



Interpreting the Bible

Hermeneutics for the Layperson

Why Attend this Class?



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- Learn about what you know about the original books and letters of the Bible and how, and to what extent can you be confident that your English translation is accurate?
 - Learn about the meaning and significance of: Authorial Intent, Textual Criticism, Historical Grammatical vs. Christocentric Method, Speech Act Theory, the Masoretes, the Septuagint, the Leningrad Codex...and more!
 - Learn about the different types of literature in the Bible and how to identify them; and what are the different interpretive rules that apply?
 - Learn about some useful tools to interpret and apply passages from the Bible, and to be instructed in using them

Scriptural Reasons to Improve our Bible Interpretation Skills



- By God's design, accurately understanding and applying the Bible is central to a Christian's life of faith and obedience: 2 Tim 3:14-17, 2 Pet 1:20-21; Psa 19: 7-11, Psa 119:9-11
 - Note these passages also attest to divine inspiration, affirming both divine and human authorship (human authors, writing in literary styles consistent with the times in which they were written, writing to an original audience with an intended effect)
- Diligence in studying the Scriptures is a metric of Christian Maturity: Acts 17:10-11
- If we are to learn to help and serve others, we must give counsel/advice that accurately interprets God's Word: 2 Tim 2:1-2, 15; Neh 8:7-8

Our Roadmap



- Introduction, general concepts and terms
- Presuppositions: pros and cons
- Original manuscripts, copies, and translation facts; issues and concerns
- General rules of interpretation, mostly applicable to all Scripture
- Special rules of interpretation specific to the type of Bible literature
- Framework and tools for interpretation
- Along the way: we will work together on Bible interpretation exercises

Hermeneutics-What is it?



- ***Hermeneutics*** (from Gk. ἐρμηνεύω. ‘to interpret’): The science of the methods of *exegesis*. Whereas exegesis is usually the act of explaining a text, often in the case of sacred literature according to formally prescribed rules, hermeneutics is the science (or art) by which exegetical procedures are devised.
 - Cross, F. L., & Livingstone, E. A. (2005). The Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church (3rd ed. rev.) (765). Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Proverbs 22:28 (NKJV)

28 Do not remove the ancient landmark
Which your fathers have set.

Proverbs 23:10–11 (NKJV)

10 Do not remove the ancient landmark,
Nor enter the fields of the fatherless;
11 For their Redeemer is mighty;
He will plead their cause against you.



Warm up question

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- Examine Pro 22:28, then Pro 23:10-12. Then answer these questions:
 - What so you think is the author's intended meaning of these passages to the original audience? (Pre-exile Israel, ~1,000-600 BC)
 - What was the author's intended reader response to these passages?
 - What are some relevant historical, cultural, societal, and covenantal differences between the original audience and us?
 - What (spiritual) principles can be derived from these passages?
 - How can we apply these principles today?

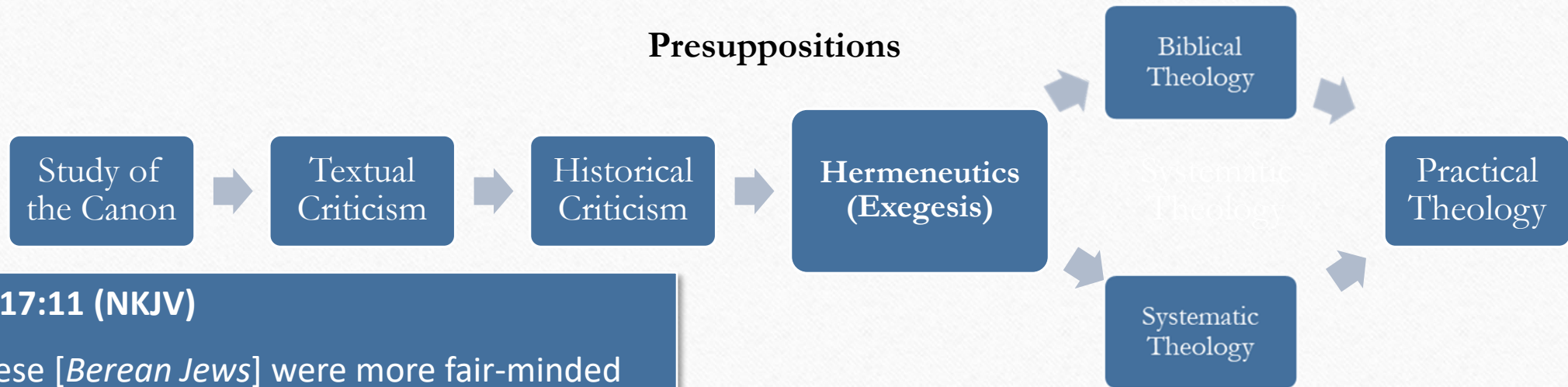
Where does Hermeneutics fit in?



Original Manuscripts and Copies

Translations

Presuppositions



Acts 17:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ These [*Berean Jews*] were more fair-minded [*or, open minded, or noble minded*] than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Observation, Interpretation, Application