

Sermon Study Guide

Pastor: Dr. Henry Schorr

Date: Feb 20/21'16

THE MAIN THING: Proper interpretation of the Bible requires adherence to several principles. (2 Timothy 2:15)

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: *Opportunities to connect and pray as a group*

1. Tell of a time when you had a misunderstanding with someone because you misinterpreted what they had said.
2. What Bible verse/passage has been very difficult for you to understand?
3. When has there been opportunity for you to challenge someone on their interpretation of the Scripture?

PURSUE GOD: *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

1. Read the following verses/passages. As you read each, discuss what principles of interpretation could be used for the words in parentheses:

John 2:1-12 How to interpret the story

(what does it mean to take the story 'literally?')

John 2:19 'Destroy this temple'

John 3:16 'the world'

John 8:13 'your testimony is not valid'

John 10:1-9 'I am the gate' **take note of v.6!

What are the word pictures used in this section?

What are some cultural/historical hints you get from the passage?

Why did the disciples not understand what Jesus was saying?

(Do you understand??)

John 13:12-15 'you also should wash one another's feet'

John 16:23, 24 'whatever you ask in my name'

John 21:25 'the whole world'

2. There are differences of opinion on some biblical issues (e.g. mode of baptism, timeline for the end of the world, prophecy). What is essential for a Bible-believing church to accept as true?

Check out the Statement of Faith for Centre Street Church:

<http://www.cschurch.ca/central/about/statement-of-faith/>

PURSUE MISSION: *Seek to be the community of God's people in your community as you live out your calling.'*

1. Share what has been new information to you about the study of Scripture.
2. Rate your personal response to each of Pastor Henry's three challenges for reading the Bible:
 - a) study the evidence for the validity of Scripture;
 - b) serve and minister to others so that I can have effective spiritual conversations with them;
 - c) realize Scripture is God's direct line of communication with me.What steps will you take this week to let Scripture impact you and your sphere of influence?

Resource:

<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/knowning-scripture/>

THE WORD (NIV)

John 2:1-12

2 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." 4 "Woman, 5 why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. 8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, 9 and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 10 and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." 11 What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. 12 After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

John 2:19

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 8:13

The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

John 10:1-9

"Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." 6 Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

7 Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. 10 They will come in and go out, and find pasture.

John 13:12-15

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

John 16:23-24

In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

John 21:25

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

Sermon Study Summary

- 1) Interpret the Bible literally. In other words, interpret the Bible as it is written - in the context of any piece of literature respecting the context of the passage - whether it is meant as an historical, figurative or metaphorical, or instructive story.
- 2) Let the Bible interpret itself. The Bible is its own best source of explanation. For example, if you are presented with two different interpretations of Scripture, with one in harmony with the message of the Bible and the other that is not, then the latter must be discarded based on the disharmony it presents.
- 3) Interpret a passage in its context. Taken out of context, the Scriptures can be twisted to say just about anything. One cannot isolate passages of the Bible and neglect the context in which the passage was written in; to do so is to break one of the greatest principles of Biblical interpretation. For example, both parts of Psalm 14:1 must be read to understand the full sense of what is being said. (Reread Sermon Summary from January 31, 2016 for full explanation of #1-#3).
- 4) Interpret a passage in light of historical and cultural background. Beliefs, politics, and cultural practices and customs change over time and, as a result, the behaviour and actions of ancient peoples might be seen as strange or esoteric. When an understanding of the cultural norms and practices are excluded from Biblical interpretation this can lead to a misinterpretation of the author's message. The more fully you understand the people of a particular era in time the more fully you'll be able to discern intent and meaning from a passage. (John 13:4, 5 tell of Jesus' washing the feet of His disciples.) Washing feet in that time was necessary because the norm was to walk the dusty/dirty roads either barefoot or in sandals.
- 5) Interpret your experience in the light of Scripture. When it comes to interpreting Scripture the goal is exegesis, which means to determine the intended meaning of text - as opposed to *eisogesis*, which means to superimpose a personal meaning on the text. Personal bias must be removed in the process of exegesis because the message the author is conveying is the imperative and should supersede personal preference.
- 6) Always interpret Biblical narratives in light of the teaching passage. Much of the Old Testament, the Gospels, as well as the book of Acts are narrative - in the sense they give an account of what has occurred; the Epistles on the other hand (Romans; 1st and 2nd Corinthians) are largely written to teach specific doctrines. An account of events must not be mistaken for spiritual instruction - Biblical examples and stories apply to our lives when they are supported by a command or a specific teaching.
- 7) Interpret the Old Testament in light of the New Testament. God's revelation has been progressive in that He has revealed himself in various ways over the centuries, beginning with the prophets and culminating with Christ (Hebrews 1:1). Furthermore, along with these revelations through the ages, Christ established a New Covenant which is superior to the Old Testament covenant once Jesus fulfilled the promises of God on the cross (Hebrews 8:6). With the Old Covenant fulfilled, the Old Testament does not become irrelevant but rather takes on a new meaning and brings clarity to New Testament truths.
- 8) When interpreting Scripture - avoid spiritualizing. Similar to *eisogesis*, spiritualizing is imposing our personal bias on a text yet differs from *eisogesis* by rationalizing personal choices as prophetic or divinely inspired when they are not. When interpreted properly, the student clearly seeks to determine the actual meaning of a passage and then any application (including prophetic words or revelation) stays true to the intended message.