

Grasping God's Word

Teacher: Vinnie Angelo, MA

Sundays 10:55am - 12:10pm

Room W248

Starts: 5/1/16 - Ends: 8/28/16

- No Class: 6/29 (Memorial Day weekend); 7/3 (4th of July weekend)

Class Webpage: TheologyClass.org

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Class Description: The goal is to have small group leaders (and potential leaders) go through this 14-week class, in which they are given the basic tools to interpret and study the Bible. This includes: Understanding the differences in translations, understanding how words/language works, understanding the historical significance of biblical times, as well as being given a basic understanding of the various biblical genres (Old Testament, New Testament, etc).

Once completed, the leaders will be very well equipped as they continue to engage their own small groups in their weekly studies. Leaders could also use this material as a potential study topic, teaching their own small group the same information, and empowering them to become better "Bible students"

GGW Chapter 1 - *Bible Translations*

1. The transmission of the Bible

- God inspires the words of the biblical writers (original/autograph)
- The autograph is sent to its audience
- The early church began collecting/assembling early writings
- Circulating Manuscripts
- From the Critical Text comes the "Greek Text"
 - Most translations come from one Greek Text
 - NASB, ESV, NIV, NLT, etc
 - The KJV/NKJV are based on a different Greek Text
 - Acts 8:37
 - 1 John 5:7-8
 - Mark 16:9-20
 - John 7:53 - 8:11

2. Bible Translations

- From the Greek Text, scholars translate the Greek in the common tongue
 - (GGW pp 32-33 etc)

3. Translations for Study

- Study with a Formal translation
 - a more "wooden" translation will keep you as closer to the Greek
 - the more "smooth" a translation, the more interpretation goes into the translation

GGW Chapter 2 - *The Interpretive Journey*

(p42-47)

Step 1: Grasping the Text in their Town

- What did the text mean to the original audience?
 - Synthesize the meaning of the passage into 1 or 2 sentences

Step 2: Measuring the Width of the River to Cross

- What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?

Step 3: Crossing the Principlizing Bridge

- What is the theological principle in the text?
- Criteria for formulating the theological principle:
 - It should be _____ in the text
 - It should be _____ and not tied to a specific situation
 - It should not be _____ bound
 - It should correspond to the teaching of the rest of _____
 - It should be relevant to both the _____ and the _____ audience

Step 4: Consult the Biblical Map

- How does our theological principle fit with the rest of the Bible?

Step 5: Grasping the Text in Our Town

- How should individual Christians today [and the church] live out the theological principles?

Step 6: How do we find Jesus in the text? (Vinnie's step)

- The Biblical story is about Jesus, and how God is redeeming creation (and His People) through Jesus
 - (Rob Dalrymple *Understanding Eschatology* p17)
- Jesus said the Bible was about himself:
 - John 5:39, 45-47
 - Luke 24:27, 44-46

Recommended Reading:

- "How to Read the Bible Through the Jesus Lens" Michael Williams

Appendix

Theological Terms

Exegesis: Literally, “drawing meaning out of” respectively. Exegesis is the process of seeking to understand what a text means or communicates on its own. *Eisegesis* is generally a derogatory term used to designate the practice of imposing a preconceived meaning onto a text, even if that meaning could not have been originally intended at the time of its writing.

Hermeneutics: Theories of interpretation. The term *hermeneutics* was first used with respect to interpretive methods and discussions of biblical interpretation; now the term has a broader use as the theory and art of interpreting any text.

Law: The *law* means variously the OT in general, the Torah (especially the Pentateuch or first five books of the Bible), the Ten Commandments or the several codes of conduct that identified Israel as set apart and in covenantal relationship with God. Jesus summarized the law with two commandments: to love God with heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself. Paul declares that the law is fulfilled in Jesus, who sets humans free from the law’s penalty of death. *Legalism* is the attitude that identifies morality with the strict observance of laws or that views adherence to moral codes as defining the boundaries of a community. Religious legalism focuses on obedience to laws or moral codes based on the (misguided) assumption that such obedience is a means of gaining divine favor.

Theology: *Theology* commonly refers to the ordered, systematic study or interpretation of the Christian faith and experience of God based on God’s divine self-revelation. Theology seeks to “harmonize” what the Bible (along with church history) has said about a particular topic (e.g., the Trinity; hell; baptism).

Theologizing: To speculate about theology; to render/insert a theological conclusion; to treat theologically, oftentimes at the expense of exegesis.

Torah: The first part of the Hebrew canon (Gen-Deut). It is traditionally translated “*law*” but is more literally the *instruction*. The term can also be used of the OT as a whole, including even the Talmud, so it comes to have the sense of God’s revelation as a whole and not just commands or laws. Instructive are passages such as Psalm 1:2, where the righteous “delight” in Torah, and Psalms 19 and 119, which are extended poems on the worth of Torah. Torah sets forth the fundamentals of Israelite faith and functions as the norm for judging all subsequent experiences of God.