



## Core Seminars—Biblical Theology

### Class 2: The Tools that Are Needed

#### Apocalyptic

1. Two main examples: Daniel and Revelation.
  2. Literary context is important. Draws biblical images from OT.
  3. Apocalyptic provides a schematization of history, but not necessarily chronologically.
  4. Main point: God's people can endure present suffering because of the confidence that God wins—because of what Christ has already accomplished in the past.
- Example: Revelation 5.

#### 13 Weeks Schedule

#### THE TEXT TO BE EXAMINED

1. What Is The Bible? Week 1

#### THE TOOLS THAT ARE NEEDED

2. Exegetical Tools Week 2
3. Biblical Theology Tools 1 Week 3
4. Biblical Theology Tools 2 Week 4
5. Systematic Theology Tools 1 Week 5
6. Systematic Theology Tools 2 Week 6

#### THE STORIES TO BE TOLD

7. Creation Week 7
8. Fall Week 8
9. Love Week 9
10. Sacrifice Week 10
11. Promise Week 11

#### PUTTING IT TOGETHER FOR THE CHURCH

12. Preaching Week 12
13. Other Benefits for the Local Church (Counseling, Missions, Social justice, etc.) Week 13

#### INTRODUCTION

- How can we be sure that we're reading the story correctly?
- "Hermeneutics" = theories of interpretation
- Author's original intent?
- Exegesis = The disciplined attempt to find the author's original intent

#### GRAMMATICAL HISTORICAL METHOD

John Owen: "There is no other sense in [Scripture] than what is contained in the words whereof materially it doth consist... In the interpretation of the mind of anyone, it is necessary that the words he speaks or writes be rightly understood; and this we cannot do... unless we understand the language he speaks ...the [idiom] of that language, with the common use of an intention of its... expressions." (Quest, p. 101) (Beware the "Intentional Fallacy")

#### *Grammatical*

1. First, how does the larger text break up into units?
2. What's the general flow of argument? Basic sentence diagramming!
3. How are the sentences connected? Discourse analysis.

#### *Historical*

1. How does this fit within the larger argument?
2. How does the historical context (author, date, audience, provenance) help?
3. Is there a cultural context? E.g., what are Pharisees; what rights did women have in the Roman world.
4. Are there issues of geography, politics, or history? E.g., where is Tarshish in relation to Nineveh?

Further resources: Nigel Beynon, *Digging Deeper*; Norm Stearett, *How to Understand Your Bible. How to Study the Bible* Core Seminar

#### *Biblical*

How does this text relates to the rest of Scripture.

## IMPORTANCE OF LITERARY FORMS

First, distinct genres tend to have distinct rules or patterns of communicating.

Second, the Bible consists of multiple genres.

Third, some of the Bible seems culturally foreign to us

## INTERPRETING THE BIBLE'S DIVERSE GENRES

### *Narrative* (40% of OT and 60% of NT)

1. Pay attention to the story and its details.
2. Remember the narrator has had to be selective in what he records.
3. Context is king.
4. What's the point of the narrative in light of the author's purpose in writing the book?
  - Example: 1 Samuel 17

### *Parable*

1. Ask, "What's the main point or points?"
2. Pay attention to repetition—a clue to the main emphasis.
3. The conclusion/ main point is typically at the end and centers on the nature of the Kingdom or the King.
4. Interpret in light of the context of the larger narrative it's in.
  - Example: Mark 4:30-31.

### *Poetry* (one-third of the OT)

1. The most common feature of poetic structure is *parallelism*: synonymous, synthetic (builds), and antithetical.
2. Consider word play, alliteration and alphabetic acrostic, repetition, hyperbole, contrast, metonymy (substitution) and synecdoche (the whole stands for the part or vice versa).
3. Like English poetry, it uses metaphor and simile, figurative images, irony and euphemism.
  - Example: Psalm 19:7-11. An extended example of synonymous parallelism. Not six different things, but one—the Word of God. The point is both to engender in us a high view and value of his word and to convince us of verse 11!

### *Wisdom*

All about how to live well in God's world and in light of God's character. Wisdom is the fruit of the fear of the Lord

1. There are lots of forms of Wisdom literature—drama, proverbs, autobiographical confession and admonition, etc.
2. Read it in context and according to its stated purpose.
  - Example: Proverbs 12:21

### *Prophecy*

The prophets come as attorneys for the prosecution, arguing God's case in a covenant lawsuit against Israel for breaking the covenant. 1.

1. The basic feature, and problem, of interpretation is the promise-fulfillment dynamic.
2. Multiple horizons of fulfillment.
3. The language and images of the past are used to describe the future. These provide a theological understanding of what's happening, not necessarily a literal understanding.
4. Not all prophecies are unconditional. E.g. Jonah.
5. Prophecy not just predictive, but descriptive (typological).
6. Context is king.
  - Example: Isaiah 11:

### *Epistles*

1. Context is extremely important. Occasional documents.
2. Logical arguments.
3. Self-consciously understand themselves to be the recipients and fulfillment of the OT promises because of what Christ had done.
4. Application is typically straight-forward.
  - Example: Ephesians 2:11-22.