

# HERMENEUTICS **FOR EVERYONE**

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A Practical Guide for Reading and Studying Your Bible



# WHERE ARE WE GOING?

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Part 1 – Introducing your Bible

Part 2 – Concepts and definitions

Part 3 – The ACTS method

Part 4 – Types of Bible study

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# HERMENEUTICS, PART 1

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INTRODUCING YOUR BIBLE

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# INTRODUCING YOUR BIBLE

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Part 1 – What is the Bible?

Part 2 – Where did it come from?

Part 3 – Which Bible should I use?

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# WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

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# WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

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# 4 QUESTIONS

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1. What is inspiration?
  2. To what does it extend?
  3. Why do we need it? or Why is it important?
  4. What do we gain/benefit from it?
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# TWO KEY PASSAGES

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- All Scripture is **God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16)
  - Prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God **as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.** (2 Peter 1:21)
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# 1. WHAT IS “INSPIRATION”?

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“[Inspiration] is God’s superintendence of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs.”  
– Charles C. Ryrie

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## 2. TO WHAT DOES INSPIRATION EXTEND?

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### 3. WHY DO WE NEED INSPIRATION?

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## 4. WHAT DO WE BENEFIT FROM INSPIRATION?

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*“I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us **not to go beyond what is written**, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.”*

**1 Corinthians 4:6**

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DON'T LET WHAT YOU SEE,  
MAKE YOU FORGET WHAT  
I SAID.

- GOD

# WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

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**The Bible is God's authoritative self-revelation to humanity**

- It is God's Word
- It carries God's authority
- It is true and it is truth

**This should lead us to a complete submission to the authority of Scripture**

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# CHALLENGE

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*If the Bible is not our final authority,  
we have no business being pastors, ministers,  
teachers, and leaders!*

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# WHICH BIBLE SHOULD I CHOOSE?

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# BIBLE TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

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“Studies of Greek papyri found in Egypt over the past one hundred years have shown that this language [Koine Greek] was the language of the everyday people used in the writing of wills, private letters, receipts, shopping lists, etc. ...

God used the common language to communicate the gospel. The gospel does not belong to the erudite alone; it belongs to all people. It now becomes our task to learn this marvelous language to help us make the grace of God known to all people.”

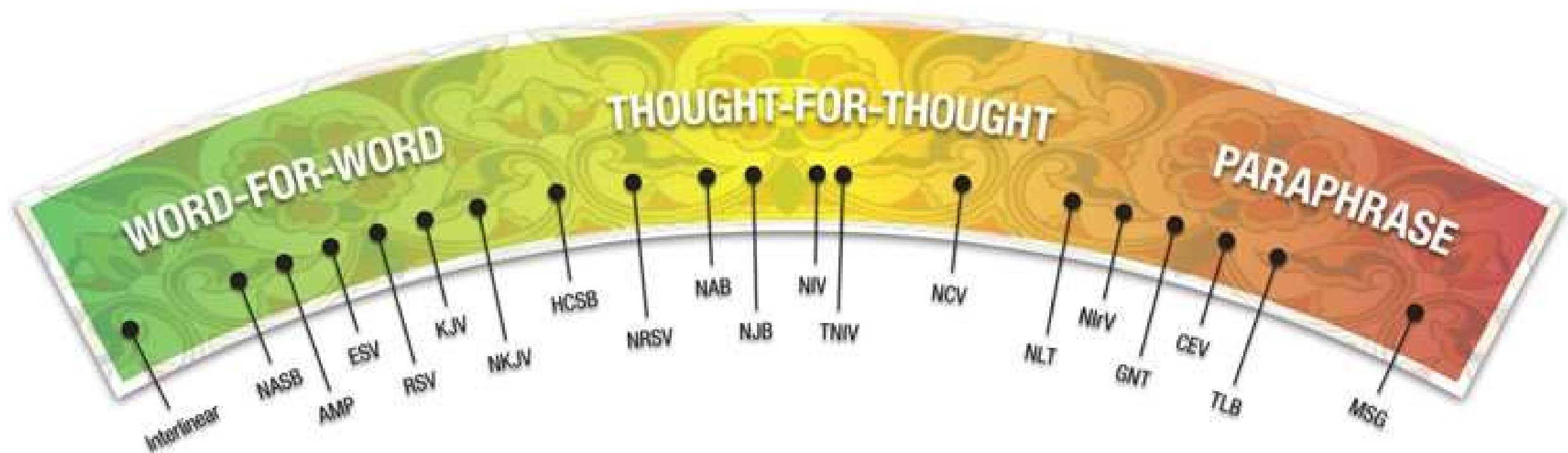
William Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek*

# BIBLE TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

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- Word-for-word
    - “literal”; formal equivalence; word-based
  - Thought-for-thought
    - “not literal”; dynamic equivalence; phrase-based
  - Conceptual
    - “paraphrase”; concept-based
-

# Types of Bible Translations



NASB - New American Standard Bible  
AMP - Amplified Bible  
ESV - English Standard Version  
RSV - Revised Standard Version  
KJV - King James Version  
NKJV - New King James Version

HCSB - Holman Christian Standard Bible  
NRSV - New Revised Standard Version  
NAB - New American Bible  
NJB - New Jerusalem Bible  
NIV - New International Version  
TNIV - Today's New International Version  
NCV - New Century Version  
NLT - New Living Translation

NirV - New International Reader's Version  
GNT - Good News Translation  
(also Good News Bible)  
CEV - Contemporary English Version  
TLB - The Living Bible  
MSG - The Message



# BIBLE TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

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“she was found to be **pregnant** through the Holy Spirit” (NET)

“she was found to be **with child** by the Holy Spirit” (NASB 1995)

“she was found to be **pregnant** by the Holy Spirit” (NASB 2020)

“she was found to be **with child** from the Holy Spirit” (ESV)

“she was found to be **with child** through the Holy Spirit” (NIV 1984)

“she was found to be **pregnant** through the Holy Spirit” (NIV 2011)

“she became **pregnant** through the power of the Holy Spirit” (NLT)

“she was found **with child** of the Holy Spirit” (NKJV)

“she was found **with child** of the Holy Ghost” (KJV)

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# BIBLE TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

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What does the Greek text say?

εὐρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου

*heurethē en gastri echousa ek pneumatos hagiou*

*“she was found in stomach having from spirit holy”*

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# BIBLE TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

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- How close to the original do we want to get?
  - How do we best present the original languages in the receptor language?
    - idioms
    - semitisms
    - poetry vs. prose
    - plays on words, rhyming
-

# BIBLE TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

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- Optimal equivalence
    - Balance between formal and dynamic
    - Emphasis on authorial intent and readability rather than one or the other (“accuracy”)
    - Still faithful to original languages
-



# HERMENEUTICS, PART 2

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CONCEPTS & DEFINITIONS

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# WHERE ARE WE GOING?

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# KEY CONCEPTS

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- **Verbal** – inspiration extends to the very words, not just the concepts or ideas

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ.

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# KEY CONCEPTS

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- **Verbal** – inspiration extends to the very words, not just the concepts or ideas
  - **Plenary** – inspiration extends to every part of the text, not just those matters of doctrine
-

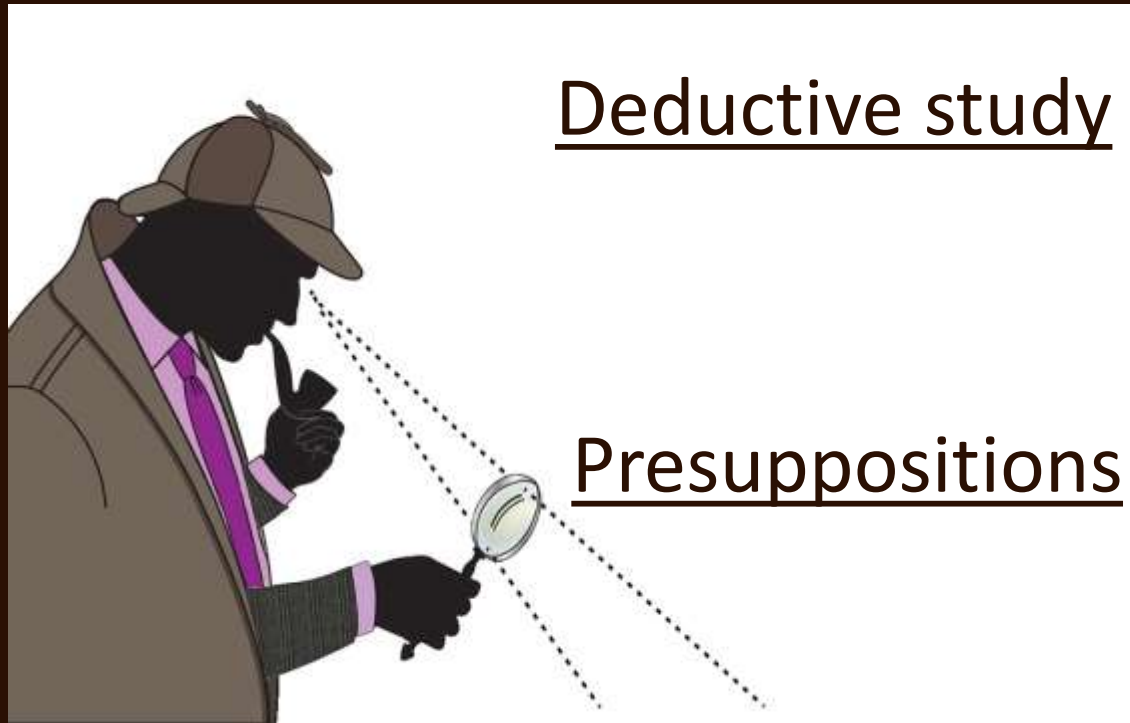
# KEY CONCEPTS

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- **Inerrant** – without error of any kind
  - **Infallible** – unable to cause someone to fall
  - **Perspicuous** – able to be read and understood without decoding or decryption
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# TWO WAYS TO APPROACH THE TEXT

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Deductive study

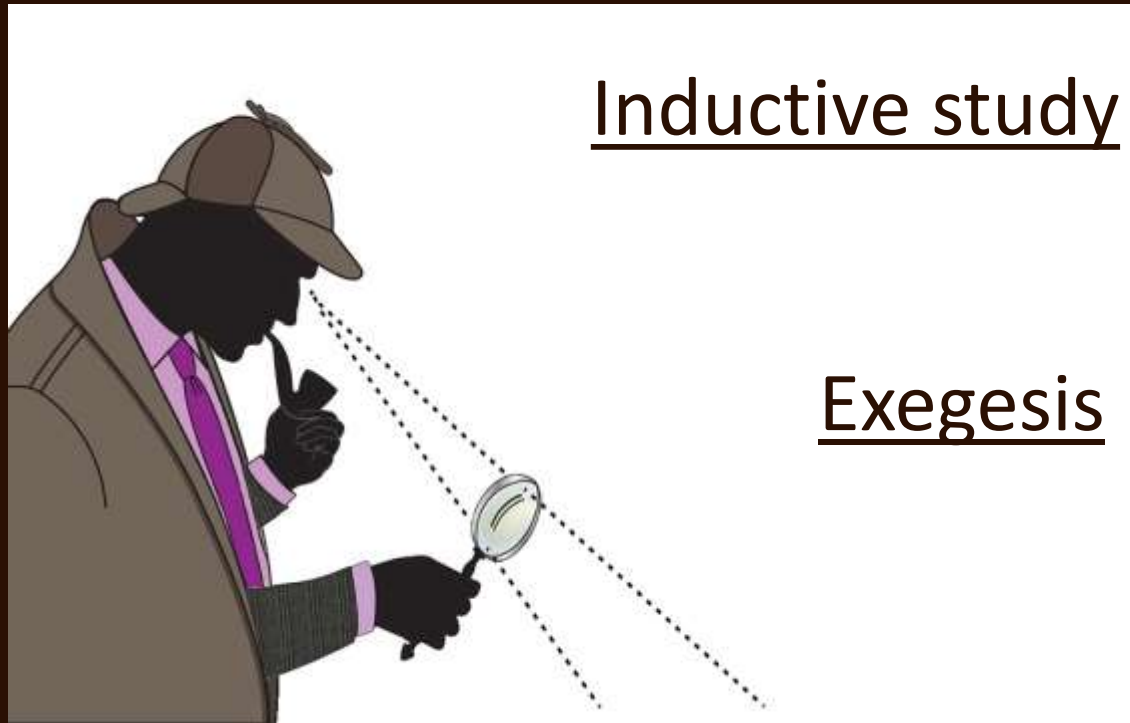
Conclusions are tested against a preexisting theory or hypothesis

Presuppositions

Something assumed to be true beforehand, taken for granted

# TWO WAYS TO APPROACH THE TEXT

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Inductive study

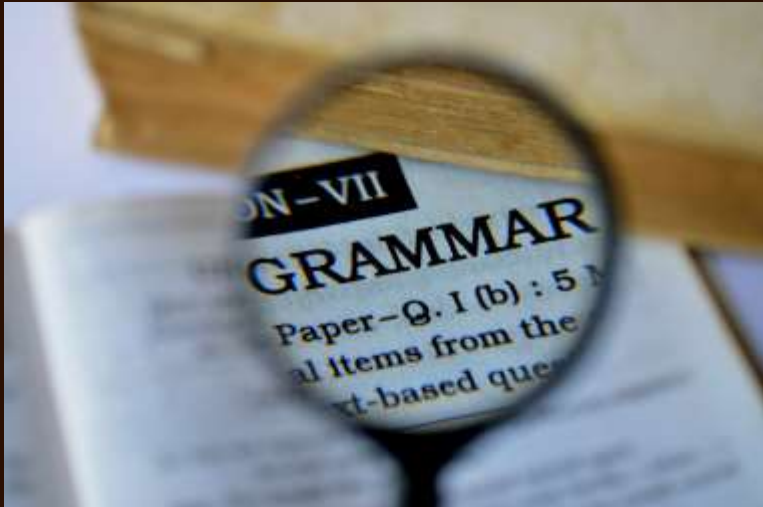
Conclusions are drawn from the observations

Exegesis

“to draw out, explain”; the process of studying individual parts to explain the whole

# KEY CONCEPT

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**Hermeneutics** – the science and art of interpretation


- It is a **science** because there are rules to follow and apply
  - It is an **art** because it takes practice and skill to apply those rules well
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# HERMENEUTIC METHODS

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## Allegorize / Spiritualize

- There must be a hidden meaning that we have to uncover
  - This does not make sense so I have to fix it

A photograph of a snowy mountain range under a night sky with a vibrant green aurora borealis. The text is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**I CAN DO  
ALL THINGS  
THROUGH A  
VERSE  
TAKEN OUT  
OF  
CONTEXT.**

# HERMENEUTIC METHODS

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## Dogmatic

- This is what I've always been taught
    - This is what our church believes
-



# HERMENEUTIC METHODS

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## Personal / Theological

- This is what I think it means
  - This is what it means to me
  - This is what I want it to mean
-

# HERMENEUTIC METHODS

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## Literal-Grammatical-Historical (LGH)

- **Literal** – the plain, normal meaning of the words
  - **Grammatical** – the rules of the original languages
  - **Historical** – how the original audience understood it in their time and culture
-

# NATURAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE LGH METHOD

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- A recognition of cumulative revelation
  - A normative dispensational conclusion
  - A clear distinction between Israel and the Church
  - The awareness that God's glory is central to everything
  - A submission to the authority of Scripture
-

# NATURAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE LGH METHOD

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## **A recognition of cumulative revelation**

- Revelation builds on itself; interpretation requires all the relevant data
  - Newer revelation is based on older revelation
  - Newer revelation never changes the truth or meaning of the older revelation
-

# **NATURAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE LGH METHOD**

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**A normative dispensational conclusion**

**A clear distinction between Israel and the  
Church**

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# NATURAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE LGH METHOD

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## The awareness that God's glory is central to everything

- God acts for his own name and his own sake (Is 48:11)
  - He expects us to do the same thing (1 Cor 10:31)
  - Even salvation is about the glory of God (Eph 1:6, 12, 14)
-

*... **to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:6)*

*... so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be **to the praise of his glory**. (Ephesians 1:12)*

*... who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory**. (Ephesians 1:14)*

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# CHALLENGE

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*The LGH method is the only way to study and interpret the Bible so that it stands with God's authority and meaning.*

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# HERMENEUTICS, PART 3

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THE ACTS METHOD

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# 4-STEP PROCESS

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**A** – **ASK** QUESTIONS

**C** – **COMPOSE** YOUR THOUGHTS

**T** – **TEST** YOUR CONCLUSIONS

**S** – **SUBMIT** TO GOD'S WORD

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# A - ASK QUESTIONS

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Key Question: What does the text **say**?



- Should be the longest and most difficult step in your Bible study
- Read multiple Bibles
- Take lots of notes; ask lots of questions
- Write down all your questions and answers to use later
- ***NO commentaries or other helps yet!***

# A - ASK QUESTIONS

---

Key Question: What does the text **say**?



“In the beginning God created  
(Genesis 1:1)

# A - ASK QUESTIONS

---

Key Question: What does the text **say**?



“In the beginning God created  
the heavens and the earth.”  
(Genesis 1:1)

# C – COMPOSE YOUR THOUGHTS

---

Key Question: What does the text **mean**?



- Read all of your observations and notes to determine the plain, normal meaning of the passage
- Ask more questions
- ***NO commentaries or other helps yet!***

# C – COMPOSE YOUR THOUGHTS

---

Key Question: What does the text **mean**?



“In the beginning God created  
the heavens and the earth.”  
(Genesis 1:1)



# T - TEST YOUR CONCLUSIONS

---

Key Question: What did I **miss**?



- Read commentaries, study notes; talk to other people
- Three results:
  1. Same conclusion, same path
  2. Same conclusion, different path
  3. Different conclusion

# T - TEST YOUR CONCLUSIONS

---

Key Question: What did I **miss**?



- [netbible.org](http://netbible.org)
- *Constable's Notes*
- *Chapter by Chapter* books

# S – SUBMIT TO GOD’S WORD

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Key Question: How should I **respond**?



- Application for original audience
- Timeless truths or general principles
- Not every application is a “do”

*“Every passage is equally inspired;  
every passage is not equally  
applicable.”*

*“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.**”*

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**

*“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, **that we may present everyone mature in Christ.**”*

**Colossians 1:28**

*“The aim of our charge is **love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.**” 1 Timothy 1:5*

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# S – SUBMIT TO GOD’S WORD

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Key Question: How should I **respond**?



“In the beginning God created  
the heavens and the earth.”  
(Genesis 1:1)

# CHALLENGE

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*Good Bible study is hard work;  
it requires effort and patience.*

*Do not cheat yourself  
by using commentaries as a shortcut.*

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# HERMENEUTICS, PART 4

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TYPES OF BIBLE STUDY

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# HERMENEUTIC METHODS

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# 4-STEP PROCESS

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**A** – **ASK** QUESTIONS

**C** – **COMPOSE** YOUR THOUGHTS

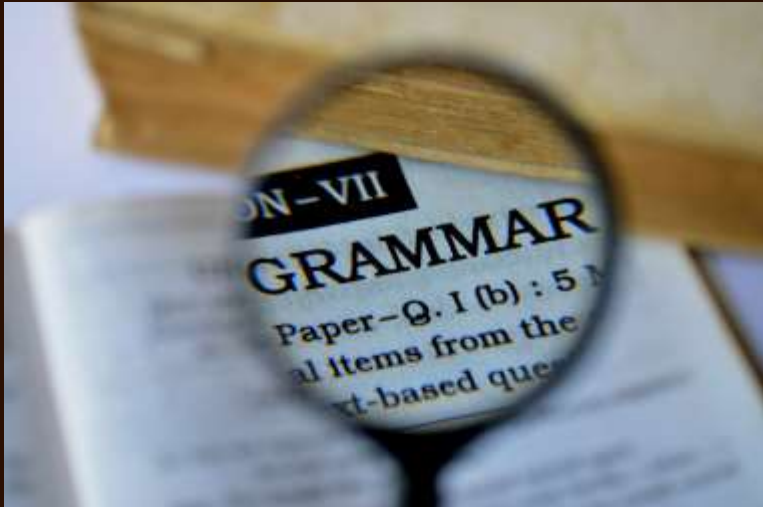
**T** – **TEST** YOUR CONCLUSIONS

**S** – **SUBMIT** TO GOD'S WORD

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# 3 TYPES OF BIBLE STUDY

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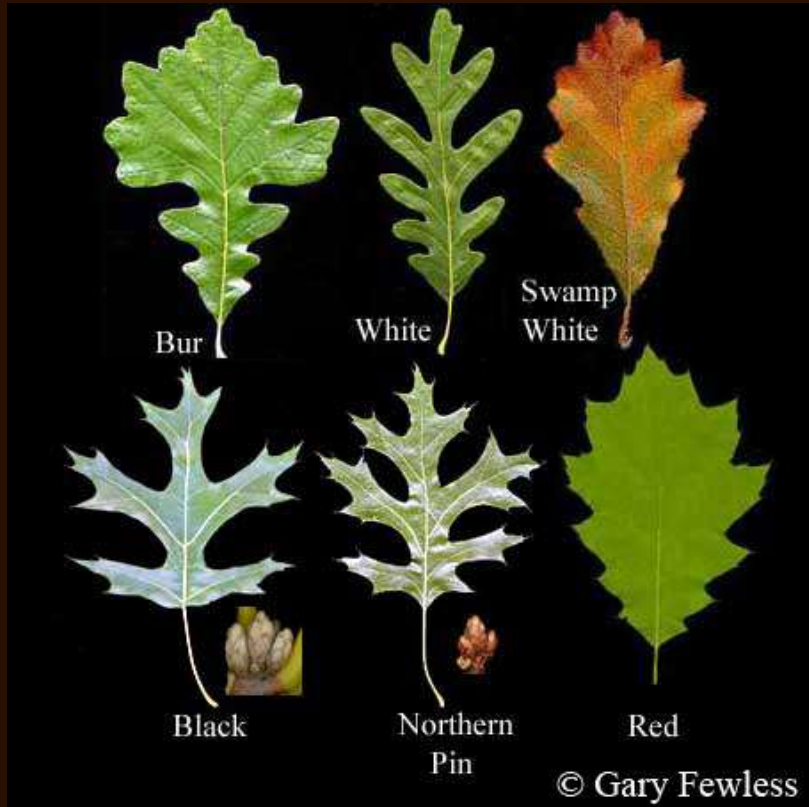
Exegetical – What does this verse or passage teach?

Survey – How does the whole Bible fit together?

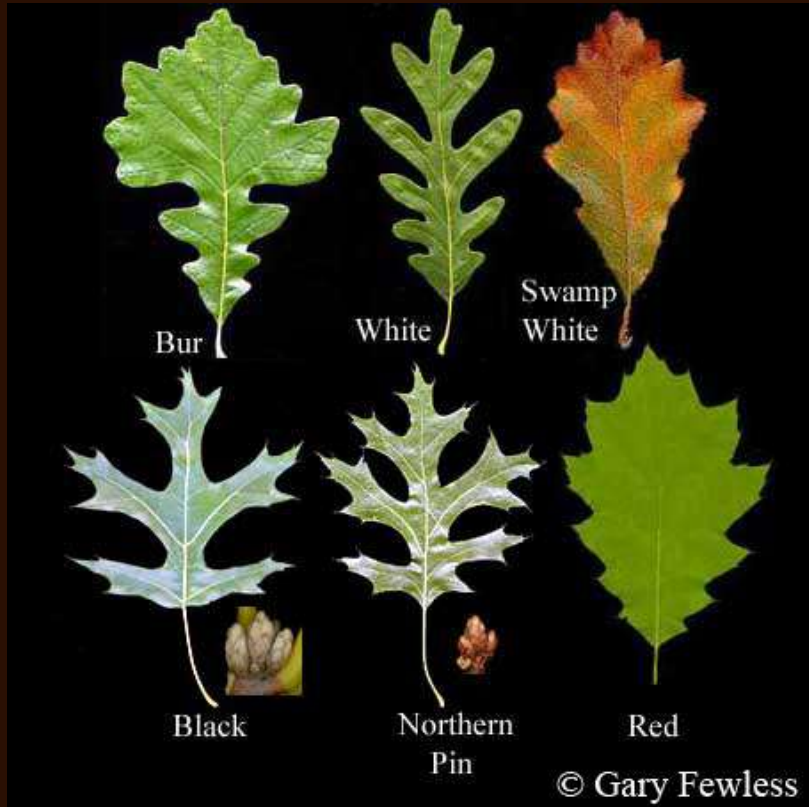
Topical – What does the whole Bible say about this topic/category/doctrine?

# BIBLE SURVEY

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# BIBLE SURVEY



# TYPES OF BIBLE SURVEYS

Chronological

Covenants

Dispensations

Book surveys





# TYPES OF TOPICAL STUDIES

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Genealogies

Lives of people

Attributes of God

Prophecies

Doctrines







# 11 MAJOR BIBLE DOCTRINES

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1. The Bible

5. Angels

9. Israel

6. Humans

10. The Church

2. God

3. Jesus

7. Sin

11. End Times

4. Holy Spirit

8. Salvation

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# CHALLENGE

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*Be sure to study the Bible in multiple ways  
Do not build doctrine from just one type of study*

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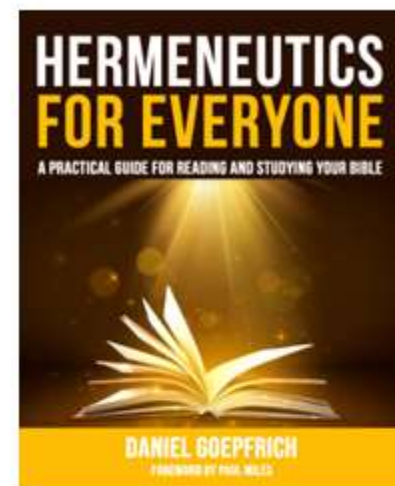
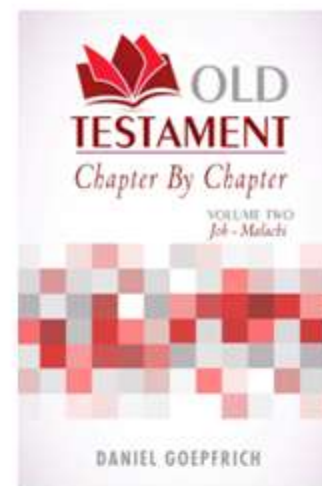
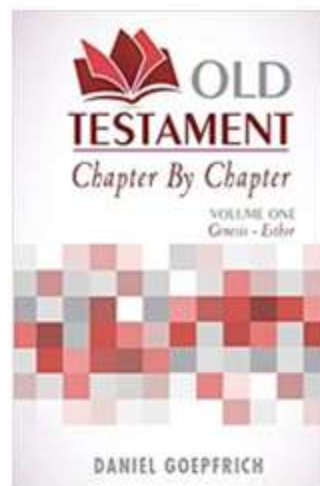
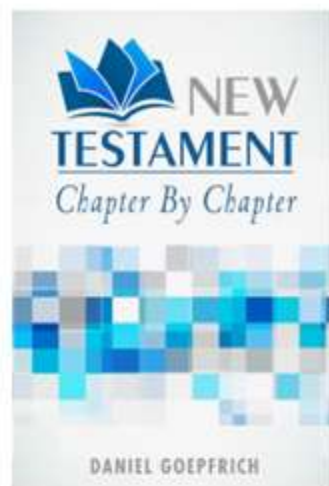
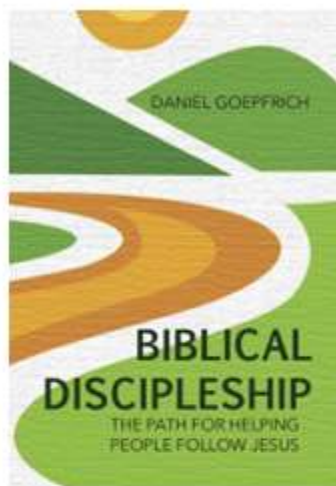




# QUESTIONS?

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