

Hermeneutics

Session 18

Process for Studying a Book of the Bible

Hermeneutics Outline

1. Introduction: What is hermeneutics and why should we care?
2. What is the Bible and how did we get it?
3. Why so many translations? And which is best?
4. What is the history of Hermeneutics?
5. What are the different hermeneutical approaches, and which is best?
6. What are the key principles of good hermeneutics?
7. NT Genres: Epistles
8. NT Genres: Gospels
9. NT Genres: Parables
10. OT Genres: Hebrew Historical Narrative
11. NT Genres: Acts
12. OT Genres: Law
13. OT Genres: Prophets
14. OT Genres: Psalms
15. OT Genres: Wisdom
16. NT Genres: Revelation
17. What are the tools we have available to us today to study the Bible?
18. Process for Studying a Book of the Bible

Process for Studying a Book of the Bible

Outline

1. Background Study
2. The Big Picture of the Book
3. Focussing on a passage: Observation/Interpretation/Application
4. Big Idea Discovery Study

Practice:

Revelation (Background etc.)

Revelation 3:14-22

Process for Studying a Book of the Bible

1. Background Study

Use Resources:

- Commentaries
- Bible Dictionaries
- Lexicons
- Bible Handbooks
- Concordance
- Parallel Bible
- Cross-referencing Bible
- Dictionary of Bible Imagery
- Interlinear Bible
- Maps
- Study Bible

Key Introductory Questions to Answer

1. Authorship: Who wrote the book?
2. Date: When was it written?
3. Destination (especially relevant if it is a letter): To whom was it written?
4. Occasion and Purpose: Why was it written?
5. Relation to other writings:
 1. What genre is it? Why is this significant?
 2. How does it fit within the story of God's purposes throughout history?
 3. How does it relate to the rest of Scripture? (Quotes? Similarities? Differences? Style similarities/differences?)
6. Theological Values: What are some of the key theological teachings? Themes?
7. Outline: Observe the outline of the book.

Process for Studying a Book of the Bible

2. The Big Picture of the Book

Read in one sitting (if a smaller book) or two or three (if a larger book)

1. Observe key words/phrases/themes.
2. Come to a general understanding of the author's intent of the book.
3. Use resources as needed (Bible Handbook, Study Bibles, Commentaries, etc.)

Process for Studying a Book of the Bible

3. Focussing on a passage: Observation / Interpretation / Application

The Hermeneutical Process (Observation/Interpretation/Application)

1.Observation

1.What did the author intend to communicate?

- It can't mean for us today what it didn't mean to the original hearers.
- Genre?
- Historical context?
- Literary context?
- Use Resources as needed.
- This is a very important step: If we misunderstand the authorial intent, we will miss the next two steps too!

2.Interpretation

1.What is the principle that crosses time and culture?

3.Application

1.How can I apply this principle to my life today?

Process for Studying a Book of the Bible

4. Big Idea Discovery Study

- A helpful way of organizing your observation / interpretation / application.
- Especially helpful for preaching, teaching, or leading a Bible study discussion.

Practice: John 15:1-11

Big Idea Discovery Study

4-Step Bible Study Tool

Step One - Big Idea

- Read the passage and create a tentative “Big Idea”
- What is the main point of this passage?
- (Clear and concise is best)

Big Idea Discovery Study

4-Step Bible Study Tool

Step Two - One Things

- Reread the passage and pick out One Things that are connected to the Big Idea.
- (A One Thing is a word or phrase that stands out to you personally).
- Aim for at least five One Things.

Big Idea Discovery Study

4-Step Bible Study Tool

Step Three - Connecting the Big Idea and the One Things

- Turn the Big Idea into an application-oriented question: Big Idea Question.
- Turn the One Things into answers to the Big Idea Question.
- (Notice: this can be an outline for a sermon or Bible study!)

Note: if this step is difficult, consider refining the Big Idea and Big Idea Question. Is it really the Big Idea and Big Idea Question of the passage? Can it be re-worded? Are the One Things clearly related to the Big Idea? If the One Things are not clearly related to the Big Idea, select different One Things that are related to the Big Idea.

Big Idea Discovery Study

4-Step Bible Study Tool

Step Four - Create Discussion Questions

What does it say?

- State the One Thing
- Or ask an observation questions to which the correct answer is the One Thing.

What does it mean?

- Ask of the One Thing: What does it mean?
- This is where you get some very good discussion in a group setting.
- When doing a sermon/message, asking good questions (rhetorical) helps engage the audience.
- This is also where you would have additional cross-references, illustrations (story, video, pictures), etc.

What does it matter?

- Discuss the significance of the One Things to your life these days.
- In other words: How is God calling you to apply this truth to your life?
- In a sermon: Asking and answering good application questions can be a great tool for communicating. In a sermon, you will likely suggest answers and/or give your own personal answers.

The End