactions with one another, refraining from judging, shaming, or excessively advising others.

COMMITMENT TO TRUST As brothers & sisters in Christ, we expect that maturity and reconciliation will be used anytime a conflict may arise within a class, especially involving theological or personality differences with others (including the teacher). This means that we first must assume the best of intentions in others, and fill any questionable interactions with trust, and not with suspicion or ill-motive. If a situation arises where you have a question or concern, or have been offended, please contact the teacher, the Adult Education Coordinator, or a pastor as soon as possible to engage in reconciliation.

Sundays: 6/4 — 7/30 (no 7/2)

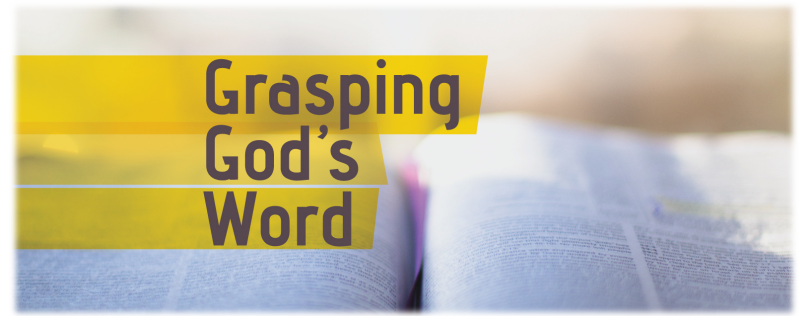
Where: 130

Class website:

<https://www.theologyclass.org/ggww23>

Class Notes

Weekly videos/articles



Week 1

II. THE BIG PICTURE OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

A. THE PROCESS OF INTERPRETATION

1. What does it *say*?
2. What does it *mean*?
3. Where is *Jesus* in the text?
4. How do I *apply* this to my life?

I. THE BIG PICTURE OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

B. THE THREE HORIZONS OF STUDYING THE BIBLE

1. The *Textual Context (Grammatical—Historical—Christ-Centered)*
 - a. *Grammatical*
 - i. What do the words mean?
 - ii. This includes literary context (genres)
 - b. *Historical*
 - i. What is the historical context?
 - ii. What are the cultural/historical/etc. details that shed light on understanding?

II. THE BIG PICTURE OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

B. THE THREE HORIZONS OF STUDYING THE BIBLE

2. The *Epochal* Context

- a. Locating the story within God's unfolding plan
 - i. How does the story relate to the covenants?
- b. Christocentric: Where is Jesus in the text?
 - i. Foreshadowed? Typology?

II. THE BIG PICTURE OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

B. THE THREE HORIZONS OF STUDYING THE BIBLE

3. *Redemptive* History

- a. Creation
- b. Fall
- c. Redemption
- d. New Creation (Restoration/Re-creation)

II. THE BIG PICTURE OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

C. KEY STEPS TO INTERPRETATION

1. **Exegesis**

- a. To pull out/discover the original meaning of the text
- b. "What is the text?"
- c. Original Context & History
- d. Original Word meaning

2. **Eisegesis**

- a. Reading a meaning INTO the text
- b. Avoid this, be aware of why/how this happens

Our job as
interpreters....

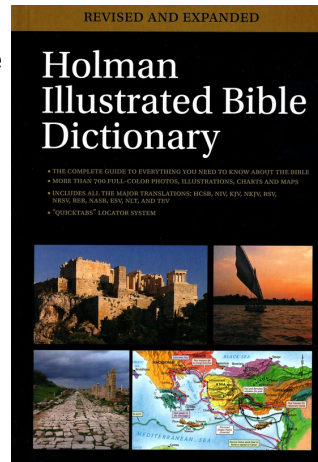
Discover the true
meaning of the
text!



II. USING TOOLS (HISTORICAL-CULTURAL CONTEXT)

A. 1. BIBLE DICTIONARIES

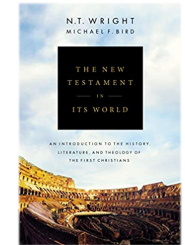
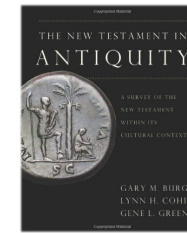
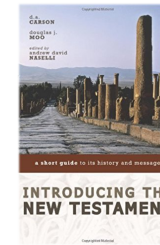
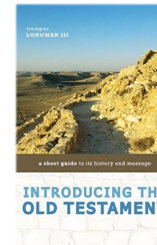
1. Have general articles about the Bible



II. IDENTIFYING HISTORICAL-CULTURAL CONTEXT

B. OLD TESTAMENT AND NEW TESTAMENT INTRODUCTIONS AND SURVEYS

1. Supply detailed background information on each book of the Bible



II. IDENTIFYING HISTORICAL-CULTURAL CONTEXT

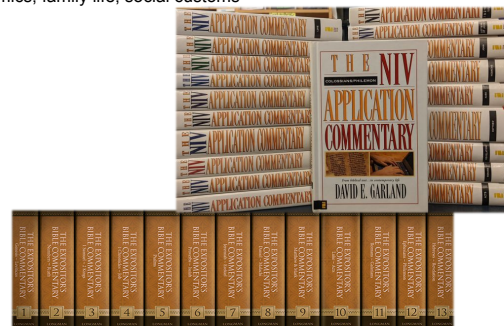
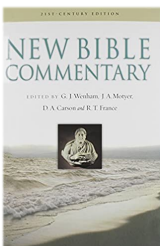
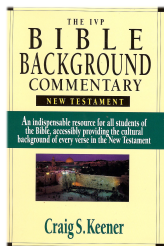
C. COMMENTARIES

1. Up-to-date/detailed information about the context of the book

a. Know the background of the scholar you're reading

2. Historical-Cultural

a. Dealing with geography, politics, religion, economics, family life, social customs



III. OBSERVING THE BIG PICTURE

A. INCLUSIO

1. (aka bracketing) creating a frame by placing similar material at the beginning and end of a section

a. Purpose: structural to alert the reader to a particularly important theme or to show how the material within the inclusio relates to itself.

Prov 1:1-7 The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

- 2 To know wisdom and instruction,
to understand words of insight,
- 3 to receive instruction in wise dealing,
in righteousness, justice, and equity;
- 4 to give prudence to the simple,
knowledge and discretion to the youth—
- 5 Let the wise hear and increase in learning,
and the one who understands obtain guidance,
- 6 to understand a proverb and a saying,
the words of the wise and their riddles.
- 7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Matt 4:23-25 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan

Matt 9:35-38 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; 38 therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest

Matt 5:1-16 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

- 2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:
- 3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- 5 “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
- 6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- 7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.
- 8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- 9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
- 10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. 13 “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

III. OBSERVING THE BIG PICTURE

B. OBSERVATIONS AND INCLUSIOS IN REVELATION

1. Observations

Rev 1:1

Rev 22:6

Rev 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John

Rev 22:6 And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."

Inclusio 1

1:3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

22:10 And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11 Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

Inclusio 2

1:3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

22:7 “And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

III. OBSERVING THE BIG PICTURE

C. USING TOOLS (BIBLE DICTIONARY)

1. Blessings and Curses:

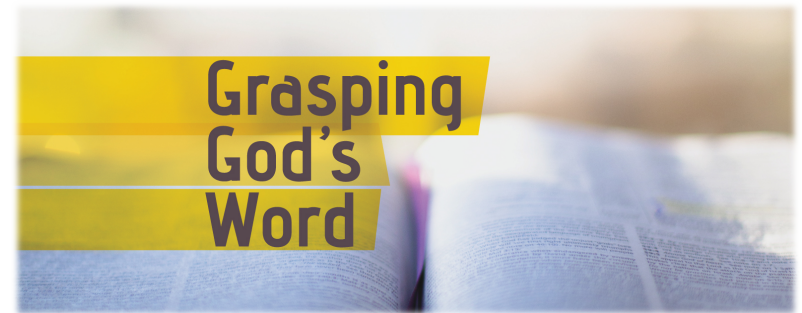
a. **Blessings**: The “blessing” form was common in the Old Testament and Jewish literature, and here implies that the hearers were expected to understand and obey what they heard. (Revelation contains seven such “blessings” and seven curses or “woes,” probably all oracular, i.e., prophetic.) Apocalypses commonly predicted the imminent end of the age, or imminent events heralding that end (especially in the roughly contemporary work 4 Ezra). (IVP Backgrounds, Keener)

III. OBSERVING THE BIG PICTURE

C. USING TOOLS (BIBLE DICTIONARY)

1. Blessings and Curses:

b. **Curses**: As belonging to God and His people meant blessing, being cursed often meant separation from God and the community of faith. It thus involved the experience of insecurity and disaster.



Week 2

BRIDGING CONTEXTS

Pastor Bo Lee



- First 270 years, the church was just trying to survive persecution. It was quickly spreading across the Roman Empire.
- “Atheistic, incestuous cannibals”
- Apologists – offering good reasons why the church is a good thing for the society and why it should exist
- The Canon of Scripture was not yet determined. Churches looked to early writings by those who were trained by the Apostles themselves to help determine how they should function.

- 313 AD – Emperor Constantine removes the penalty of persecution for Christians and gives them favorable status in the empire.
- Because they don't have to worry as much about dying or being put in prison, they have time to start thinking about theology. They are led by figures like Athanasius and Augustine (among many others).
- They wrestled with questions like:
 - *Which books actually belong in the Bible?*
 - *Was Jesus created by God, or did he always exist?*
 - *Did God choose those whom he would save?*

- By the time the Roman Empire started to crumble in the late 5th century, the church had already begun to spread beyond its borders.
- Missionary monks were in England, Scotland, and Ireland.
- The rise of Islam gave Christianity a very difficult challenge, and many churches and leaders lost their faith.
- But the church persevered. It learned new languages and new ways of thinking, and it spread further than it ever had before.
- Obviously, this continued through the Middle Ages and the Age of Exploration, up to modern times.

- Every century brought more and more division
- Apostle Paul – *I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. (Phil 4:2)*
- Bishops in Alexandria disagreeing with Bishops in Antioch
- The Great Schism of 1054, separating the Eastern and Western Churches
- Protestant Reformation
- Methodists breaking off from the church of England
- Infant baptism vs. Believers' baptism
- “You're Baptist? Which kind?”



Acts 17:24-27

²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us,

We are trying to take a 2000-year-old book written in mostly Hebrew and Greek and help people understand it in thousands of different languages and cultures.

Language barriers

- John 21:15-17
- “Peace” – John 14:27; Ephesians 2:14-16
- No “because” or “so”

Language bridges

- Cultures with the concept of God (or a benevolent god)
- “Chasm” – Luke 16

We are trying to take a 2000-year-old book written in mostly Hebrew and Greek and help people understand it in thousands of different languages and cultures.

Cultural barriers

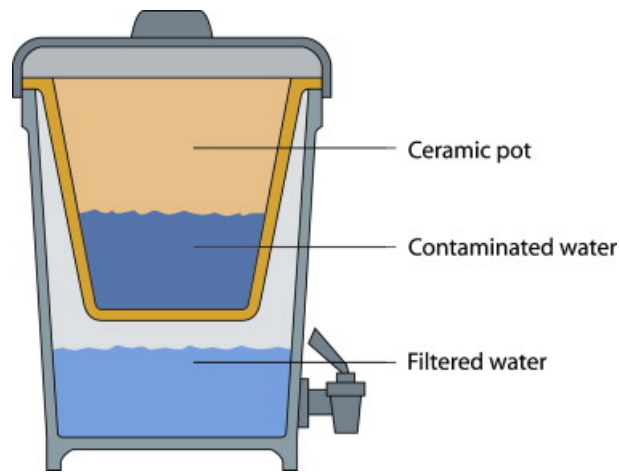
- John 1:29, but they have never seen a sheep

Cultural bridges

- Jesus himself

SYNCRETISM VS. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Our aim is to faithfully restate the gospel with all of its rich implications in a particular time and context.



SYNCRETISM VS. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Our aim is to faithfully restate the gospel with all of its rich implications in a particular time and context.

The gospel message is the same for all. It is the story of the life, death, resurrection, and return of Jesus as the only hope for our salvation and the only way to have peace with God.

But the rich implications of the gospel might be different in different places and for different people...

The gospel is the good news of what Jesus has done. But what might be some particular implications of this good news for these groups?

- The persecuted church (both in the early centuries and today)
- Those living under the bondage of slavery
- Those who live in fear of evil spirits
- Those living in honor/shame cultures
- The American church today
- Those suffering from chronic or debilitating conditions

Practice

John 15 – Three stories

Brainstorm some questions that people from a variety of cultures would have. How would you approach this?

