

BIBLIOLOGY (76)

believer facing Christ for judgment for receiving or losing rewards. The coming of Christ for His kingdom speaks of reigning with Christ having received or lost rewards. In view of this context, Paul is telling Pastor Timothy that he wants him to preach God's word in view of the fact that He will see Jesus Christ, be judged by Jesus Christ and ultimately reign with Jesus Christ.

Apparently one of the critical issues which will determine our position for reigning with Jesus Christ will be how faithful we were to carry out this charge. By observing a simple article "the", by observing the context, and by comparing this prophetic passage with others, we can come to a true, accurate interpretation of precisely what Paul was saying to Timothy, namely the charge to Preach the Word is a very serious charge.

Interpretive Principle #8 - We must keep mind that each passage must be interpreted honestly.

It is very easy to find verses that conform to our way of thinking- all cults do this. It is very easy to, as Paul said, "adulterate the word of God" (II Cor. 4:2). It is very easy, but it is also very wrong. Our job is not to support our opinions or beliefs by citing a couple of verses, our job is to **accurately and honestly understand and communicate God's Word**.

We are sternly wamed by God not to add to a text or take away from a text. We are challenged not to read things into a text that are not there. Our goal is to prayerfully and honestly understand God's precious word.

At no point should we be more honest than when it comes to a study of God's word. When faced with the Truth of God's word, which perhaps opposes our own preconceived prejudices, we should immediately toss aside our opinions and readily accept God's word. This is a major key to our own growth. Honesty and accuracy with God's word should be the hallmark of every believer.

If this hermeneutic principle were honestly applied, denominations would crumble and religious nonsense, perversion, misrepresentation and misinterpretation would cease. Unfortunately, many are not willing to honestly approach the Bible with a true desire of knowing God's word. Many are only interested in supporting their own distorted theology and beliefs.

Floyd H. Barackman, in his book, How To Interpret the Bible, lists eleven rules of interpretation to follow in every passage:

- 1) Interpret the passage according to its context.
- 2) Interpret the passage in light of all that the Bible teaches.
- 3) Understand the meaning of words in the passage. .
- 4) Interpret the passage according to its grammatical construction.
- 5) Interpret the passage in light of its background.
- 6) Recognize, identify and interpret any figurative expression in the passage.
- 7) Recognize and interpret any type in the passage.
- 8) Recognize and interpret any parable or allegory in the passage.

BIBLIOLOGY (77)

- 9) Recognize and interpret any dispensational feature in the passage.
- 10) Recognize and interpret any prophetic feature in the passage.
- 11) Recognize, identify and interpret any doctrinal words in the passage.

Although this information does not replace a course on Hermeneutics, these are good principles and rules for "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." We would all do well in our Biblical study to ask the same question that Philip asked the Ethiopian eunuch, when he was reading Isaiah, "Do you understand what you are reading?" (Acts 8:30) By following sound principles and rules of Biblical interpretation it is possible, through careful and prayerful study, to accurately and precisely understand and apply God's word.

QUESTION #17 - What will the attitude be toward the Bible as we near the end of this Church Age, as we near the Rapture?

One of the Biblical evidences that this age is nearing its end will be attitudes toward the Bible and true Biblical study. It **will not** be the majority of Church people who will be after a true understanding of God's word and God's doctrines, it **will** be the minority.

Most of the religious world will drift away true teaching and true doctrine, and this will intensify as we near the appearing of Christ at the Rapture.

- 1) I Tim. 4:1-5 – There will be a departure from a true knowledge of God's word and there will be a rise in demonic legalism in which men will use and misuse the Bible in a variety of areas.
- 2) II Tim. 4:2-4 – There will be many who will reject Biblical exposition and sound doctrine and many will be drawn to ear tickling ministers and ministries.
- 3) II Pet. 3:1-9 – There will be a rise in those who will mock the Bible, particularly in areas related to Biblical prophecy. There will be a lack of esteeming God's word and believing what it says particularly in the area of the coming of Jesus Christ.

Because of the lackadaisical attitudes toward book studies of the Bible and Doctrinal studies found in the Bible, which exist today in most churches and even in most people, we may safely assume that we are very near the end of this age, for what has been clearly predicted is presently operative.

BIBLIOLOGY (77A)

QUESTION #17a- What role does the Holy Spirit play in a person being able to interpret the Bible accurately?

This question boils down to this- how does the Holy Spirit guide and direct a person in the interpretive process of the Word of God? (For this study, this teacher will follow the outline of Roy B. Zuck, Vital Theological Issues, pp. 42-51)

(Truth #1) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** mean He gives new revelation. God's Spirit will always work with written Scripture, He will not go it by way of addition or subtraction.

(Truth #2) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** mean one's interpretation is infallable.

When the Holy Spirit inspired the original manuscripts He guarded them in such a way that they were without error (inerrancy) and incapable of error (infallibility). When it comes to interpretation the Spirit guides one into truth but does not guard against fallibility. For example, the Roman Catholic Church claimed it was the only group who could understand the Bible in an infallible way- which we (most Protestants) reject. A person has a right to private interpretation, but that does not mean that interpretation is true.

(Truth #3) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does** mean one who has a true Spirit gift of Pastor/Teacher should be able to see and understand truths beyond the level of many.

We must be very careful here because any Pastor can claim the Spirit has let them see something that may not be God's Spirit at all. Some guidelines in this area are these:

- 1) Usually if a careful interpreter thinks he has unlocked something from God's word, other skilled interpreters from all ages, have seen the same truth.
- 2) If an interpreter presents unlocked truth to God's people, others who are dedicated students and of the Bible will sense it and embrace it. It will have a certain ring to it.

(Truth #4) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does** mean that the unsaved person may be able to comprehend many of the statements in the Bible, but they are not able to appropriate it properly to one's faith system and life.

There are many unbelievers who have understood historical facts of the Bible. In fact, some have undertaken archeological digs based on their understanding. Most lost people have cognitively grasped certain Biblical data- such as the birth of Christ and the resurrection. But the person does not have the ability to apply these to his life and faith system.

(Truth #5) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** mean that only Bible scholars can understand the Bible.

BIBLIOLOGY (77B)

The Bible was given to be understood by all. We admit that great growth occurs when one with the proper gift utilizes it. However, every believer can carefully and prayerfully study the Scripture and expect a great level of understanding.

(Truth #6) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does** coincide with the real spirituality of a person.

A worldly Christian, not yielded to the Lord will not ever be able to grasp God's word fully (I Cor. 3:1-3; Heb. 5:13). The Christian whose life is full of sin is susceptible to inaccurate interpretation. A spiritual Christian has far greater depth and discerning abilities.

(Truth #7) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** mean one must not diligently study.

Nothing will ever replace careful diligent study of the word of God. The Holy Spirit works as one carefully studies the Scriptures. As an interpreter carefully studies a passage and meditates and consults other careful works on that passage, God's Spirit begins to unravel His truth.

(Truth #8) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** mean the interpreter has no need to consult study helps, commentaries, theologies, Bible dictionaries, etc.

It is often asserted by "devout" people that they can understand the Bible without any help- just them and their Bible. This is nothing more than a "veiled egotism." To think that one is at such a remarkable level that he/she can by-pass all godly learning of all ages, is very foolish and arrogant. God's sovereignty has preserved the writings of some of the most dedicated men of God who ever lived, some of whom laid down their own lives. To ignore them is ignorance.

(Truth #9) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** mean the interpreter can ignore common sense and logic.

Clear, systematic thinking is that which the Holy Spirit uses. The more the interpreter thinks clearly about history, geography, culture, and grammar the more accurate the interpretation. For example, if a text reads he went "up" to Jerusalem it may mean elevation, not direction. There will be harmony between clear, concise thinking and the work of the Holy Spirit.

(Truth #10) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** typically give sudden flashes of instant, intuitive insight into the true meaning of Scripture. Insight into Scripture requires careful study, thought and analysis. The Holy Spirit does not usurp careful verification and validation, He works in harmony with it.

(Truth #11) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** mean all parts of the Bible are equally easy and clear in meaning. II Pet.3: 16 indicates some things are "hard to understand."

(Truth #12) - The Spirit's ministry in interpretation **does not** mean it is possible to understand everything about God comprehensively and completely. Some things will not be known until we see our Christ 'face to face' (I Cor. 13:12). Some of the mysteries of God we will not know until we get to heaven.