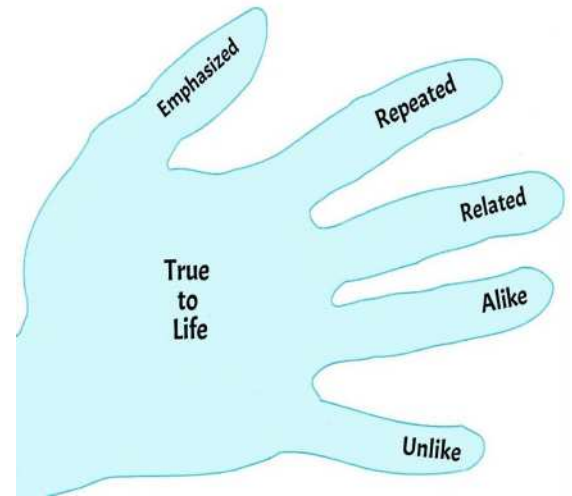


Use the five "Ws" - and you will be on your way to dissecting Scripture well. "How" is sometimes the sixth added to this. Who is it about? What happened? When did it take place? Where did it take place? Why did it happen? How did it happen? Thomas Aquinas says the genesis of this thinking was to be found in Cicero (January 106 BC – 7 December 43 BC). CSI, detectives, private investigators, literary critiques, and moms all use this in their daily investigations.

Emphasized: In Matthew there are 1,062 verses, at least 342 of them (one third) give us discourses from the savior; Repeated: The psalmist repeats "His love endures forever"

twenty-six times. Or God's *Hall of Fame* (Heb. 11) repeats "by faith..." 18-times. Related: Things that have some connection, look for 3-things ~ a) movement from the general to the specific, b) questions and answers, c) cause and effect. Like/Unlike: *Similies* - "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up." *Metaphors* - "I am the vine, and My father is the vine dresser," or, "you must be born again." The use of "but" that a change of direction is coming your way: "You have heard that it was said... but say to you" (Matt. 5:21). True To Life: What does the passage tell you about reality? How does it resonate with your life?



Some mistakenly view biblical hermeneutics as limiting our ability to learn new truths from God's Word or stifling the Holy Spirit's ability to reveal to us the meaning of God's Word. This is not the case. The goal of biblical hermeneutics is to point us to the correct interpretation which the Holy Spirit has already inspired into the text. The purpose of biblical hermeneutics is to protect us from improperly applying a Scripture to a particular situation.

Eight Rules of Interpretation

- 1) **Rule of Definition**: Define the term or words being considered and then adhere to the defined meanings.
- 2) **Rule of Usage**: Don't add meaning to established words and terms. What was the common usage in the culture and that time period. When the passage was written, in other words?
- 3) **Rule of Context**: Avoid using words out of context. Context must define terms and how words are used.
- 4) **Rule of Historical background**: Don't separate interpretation and historical investigation.
- 5) **Rule of Logic**: Be certain that words as interpreted agree with the overall premise.
- 6) **Rule of Precedent**: Use the known and commonly accepted meanings of words, not obscure meanings for which there is no precedent.
- 7) **Rule of Unity**: Even though many documents may be used there must be a general unity among them.

- 8) **Rule of Inference:** Base conclusions on what is already known and proven or can be reasonably implied from all known facts.

Greeks [Aristotle, Cicero, etc] are the genesis of, Irenaeus used them when he wrote *Against Heresies*, which dealt with Gnosticism and other untruths. Every law court religiously follows them and honest theologians dare not violate them. Much false teaching is the result of violating one or more of these universal rules of interpretation. They were used by the master expositors of the Middle Ages all the way to Luther and the Reformation theologians who disproved Roman fallacies with them. These rules were involved in the great doctrinal debates of the theologians from the Council of Nice (324 A.D.) to the Council of Trent (1545-1563).

2 Timothy 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed, correctly teaching the word of truth.

2 Peter 1:20

First of all, you should know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from one's own interpretation...

Solomon said in **Proverbs 1:5-6**

a wise man will listen and increase his learning... for understanding a proverb or a parable... and their riddles.

Hermeneutics – From the Greek hermeneutikos, “interpretation.” *Hermeneutics is the science of the study and interpretation of Scripture, the branch of theology that prescribes rules by which the Bible should be interpreted.* Biblical hermeneutics strives to formulate guidelines for studying Scripture that help recover the meaning a Biblical text had for its original hearers. (*The Compact Dictionary of Doctrinal Words*, 1988)

Exegesis – (GK, explanation) *Critical exposition or explanation of the meaning of a scriptural passage in the context of the whole Bible. The reader of Scripture studies the word meanings and grammar of the text to discern what... was communicated, drawing the meaning out of the text rather than reading what he wants into the text (eisegesis).* (*The Compact Dictionary of Doctrinal Words*, 1988; *Nelson's New Christian Dictionary*, 2001)

Eisegesis – *is the process of interpreting a text or portion of text in such a way that it introduces one's own presuppositions, agendas, and/or biases into and onto the text.*

Recommended Resources:

How to Study the Bible, by John MacArthur;

Living By the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible, Howard G and William D. Hendricks