

Interpretation, Application, and Implication of Scripture

Associate Minister's Class

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INTRODUCTION: If the Bible is in fact, the Word of God that reveals His will for humanity regarding life and faith, there is nothing more important than understanding and applying its commands and precepts. This is of particular importance for Ministers of the Gospel – those called to teach, preach, and evangelize.

Some ministers are excellent at interpreting Scripture; however, they lack the skill to make the text relevant to their hearers. Therefore, the hearers leave with the *facts* of the Bible, but no understanding of how to apply it to their daily lives.

Likewise, there are those who are talented at giving illustrations, but poor interpreters. The result is that their applications are detached from any text, and their messages lack power to change the lives of the hearers. Sermons become no more than interesting fables, expressed by a good storyteller.

The purpose of this session is increase the participant's ability to properly interpret and apply Scripture, so that each Minister will be more effective in delivering the Gospel.

- I. The Authority of Scripture
 - a. II Peter 1:20-21
 - b. II Timothy 3:16-17
 - c. A proper reverence for the authority of Scripture will: (1) influence the interpreter to be careful to translate the text accurately, and (2) it will influence the interpreter to be *honest* in seeking the author's intent, bridging the gap of culture and understanding of thousands of years.

- II. Important Presuppositions – a person's presuppositions will determine, to a great degree, how he/she interprets Scripture.
 - a. The Bible is supernatural
 - b. The Bible is trustworthy
 - c. The Bible is natural in character

- III. Literal Interpretation – a system of limitations that takes into consideration context, grammar (normal meaning of words), historical background, culture, and figures of speech.
 - a. There is only ONE interpretation
 - b. ANYONE can interpret Scripture through dependence on the Holy Spirit, belief in the Bible's authority, and proper application of the rules of interpretation

- IV. Non-Literal Interpretation – assumes that there is other than obvious or normal meaning behind the words and that this meaning is to be preferred.
 - a. The author has concealed the meaning of Scripture from ordinary people, and make it available only through a qualified interpreter
 - b. Only certain people are given special qualifications for interpretation

- V. The Prevalence of Non-Literal Interpretation
 - a. A minister forces a meaning on a text, in order make a point – the idea may be biblical, but the preacher has chosen the wrong text
 - b. To see *typology* where none is intended – gives the impression the interpreter has special ability of interpretation
 - c. To *spiritualize* all prophetic verses, rather than accepting the literal meaning, except in the case of obvious symbolism, or figures of speech

- VI. Context
 - a. The Immediate Context
 - b. The Remote Context
 - c. The Context of the Whole Book

- VII. Historical Background
 - a. The Recipients of the Book
 - b. The Author of the Book
 - c. The Purpose of the Book
 - d. Sources to Recreate the History (Scripture itself, Bible Commentaries, Bible Dictionaries, Bible Concordance, Bible Atlas/Maps, Bible Charts, and Study Bibles)

- VIII. Practical Exercises
 - a. Revelation 3:20
 - b. Ephesians 5:18
 - c. Matthew 24:40, 41
 - d. John 12:32
 - e. Matthew 18:20

- IX. Applying the Text
 - a. Preaching: the delivery of God’s message for the purpose of transforming lives for God’s ultimate glory – application without truth is powerless; and truth without application is useless
 - b. Forming Applications
 - c. Think in terms of examples - What examples do you see in your own life or the life of the congregation?
 - d. What does this look like in real time-real life (work, home, life of the church)?

- X. X. Practical Exercise – Hebrews 12:1

- XI. XI. Implications of Application
 - a. What are the implications of obedience?
 - b. What are the implications of disobedience?