



Preparation and Delivery of Sermons

Lesson 2

Understanding the Idea of Hermeneutics

I. GRASPING HERMENEUTICS.

- A. Hermeneutics is the science and art of biblical interpretation.
- B. Three levels of general hermeneutics?
 1. Grammatical. The study of words in a verse or sentence.
 2. Historical. The level outside or apart from the context including outside the Biblical text. Geography, politics, customs, wars, cultures, economy, commerce, etc.
 3. Literary. A passage or a whole book; an extended passage.
- C. The orthodox rule of biblical hermeneutics: *The correct meaning of any passage is always the author's intended meaning.*
- D. The method of biblical interpretation in which words, phrases, passages and accounts are given symbolic representations is known as allegorical hermeneutics. This kind of hermeneutics has dominated the history of Bible study until recent times.
- E. *Exegesis* means *to come out of or to reveal or declare what is already there.*
- F. *Eisegesis* means *to read into or impose or bring in something that is not already there.*
- G. Since the oldest book of the Bible was written approximately 3,800 and the last book was written over 1,900 years ago, four gaps especially demand hermeneutical work.
 1. Historical.
 2. Cultural.
 3. Linguistic.
 4. Philosophical.
- H. A Scripture has one meaning but it may have many applications.
- I. When the literal sense of a Scripture makes sense, use no other sense.

II. HERMENEUTICAL ANALYSIS.

- A. Four primary analyses which should always be applied in Scriptural research.
 1. *A Historical-Cultural and Contextual Analysis.*
 2. *A Lexical-Syntactical Analysis.*
 3. *A Theological Analysis.*
 4. *A Literary Analysis.*

- B.** Understanding a *Historical-Cultural and Contextual Analysis*.
1. How could history impact the understanding of a passage?
 2. In what ways does the culture of Bible days differ from current culture?
 3. Why is context so important to proper interpretation of the Scriptures?
- C.** Understanding a *Lexical-Syntactical Analysis*.
1. In what sense should every word in Scripture be understood?
 2. Syntax.
 3. Tools that help with this analysis.
- D.** Understanding a *Theological Analysis*.
1. *Salvation History*.
 2. *Dispensationalism*.
 3. *Covenant Theology*.
- E.** Understanding a *Literary Analysis*.
1. The importance of understanding the type of literature of any given Bible passage.
 2. The three predominant genres of literature in the Bible.
 - a) Prose.
 - b) Poetry.
 - c) Prophetic.
 3. Figures of speech used in the Bible.
 - a) Simile.
 - b) Metaphor.
 - c) Irony.
 - d) Paradox.
 - e) Personification.
 4. An extended simile is called a parable.
 5. An extended metaphor is called an allegory.
 6. A compressed parable or allegory is called a proverb.
 7. The longest book in the Bible is a book of songs.
 8. The two most common types of psalms are praise and lament.
 9. Hebrew poetry achieves poetic flow by repetition, comparison and contrast of thoughts and ideas.

10. There are three main types of parallelism in Hebrew poetry.

- a)** Synonymous
- b)** Antithetic
- c)** Climactic

F. The type of Bible literature that makes the greatest use of symbols is called apocalyptic literature.

G. Apocalyptic literature is prophetic in nature.

III. ONCE A STUDENT HAS ANALYZED A PASSAGE AND EXEGETED THE MEANING, HE SHOULD:

A. He should verify the validity of his work by comparing his findings with others who have spoken with authority on the passage.

B. He should identify the timeless principles of the text with a view of accurately conveying them to a contemporary audience.

C. He should realize that at this point he has done nothing to prepare his finding for presentation to his audience.

1. He should therefore be aware that his work is far from over.

2. Before him now is the tremendous responsibility of organizing and presenting the message of God to his audience without distortion.

Suggested resource: *Hermeneutics* by Henry Virkler.