

# Going Deeper in Bible Study

## Week 4 - Interpretation Part II



January 26, 2025

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### Motivation Moment & Prayer

- Psalm 19:7-11 (NIV84)

<sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. <sup>8</sup> The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. <sup>9</sup> The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. <sup>10</sup> They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. <sup>11</sup> By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

- <sup>7</sup>Yhwh's teaching has integrity, restoring life.
- Yhwh's declaration is reliable, giving insight to the untaught.
- <sup>8</sup>Yhwh's charges are upright, joying the heart.
- Yhwh's command is clean, lighting up the eyes.
- <sup>9</sup>Yhwh's reverence is pure, standing forever.
- Yhwh's decisions are truthfulness; they are altogether faithful. (BCOT)

### Review last week and Growth project

- Interpretation, what does it mean?
  - We did answering a tricky question, and how to do good interpretation.

OBSERVATION – what do I see?

INTERPRETATION – what does it mean?

STEP 1: Answer your questions for interpretation (last time)

STEP 2: Theological reflection: biblical & doctrinal (today)

STEP 3: Summarize the passage

STEP 4: Create a BIG idea

STEP 5: Come up with timeless truths based on your interpretation

APPLICATION – how will I respond?

See what people did for their growth project, ask and answer a tricky question using my process in Colossians.

## INTERPRETATION (Part II) – what does it mean?

### STEP 2: Theological reflection - studying with sound doctrine (overview)

- Biblical Theological Reflection – Relating my passage to biblical theology.
  - How does this passage relate to the entire story of Scripture?
  - How does it anticipate or reflect upon the person and work of Christ?
- Doctrinal Reflection – Relating my passage to systematic theology.
  - How does this passage fit into what the entire Bible says about a particular topic?
  - How does it sync in with the major topics and concerns of the Bible in systematic order?

Taking time to do Biblical Theology.

What is Biblical Theology?

“A way of reading the Bible as one story by one divine author that culminates in who Jesus Christ is and what he has done, so that every part of Scripture is understood in relation to him.”

Roark and Cline from *Biblical Theology*

- Jesus is the hero, the centerpiece of the story, from cover to cover.
- Jesus is “the interpretive key to the Bible, which means a careful Bible reader will find him in the beginning, middle, and end of this story.”
- “God’s story is a grand story - the grandest of them all, in fact - and it’s centered on his plan of redemption in the person and work of Jesus Christ.”

The term “biblical theology”

\*\* (from 9Marks.org)

It describes a “hermeneutical discipline” (or way of interpreting the Bible). Specifically, it’s a discipline that attempts to trace the Bible’s one main storyline through all of the Bible’s different books and genres. Biblical theology in this sense looks at,

- How certain themes develop throughout all of Scripture,
- How the Old and New Testaments relate to each other,
- And how all of Scripture, in one way or another, points to the saving work of Jesus Christ.

That the Bible is about “Christ from Beginning to End – the full story of Scripture reveals the full glory of Christ.” (Hunter and Wellum)

- That the, “Bible is one unified story that leads to Jesus.” (Bible Project)

Why is it important we do this theological reflection when we study the Bible?

- Luke 24:25-27, 44-47  
“he interpreted to them all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”
- John 5:39, 46
- Acts 17:2-3  
Also, Acts 17:22-31, is an example, moved through the story of God in sermon
- 1 Peter 1:10-12
- Interpreting the Bible with the instincts of Jesus and Paul and Peter.
- Finding how the part relates to the whole, the story of God’s redemption in Christ.
- Guards against proof-texting and moralism
- It’s finding the fuller meaning, God’s intentions in the text according to his full plan.
- It gets at the core – the gospel and how it affects our hearts – we are like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, “we need our eyes and mind opened (Lk 24:31,45) to recognize Jesus in all the Scriptures in order that we might love him with all your hearts from all the Scriptures (Lk24:32)” – leads us to Jesus, gospel, and who we are as his people.

How do we do Biblical Theology?

Three Contexts of Bible Study – continuing, close, complete (Hunter/Wellum)

1. Studying the close context - what is happening in the book?
2. Studying the continuing context - where am I at in God’s Story?
3. Studying the complete context - how does this point to Christ?

In other words, we look down (close context), look back (continuing context), and look ahead (complete context).

## Looking Down - Studying the Close (Immediate) Context

- what is happening in the book?

\*\*puzzle illustration - working on a half done puzzle - single area (color, shape)

Three Questions as we seek to look down at the immediate context (historical and literary)

1. What is the book about and where am I at?
2. What is happening in this particular passage?
3. What kind of literature is this?

## COMA Study Method

- Context - where am I at?
  - Background of the book & current place in the story.
  - Author, original audience
  - Historical context, cultural features and circumstances
  - Type of literature - story, poetry, prophecy, epistle, etc.
- Observation - what do I see?
  - Words, grammar, etc - figures of speech, word/phrases repeated
  - Structure - how is the passage arranged, does this give clues?
- Meaning - what does it mean?
  - *Who is...* the author talking about? Accomplishing the action?
  - *What is...* the meaning of this word or phrase? Implication of this statement? Meaning of this figure of speech? The author's flow of thought and tone?
  - *Why did the author...* choose this word? Include this phrase or statement? Not include or mention something? Connect these ideas?
  - Look up *cross references* and find other places where words and topics are used.
  - *Compare multiple translations* such as ESV, NIV, NAS, NKJV. This can help give you a feel for the meaning.
  - Look up *background information* in a Bible Dictionary or Encyclopedia.
  - Compare your findings with ideas in *commentaries*.
  - *Summarize* the passage in a big idea statement, chart, drawing, or summary paragraph.
- Application - how can I apply this to my life?
  - Universal principle - statement of truth from meaning applied to any situation at any time.

- o Potential applications one could make
- o Write out something you will do, "I will"
- o Or, S.P.E.C.K. - how?

What kind of literature is this? What are the features that govern this genre?

1. Narrative (Historical & Law, Gospels & Acts)
2. Wisdom Literature & Poetry (Psalms & Proverbs)
3. Prophecy (Major & Minor)
4. Discourse (Epistles)

### Looking Back - Studying the Continuing Context

- where am I at in God's story?  
 \*\*puzzle illustration - take a break and look at what you have accomplished

Where am I at in the grand story of redemption?

1. Creation
2. Fall
3. Redemption – God plan to save through Christ
  - o OT promises and themes, redemption anticipated (peace, hope amidst despair)
  - o NT fulfillment in Christ redemption accomplished and applied (prince of peace, bring God's future)
4. New Creation

Where am I at in the drama of God (Acts and Scenes)?

*Read the Bible for Life, Reading God's Story* by George Guthrie

Where am I at in the progression of promises made and kept (Covenants)?

God's covenant with...

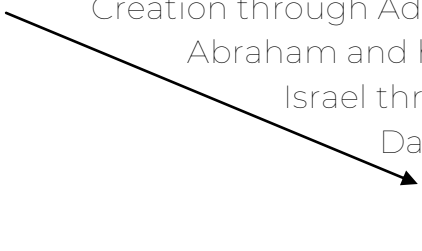
Creation through Adam & Noah (Gen 3:15, 9:13)

Abraham and his children (Gen 12:1-3, 15:6)

Israel through Moses (Ex 4:22, 19:6, 19-20)

David and his sons (2 Sam 7:14)

✝ God's New Covenant in Christ (Jer 31:31-34; Lk 22:20)



## Looking Ahead - Studying the Complete Context

- how does this point to Christ?
- \*\*puzzle illustration - take a look at the box cover**

As we study, regularly ask, "What does this reveal about Jesus?"

1. How is this pointing forward to the person and work of Christ? How is this person, event, or institution a type of Christ?

Type (definition) - An OT person, event, or institution designed by God to be fulfilled in Christ and his people.

**\*\*Indicators of Types:**

- A pattern rooted in history (repeated, Goldsworthy's three places - 1) OT history 2) prophecy, 3) NT fulfillment)
- Designed by God (purpose in God's plan – theme picked up & applied to Christ/redemption, not random: NT explains it (reflects back, quotes, alludes)
- A progression fulfilled in Christ (unpacked through covenants, lesser to greater escalation of theme, esp come to final fulfillment in Christ)

Person - Adam... others?? David, Moses

Event - Exodus... others?? Day of Atonement

Institution – Priests... others??

Sacrifices, temple/tabernacle, prophets, kings

TIP - Read Hebrews! Esp. 9-10 how describes as better, greater/better... Moses, etc.

2. How does the story create a desire for something better? What is the longing or the hunger here (human need) that only Jesus can satisfy? How does he satisfy it?

Examples:

- Mana - spiritual hunger - bread of life, satisfies spiritual hunger
- Others?
- Kings/shepherds - the leaders let people down... Christ King of Kings, Good Shepherd – satisfies need for direction, protection, provision.

### 3. What promises are made and how are they ultimately kept through Christ?

#### Tips

- Daily Bible reading - read regularly in OT and NT together in your plan
- Look for promises as you read, mark
  - Certain color in reading, OT, underline (GREEN)
  - Specific prophecy that was fulfilled in Christ (PURPLE)
- Go backwards, read Matthew - flip back and read OT passage, mark
- Go through a resource that lists quotations and their passages (ESVSB)

Summary – questions to ask to find how a passage relates to the person and work of Christ

1. How does my passage point forward to Christ's first coming? How does it anticipate or predict the gospel?
2. How does my passage explain Christ's person and work? How does my passage reflect upon or apply the gospel?
3. How does my passage anticipate Christ's return? How does it predict or explain the future consummation of all things, the new heavens and earth in Christ?

(adapted from *Biblical Theology*)

## DOCTRINAL REFLECTION– the what, why, and how

What is theological reflection on doctrine? How does it relate to biblical theology?

"If biblical theology helps you discern the progressive unfolding of God's redemptive plan in Christ, then systematic theology helps you synthesize everything that the Bible says in the form of doctrines."<sup>1</sup>

"Systematic theology begins with key topics (God, man, sin, Christ, salvation, etc.) and then searches the Scriptures to see what they teach about them. On the other hand, biblical theology attempts to read the whole story of the Bible and asks how each part relates to the whole."<sup>2</sup>

"Because Scripture faithfully represents the mind of God, the teaching of Scripture can be put together into a coherent whole. We can sum up what Scripture as a whole says about its central concerns, such as the character of God, the state of

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<sup>1</sup> David Helm, *Expositional Preaching*, 83.

<sup>2</sup> Roark and Cline, *Biblical Theology*, 26.

creation, the nature and fallenness of man, the saving work of Christ, the life of the church, and the promise of the world to come. Working through these topics in an orderly progression is called systematic theology.”<sup>3</sup>

Systematic Theology: “A way of reading the Bible that summarizes and synthesizes the teachings of Scripture and brings them to bear on our lives.”<sup>4</sup>

Biblical Theology: “A way of reading the Bible as one story by one divine author that culminates in who Jesus Christ is and what he has done, so that every part of Scripture is understood in relation to him.”<sup>5</sup>

\*\*Think of putting *together a puzzle* (Biblical theology in Bible study). Systematic theology, doctrinal reflection, is like going *bowling*, serves as the guardrails toward the pins, goal.

## DOCTRINAL REFLECTION – why?

Why is doctrinal reflection important? (2 Group Questions)

1. Why take time to consider Bible doctrine when studying a passage? What are the benefits to connecting a topic in my passage with the systematic whole of what Scripture says about it?

- Keeps me from error, puts it in perspective
- Helps me decide its importance in the scheme of what is important in the Bible
- Helps me explain it to others. Helps answer questions. Even non-believers.
- If in a certain genre, it helps me balance, connect it with whole Bible teaching

Jamieson

- It serves as the bumpers and pins in bowling. It keeps us going toward the goal of knowing and loving God and also keeps us from going off the rails into false beliefs.
- An important goal and guardrail (of Bible study, reading, preaching)

“Sound doctrine summarizes and synthesizes the Bible’s teaching into a coherent whole. It tells us what God is like, what he loves and hates, what he’s done in the past, and what his plans are in the future. Letting your knowledge of

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<sup>3</sup> Bobby Jamieson, *Sound Doctrine*, 38.

<sup>4</sup> Jamieson, 38.

<sup>5</sup> Roark and Cline, 26.



God be determined by one or two isolated passages would be like letting one or two isolated conversations determine your knowledge of your spouse.”

“An important guardrail. It keeps us from wrongly inferring things about God from Scripture that are untrue. In order to interpret Scripture rightly, we need to bring to the table what we already know about God from Scripture – that is, sound doctrine.” (Jamieson, 30-31)

2. How can people get off into the gutter? How can things go awry if we don't do good doctrinal reflection? Do you have any examples of people doing this from your life?

## DOCTRINAL REFLECTION – how?

### My Process – walk through example

1. Make observations, summarize. Ask questions.
2. Try to connect it to the topic according to the book I am in – list the places I see the topic in the particular book.
3. Try to connect it with what the author says as a whole about it or other important passages about that topic by the author.
4. Try to fit it into what the entire NT or OT says.
5. Fit it into the major topics and sub-categories of systematic theology. Pull out a resource and review it, find where it may be. Learn the different views. Find the main texts that explain it well. History – historic confessions i.e.
6. Decide how important or formative the topic is in your passage. (major, minor, need much more for further explanations)
7. How much of this will I include in my talk, sermon, or how much does it relate to the main point of the passage?

## Growth Project – worksheet

LOOKING DOWN – what is the main point of the passage?

LOOKING BACK – where are we at in God's story?

- Where are we at in the grand story of redemption?
- Where are we at in the drama of God?
- Where are we at in the progression of promises made and kept (covenants)?

LOOKING FORWARD – How does the passage explain Christ's person and work?

- Do we find any major themes in the passage woven throughout the Bible that find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ's person or work?
- How does the passage create a desire for something better? What is the longing or the hunger here (human need) that only Jesus can satisfy? How has he satisfied it?
- Do we find any promises made and ultimately kept through Christ?
- How does the passage anticipate Christ's return? How does it predict or explain the future consummation of all things, the new heavens and earth in Christ?
- Do we find any types (person, institution, event) that point to Christ? Are any types explained - do we see Jesus fulfill any of these types?