Saint Louis Christian College
BBI211N – Hermeneutics
T. Scott Womble

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR COURSE

Fall 2014   Thursday evening
                                                                  6:00 – 10:00 p.m.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXEGESIS PAPER: WRITING GUIDELINES

1. Follow the MLA 7th edition handbook!
2. Your Bibliography should be called a "Works Consulted" page for this assignment.
   (*easybib.com* or *citationmachine.net* may be helpful)
3. Do not turn in a report cover. Simply staple the paper together.
4. Regarding quotes:
   a. Plagiarism will not be tolerated! If you quote anything of four words or more, put it in "quotes."
   b. No more than 20% of your paper should contain direct quotes.
   c. When your quote runs more than four lines on your paper, it needs to set off as a long "block" quote.
   d. When you paraphrase an author's ideas, you still need to give him/her credit.

Here are some other helpful hints:
5. Don't forget page numbers.
6. Use spell check on your computer when you are finished.
7. Know the difference between the following:
   a. there, their, and they are (they're)
   b. your and you are (you're)
   c. to, too, and two
8. Do not dangle headings at the bottom of a page. Move it to the next page.
9. Do not use contractions in a formal paper such as this. (e.g., can't and don't)
10. As a rule, do not write in the first person in formal papers. However, for this assignment you may do so for sections 9 and 10.
11. It is permissible to have someone else type your paper.
12. When you write about your word studies, put the word you are discussing in quotes. For example, if you are studying the word "salvation," do what I just did.
13. The word "Bible" should be capitalized, but the word "biblical" is not.
14. When referring to a Bible translation, just abbreviate it like this: KJV (which stands for the King James Version).
15. Regarding the quotation of Scripture.
   When you say the reference in a sentence spell out the book. For example:
   In Colossians 3:1 Paul said, "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."

   When you don't mention the passage in the sentence, just add the reference at the end in abbreviated form. For example:
   Paul said, "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Col 3:1).
16. When citing several passages in succession use semi-colons between chapters and/or books (use a comma for separating verses in a chapter). For example: The Bible says basketball is awesome (Col 1:10, 13; 4:1; 1 Thess 5:21; Jms 3:10, 21; Rev 15:10).
17. Let's say you are speaking about the book of James. After you establish that you are speaking of that book, you can quote the text by saying 2:2 (as an example). There is NO NEED to say, chapter 2, verse 2.
18. Do not say, "In my opinion …." Just say it!
19. GIVE EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT YOU ANSWERS! For example, do not just say basketball is awesome, give the verses that support your assertion.

EXEGESIS PAPER: SCORING GUIDE

	(0%)	(40%) = 4 pts	(60%) = 6 pts	(70%) = 7 pts	(90%) = 9 pts	(100%) = 10 pts
1 – Initial Interpretation (10%)	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	While there was an attempt to complete this step, there is no indication that instructions were followed.	The section barely demonstrates an initial interpretation of the text.	The section demonstrates an initial interpretation of the text.	The section demonstrates an initial interpretation of the text, considering previous and current thought.	The section demonstrates a thorough initial interpretation of the text, considering previous and current thought.
2 – Genre (10%)	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	The section does not mention the primary genre at hand and how it impacts the interpretation of the text.	The section barely mentions the primary genre at hand and how it impacts the interpretation of the text.	The section adequately deals with the primary genre at hand and how it impacts the interpretation of the text.	The section addresses each genre present and somewhat describes how each impact the interpretation of the text.	The section clearly addresses each genre present (and provides evidence) and how each impact the interpretation of the text.
3 – Setting (10%) no sources cited = -5	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	The section only reflects study of one of the three (historical, cultural, geographical) issues.	The section reflects study of two or three (historical, cultural, geographical) issues.	The section reflects comprehensive study of two of the three issues. (historical, cultural, geographical)	The section reflects adequate study of the historical, cultural and geographical setting.	The section reflects comprehensive study of the historical, cultural and geographical setting.
4 – Establish Text (10%)	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	The section does not show comparison of four translations.	The section shows comparison of at least four translations but does not show any awareness of key words and issues which need further study.	The section shows comparison of at least four translations but shows little awareness of the key words and issues which need further study.	The section shows comparison of at least four translations, uses the proper model and somewhat addresses variants & key words and issues that need further study.	The section shows comparison of at least four translations, uses the proper model and clearly addresses variants & key words and issues that need further study.
5 – Structure (10%)	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	The section does not demonstrate structural analysis and does not even provide a flow chart.	The section barely demonstrates structural analysis and does not even provide a flow chart.	The section partly demonstrates structural analysis and provides (at minimum) a flow chart of the text.	The section mostly demonstrates structural analysis and provides (at minimum) a flow chart of the text.	The section clearly demonstrates thorough structural analysis and provides (at minimum) a flow chart of the text.
6 – Literary Context (10%)	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	The section only shows contextual analysis of two or fewer required layers of context.	The section shows contextual analysis of three required layers specified.	The section clearly shows adequate contextual analysis of three required layers specified	The section demonstrates contextual analysis of the four required layers specified.	The section clearly demonstrates thorough contextual analysis of the four required layers specified.
7 – Word Studies (10%) no sources cited = -5	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	The section does not demonstrate one thorough word study of any terms in the text.	The section shows two word studies.	The section clearly demonstrates one thorough word study on a key term in the text.	The section clearly demonstrates one thorough word study and one casual word study on key terms in the text.	The section clearly demonstrates two thorough word studies on key terms in the text.

	(0%)	(40%) = 4 pts	(60%) = 6 pts	(70%) = 7 pts	(90%) = 9 pts	(100%) = 10 pts
8 – Theology (10%)	There was no attempt to complete this step.	The section does not demonstrate theological reflection of the key issues at hand.	The section barely demonstrates theological reflection of the key issues at hand.	The section partly demonstrates theological reflection of the key issues at hand.	The section mostly demonstrates theological reflection of the key issues at hand.	The section clearly demonstrates theological reflection of the key issues at hand (and provides evidence).
9 – Application (10%)	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	The section does not demonstrate that a window was used to find application for THEN, NOW (others and the church) and ME.	The section barely demonstrates that a window was used to find application for THEN, NOW (others and the church) and ME.	The section partly demonstrates that a window was used to find application for THEN, NOW (others and the church) and ME.	The section mostly demonstrates that a window was used to find application for THEN, NOW (others and the church) and ME.	The section clearly demonstrates that a window was used to find application for THEN, NOW (others and the church) and ME.
10 – Final Reflection (10%)	There was no discernable attempt to complete this step.	The section does not demonstrate that instructions were followed.	The section is missing two of the following: - commentaries - interviews - final reflection	The section is missing one of the following: - commentaries - interviews - final reflection	The section contains: - commentaries - interviews - final reflection with previous interpretation being re-addressed	The section thoroughly contains: -commentaries (with proper citing) -interviews -final reflection with previous interpretation being re-addressed
PENALTIES	The student does not receive points for playing by the rules!			**HONESTY STATEMENT**	All papers must have the honesty statement attached to the back. Failure to comply results in full grade deduction.	For example: **A** paper will become **A minus**.
Depth of Research		The paper makes use of ten or more resources.	Every source less than 10 takes a point off your grade for the paper (e.g, 8 sources = -2)	Sources are NOT to include Bible translations or interviews		
MLA 7th edition / Model Paper compliance		Title, pagination, headings, font size, spacing, margins, bibliography and BOX NUMBER	Each mistake will result in a lowering of your grade (up to 10 mistakes). e.g., 5 mistakes results in -5 points.	A repeated mistake counts only as 1 mistake.	Pay attention to your bibliography!	
Style, Grammar & Spelling		The paper should contain complete paragraphs, varied and consistent sentences, and proper usage of grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and spelling.	10 total mistakes will result in a deduction of 3 points.	The paper should also conform to the format provided in the sample paper.		

EXEGESIS PAPER: EXPLANATION OF STEPS

1. Initial Interpretation

One should read the text (many times) to be studied and determine if the text elicits any emotional feelings. For example, does reading a text about women and the church make you cringe for some reason? Also, ask yourself if you already know what the text in question means or if you can recall what you have heard taught about it previously.

2. Genre

Genre is simply the classification of the text you are studying. Is it law, poetry, prophecy, history, narrative (a story), or wisdom literature? There may be other, more specific types, but these will give you a good start. Remember, the genre may influence how the language is understood, and you should briefly defend your classification. Related to genre is *form*. Form is more specific, but a passage may not always represent a specific form. Examples of form would be Gospel, letter, hymn, or exhortation. Note that this is not a complete list.

3. Setting

Setting is concerned with the historical and cultural conditions surrounding the text (*Higher Criticism*). This is a dual concern: on the one hand, the setting represented by the conditions to which the author is referring is an important clue to understanding the text. On the other hand, some texts may have been written some time after the event, and the cultural and historical setting at the time of writing may be crucial as well, but much more difficult to discover. This consideration is important especially for the Gospels (written some 20-30 years after the time of Christ to different groups of people) and much of the OT history books (note the comments occasionally in the Pentateuch: "and it is still called that to this day").

4. Establish the Text

The first priority in any exegesis is to establish just what the words of the text are (see *Lower Criticism* in Hermeneutical Paradigms). This can be done with relative certainty even by those who don't have the slightest knowledge of biblical languages. The best way to do this is:
   a. Read several different translations of the same passage. Note especially where there are significant differences in the words used. This may represent some ambiguity in the original language, or it may simply be that a synonym was used. If the discrepancy seems significant, assume the former, unless further study shows otherwise.
   b. Watch for markers in the text itself. For example, the King James Version *italicizes* English words which are "supplied" (not in the original language) by the translators in an attempt to clarify the text. Modern versions also have footnotes which may indicate alternative readings. BE CAREFUL! Some footnotes [e.g. Isaiah 53:11 (NIV)], may contain supplied words as well!

Some abbreviations and terms to be aware of:

    i.   LXX/ Septuagint: The Greek translation of the OT
    ii.   MS(S): Manuscripts(s), copies of Scripture which may vary from the text used by the translators.
    iii.   DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls (or *Qumran* [koom'-rahn] scrolls)
    iv.   MT: Masoretic Text, the most widely accepted Hebrew text
    v.   *textus receptus* (t.r.): first "eclectic" Greek text, basis for KJV
    vi.   UBS or Nestle-Aland: Modern Greek text, more accurate than *t.r.*

c. One final consideration must be noted with regards to text. You must be aware of your audience as well. For example, if you are preaching or teaching in an older congregation or in certain traditions, you might expect that those people would be more familiar with the King James Version. If, however, you were speaking to a group of second graders, they might have a tough time understanding the language of King James, and a modern translation like the New International Version or the Good News Bible, would be more appropriate. Regardless of your choice of version, you should always take into consideration the finds of steps (a – b) above. When presenting the text, you will want to note any significant variations in meaning based on your study, but *be sure your study has been as thorough as possible*.

5. Structure

The structure of the text can reveal important clues to the author's train of thought. Parallelisms, chiasms, alliterations, acrostics, repeated words, and word plays all go a long way in helping to reveal meaning and purpose in the text. Also, structural analysis can help to determine the limits of a text: does the passage in consideration have a single thought, or does the surrounding text give the passage it's meaning? A simple outline is a good start, but use of one of the other methods described in class is even better.

6. Literary Context

The surrounding context of the passage will almost always shed additional light on the meaning of that passage. Start by looking at the immediate context of the passage, the verses and chapters around it. Are there important connections? "Therefore," "so then," "likewise," etc., are all important connecting words for context study. Also, significant words from your passage which are found in the surrounding context may be words worthy of study and will probably need special attention. Next consider the whole book or letter (or book section if it is a larger book) in which the passage is found. What purpose did the author have in writing the book? Next, consider all books written by the author. Finally, the Testament itself, and the passage's connection with the other Testament needs to be considered. If you are working on an OT passage, is that passage quoted or alluded to in the NT? Does the NT passage you are working on contain any quotes or allusions to the OT?

7. Key Words and Phrases

After all this, you can finally begin the process of studying key words and phrases in the text. It is at this point that you should include your word studies. Be careful that you do not "overstudy" the words. Many words may be interesting, but focus on the ones which provide the greatest insight into the text. Start with a concordance search of your word(s). After seeing how the word is used generally, focus on the specific meaning in your text. This is where such reference books as *The Theological Wordbook of the OT,* Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the NT*, or Vine's *Expository Dictionary* are helpful.

8. Theological Reflection

It is vitally important to think about theological implications when we interpret the text. We should not allow our theology to drive our interpretations. Rather, our interpretations should impact our theology. Every text addresses a theological issue of some kind, whether it is pneumatology (the Holy Spirit), ecclesiology (the church), hamartology (sin) or something else. Most importantly, does the text say something about the nature of God (and/or Christ) or the way He works among us? Theological reflection is critical as it enables the interpreter to better understand the whole of Scripture.

9. Application

How should this passage influence the body of Christ? Since we believe in an essential unity in the Bible between testaments, even the OT will have something to say to the body of Christ. What response should we expect from ourselves and others as we read and study the text? How are our lives affected by a proper understanding of this text? What changes, if any, should the body of Christ be prepared to make if traditional understandings are challenged? The principles you learn from your textbooks should be applied at this point.

10. Final Reflection

Now that your exegesis is complete, place yourself back in front of the text and ask yourself if your previous understanding of the text has changed. In addition, consult voices from the present (commentaries and interviews) to check your interpretation.

EXEGESIS PAPER: OUTLINE OF STEPS

GETTING IN FRONT OF THE TEXT
1. Initial Interpretation

GETTING BEHIND THE TEXT
2. Identify the Genre
       a. What is the genre of your selected text, and what characteristics did you use to make that determination?
       b. How does the genre of the passage contribute to your understanding of it?

3. Establish the Setting of the Text
       a. Historical setting
       b. Cultural setting (includes political and religious setting)
       c. Geographical/Physical setting
       d. Authorship

GETTING INTO THE TEXT
4. Establish the Text
       How and Why?

5. Analyze the Structure of the Text
       a. Literary structure
       b. Thought structure. Where is the paragraph break?

6. Set the Literary Context
       a. Immediate context of the pericope
       b. Layers of context

7. Interpret Key Words and Phrases
       a. Identify key words and phrases in the text.
       b. Do word studies to understand the significance of the words chosen.

8. Grasp the Theological Instruction of the Text
       a. What theological teachings are there in the text?
       b. Specifically, does this text teach anything about God or Jesus?

9. Make Application of the Text
       a. Determine the "Now What" of the text.
       b. Find authentic application to self, church and others.

GETTING BACK IN THE FRONT OF THE TEXT
10. Final Reflection
       How has your previous understanding of the text changed?

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Hermeneutics BBI211

10 May 2009

<p align="center">Exegesis Paper MODEL</p>

Pericope & Translation

Colossians 1:15-20 (NASB95)

[15] He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. [16] For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. [17] He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. [18] He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. [19] For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, [20] and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

1. Initial Interpretation

After reading Colossians 1:15-20, I realized that I have seldom heard a sermon address this specific passage. I've read it dozens of times over the years and believe the central point . . .

2. Identify the Genre

The primary genre at hand is "epistle." This is evident because . . . There is also a metaphor in the text as Paul says Jesus is the "head of the body" (v. 18). . . .

3. Establish the Setting of the Text

Give me at least one solid paragraph for **each of the following:** historical setting, cultural setting, geographical setting, and authorship/recipients.

4. Establish the Text

In an effort to establish the text, four translations were utilized: New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update (NASB95), English Standard Version (ESV), New International Version (NIV), and New Living Translation (NLT). The Message (TM), a paraphrase, was also used for audience awareness purposes. The following analysis will note the differences which need to be explored.

Students: Notice I have these in Zondervan chart order

NASB95	ESV	NIV84	NLT	TM
[15] He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.	[15] He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.	[15] He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.	[15] Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before God made anything at all and is supreme over all creation.	[15] We look at this Son and see the God who cannot be seen. We look at this Son and see God's original purpose in everything created.

In verse 15, the NASB95 and ESV are identical. The NIV only makes one change from the former, as it says "over" all creation (NASB95 and ESV say "of"). The NLT …

NASB95	ESV	NIV84	NLT	TM
[16] For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.	[16] For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.	[16] For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.	[16] Christ is the one through whom God created everything in heaven and earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. Everything has been created through him and for him.	[16] For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank after rank of angels— everything got started in him and finds its purpose in him.

Verse 16 contains many differences. …

5. Analyze the Structure of the Text

Your structural analysis goes here. You may either do a flow chart (like below), use the Duvall & Hays model, use the subject / verb / object model, or do sentence diagramming. You should single space this section! I just did this flow chart quickly – I'm sure it could be much better!

```
He      is        the image
                              of the invisible God,
                  the firstborn
                              of all creation.
For     by him were                   all things created,
                                             that are in heaven,
                           and             that are in earth,
                                                    visible
                                             and    invisible,
                           whether they be         thrones,
                                                    or dominions,
                                                    or principalities,
                                                    or powers:
                                      all things were created by him,
                           and                            for him
```

6. Literary Context

The immediate context of Colossians 1:15-20 is . . . Then tell me how your text fits into the surrounding context (the before and after). Then tell me how it fits into the chapter (if you have not already done so) and then the book as a whole. Your next step would be to think about the Pauline epistles. Are the statements in Colossians 1:15-20 unique or are they a topic Paul is clearly passionate about? Perhaps you noticed a key word that Paul uses elsewhere. How does your text fit in the New Testament and even the Old Testament?

7. Interpret Key Words and Phrases

The word "reconcile" (v. 20) was chosen for study because it is a theologically loaded term. Strong's says it means "to reconcile completely" or "to reconcile back again, bring back a former state of harmony." It is the Greek word ἀποκαταλλάσσω (*apokatallasso*). It is used 53 times in the New Testament (just an imaginary number I made up). Paul uses the word 27 times and 8 times in Colossians (1:10, 15; 2:3, 26; 3:7; 4:1, 10 --*I just made these up*). Mounce (*Analytical Lexicon*) says "reconcile" means ... Louw & Nida says ... Brown (*NIDNTT*) says ... Here in Colossians 1:15, by using the word "reconcile," Paul means . . .

8. Grasp the Theological Instruction of the Text

One sees Christology in all of Colossians 1:15-20, as it is a Christ-centered text where each verse speaks of Christ. Verse 20 gives brief insight into both hamartology and soteriology, as it says, "through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross." . . . .

9. Make Application of the Text

The student needs to use the window and address application for THEN, NOW (including the church and others) and ME.

10. The Exegete: Getting Back in Front of the Text

Now that my exegesis is concluded, I checked my conclusions against two modern commentaries. F.F. Bruce said, "…" I. Howard Marshall agreed but added, "…"

Finally, I also interviewed two people …

Before I began the exegesis of Colossians 1:15-20, I believed the central point of the passage was . . .   Now, after hours of study on this text, I realize . . .

HERMENEUTICAL (INTERPRETATION) PARADIGMS
or: *How Other People Changed the Rules to Fit Their Own Agendas*

by Scott Stocking *(edited by Professor S. Womble)*

Have you ever talked to someone of a different faith, or no faith, about the Bible and discovered that you had a fundamental difference, not so much over the truth of the words in the Bible, but the perspective from which the other person approaches the Bible? We do not have to look far to find such examples. Genesis 1 is a passage subject to a number of different perspectives which still, more or less, hold to the "deeper" truth of the words. On the one hand, Christian A reads Genesis 1 and decides that God created the heavens and the earth in six literal 24-hour days. Christian B, on the other hand, might see that each *day* is not a literal 24-hour period, but an undefined period of time, and therefore sees creation as happening over thousands, or even millions, or years. Christian C, meanwhile, sees Genesis 1 as an intricately woven story about the order and beauty in creation, yet holds to a theory of divinely controlled evolution.

Such theories have been the source of bitter debates not only between scientists and Christians, but among Christians themselves. Genesis 1 is a many-headed hydra, with each "head" or position attempting to assert primary control over the body of Christian doctrine on the subject. The issue of which version of the creation story is correct will probably be debated until the end of time. In spite of the many different views of Genesis 1, one common thread is found throughout: God had an active role in Creation.

The problem of Genesis 1 illustrates the influence that *paradigms* play in interpreting the Bible. A paradigm is a system of organizing data, usually with intent of demonstrating a particular world-view or doctrinal position. James Sire defines a "world-view" as: "a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true, or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of our world."[1] In fact, the terms "paradigm" and "world-view" are often used synonymously, but a paradigm is more specific in scope than a world-view.

When we speak of a "hermeneutical paradigm," therefore, we are talking about a specific paradigm which governs our interpretation of the Bible. *Hermeneutics* is a transliterated Greek word which simply means "interpretation." When we speak of an individual *hermeneutic*, we are talking about a specific hermeneutical paradigm (e.g. *naturalism*). This essay provides an overview of four major "hermeneutical paradigms" prominent in Christian theology today: *Naturalism, Supernaturalism, Existentialism,* and *Dogmatism.* Each of these has its own particular flaws, which will be detailed in the following paragraphs. The remainder of the course will be spent in establishing a biblical hermeneutic which hopefully eliminates most if not all of our biases and helps us arrive at the true and intended meaning of the text.

Naturalism. Simply put, naturalism considers only those things which can be seen or deduced by logic and scientific observation. Anything supernatural, therefore, such as miracles, God "appearing" to man, and so forth is automatically discarded as untrue. The naturalist would find some other explanation for such events: the miracle really has a scientific explanation which

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[1] *The Universe Next Door* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1988, p. 17).

can be uncovered; a "vision" of God is simply a dream, no more. This view represents one sub-category of the naturalist called a *rationalist*.

Another sub-category of naturalism is *biblical criticism*. Biblical criticism is the process of understanding the origins of the text and what human or natural events influence its writing. On the one hand, "lower criticism" attempts to establish, as much as possible, the original form of the text. This is valuable, since many consider the "autographs" (original copies of the individual Bible books and letters) to be inspired and inerrant. Great pains have been taken, for example, to reconstruct the original Greek text as accurately as possible, based on the thousands of complete documents and fragments found which may or may not contain discrepancies among them. The final form of the text is more important than whatever sources were used to prepare the text, because that final form (as we have it today) was what the church "canonized."

Higher criticism seeks to understand the historical and cultural backgrounds of the text. These are important for understanding the author's intended meaning in the text. The historical and cultural settings are often considered on two levels. The first is the actual setting of the events described. The second is the setting in which the text was originally presented or prepared. This may sometimes be several hundred years after the events described (e.g. Moses writing down the stories of Abraham).

Some scholars have taken higher criticism too far, however. They treat the document as simply a biased historical record of religious experience, rather than a revelation of how God was working through his people. Destructive higher criticism denies, for the most part, inspiration, and often subjects the text to such scrutiny as to splinter the text into small, insignificant pieces. The *Documentary Hypothesis*, for example finds four different source documents (identified as JEDP) for the Pentateuch, and proposes that the authors/editors took bits and pieces from each one and pieces them together in the current form. *Redaction* criticism is similar, in that it sees a later editor rearranging or supplementing the text, sometimes to fit his own understanding. Each of these theories may have its valid points, but often the proponents of these (and other) theories take them to extremes.

One other forms of naturalism is *cultural relativism*. This position considers the cultural context of the text and decides if these factors make the text relevant for the modern day. Often pro-homosexual groups use this argument today: if over half of the current culture accepts homosexuality, then it is no longer sinful as it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Some see that many of the restrictions on women in the New Testament are culturally conditioned, and thus should not be regarded as normative for today's church. Knowing the cultural context is important for understanding the meaning of the text, but culture itself should never be an isolated test for determining biblical truth.

Supernaturalism. Supernaturalism, as one might expect, is quite different from naturalism. The supernaturalist attempts to find some spiritual meaning or significance in all passages of the Bible, even simple historical narratives. The early Christians and First Millennia Rabbinical scholarship tended to *allegorize* much of Scripture. For example, some Jews who hold strictly to Jewish dietary laws cannot eat a cheeseburger because of the command: "Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk" (ex. 23:19b). Clement thought that the 318 fighting men of Abraham (Gen. 14:14) prefigured Christ's crucifixion because in Greek, the letter *tau* (symbolizing the cross) has a value of 300, and the letters *iota* and *eta* (the first two letters of "Jesus" in Greek) have a value of 18.

Allegory is not necessarily wrong in all cases: Jesus himself allegorized the parable of the seed on the four different soils (Matthew 13) and several other parables. Parables are such

that allegorization is appropriate on occasion. A parable does not necessarily have to have an exhaustive one-to-one correspondence of story elements to reality in order to be interpreted allegorically. Other types of literature, such as historical narratives, are done an injustice when treated allegorically.

Related to this type of interpretation is the "privatizing" of God's revelation. A Christian landlord once confronted his Christian tenant who could not pay his rent, and showed him from the Bible that he must work to meet his own needs. The Christian tenant said that God had told him not to work so he could develop his spiritual life. When the landlord pressed home the point that no private revelation should supersede God's holy Scriptures, the tenant replied: "I can't help it if I'm more spiritual and you're more scriptural!" The tenant's hermeneutic was that his claimed supernatural experience had more authority than God's Word! If this is the case, then all ground for judging the truth has been lost.

Existentialism. The latter case might also fit in this category of existentialism. Karl Barth believes in the supernatural elements of Scripture, but he did not believe Scripture "became" God's Word until it was received by another. Barth felt that God's word was not only contained in the Bible, but in man's proclamation of that word through preaching. In other words, the Bible has no authority in and of itself. Rudolph Bultmann went a step further and "demythologized" all the miraculous language of the Bible. For Bultmann, the miracle stories were nothing more than "hero legends" told of Christ by those who wanted to exalt him in the eyes of their contemporaries.

Barth is also one of the patriarchs of a branch of existentialism known as neo-orthodoxy. The neo-orthodox student treats the stories of the Bible as having some religious significance, even if the events recorded are not quite 100% as they happened. For example, a neo-orthodox view of the feeding of the 5,000 would state that the miracle was not in the multiplying of the five loaves and the two fishes, but that such faith demonstrated by Jesus to bless five loaves and two fishes for the large crowd inspired the people to share their own lunch with those around them.

Joseph Campbell has taken existentialism to a dangerous extreme. Campbell and his fellow postmodernists teach that the only meaning in the text is the meaning derived by the reader. Discovering the original meaning of the text, which should be the primary goal of the exegete, is a foolish enterprise. The only thing that matters is how the reader responds to the text. If the reader reads: "Thou shalt not," and decides the speaker is being sarcastic or speaking in parody, then the reader can legitimately (in the deconstructionist's mind) interpret the passage as "Thou shalt." The fact that the author was giving a serious command and had no intention of sarcasm or parody is irrelevant to the interpretation.

The fall-out of a reader-response view of deriving meaning from a text is that numerous, unintended meanings are derived from the text, and each reader's interpretation is considered legitimate. This has led some to conclude that language really has no inherent meaning at all, no power to accurately describe reality. Instead, language becomes a tool for exercising political power and manipulation. This theory is called *deconstructionism*. The deconstructionist attempts to discover the hidden agendas in a text, ignoring the intended meaning of the text altogether. See the comparative chart below.

Dogmatism. Dogmatism is a common problem among denominational groups and cults. Dogmatism results when certain passages of Scripture are used to promote a certain doctrine, while those Scriptures which contradict or modify that doctrine are ignored or explained away.

The contemporary debate between free-will theists and Calvinists exemplifies this point. Calvinists point to a text such as Romans and argue that God has predetermined all future events, perhaps even down to the finest detail. The free-will theist, on the other hand, would look at Jeremiah 18 (which would be ignored or explained away by the Calvinist) and argue that God does not always predetermine future events, but waits to *learn* man's response before deciding to act.

Dogmatism establishes a system of beliefs, then attempts to "prove" or "justify" them by finding supporting Scripture. Instead of allowing the Scripture to inform one group's belief and doctrine, they allow their doctrine to influence their interpretation of Scripture. This is common among those who hold to certain millennial positions. One does not have to look far to find examples of popular Christian speakers who not only interpret passages which have nothing to do with end-times as proof of their position, but fall into the trap of supernaturalism and even existentialism.

A Better Way. As you will see in this module, a method of Bible study and exegesis is presented which can help to curb the influence of unhealthy paradigms and presuppositions. The method is the "grammatical-historical" method (also called the "historical-critical" method). McQuilken defines it by saying:

> The historical context includes the physical, geographical, cultural and ideological context of the authors and the people to whom they wrote, as well as historical events. The literary context includes the language itself, the type of literary form, and the immediate context of the passage under consideration (67-68).

Virkler concludes, "This method suggests that the meaning of a text is the authors intended meaning and that the author's intention can be derived most accurately by observing the facts of history and the rules of grammar as they apply to the text being studied" (73).

SELF-EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

Before sound exegesis can take place, the exegete must be aware of the fact that he/she comes to the text with pre-understandings, presuppositions, and perhaps even prejudices. Thus, the exegete should do a self-evaluation. By doing so, one becomes more aware of what kind of background they bring to the text. This is imperative as people tend to see the text through their life experiences.

The questions below are mere samples of questions which may spark your thinking. Reflect on your life and write a summary paper. **This should be 4-8 pages in length.**

1. What is your name and its significance?
2. What is your race and family heritage?
3. When and where were you born? Have you moved often?
4. What is your gender and attitude towards those of the opposite sex?
5. What was your family environment like while growing up?
6. Throughout your lifetime, what has been your financial status?
7. What were the occupations of your parents? What was your attitude about these?
8. What is your view towards marriage and children?
9. What is your marital status? If married, how do you view your relationship with your spouse?
10. What major events in your life have helped shape who you are?
11. What occupation/vocation (and economic level) do you aspire to?
12. How would you describe your personality?
13. How would you describe your worldview? (God, ethics, reality)
14. How do you view the Bible?
15. What major doctrines/beliefs about Christianity do you hold?
16. Do you believe man has a free-will to choose Christ?
17. Do you believe Christ died for all people or just for a select group (His elect)?
18. What are your views on heaven and hell?
19. How is a person saved? What is a non-negotiable item for you?
20. Describe your view of God.
21. In general, how do you feel about other belief systems (e.g., Mormonism, Hinduism, Oprahism, etc.)
22. How would you describe your political ideologies?
23. What current events do you consider most important?
24. What civic, social, benevolent organizations are you a part of?
25. What kind of music, books, and movies do you enjoy? How do they affect you?
26. What are your hobbies?
27. Add any additional information about yourself you deem important.
28. I have NEVER … well, why not?

BACKGROUND STUDY FORM ON EPHESUS (SAMPLE)

1. Subject: Ephesus (Book of Ephesians)

2. Reference Tools Used:

Eerdmans Handbook to the Bible
The New Bible Dictionary
The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible

3. Geographical Background:

The city was situated on the western coast of Asia Minor at the mouth of the Cayster River, one of the four major east-west valleys that ended in the Aegean Sea. It was at the beginning of a major highway that went eastward across Asia Minor into Syria, then into Mesopotamia, Persia, and India.

Ephesus was a large port city and had a population of around 400,000 in the Apostle Paul's time. It was the most important city in the Roman province of Asia. Its strategic location caused it to be the meeting place of the land and sea trade routes in that part of the world in those days.

4. Historical Background:

Ephesus was an ancient city whose origins are lost in the mists of antiquity. It was known as an important port city in the days of the ancient Hittites (early 1300s B.C.).

Around 1080 B.C. it was taken and colonized by the Greeks from across the Aegean Sea and Greek ways and influence were introduced. Five centuries later it was taken by the legendary King Croesus, who restored Asian influence to the city.

The Persians took Ephesus in 557 B.C. and two centuries of conflict with the Greeks over it followed. Alexander the Great captured the city in 335 B.C. and the Greek influence prevailed until Roman times.

The Romans took the city in 190 B.C. and it remained in their hands or in the hands of their allies until the days of Paul and later. It became the major city in the Roman province of Asia, although Pergamum still remained the capital.

5. Cultural Background:

From the time that the Greeks took the city in 1080 B.C., cultural conflict existed between the Asian and Greek ways of life. The original religion included the worship of the mother-goddess whom the Greeks later called Artemis (Diana in the Roman system). Here the original goddess had a shrine and the Greeks later built a grand temple that became known throughout the whole Mediterranean world.

Being at the crossroads of Europe and the Orient, the city had an international flavor as peoples of many backgrounds, particularly traders and sailors, mixed here freely. Thus it was a cosmopolitan city, primarily Greek in culture, but with Asian underpinnings existing there at the same time. It had all the conveniences of a modern Roman city—gymnasium, stadium, theaters, and a central marketplace.

6. Political Background:

In Paul's day, since it was a city loyal to Rome, it was governed by the Roman proconsul from Pergamum. Thus it was allowed to have its own government and was divided into "tribes" according to the ethnic composition of its population. In Paul's time there were six of these tribes and the representatives to their gathering elected the town clerk, who was responsible for all public meetings.

Other government officials included the Asiarchs, municipal officers of Rome, and the Neokoros, the temple officials.

7. Summary of Insights:

The city of Ephesus was an important city and because of its strategic value Paul and his team headed there on their second missionary journey. Paul later ministered there for some time (on the third journey).

Because of its cosmopolitan population, here was an opportunity for ministry to many different kinds of peoples—Romans, Greeks, and the Asians of that part of Asia. Also a ministry could be had with the travelers and traders, who came both by land and by sea.

Its history and geography made the city strategic for the planting of churches and then spreading the news of the Gospel throughout the whole territory around it, as well as to many other places through the caravans and shipping.

BACKGROUND STUDY FORM

1. <u>Text</u>:

2. <u>Geographical Background</u>:

3. <u>Historical Background</u>:

4. <u>Cultural Background</u> (which includes the Political and Religious backgrounds):

TEXT COMPARISON ASSIGNMENT

Read Exodus 21:1-17 in at least four different versions of the Bible. For this particular assignment you must use the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV84), either the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) or the Revised Standard Version (RSV), and a version of your choice (but not a paraphrase). When you do this assignment later for your exegesis paper, you may choose the versions you wish. Parallel Bibles or computer software with multiple versions are especially helpful for this assignment. The following web sites are also very helpful:

www.studylight.org   www.biblegateway.com
www.crosswalk.com   www.bibleresourcecenter.org
www.blueletterbible.com   www.biblestudytools.com

Produce a chart comparing word changes in each translation. Afterwards, answer the following questions.

1. Did you understand the same meaning from each version read? If not, where are the discrepancies? In other words: are the words and ideas presented in each version synonymous with other versions, or do the translators' choices of words in one version seem to imply subtle or not-so-subtle differences in meaning? Hint: some versions (even online) may have "footnotes" at the bottom of the page. Often, these notes reveal some of the discrepancies you will find among versions.

2. Based on your reading of the various passages, prepare a list of question or issues raised that will need to be answered or resolved. Included in this list should be important or repeated words in the passage, ideas or central themes which need more detailed explanation, cultural setting and customs which need to be understood, structural (how the passage is presented) issues of the text in question, and any discrepancies among the versions which may indicate a significant difference in meaning.

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS FORM ON MATTHEW 5:43-48

1. Text:
    Matthew 5:43-48

2. Themes of Immediate Context:
    Love your enemies and pray for them; there is no reward in loving people who love you

3. Surrounding Context:
    This is one of the five "You have heard" statements (vv. 21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43) that Jesus addresses in Matthew 5. Our text is very similar to the statements of vv. 38-42 (turn the other cheek; go two miles).

    Further Surrounding Context:
    This is part of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7). Since it is virtually impossible to love your enemies without also forgiving them, 6:12-15 (part of the Model Prayer) is very relevant here. Jesus tells us that as we forgive others, God will forgive us. 7:1-5 is also interesting. Jesus tells us not to judge other people. We often get upset with other people because we harshly judge things they have done. In 7:11, Jesus tells us that we are "evil" in comparison to God. Therefore, it's easy to conclude that we could be "enemies" of God if it were not for His love for us. In 7:15-23 speaks of knowing people by their "fruits." We should think twice before we choose to continue hating our enemies.

4. Book Context:
    Matthew is a book which provides a great deal of Jesus' teaching that is geared towards convincing the Jews that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah. Our text (one of the "You have heard" sections) is one where Jesus corrects false Jewish beliefs.

    The word "enemies" shows up three times in Matthew (the others being 10:36 & 22:44). In the former, Jesus reveals that real enemies are not people you simply don't like. Rather, they are people who have not taken up their cross to follow the Savior. This is all the more reason to love them! The latter reference is of no real help.

    Matthew 18:21-22 says, *"Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."*

    Matthew 22:37-40 sheds light on our text. When asked what the greatest commandment of the Law way, Jesus replied by saying, *"'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."*

5. <u>Author and/or Genre Context:</u>

    Matthew is one of the four Gospel accounts. Luke 6 records what is called the Sermon on the Plain. Luke 6:27-28 (also v. 35a) somewhat parallels Matthew 5:43-44. Luke 23:34 shows Jesus giving the ultimate demonstration of living what He taught. While on the cross He prayed, *"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."*

6. <u>Testament Context:</u>

    A few samples:
    -   Romans 5:10 says that *"while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son."*
    -   2 Corinthians 2:5-11, Paul tells the church to forgive someone they have previously punished.

7. <u>Biblical Context:</u>

    Jonah's story of preaching repentance to his enemies comes to mind! Ultimately he didn't do it because of his love for the Assyrians, but merely out of obedience.

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS FORM

1. Text

2. Put your text into a paragraph (the immediate context).
   What are the verses?

3. What is the point of your pericope (immediate context)?

4. Themes of Immediate Context

5. Surrounding Context.
   Be specific and tell me what the verses are.
   How does your passage fit into the surrounding context?

           (Perhaps) Further Surrounding Context

6. Book Context
   How does your passage fit into the book?

7. Author and/or Genre Context
   How does your passage fit into the author's writings?

8. Testament Context
   How does your passage fit into the Testament?

9. Biblical Context
   How does your passage fit into the Bible?

THE WORD ON WORD STUDY
by Scott Stocking

"Words mean things." These are the words used by a famous talk show host when critiquing the tendency of post-modern man (or woman) to make language say something it does not. This saying holds true for the Scriptures as well. "Words mean things," or better, "words meant things" in the context of Scripture. The goal of a word study is to find out what the author's understanding was of the words he used when writing the biblical text.

Now obviously, because the Scriptures were not originally written in English (King James or otherwise), the careful student must discover the possible range of meanings of the words used by the Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic writers in their native tongues. This task is becoming increasingly easier for those who know little to no Greek or Hebrew vocabulary (although I would venture to say you know more Greek vocabulary than you realize!) with the advent of computer software and the new Goodrick/Kohlenberg numbering system.

Range of Meaning

All words, regardless of language, carry a range of meanings. An extreme example in English is the word "cleave." If you look in a dictionary, you will find the verb can mean both "to cling to" and "to split apart"! The word "pile" has four distinct definitions representing a broad range of meaning: 1) (n) a long slender column used to support a vertical load; 2) (n) a quantity of things heaped together; 3) (v) to press forward as a crowd; 4) (n) a velvety surface of fine short hairs. The following example sentence, albeit somewhat absurd, demonstrates the range of meaning: "As the mob piled toward the construction site, the workers covered the piles of piles with a soft piled cloth in hopes of preventing injury."

Robert Stein calls this range of meaning the "norms of language." A word by itself implies its entire range of meaning. Used in context, however, a word adopts a "norm of utterance." A "norm of utterance" (again from Stein) is the meaning intended by the author or speaker when using a particular word. In the above example sentence, which used a form of "pile" four times, each use of the term carries with it one and only one meaning, not all four meanings. All the uses together provide the range of meaning or norms of language for that one word. Each used separately, however, obtains a "norm of utterance," because it becomes clear which particular meanings are intended by the way the word "pile" is used in each instance.

The task of biblical word study is to choose from the range of meaning of a word the best possible English (if you are translating into English) word to represent the norm of utterance of the Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic word. This process is crucial, because failure to make the correct choice can lead to confusion, doctrinal error, or in extreme cases, the formation of cults.[1]

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[1] Consider the following Scripture:

"They will spring up like grass in a meadow/like poplar trees by flowing streams." (Isaiah 44:4, NIV)

The cult group "The House of Yahweh" has used semantic overload to discover the "hidden" (=wrong!) meaning of this passage. The Hebrew word *'abel* has several different meanings, reflecting different etymological backgrounds. In this passage, the word is translated "meadow." Their translation of the verse, however, utilizes all possible meanings:

"The seed of the Two Witnesses will be first in this world to shine forth as separated, distinct, and having understanding and wisdom, being present to CALL TOGETHER and CONVOKE to the courts The House of Yahweh, the Place of Offerings—truly guaranteeing from the WEST on the ground that YAHWEH IS BRINGING the WATER COURSES—the religious water of the BRIDE, His outpoured WRATH, and abundant JUSTICE and PEACE" (Isayah [their spelling] 44:4 in "The House of Yahweh Established," PO Box 2442, Abilene, TX 79604).

Their conclusion from this verse is that Yahweh will return and establish his heavenly kingdom in Abilene, Texas. (Hebrew *'abel*, Abilene?!) Of course, this is an extreme example of the dangers of improper word study.

Some popular Bible versions (most prominently, *The Amplified Bible*) sometimes make the error of applying too many meanings to a word used in a specific context. This is called "illegitimate totality transfer" or "semantic overload" interchangeably. Each word means one thing, save the rare occurrence of double entendre in the Scriptures. Your task is to move from the "norms of language" to the "norm of utterance" for each key word you study.

<u>Where to Begin</u>

The best place to begin a word study is in the Bible itself. Once you have selected a passage for study (target text), you will want to identify at least one, but preferably two to four key words in the passage. These words should be selected based on their importance to or frequency in the target text, their theological importance, or the degree of controversy surrounding the translation of a particular word.

Once you have identified your key words, you can work back to the original language using a variety of tools. A Strong's *Concordance* (if you are partial to the KJV) or an *NIV Exhaustive Concordance* (G/K) provides a number for the word you wish to study, and you can look up its "norms of language" in the dictionary in the back for the respective word. Strong's provides a dictionary-like definition, while G/K lists all the different ways the Greek or Hebrew word is translated in the NIV. Checking out these definitions in the back of the concordance is an important step, because sometimes you may find that the same Greek or Hebrew word is translated completely different in the same passage you are studying.

Once you have determined the range of meaning of your word, your next step is to work outward from your target text. Words are fluid and sometimes change meaning in just a short period of time. For example, the word "career" 100 years ago meant "a fast gallop on a horse." Now it means your chosen field of work. This phenomenon is especially true in Hebrew since the various books were written over about a 1,000-1,500 year time span. Even the Greek NT, which covers a twenty to forty year span of writing, shows shifts in meaning of certain words, or even how some words are used by different authors or with different audiences.

The best way to illustrate this process is by the use of concentric circles. Determine how many times your chosen word is used by your target text. Also determine how it is used, both grammatically and semantically. In both Greek and Hebrew, there is a much closer relationship between nouns, verbs, and adjectives, so in some cases, it may be helpful to discover if the root of your word is used in other parts of speech (e.g. *oikodomeō* ["I build"] is a verb, and *oikodomē* ["building"] is a noun, forms of both are used in Eph 2:19-22).

The semantic use of a word is always influenced by both syntax (how the sentence is structured) and by genre (the type of literature in which the word is found). "Rock" has one meaning in a narrative passage (e.g. "He used *rocks* to make an altar") and a completely difference meaning in wisdom literature (e.g. "God is my *rock*") and still another in the Gospels (e.g. "Upon this *rock* I will build…"). A word only has a "norm of utterance" in context, so the context (that which surrounds the word) will always provide important clues for your understanding of the word.

The next step is to see how the author uses this word in the rest of his book or epistle. For Peter, Paul, or John, check their other writings, too. Also, keep in mind that Luke wrote Acts, as well. Does an author use the word several different ways, or is he consistent in his usage? Does the author use the word one way in an earlier writing, and differently in a later writing? If the author is fairly consistent in his usage, then settling on a definition or translation will be relatively easy. If he is not consistent, then you must dig a little deeper.

After you have checked the immediate and authorial context, your next step is to see how the word is used in the entire testament. Do the other writers have the same understanding of the word? If no, what are the differences? Some things to look for might be: Is the word only used by or of certain people? Are there internal comparisons or contrasts made to an author's use of the word (e.g. parallelism)? Is the word only used in certain settings or in certain genres (e.g. parables)?

At this point, the beginning student should have enough information to begin to form some conclusions about the meaning of the word or words studied (but see *ahpaz legonmenon* below). However, if a word you are studying in the NT is found in an OT quotation, or has implications which have carried over from the OT, then the next step would be to see how both the Greek word is used in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT), and what Hebrew term or terms it translates. The Hebrew words can easily be found by using one of the above mentioned concordances. The Septuagint reference may be more difficult for the beginning student, because none of the Septuagint reference works of which this author is aware are keyed to the Strong's or G/K numbering system. Some of the more advanced Bible software programs may provide more assistance in this area. Also, Kittel's *TDNT* (the 10 volume set) and Colin Brown's *NIDNTT* contain discussions on the OT use of each significant NT Greek word found in the Septuagint and its relation to Hebrew.

Advanced Issues

By now, you should have enough information to go on, and this is as far as any beginning student in the biblical languages is reasonably expected to pursue a word study. However, if you are still not satisfied with the results of your word study, a more advanced step would be to check a patristic concordance or lexicon to see how the early church fathers used the word. Additionally, the works cited above will sometimes offer discussions on the patristic use of a word. The text of the Ante-(Pre-) Nicene church fathers alone is about 100 times the text of the NT (about 8,000 8 ½" x 11" pages of 10-point print!), so if you want to make this step, be prepared to spend much time on this! *This step is not expected of the beginning student, but is included for those of you who want to explore further study*.

Another advanced step you may wish to take is to check synonyms of your selected word. Sometimes there may be subtle differences between synonyms that help to inform your understanding of a word more fully. You may ask: "Why did the author choose this word over that word?" "Does one words have more or less of a theological load than the other?" For example, in the stories of the feedings of the 5,000 and 4,000, two different words are used for basket. The first baskets (feeding of 5,000) were possibly the apostles' lunch baskets, smaller than the baskets used to collect the leftovers at the feeding of the 4,000.

hapax legomenon

At this point the *hapax legomenon* should be considered. A *hapax legomenon* is a word which is only used once in a collection of writings, in this case, the Scriptures. Often, these words have been thorns in the flesh of many theologians. A good example of a *hapax legomenon* is the word *authentein*, found only in I Timothy 2:12. The word is translated "to have authority," but just what kind of authority? Paul often uses the word *eksousia* to speak of his authority, so why does he choose a different word here when writing about women not exercising "authority" over men? Some argue that the *authentein* "authority" as a kind of usurping authority, the type Paul or any good Christian leader would and should *never* use. The scholars are by no means united in this opinion, however.

In such cases, it is helpful to go beyond the bounds of Scripture to see how the word is used in other contexts and in other types of literature. Again, a resource such as Kittel's

Theological Dictionary of the NT, Colin Brown's *New International Dictionary of NT Issues*, or VanGemeren's *New International Dictionary of OT Theology & Exegesis* can help in broadening the scope of word study beyond the Biblical text.

Limiting Your Search

When you look up your chosen words in a concordance or lexicon, you may be overwhelmed by the number of times a word is used. Some key words may be used two hundred times or more! Obviously, you will not always have time to look up each and every occurrence of words used this many times. Here are some hints for limiting the scope of your study while still gleaning useful information.

- Parallel passages (esp. in the Gospels) may be eliminated in some instances, but sometimes the details around a selected word may prove useful;
- If a Hebrew or Greek word is used across several genres, select representative examples from each genre;
- It may become apparent that a word has a consistent meaning or translation throughout Scripture, in which case a conclusion may be reached quickly;
- The Goodrick/Kohlenberger NIV *Concordance*, as well as Wigram's *Concordances* list all the ways each Greek or Hebrew word is translated in the Bible. This can be helpful in determining the "norms of language" of a word. You can see at a glance how much digging you may need to do.

When all is said and done, a sampling of about twenty (if it occurs that often) to fifty uses of a word should suffice as a reasonable database for your study.

Using the Tools

Language tools are a valuable resource when used at the proper time in your study. Here is the recommended order for using the tools (see bibliography for abbreviations, many of these resources/functions are also available in the most popular software packages).

1. Concordances (Greek/Hebrew or computerized)
2. General Lexicons (*Dictionary* in UBS Greek text; Holladay's *Concise Hebrew*, Strong's or G/K's dictionaries; "enhanced" Strong's on some software)
3. Advanced Lexicons (BAG-D Greek); BDB Hebrew; Louw & Nida's *Semantic Domain, Analytical* lexicons if grammatical information is important)
4. Theological Dictionaries (Kittel's TDNT; Brown's NIDNTT; TWOT; NIDOTTE; TDOT); *cultural* background commentaries (*IVP Bible Background*).
5. Commentaries (as a last resort, if you have trouble making your own conclusions).

Making Decisions

Ideally, you want to come to your own conclusions in your word studies. As you progress through your word study, you may begin to notice certain patterns appearing which will help you come to your conclusions. For words with a limited "norm of language," the decision on how to translate a word may not be that difficult. In fact, your decision on how to translate a word may not be that much different from modern translations. What you are looking for in your study is any "deeper meaning" behind the word, and ultimately, the best way to explain the word (if it needs further explanation) to your audience.

With all the new resources available, especially computer software, you may begin to experience some information overload as you progress through your study. This is completely normal. Your job is to sort through the relevant information which applies to the "norm of

utterance" of your specific word in the context of your passage. *Ideally, the "theological" dictionaries and commentaries are best used to confirm or fine-tune your own conclusions, not to form them.* If your conclusions disagree substantially with those of the advanced works, you may need to do some more study, or recheck your previous steps, to see if any errors in judgment have been made on your part. Then again, your study may reveal flaws or deficiencies in the advanced works, and you could be on the road to becoming a respected scholar!

A word of caution is appropriate here: be careful not to give a word a new or "creative" meaning just for the sake of innovation or to make a totally off-the-wall theological point. Remember, your task is to determine how the biblical author used the word, and how the readers or hearers would have understood them. To give the term any other meaning is at best *eisegesis* (i.e. reading "into" the text a meaning not there), and at worst *deconstructionism*, a post-modern philosophy which basically says the current reader supplies the meaning of words in a (pre-)text, regardless of authorial intent.

Conclusion

Many of the advanced works are so thorough in their treatment of words, that it hardly seems necessary to do your own study. You will find, however, that your diligence in following these steps will be rewarded. You will begin to develop confidence in your own ability to study the Bible in general, for starters. The process will also help you develop a historical-critical mindset when approaching the Scriptures. You will be better able to explain the Word of God to friends and neighbors as you share your faith. You will also be able to say that you did the study and that you came to your own conclusions, rather than being spoon-fed by a distant (and sometimes deceased) scholar who knows little of your own context. In doing this, you will earn the respect of Christians and non-Christians alike, regardless of their level of scholarly achievement.

WORD STUDY FORM

1. Choose the English Word for study based on one or more of the following criteria:
    a. Is it a word you simply do not understand?
    b. Is it theologically loaded?
    c. Is the word repeated often?
    d. Is the word different in various translations?

English Word	Bible Verse	Bible Translation

2. Consult a **concordance** that matches your translation of choice. Some concordances are keyed to KJV, while others are keyed to NIV, NASB and RSV.

Strong's #	GK #

Greek Word	Transliteration	Brief Definition

3. While still in your **concordance**, note the number of times it occurs in the NT. All concordances do not function the same. In some, you'll need to look at all forms of the word. For example, if you were looking up the word "complete," you may also have to look up "completes," "completed" and "completing." Let's say the final count of those 4 words being translated by the same Greek word is 11. *Make note that the Greek word may also be translated as something else (but at this point, you have no way of knowing this). What I'm saying is that your Greek word may actually be used 14 times, but in the other 3 occurrences your Greek word is translated as something other than a form of "complete."*

In others like the "Strongest," it gives usages and definitions. So you may look up the word "car" (#2181) and in the back it may say: (3) car; (7) vehicle; (4) truck. In this situation, you would then look up each of those words too (to find the Scriptures) and look specifically for #2181.

# of usages in book & Scripture references	# of usages by author & Scripture references	# of usages in NT & Scripture references

4. Consult 2 **lexicons** to see what they say about your word.

      Always look to see if they mention your verse so you can see exactly how they would translate your word in this specific instance.

Resource #1	Semantic Range

Resource #2	Semantic Range

5. Consult 2 **theological dictionaries** to see what they say about your word.
      a. Get a definition
      b. Always look to see if they mention your verse.
      c. Look to see how your author typically uses your word.

Resource #1	How does this resource translate it & what do they say?

Resource #2	How does this resource translate it & what do they say?

6. Make a decision! Does the **context** of your passage warrant a specific rendering of your word? Consider these questions:
      a. Think back to how your author typically uses your word.
      b. How does the context dictate how your word has been used in the NT.
      c. Consider how the word was used in various genres.

BASED ON RESEARCH, the best translation of this word in this text is _____

BASIC TOOLS OF BIBLE INTERPRETATION

A. An Accurate Text
   1. Primary Languages
      a. Hebrew Old Testament: "Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia" *(Latin title)*
      b. Septuagint (LXX – *Greek version of the OT*): "Septuaginta" *(Latin title)*
      c. Greek New Testaments:
         i. "Novum Testamentum Graece" (Nestle/Aland's - blue cover) *(Latin title)*
         ii. "The Greek New Testament" (UBS – red cover)
            A companion text for this which explains why specific variant readings are preferred over others is:
            "A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament" (Bruce Metzger)

   2. Translations
      a. Formal equivalents (KJV, RSV, NASB, etc.)
      b. Dynamic equivalents (NIV, The Good News Bible)
      c. Paraphrases (The Living Bible, The Message)
      d. Parallel versions
         ➢ *The Complete Parallel Bible* - REF 220.52 B582par
         ➢ *Eight Translation New Testament* - REF 225.52 E34
         ➢ Kohlenberger's, *The Precise Parallel NT* (gives 7 plus Greek)
      e. Interlinears (Greek or Hebrew w/English translation below)
         ➢ Owen's, *Analytical Key to the OT* - REF 221.44 O97a
            (gives Hebrew word and how it is translated in RSV)
         ➢ Kohlenberger's, *The Interlinear NIV Hebrew-English OT* -
               REF 221.44 B582i
            Marshall's, *The Interlinear NASB-NIV - Parallel NT* - REF 225.48 I681m
            (you can see how Greek is translated)
         ➢ Marshall's, *RSV Interlinear Greek-English NT* - REF 225.48 R454m
         ➢ Marshall's, *NASB Interlinear Greek-English NT* - REF 225.48 N243m

B. Language Grammars
   1. Hebrew Grammar
      ➢ Kelley's, *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*
   2. Greek Grammar
      ➢ Mounce's, *Basics of Biblical Greek*
      ➢ ALSO: Dana & Mantey; Funk, Debrunner, & Blass

C. Concordances
   1. English Concordances
      ➢ Young's, *Analytical Concordance to the Bible* **(KJV)** - REF 220.52033 Y75Y
         (You can't count number of usages with this! No Strong's #. Also, back index is
         more confusing that others since each page does not specify Hebrew or Greek)
      ➢ Strong's, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (**KJV**) - REF 220.52 S923n
      ➢ Strongs, *The New Strongs* **(KJV)** – REF 220.52 S923
      ➢ *Strongest Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* – REF 220.52 **(KJV)**
      ➢ Goodrick & Kohlenberger's, *The Strongest: NIV Exhaustive Concordance* –
         REF 220.52 G654s
      ➢ Goodrick & Kohlenberger's, *NIV Exhaustive Concordance*
         (no Hebrew or Greek helps)   REF 220.52 G655n
      ➢ Zondervan, *NASB Exhaustive Concordance* – REF 220.52053.287
   2. Hebrew & Greek Concordances
      ➢ Kohlenberger & Swanson's, *The Hebrew-English Concordance of the OT*
         (some coded to Strong's ... designed to replace Wigram) - 221.44 K79h
      ➢ *Hebrew-English Concordance to the Old Testament* - REF 221.44 K79h
      ➢ Wigram's, *The Englishman's Hebrew & Chaldee Concordance of the OT* -
         492.42 WIG
      ➢ Wigram's, *The Englishman's Greek Concordance* - R 487.2 WIG

D. Hebrew & Greek Lexicons
   ➢   Gesenius', *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon of the OT* (coded to Strong's) –
            R 492.34 TRE
   ➢   Holladay's, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT* - R 492.43 Hol
   ➢   Brown, Driver, & Briggs' (BDB), *Hebrew & English Lexicon of the OT*
            REF 492.43 B877h
   ➢   Jenni & Westermann's, *Theological Lexicon of the OT* - 3 volumes
   ➢   Thayer's, *Greek-English Lexicon of the NT* (coded to Strong's) - R 483 Tha
   ➢   Moulton & Milligan's, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (coded to Strong's)
            R 483.3 Mou
   ➢   Mounce's, *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek NT*
            (listed in order by Greek alphabet) - R 487.4 MOU
   ➢   Balz & Schneider's, *Exegetical Dictionary of the NT* - 3 volumes
            REF 225.4803 E96b
   ➢   Louw & Nida's, *Greek-English Lexicon of the NT Based on Semantic Domains*
            R 487.4 GRE (need to consult Vol 2 to look up words in Vol 1)
   ➢   Bauer's (BAGD), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the NT and Other Early Christian
            Literature* - R 487.4 A747g
   ➢   Spicq's, *Theological Lexicon of the NT* - 3 volumes - R 487.4 SPI
   ➢   Rogers, Cleon Jr. & Rogers, Cleon, III. *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key
            to the Greek New Testament*

E. Dictionaries
  1. Hebrew & Greek Theological Dictionaries:
  ➢ Vine's, *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
    (coded to Strong's) REF 220.3 V782c
  ➢ Mounce's, *Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
        REF 220.3 M924m (coded to Goodrick & Kohlenberger in back but also
        contains Strong's numbers by each word)
  ➢ VanGemeren's, *New International Dictionary of OT Theology & Exegesis*
    (NIDOTTE) - 5 volumes – REF 221.3 N 532v
  ➢ Betterweck, Ringgren, & Habry's*, Theological Dictionary of the OT (TDOT)*
        - 11 volumes - REF 221.3 T391b
  ➢ Verbrugge's, ABRIDGED VERSION *New International Dictionary of NT
    Theology* – REF 225.3 N532v and in circulation 225.3 N532v
    (This book is like C. Brown but briefer and easier to use)
  ➢ C. Brown's, *The New International Dictionary of NT Theology (NIDNTT)*
    4 volumes - REF 230.03 N532
  ➢ Kittel's, *Theological Dictionary of the NT (TDNT)* - 10 volumes - REF 483.3 KIT
  ➢ Kittel's, ABRIDGED VERSION *Theological Dictionary of the NT (TDNT)*
        REF 225.48
  ➢ Vines's, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* – REF 487.4 V782e
    (You can use this when using your lexicons. It should not replace, Kittel, Brown
    or Verbrugge. Look up in English. After you find word, you look up with
    transliteration. The Greek word is next to it. Very friendly!)
  ➢ Vincent's, *Word Studies in the New Testament* – REF 225.7 v 773w
    (This is like 4 commentaries. You look up your passage and look to see if he
    mentions the word you are looking for. It is hit and miss, but very friendly.)
  ➢ Wuest's, *Word Studies in Greek New Testament* – REF 225.7 W959w
    (This is like many commentaries. You look up your passage and look to see if he
    mentions the word you are looking for. It is hit and miss, but very friendly.)

  2. Bible Dictionaries & Encyclopedias
  ➢ Unger's, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*
  ➢ Hasting's, *Dictionary of the Bible*
  ➢ *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
  ➢ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
  ➢ *The New Bible Dictionary*
  ➢ Ryken, Wilhoit, & Longman's, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*
        REF 220.3 D554r
  ➢ Green, McKnight & Marshall's, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*
  ➢ Hawthorne, Martin & Reid's, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*
  ➢ Martin & David's, *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & Its Developments*

F. Commentaries
  1. Focus: critical, devotional, expositional, theological, etc.
  2. One- or multi-volumes; one- or multi-authors.
  ➢ Some good ones:
      The Expositor's Bible Commentary; Word Biblical Commentary;
      The College Press NIV Commentary
          (Christian Church / Churches of Christ perspective)
      Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries & Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
      The NIV Application Commentary
      The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (NICOT) & (NICNT)
      Black's New Testament Commentary

G. Introductions
  1. Old Testament Introductions
      ➢ Hill & Walton's, *A Survey of the Old Testament*
      ➢ ALSO: LaSor, Hubbard, & Bush's *Survey*
  2. New Testament Introductions
      ➢ Gundry's, *A Survey of the New Testament*
      ➢ ALSO: Guthrie, Martin
  3. Bible
      ➢ Wilkinson & Boa's, *Walk Thru the Bible*

H. Bible Atlas
      ➢ Beitzel's, *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands*
      ➢ *Atlas of the Bible Lands*

I. Bible Backgrounds
      ➢ Walton, Matthews, & Chavalas', *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*
      ➢ Keener's, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*
      ➢ Kasier, Davids, Bruce, Brauch's, *Hard Sayings of the Bible*
      ➢ Bell Jr's, *A Guide to the New Testament World*
      ➢ Malina's, *Windows on the World of Jesus*
      ➢ Barrett's, *The New Testament Background: Writings from Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire That Illuminate Christian Origins*
      ➢ Gower's, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*
      ➢ Yancy's, *The Jesus I Never Knew* (this was a best seller - a fun read)

GUIDE FOR USING GREEK AND HEBREW REFERENCE WORKS
by Scott Stocking

Key: **B** Background Information; **E** English word index; **G** Basic knowledge of Greek/Hebrew grammar helpful; **H** General Hermeneutics; **L** Knowledge of Greek/Hebrew vocabulary/ alphabet helpful; **S** Keyed or indexed to Strong's numbering system (**S*** only some editions are keyed); **W** Word studies. Those labeled **G** and **L** are more advanced works, but not unusable by average students. Other reference works may cross-reference to these **G/L** works by page number and section or column on the page. Sample bibliographic entries are given for edited works which contain entries by multiple authors.

Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd ed. tr. & rev. by William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. Chicago Press: Chicago, 1979. **W, L**

The standard Greek lexicon for the serious Bible student. Many other reference works are cross-referenced to the BAG-D (initials of last names of author and translators). It is comprehensive in scope, and is valuable in showing how early Christian writers understood the biblical text and Koine Greek. As far as I know, no editions of this work are keyed to Strong's, but a supplemental index to BAG-D does exist (and is available in the SLCC library) which is cross-referenced to the Scriptures in canonical order.

Botterweck, G. Johannes and Ridggren, Helmer, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Tr. By john T. Willis. 9 Volumes and growing. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. **W, B, L**

This is the most advanced of the Hebrew reference works. The volumes have a green cloth cover. To use this resource (only completed through about ½ the Hebrew alphabet), you need to know the Hebrew alphabet in order and the transliteration (i.e. corresponding English phonetic spelling) of the Hebrew word. If you can find the Hebrew transliteration of a word from another source (e.g. Strong's), it may be possible to lookup the Hebrew word in this reference work. Care must be taken in that transliteration schemes are not always consistent from one reference work to the next. As far as I know, none of the volumes have even been keyed to Strong's.

Eissfeldt, Otto. "*'adhonai*." In *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Tr. by John T. Willis, vol. 1. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974, pp. 59-72.

Brown, Colin. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 4 Volumes, includes index. 1986. Arranged alphabetically by English words. **W, B, E**

This is a very popular work. The entries are arranged by English words/themes. The dictionary discusses both the lexical meaning of the word as well as the theological significance attached to the word. An index of transliterated Greek and Hebrew is included in volume 4 (back of volume 3 in the older sets). This index is cross-referenced in the *Greek-English Concordance* (NIV) by Zondervan. A CD-ROM version is available through Zondervan, and

works in conjunction with the Goodrick/Kohlenberger (G/K) numbering system included in Zondervan's *NIV Complete* CD-ROM package.

Brown, Francis; Driver, S.R.; and Briggs, C.A., eds. *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. (BDB) Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907. **L, W, S***

Editions not keyed to the Strong's numbering system require a knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet, and in some cases, a knowledge of the Hebrew root. The most helpful part of the lexicon is that many of the meanings are stated in the context of the Scriptures where the word is used. The lexicon also contains information about cognate (related or corresponding) words in other languages contemporary or pretemporary to biblical Hebrew, which should be ignored at this level. BDB is cross-references in Owens and the NIV *Hebrew-English Concordances*.

Goodrick, Edward W., and John R. Kohlenberger III, eds. *NIV Exhaustive Concordance* (G/K). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990. **W, E;** *links to* **L**

This new concordance surpasses Strong's in scope, and utilizes an entirely revised numbering system (shorthand is usually G/K). Many new reference works (especially by Zondervan) are keyed to G/K now. This concordance also cross-references its new numbering system with Strong's. Goodrick and Kohlenberger have also published concordances to the NSRV and NAS.

Harris, R.L.; Archer, G.L.; and Waltke, B.K. *Theological Workbook of the Old Testament (TWOT)*. Chicago: Moody, 1980. **S, L, W**

This 2-volume set is useful in that it is inexpensive and compact, yet contains valuable theological summaries of many important OT words. The *Workbook* utilizes its own numbering system, but is also cross-referenced to Strong's in the back of Volume 2. If you do not have access to Strong's, a knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet is necessary to locate the desired word. The *Online Bible*'s enhanced Strong's dictionary directs you to the TWOT word number.

Smith, James E. "*gānab*." TWOT. Chicago: Moody, 1980.

Kittel, Gerhard. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. 10 volumes and abridged one volume. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. **W, L, E**

The most comprehensive of the Greek theological dictionaries, Kittel is arranged alphabetically according to the Greek word. The 10 volume set contains a great deal of etymological data about each word and its cognates in other languages. At your level, reading the section on use in the NT should suffice. If your particular word happens to come from an OT quote in the NT, then read the OT/Septuagint section as well. An abridged one volume Kittel ("Little Kittel") provides much briefer studies on the words. "Big" Kittle is indexed according to English key words, Greek key words and Hebrew words (neither are transliterated), and biblical/apocryphal references. Little Kittel is alphabetized according to Greek, but transliterates all Greek words in the main entries, and is indexed accordingly, along with an English key word index.

Kohlenberger III, John R., Goodrick, Edward W., and Swanson, James A. *The Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. **W, L, E, S,** Based on NIV

Kohlenberger III, John R. and Swanson, James A. *The Hebrew-English Concordance to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. **W, L, E, S** Based on NIV

Similar in scope to Wigram (see below), but updated in organization (contains important phrases as well as words) and cross-references to the G/K and Strong's numbering system. The Hebrew Concordance is cross-referenced to both the BDB *Hebrew Lexicon* and Holladay's *Concise Hebrew Lexicon*. Lexical entries in the Greek concordance are also keyed to the Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich (BAG-D) lexicon and to Colin Brown's index.[1] With G/K numbering system, the *Hebrew-English Concordance* is easily cross-references to VanGemeren's NIDOTTE. (Both works are exhaustive, i.e. contain every reference to every word).

Louw, Johannes, and Nida, Eugene, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*. 2 vols. New York: United Bible Societies, 1988. **W, L, E**

This work classifies words based on semantic domain (i.e. all words referring to "work" can be found in one section). This Lexicon is helpful in determining contextual factors in the translation of a word. It's primary purpose is to assist Bible translators in the field, but it is highly usable by the average students of the Bible. Volume 2 is indexed according to Greek and English words, as well as Scripture passages cited for context. It has it own unique numbering system, because some words can be classified in several domains.

Owens, John Joseph. *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*. 4 volumes. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. **L, G, W**

This four-volume set lists the entire Hebrew text word by word or phrase by phrase. Each word or phrase is then analyzed according to grammatical information and translation (RSV). The page number in parentheses is where the word can be found in the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew lexicon. Aside from computer tools, this is the best resource for discovering grammatical data about a Hebrew word. Its only drawback is that it is not keyed to Strong's. A word of caution: a knowledge of Hebrew grammar is essential before using any of the grammatical information to form your own conclusions.

Rienecker, Fritz. *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*. Tr. by Cleon Rogers. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980. **L, G, W**

Rogers, Cleon Jr. & Rogers, Cleon, III. *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. **L, G, W**

The 1998 volume is a complete overhaul of the 1980 volume. This work contains verse by verse treatment of important Greek words and grammatical considerations. Some entries

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[1] The SLCC library has an older edition of the NIDNTT, which contains the index in volume 3. To find the page number in the older edition, add 894 to the CB number in the concordance listing.

even provide theological insights. A rudimentary understanding of the Greek alphabet and morphology is helpful but not necessary. Words are also identified by the G/K numbering system. The new work is geared more toward the English reader, and is highly usable by those who do not know Greek. Many entries contain insights from other sources. These sources are abbreviated in the body of the work, but a fill biographical listing can be found in the front of the book. This would make up the first part of your citation (bolded below for the purpose of illustration only).

Robertson, A.T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament***. New York: Harper, 1930.** In Rogers, Cleon Jr. and Rogers, Cleon III. *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. Matt 23:24.

Strong, James. *The Exhaustive Concordance of the [KJV] Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980. **W**

A foundational tool, especially for those who are more familiar with the King James Version. Many of the works cited in this bibliography are cross-referenced to Strong's dictionary, although Goodrick and Kohlenberger (*NIV Concordance*) seem to have set a new standard in numbering. VanGemeren's five-volume set (see below) contains a cross-reference of Strong's and G/K's numbering system.

VanGemeren, Willem A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis (NIDOTTE)*. 5 volumes. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. **W, S, H, L, E**

This new work includes 200 pages of articles on OT exegesis and theology, a comprehensive dictionary akin to Kittel, and is keyed to the G/K numbering system. The work also contains a 1,000 page topical dictionary, and a five part index. Clearly the most advanced and English-reader-friendly Hebrew reference work to date. The G/K numbering system is cross-referenced to Strong's.

Hall, Gary H. *n'p*. NIDOTTE, vol 3. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997, pp. 2-5.

Vine, W.E., Unger, Merril, F., and White, William Jr. *Vine's Completed Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words with Topical Index*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996. **W, E, S***

This entry level resource is a popular tool. This particular edition (the NT portion has been published separately in the past) is keyed to Strong's Concordance. The indices for both the Old and New Testament sections contain both English and Hebrew or Greek transliterated listings of key words. The latter gives not only the Strong's reference number, but also the page number in the Brown-Driver-Briggs *Hebrew Lexicon* or the Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich *Greek Lexicon* respectively where the word can be found. The entries are terse, but provide grist for further study.

Wigram, George V. *The Englishman's Greek Concordance*. Reprint ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. **W, L, E, S***

_____. *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament*. Reprint ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980. **W, L, E, S***.

Both works are arranged alphabetically according to the Greek or Hebrew words. Some volumes are indexed to Strong's *Concordance*. Each work also contains an English word index (according to KJV) and where each Hebrew or Greek word translated thus can be found by page number. Every Hebrew verb is sorted according to its "stem" (i.e. how it is used as a verb), so you should not necessarily stop after you have looked up the Qal imperfects. It also lists each Hebrew word and gives frequency counts of the various way each word was translated into KJV English. The transliteration scheme for these works is somewhat dated, so pay special attention when comparing to more modern works. The *Word Study New Testament* and *Concordance* (Tyndale) utilize Wigram's Greek Concordance and Strong's numbering system, and also provide links to other Greek lexicons and resources.

Young, Robert. *Analytical Concordance to the [KJV] Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970. Divided by English words, and subdivided by Hebrew and Greek words. **W**

Like Strong's, every occurrence of every KJV English word is located. Unlike Strong's however, Young's breaks down each English word according to the Greek and Hebrew words which translate it, so you don't have to flip to the back for the broader range of meaning.

GREEK ALPHABET[1] AND TRANSLITERATION

English Spelling	Greek Spelling	Capital	Lower Case	Trans-literation	Pronun-ciation	Numeric value
alpha	αλφα	A	α	*a*	f*a*ther	1
bēta	βητα	B	β	*b*	*b*a*b*y	2
gamma	γαμμα	Γ	γ	*g*	*g*irl	3
delta	δελτα	Δ	δ	*d*	*d*a*d*	4
epsilon	εψιλον	E	ε	*e*	m*e*t	5[2]
zēta	ζητα	Z	ζ	*z*	*z*one/a*dz*e	7
ēta	ητα	H	η	*ee*	f*ê*te	8
thēta	θητα	Θ	θ	*th*	*th*in	9
iōta	ιωτα	I	ι	*i*	mach*i*ne	10
kappa	καππα	K	κ	*k*	*k*ite	20
lambda	λαμβδα	Λ	λ	*l*	*l*ake	30
mu	μυ	M	μ	*m*	*m*o*m*	40
nu	νυ	N	ν	*n*	*n*u*n*	50
xi	ξι	Ξ	ξ	*x*	a*x*e	60
omicron	ομικρον	O	ο	*o*	h*o*t	70
pi	πι	Π	π	*p*	*p*en	80[3]
rhō	ρω	P	ρ	*r*	*rh*yme	100[4]
sigma (Final *sigma*)	σιγμα	Σ	σ ς	*s*	*s*end	200
tau	ταυ	T	τ	*t*	*t*able	300
upsilon	υψιλον	Y	υ	*y/u*	b*oo*k	400[4]
phi	φι	Φ	φ	*ph*	*ph*one	500
chi	χι	X	χ	*ch*	lo*ch*	600
psi	ψι	Ψ	ψ	*ps*	ri*ps*	700
ōmega	ωμεγα	Ω	ω	*o*	t*o*ne	800[5]

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[1] The Greek alphabet, like the Semitic alphabets (e.g. Hebrew) derives from ancient Phoenician alphabet. Although Greek and Hebrew are very different languages, the alphabets are nearly identical, phonically. Take a few minutes to compare the Greek alphabet with the Hebrew alphabet printed in Psalm 119 of most modern English translations.

[2] The Pre-Koine Greek alphabet had the letter *digamma* next. It was called this because it looks like two stacked gammas. BAG-D calls this letter *stigma*; it is also more properly known as *vau*, and has a consonantal "w" sound, or perhaps even a "v" sound (compare to Hebrew *waw*). The letter dropped out by the time Koine Greek had developed, but its original presence in some words still influences the morphology of those words. For an advanced discussion, see William D. Mounce, *The Morphology of Biblical Greek*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

[3] The Pre-Koine Greek alphabet had the letter *qoppa* or *koppa* next. Compare to Hebrew *qoph*.

[4] When a word begins with *rho*, it always has a rough breathing mark (᾿, 'P) unless it is a loan word. Words beginning with *upsilon* or an *upsilon* diphthong always have rough breathing, except in the case of the name of the letter itself.

[5] The Pre-Koine Greek alphabet had *sampi* as its final letter (after *omega*). Compare to Hebrew *sin/shin*.

THE HERESY OF APPLICATION
It's when we're applying Scripture that error is most likely to creep in.

An interview with Haddon Robinson

Leadership assistant editor Ed Rowell was talking on the phone with Haddon Robinson recently when Haddon made the offhand comment, "More heresy is preached in application than in Bible exegesis." The phrase stuck in our minds. We editors had several, animated conversations about it, standing around the black file cabinets in the hall outside our offices.

We finally decided to visit Haddon in his office at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, near Boston, and press him on the implications of what he'd said.

There, amid at least three containers of jellybeans, numerous diplomas, and an academic gown still in plastic from the dry cleaners, we found the Harold John Ockenga Distinguished Professor of Preaching. Haddon authored *Biblical Preaching*, a text used in 120 seminaries and Bible colleges. He teaches on the daily program "Radio Bible Class" and, in a 1996 poll conducted by Baylor University, was named one of the twelve most effective preachers in the English-speaking world.

Our conversation became a rich, Socratic dialogue on the delicate art of applying ancient truth to modern people.

You've said that more heresy is preached in application than in Bible exegesis. Why?
Haddon Robinson: Preachers want to be faithful to the Scriptures, and going through seminary, they have learned exegesis. But they may not have learned how to make the journey from the biblical text to the modern world. They get out of seminary and realize the preacher's question is application: How do you take this text and determine what it means for this audience?

Sometimes we apply the text in ways that might make the biblical writer say, "Wait a minute, that's the wrong use of what I said." This is the heresy of a good truth applied in the wrong way.

What does this heresy look like?
I heard someone preach a sermon from Ruth on how to deal with in-laws. Now, it's true that in Ruth you have in-laws. The problem is, Ruth was not given to solve in-law problems. The sermon had a lot of practical advice, but it didn't come from the Scriptures.

Someone might ask, "What's the problem with preaching something true and useful, even if it's not the central thrust of your text or not what the writer had in mind?"
When we preach the Bible, we preach with biblical authority. We agree with Augustine: What the Bible says, God says.

Therefore, we bring to bear on, say, this in-law problem, the full authority of God. The person hearing the sermon thinks, *If I don't deal with my mother-in-law this way, I am disobedient to God*. To me, that's a rape of the Bible. You're saying what God doesn't say.

How does such preaching affect a congregation?
One effect is that you undermine the Scriptures you say you are preaching. Ultimately, people come to believe that anything with a biblical flavor is what God says.

The long-term effect is that we preach a mythology. Myth has an element of truth along with a great deal of puff, and people tend to live in the puff. They live with the implications of implications, and then they discover that what they thought God promised, he didn't promise.

A week ago I talked with a young woman whose husband had left her. She said, "I have tried to be submissive. Doesn't the Bible say if a wife submits, she'll have a happy and successful marriage?"

"No," I said, "the Bible doesn't say that."

She said, "I've gone to seminars and heard that."

"What the Bible says is you have a responsibility as a wife. A husband also has a responsibility. But the best you may have is a C marriage. There is no guarantee you will have an A marriage."

What makes Bible application so prone to error?
In application we attempt to take what we believe is the truth of the eternal God, which was given in a particular time and place and situation, and apply it to people in the modern world who live in another time, another place, and a very different situation. That is harder than it appears.

The Bible is specific—Paul writes letters to particular churches; the stories are specific—but my audience is general. For example, a man listening to a sermon can identify with David committing adultery with Bathsheba, but he's not a king, and he doesn't command armies. We have to take this text that is historically specific and determine how the living God speaks from it to people today.

What's the best way to do that?
Preachers make that journey in different ways.

One is to take the biblical text straight over to the modern situation. In some cases, that works well. For example, Jesus says, "Love your enemies." I say to my listeners: "Do you have enemies? Love them."

But then I turn the page, and Jesus says, "Sell what you have, give to the poor, and follow me." I hesitate to bring this straight over because I think, *If everybody does this, we'll have problems, big problems*.

Some texts look as though they can come straight over to my contemporary audience, but not necessarily. I need to know something about the circumstances of both my text and of my audience.

For example?

Let's say I ask the question, as many Christians did in the last century, "Is slavery wrong?" I go to Paul, who does talk about slavery. But I discover when I get into his world that he's not necessarily answering my questions about the nineteenth century in America, because the slavery Paul talks about isn't the slavery we knew in the United States in the nineteenth century.

In the first century, people sold themselves into slavery because they were economically better off as slaves, protected by their owners, than they were free. Most slaves were freed by age 30, because in that day maintaining slaves was economically difficult. Roman law said an owner could not handle slaves any way he wanted to. And if you walked down the streets of Rome, you could not tell the slaves from the free men by the color of their skin.

If I don't realize that Paul's situation and mine are different, I may apply Paul's advice about slaves in a way it was never intended.

Another difficulty is that Paul talks to people I can't see or hear. It's like overhearing a telephone conversation. I listen to only half of the conversation, and I think I know what the other person is saying, but I can't be sure. I can only guess at what the full conversation is from what I hear one person saying. The questions the writer answers are not necessarily my questions.

What signals that we may be confusing the questions?

A text cannot mean what it has not meant. That is, when Paul wrote to people in his day, he expected them to understand what he meant.

For example, we have some thirty different explanations for what Paul meant when he wrote the Corinthians about the baptism for the dead. But the people who read that letter the first time didn't say, "I wonder what he meant by that." They may have had further questions, but the meaning of the subject was clear to them.

I cannot make that passage mean something today that it did not mean in principle in the ancient world. That's why I have to do exegesis. I have to be honest with the text before I can come over to the contemporary world.

I picture a "ladder of abstraction" that comes up from the biblical world and crosses over and down to the modern setting. I have to be conscious how I cross this "abstraction ladder." I want to make sure the biblical situation and the current situation are analogous at the points I am making them connect. I must be sure the center of the analogy connects, not the extremes.

Sometimes, as I work with a text, I have to climb the abstraction ladder until I reach the text's intent.

Give us an example.
Leviticus says, "Don't boil a kid in its mother's milk." First, you have to ask, "What is this all about?" At face value, you might say, "If I have a young goat, and I want to cook it in its mother's milk for dinner tonight, I should think twice."

But we now know the pagans did that when they worshiped their idolatrous gods. Therefore, what you have here is not a prohibition against boiling a kid in its mother's milk, but against being involved in the idolatry that surrounded God's people or bringing its practices into their religion.

If that's the case, it does no good for the preacher to bring this text straight over. You must climb the ladder of abstraction a couple of levels until you reach the principle: You should not associate yourself with idolatrous worship, even in ways that do not seem to have direct association with physically going to the idol.

Let's say you know that a passage can't come straight across. How do you go about climbing the abstraction ladder?
One thing I always do with a passage is abstract up to God. Every passage has a vision of God, such as God as Creator or Sustainer.

Second I ask, "What is the depravity factor? What in humanity rebels against that vision of God?"

These two questions are a helpful clue in application because God remains the same, and human depravity remains the same. Our depravity may look different, but it's the same pride, obstinacy, disobedience.

Take 1 Corinthians 8, in which Paul addresses the subject of eating meat offered to idols.

The vision of God: He is our redeemer. Therefore, Paul argues, I will not eat meat, because if I wound my brother's weak conscience, I sin against Christ, who redeemed him.

The depravity factor: People want their rights, so they don't care that Christ died for their brother.

> *Application is harder*
> *than it appears.*

How do you preach about situations not addressed directly in the biblical text? It doesn't really help listeners to say, "God doesn't speak to your situation."
Sometimes, though, I think a preacher would do a congregation well to say that. It's instructive that some things we spend time praying about have so little kingdom dimension to them.

A while ago, an acquaintance was trying to decide which of two or three cars to buy. He wanted me to pray that he would buy the car that would be most pleasing to God. I said to him, "It's conceivable that God doesn't want you to have a car at all. Maybe you ought to take the train."

I was teasing him, but we need to remember, a great mass of people in the world don't have a bike to ride.

Are preachers today more likely to apply a passage a certain way than would preachers of a generation ago?
Today, what's prevalent is specific application. In the past, the application would have been more general—to trust God and give him glory. Today, preaching deals with how to have a happy marriage, how to bring up your children, how to deal with stress.

That's challenging, because in any congregation sit people with incredibly varied backgrounds. How do you apply well to each one?
We tend to apply a passage to people like ourselves. If you're 35 and you associate with young professionals in the church, you'll tend to keep those people in mind.

It's helpful to make a grid of the people in your church in terms of things like age, marital status, housing situation, net worth, education. After you determine the principle in a passage, you look at the grid and ask, "What does this say to a single person in her fifties who works in a grocery store and lives with her parents?" It may not say anything, but you continue asking that question for each grouping.

When I prepare, I imagine about eight people standing around my desk. One is my wife's mother, who is a true believer. In my mind, I also picture a friend who is a cynic, and sometimes I can hear him saying, "Oh, yeah, sure." I picture a business executive who thinks bottom line. I have in my mind a teenager, whom I can occasionally hear saying, "This is boring." I look at these folks in my mind and think, *What does this have to say to them?*

After preaching a sermon have you ever said, "I wish I hadn't applied it quite like that"?
That's the story of my life. In my twenties I preached some things I believed deeply then, but now I wonder, *How in the world did I come up with that?*

I remember believing that headship meant the husband ought to take care of the finances. Worse, my wife insists that in a sermon on marriage, one of my main points was that a wife ought not serve her husband instant coffee!

Obviously that application came out of the culture of that day more than anything else. It preached well. In those days I used anything that popped into my head that looked like it applied. The awful thing was I said in the name of God what God was not saying. Is it disobedience against God for the wife to keep the checkbook? Of course not. Asking the question, "Does this rank at the level of obedience?" is a good test of sermon application.

What do you say when you can't say, "This is a matter of obedience to God"?
We want to have a "Thus saith the Lord" about specific things in people's lives, but we can't

always have that. So we need to distinguish between various types of implications from the text. Implications may be necessary, probable, possible, improbable, or impossible.

For example, a *necessary* implication of "You shall not commit adultery" is you cannot have a sexual relationship with a person who is not your spouse. A *probable* implication is you ought to be very careful of strong bonding friendships with a person who is not your spouse. A *possible* implication is you ought not travel regularly to conventions or other places with a person who is not your spouse. An *improbable* conclusion is you should not at any time have lunch with someone who is not your spouse. An *impossible* implication is you ought not have dinner with another couple because you are at the same table with a person who is not your spouse.

Too often preachers give to a possible implication all the authority of a necessary implication, which is at the level of obedience. Only with necessary implications can you preach, "Thus saith the Lord."

How would you phrase such distinctions in the pulpit?
One way is to say, "This is the principle, and the principle is clear. How this principle applies in our lives may differ with different people in different situations."

For example, the principle of honoring one's parents is not negotiable. But do you keep an elderly parent at home, or do you put the parent in a nursing home? You may want to say, "To honor your parent you ought to keep him at home." But someone may say, "I have three children, and my parent wanders the house in the middle of the night, waking the kids and disrupting the household, and it's hurting the kids." Now we have principles in tension.

That application may disappoint many congregations because they like to be told exactly what to do.

Doesn't it eviscerate your sense of authority to say, "Think about it"?
At times that may be the most effective thing I can do for a congregation because the world that people live in often has conflicting principles. By generalizing, we often miss the contradictions and tensions in the Bible.

For example, the Book of Job balances the theology of the Book of Proverbs. Proverbs teaches cause and effect. Job's friends basically recite Proverbs to Job, but there is an ingredient they don't know about—what's going on in heaven.

The Wisdom Literature says, "In general, this is the way God's world works, but we cannot say if a person is hurting and seemingly punished he must have been disobedient. Disobedience brings punishment; not all apparent punishment is for disobedience."

The Bible does that kind of thing all the time. Call it "the balance of harmonious opposites." We all live with that sort of tension. Therefore, when applying the text, it's more important to get people to think Christianly than to act religiously.

> *I said in the name of God*
> *what God was not saying.*

How do the different genres of Scripture affect our application?
The most extensive Bible genre is story, people doing things. We have to ask, Why does the Bible give us so much narrative? Why didn't God just come right out and say what he meant and not beat around the bush with stories? If I were God and were going to give something that would last until the end of time, I would have said, "Here are five principles about my will." But he doesn't do that.

Therefore it's dangerous to go into a narrative and say, "Here are three things we learn about the providence of God." That's not the way the biblical writers chose to handle it. If we believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, we have to consider the methods used to proclaim God's message.

What is the harm in using a three-point structure or five-principles structure? It may have been foreign to the writer, but it may be helpful to today's listener.
It is not a deadly sin. But what I need to bring out when I preach from stories are the tensions. Here are real people being directed by God and responding to God. The purpose of these stories is not to say at the end, "You must, you should." The purpose is to give insight into how men and women relate to the eternal God and how God relates to them.

In a sermon on Joseph's life, for example, I might say, "A lot of life doesn't seem to make sense. You make plans, but they don't come about. You're true to God, but you aren't rewarded for it. If that's where you are, here's a man who experienced that."

I'm not going to tell people that Joseph's experience will be like their experience. Rather I will say, "The great tension in the life of Joseph is a tension we all feel." I will apply what is a universal experience.

You can deal abstractly with a great principle—God is sovereign—in a way that gets boring. Such a sermon reminds me of a hovercraft that floats eight feet above the ground but never lands into life. Without the human element, you lose the specific, the historical narrative, the emotional interaction.

If you as a preacher could increase your sermon preparation time from eight hours to ten, what would you do with those two hours to most improve your application?
I would invest those hours in whatever I tend not to focus on.

People who are good at exegesis tend to spend a lot of time in that and may not know when to quit. Those folks would be well served to spend extra time on how to communicate the fruit of their research.

Others are into the communication side. They're always relevant, but they desperately need to spend more time in the biblical text to let it speak to them.

How do you view the Holy Spirit's role in the process of applying the text to the listener's life?
The Spirit answers to the Word. If I am faithful to the Scriptures, I give the Spirit of God something to work on that he doesn't have if I'm preaching *Reader's Digest*.

I have a formula: Pain + time + insight = change.

Sometimes people go through pain over a period of time, but that doesn't change them. But pain and time plus insight will, and that's where the preacher comes in.

This explains why on a given Sunday the sermon is a wide yawn for many. Even with the greatest preachers, not every sermon stirs everybody. But then people will say to you, "You can't imagine how that spoke to me." They didn't come to church neutral; they came with pain suffered over a period of time. They received insight from the sermon, it clicked, and change occurred in their life.

When did you sense the Spirit applying a sermon to you?
Several years ago I was out of sorts with God. I came to church one Sunday, and the preacher was not particularly good, but he dealt with the biblical text. I did not want to read that biblical text, but I couldn't get away from it. The preacher did not apply the text to my situation, but the Word itself got through to me in such a way that after the service I had to go for a long drive. It was one of those moments when you say, "God has confronted me, and it's going to be dangerous business if I don't listen." It was as though that passage and that preacher and the Spirit had picked me out of the crowd. The sermon was not eloquent, but that passage and his sticking with it drove home the truth to my life.

That's the greatness of preaching. Something can always happen when a preacher takes God's Word seriously.

KURT WARNER STORY

This is the beginning of an article by Jim Thomas that ran in the Post-Dispatch on Jan 09. It was titled, "Warner quietly wins MVP."

"Rams quarterback Kurt Warner passed for the second-highest yardage total in NFL history this season.

Millions of married men could empathize Wednesday with Kurt Warner. Here he was, honored as the NFL's most valuable player. But with his wife on hand, he couldn't get a word in edgewise.

What had to be the most bizarre MVP news conference in any sport at any time began with these words from Brenda Warner: "Kurt would first like to thank his wife for everything he's ever done," she joked.

... Brenda continued, "He thinks anybody could do what he's done with the people surrounding him. ... Super Bowl. That's what he's thinking right now, and that's all he thinks about."

CONTEXT EXERCISES

1 Thessalonians 5:2 – "The day of the Lord"

You're having a conversation with one of your Christian friends regarding things surrounding end time events. During the discussion your friend paraphrases 1 Thessalonians 5:2 and says, "Jesus will come secretly like a thief in the night." Is your friend correct?
(example from McQuilken: Understanding and Applying the Bible)

Colossians 3:15 – "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts"

A Christian author was discussing the way to discover God's will for one's life and made the point that inner peace was an important indicator. The sole verse he used to anchor his argument was Colossians 3:15. Would you agree with his use of this verse to make his point?
(example from Virkler: Hermeneutics)

Hebrews 10:26-27 – "sinning willfully"

A person comes to you extremely depressed. A week ago she willfully and deliberately stole some merchandise from a local store, and now on the basis of Hebrews 10:26-27 believes that there is no possibility of repentance and forgiveness. How would you counsel her?
(example from Virkler: Hermeneutics)

Matthew 18:18 – "binding and loosing"

While attending a recent church service, you heard a pastor quote binding and loosing demons. His basis for doing so was Matthew 18:18. Is this a legitimate application of this text?

Philippians 4:13 – "I can do all things"

You're enjoying a nice day at the beach when suddenly things go bad. Your friend is about 50 yards off shore and is screaming for your help. You can't swim though! In fact, you're so terrified of water that you've never even attempted to take swimming lessons. Does our text give us the confidence to jump in anyway?

1 Peter 2:8 – "appointed to doom"

You're teaching a Sunday School class on 1 Peter. When you get to this verse in your study, someone asks, "Is this teaching predestination?" How do you respond?

1 Corinthians 13:10 – "but when the perfect comes"

A friend quotes 1 Corinthians 13:10 and tells you the gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased because we now have the New Testament as our ultimate guide. Would you agree with this analysis?

1 Peter 2:24 – "by His wounds you were healed"

You were just diagnosed with pneumonia. A caring friend tells you that you do not need to accept that and quotes 1 Peter 2:24. What do you think about this?

1 Corinthians 14:34 – "women keep silent"

In a recent board meeting an elder said the women in the church should not preach, teach or lead anything. After all, he said, "Women are to keep silent. Just read 1 Corinthians 14!" Does he have a point?

1 John 1:9 – "if we confess our sins"

A young man hates the problem he has with pornography. He keeps clinging to 1 John 1:9 in faith as he waits for God to "cleanse" him from his "unrighteousness." Will his constant quoting of this text help him stop viewing porn?

James 3:8 – "the tongue is a restless evil"

A young lady was studying and ran across James 3:8 which says, "No one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison." She is convicted that she should simply not talk any longer. This may seem extreme, but does she have a point?

John 8:32 – "the truth shall make you free"

You just told a really bad lie, but now feeling very convicted about it, you confess. Now feeling relieved, you say "The truth shall make you free." Is this good exegesis?

Matthew 7:7 – "Ask and it shall be given to you"

You're watching an evangelist on television who continually says that if you had enough faith God would give you whatever you ask for --- and he means "whatever." Does Matthew 7:7 give him the artillery he is looking for?

WORD STUDY FOR METAPHORS

Listed below are all the uses of the words "thorn" and "thorns" in the NASB.
Metaphors are in bold

NEW TESTAMENT
Thorn:
Matt 7:16
Acts 7:30, 35
2 Cor 12:7

Thorns:
Matt 13:7 (twice), 22 .. parable
Matt 27:29
Mark 4:7 (twice), 18 .. parable
Mark 15:17
Luke 6:44
Luke 8:7 (twice), 14 .. parable
John 19:2, 5
Heb 6:8

OLD TESTAMENT
Thorn:
Exod 22:6
2 Kings 14:9 (twice)
2 Chron 25:18 (twice)
Prov 26:9
Eccles 7:6
Isa 7:19
Isa 55:13
Ezek 28:24
Hos 10:8
Mic 7:4

Thorns:
Gen 3:18
Num 33:55
Josh 23:13
Judg 2:3
Judg 8:7, 16
2 Sam 23:6
Job 5:5
Ps 58:9
Ps 118:12
Prov 15:19
Prov 22:5
Song of Sol 2:2
Isa 5:6
Isa 7:23, 24, 25
Isa 9:18
Isa 10:17
Isa 27:4
Isa 32:13
Isa 33:12
Isa 34:13
Jer 4:3
Jer 12:13
Ezek 2:6
Hos 2:6
Hos 9:6
Hos 13:14
Nah 1:10

Step 8: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Theology proper - the nature of God (divinity, trinity)
Bibliology - the Bible (inspiration, inerrancy)
Christology - the nature and work of Christ (humanity, divinity)
Pneumatology – of Holy Spirit (gifts, etc.)
Ecclesiology - the church
Hamartology - of sin
Soteriology - of salvation (cross, atonement)
Eschatology - future
Angelology - angels
Demonology/Satanology - demons/Satan
Cosmology/Ktisiology - creation/order
Anthropology - mankind
Axiology - ethics (values)
Missiology - missions
Pastorology - being a pastor/leader
Theodicy - how can God be good when evil exists? (an attempt to explain the ways of God)
Nomology - nature of the Law
Epistemology - nature of knowledge

Both the "window" and the "pyramid" are from Dave Veerman's book called *How to Apply the Bible*.

THE WINDOW

	People's Need / Problem	God's Action / Solution	People's Response / Obedience
THEN	- who needed help? - what was going on? - what was the problem?	- how did God react? - what did God do? - what did God want the people to do?	- how did the people receive God's message? - how did the people respond to God's solution? - how did God want the people to respond?
NOW	- with whom in the passage do I identify? - what tension, need, conflict or problem sounds familiar? - how are the people in the story like us?	- what is God's answer to this question today? - what is God's solution to our problem? - what is God doing now?	- how does God want people to receive his message? - how does God want us to react? - what should people do?
ME	- how am I facing a similar problem in my life? - how are the people in the passage like me? - where do I feel uneasy, a sense of conviction?	- what does God want to do in my life? - how is God involved with me? - what kind of person does God want me to become?	- what can I do to do what God wants me to do? - what can I do to become the kind of person God wants me to be? - what specific steps should I take?

THE PYRAMID

Going up the pyramid
    EXEGESIS
Top of the pyramid
    PRINCIPLES:
        What is the message for all of humankind?
        What are the timeless truths?
        What is the moral of the story?
Coming down the pyramid
    PRESENT:
        What does this principle mean for my society and culture?
        How is this relevant?
        What back then is similar to today?
        How can I make the timeless truth timely?
    PARALLELS:
        What does this truth mean to me?
        Where are my areas of need, conviction and opportunity?
        Where in my life might this truth possible apply?
    PRIORITIES:
        How should I adjust my priorities?
        What should I change about my values, beliefs, attitudes or character?
        What about my thoughts and motives should change?
        What kind of person does God want me to become?
    PLAN:
        What does God want me to do about what I have learned?
        What steps will get me to that goal?
        What should be my first step? How can I get started?

Areas for application: Home, school, work, church, neighborhood, world

Type of application plans:
    Intentional: "I will reach my goal by taking the following steps."
    Conditional: "If …, then I will …"

I like the image of the pyramid because it says exegesis is only half of the process!

Step 10: GETTING BACK IN FRONT OF THE TEXT

A. Voices from the Present

1. Choose two modern commentaries for additional research. Duvall & Hays contain recommendations on pp. 432-450. I would highly recommend you consulting *The NIV Application Commentary* and the *New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Others are fine though, as long as they do not pre-date 1970.
2. Interview two people for their interpretation of your text (not a student). One must be someone you highly respect while the other must a person of a different denomination, age, race or gender.

B. Final Reflection

What have you learned?
How has your previous understanding of the text (from Step 1) changed?

THE RELIABILITY OF THE BIBLE
(and the accuracy of various translations)

by T. Scott Womble

Today, when one looks to purchase a Bible the question that ensues is, "What translation should I use?" Christians may offer various responses. A person may view one translation to be as good as the next. Another may believe one single translation is the only correct translation. Others may view selecting a translation as a daunting task. Knowing the facts about the various translations is imperative.

First of all, translations are written for readers with various reading skills. The following reflects the **grade reading level** for many translations.

NirV (New International Reader's Version)	2.9
NCV (New Century Version)	3
TM (The Message)	4.8
CEV (Contemporary English Version)	4
GNT (Good News Translation)	6-7
(formerly called "Today's English Version" and Good News Bible	
NLT (New Living Translation)	6-7
NAB (New American Bible)	6.6
TM (The Message)	7 (some say 4-5)
HCSB (Holman Christian Standard Bible)	7-8
NJB (New Jerusalem Bible)	7.4
NIV84 (New International Version)	7
ESV (English Standard Version)	8
NKJV (New King James Version)	8-9
NRSV (New Revised Standard Version)	10
NASB95 (New American Standard Version)	11
AMP (Amplified)	11
KJV (King James Version)	12
AS (American Standard)	12

Second, there are three **different translation philosophies**: word-for-word (also called "Formal Correspondance"), thought-for-thought (also called "Dynamic Equivalence") and paraphrase. Zondervan ranks various translations in the following order (from what we may call most conservative to the more liberal).

NASB	word-for-word
AMP (Amplified)	word-for-word
ESV	word-for-word
RSV (Revised Standard Version)	word-for-word
KJV	word-for-word
NKJV	word-for-word
HCSB (Holman Christian Standard Bible)	word-for-word / thought-for-thought
NRSV	word-for-word / thought-for-thought
NAB	word-for-word
NJB	word-for-word / thought-for-thought
NIV	word-for-word / thought-for-thought
TNIV (Today's New International Version)	word-for-word / thought-for-thought
NCV (New Century Version) /	
ICB (International Children's Bible – kid's version of NCV)	

REB (Revised English Bible)
NLT   thought-for-thought
NirV   word-for-word / thought-for-thought
GNT   thought-for-thought
CEV   thought-for-thought
GW (God's Word)
LB (Living Bible)   paraphrase
TM   paraphrase
OIV (Oxford's Inclusive Language Version)

Third, **translations are just that – they are translations**. We do not possess the **autographs** (the original writings of the biblical authors). In other words, for example, although we have copies of Paul's letter to the Colossians, we do not have the original letter that is written in his own handwriting (parchments {animal skins} and papyrus don't last forever). The Bible, as we have it today, is based upon copies of the original manuscripts. The problem for the modern reader is that the oldest and most reliable copies are not in English. Our Old Testament is translated from Hebrew, whereas the New Testament is translated from Greek.

The Hebrew Bible we use today is based upon the Leningrad Codex (L). The Leningrad Codex (A.D. 1008) is "the oldest dated manuscript of the complete Hebrew Bible." Codex Leningradis is known to have a high degree of accuracy with texts which are 1,000 years older. It is believed to be the descendant of the standard Hebrew text which Rabbi Aqiba helped establish in A.D. 100. The text itself must have existed early since the text type is the same as those of the Dead Sea Scrolls (200 BC - AD 100). It has also been referred to as the Masoretic Text, as the Masoretes inherited the text in A.D. 600 and kept re-copying the text until approximately A.D. 1,000.

Unlike the Hebrew text which is based upon one superior manuscript, the Greek New Testament is an **eclectic** text (derived from a variety of sources). The reason for such is due to the vast number of Greek manuscripts in existence today. In fact, **over 5,800 Greek manuscripts** have been discovered. At my last estimation (Spring 2011) there was:
a. 299 uncials   (320)
b. 96 papyrus fragments   (127)
c. 2,812 minuscules   (2,877)
d. lectionaries   (2,433)   = total of 5,757

(Note: there are also over a million quotations from the early church fathers. Furthermore, the New Testament was translated early on into several other languages as well, such as Latin, Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Gothic, etc. The total number of these versional witnesses has not been counted yet, but it certainly numbers in the tens of thousands. Daniel B. Wallace)

There are two Greek texts being consulted today: Nestle-Aland (blue) and United Bible Societies (red). The primary differences rest in their critical apparatuses:
a. UBS is more explicit in detail on fewer variants
b. Nestle-Aland surveys the whole better
        e.g. on one page Nestle-Aland shows 32 variants and UBS only 1
c. UBS includes the graded evaluation of the variant (A thru D)

d. Nestle-Aland tends to have more paragraph breaks (they replace the usual pericope divisions of the text with the original structure divisions of the text)

To put this number of Greek mss (over 5,800) into perspective, consider how many copies of other well-known works from antiquity exist.

AUTHOR / BOOK	WHEN WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPY	TIME SPAN	# OF COPIES
Catullus	54 BC	AD 1,550	1,600 years	3
Euripides	490-406 BC	AD 1,100	1,500 years	9
Demosthenes	383-322 BC	AD 1,100	1,400 years	200
Sophocles	496-406 BC	AD 1,000	1,400 years	193
Aristotle	384-322 BC	AD 1,100	1,400 years	5 or 49?
"The History of Thucydidus"	460-400 BC	AD 100	500 years	20
Herodotus' "History" (Greek historian)	480-425 BC	AD 100	500 years	75
Aristophanes	450-385 BC	AD 900	1,300 years	10
Plato "Tetralogies"	427-347 BC	AD 900	1,200 years	7
Pliny the Younger (historian)	1st century AD	AD 1,000	900 years	1
Julius Caesar's "Gallic Wars"	58-50 BC	AD 800	800 years	9-10 readable copies
Suetonius "De Vita Caesarum"	AD 75-160	AD 950	800 years	200
Tacitus' "Histories"	AD 100	9th century AD	700 years	4 copies of 14 bks
Tacitus' "Annals" (16 books)	AD 100	9th century AD ----------- 11th century AD	700 years	only 2 copies (both contain unique material) of 10 of the16 bks (there are 31 late Italian mss)
Homer's "Iliad"	1,050-850 BC	400 BC? OR AD 200	500 years? OR 1,000 years?	643
Livy's "Roman History"	59 BC-AD17	4th century AD	300 years	27 copies

No book of antiquity is attested to like the New Testament! Bruce Metzger wrote "*In evaluating the significance of these statistics ... one should consider, by way of contrast, the number of manuscripts which preserve the text of the ancient classics. Homer's Iliad ... is preserved by 457 papyri, 2 uncial manuscripts, and 188 minuscule manuscripts."*

Of course, possessing 5,800 copies presents a problem too. For, when each copy is compared to the others, it becomes clear that alternate readings (differences) exist. These alternate readings are called **variants**. Variants are the natural result of copying a copy, of a copy, of a copy, etc.

The following provides some common reasons for variants:
- a. Misspelling words *(make up about 70% of the variants)*
- b. Transposing letters or words
- c. Dittography - repeating a letter, word, or line
- d. Haplography (parablepis) - omitting a letter, word, or line
- e. Fusion - putting 2 words together that don't belong (later MSS)
- f. Fission - pulling 2 words apart (later MSS)
- g. The copyist may mishear while copying from dictation
- h. Sometimes intentionally to assist the reader (like adding "Christ" to Jesus)
- i. Adding margin notes

EXAMPLE:

MS A – Jesus is Lord and Savior

MS B – Jesus is Lrod and Savior

MS C – Jesus is the Lord and Savior

MS D – Christ Jesus is Lord and Savior

REASONS FOR VARIANTS (69)

"Until the beginning of the fourth century the text of the NT developed freely. It was a 'living text' in the Greek literary tradition, unlike the text of the Hebrew OT, which was subject to strict controls because (in the oriental tradition) the consonantal text was holy. And the NT text continued to be a 'living text' as long as it remained a manuscript tradition ... Even for later scribes, for example, the parallel passages of the Gospels were so familiar that they would adapt the text of one Gospel to that of another. They also felt themselves free to make corrections in the text, improving it by their own standards of correctness, whether grammatically, stylistically, or more substantively. This was all the more true of the early period, when the text had not yet attained canonical status, especially in the earliest period when Christians considered themselves filled with the Spirit."

"Variant readings in the NT text which are not due to simple scribal error (or to the confusion of similar sounds when transcribing from dictation in a scriptorium) may be explained by its character as a 'living text.' While it is true that from at least the third century the scribes tried to copy their exemplars faithfully to the letter, they also followed the meaning as they transcribed the text (which they knew practically by heart), and this gave rise to variants."

Kurt & Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (1981)

Due to the absence of the autographs and the existence of variants, one may wonder if our preferred translation (or for that matter, any translation) accurately reflects what the authors actually said. In other words, can we know for sure that the text we have today is reliable? As an example, how can we know that Jesus gave the words in the SOM as we read them today, etc.?

The task of **"textual criticism"** (often called "lower criticism") sets out to determine the reliability of the Bible. Textual critics study copies of an ancient writing and try to determine the exact words of the text as the author originally wrote them. Thus, the task of textual criticism involves comparing every existing copy of a text to each other. It is during this process that variants are discovered.

While it may be one's natural inclination to think the discovery of variants is a bad thing, it is quite the opposite. It is only due to the wealth of material we have (in stark contrast to other writings of antiquity) that we can spot possible problems and know for sure when we see authentic material. For instance, in theory, the ten readable copies of Julius Caesar's *"Gallic Wars"* could be in complete agreement, but with only ten copies it is difficult to know if the material is still trustworthy. With over 5,800 Greek sources to attest to the NT, however, one can identify the authentic material while also spotting possible corruptions to the text.

Some **variants of concern** include:
> Mk 16:9-20
>> Sinaiticus, Vaticanus omit section (both 4th cent)
>> UBS gives this an {A} rating (indicates the text is certain) for vv. 9-20 being omitted.
> Jn 5:4
>> Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, P^{66} (about 200 AD), P^{75} (early 3rd cent) omit
>> UBS gives this an {A} rating (indicates the text is certain) for v. 4 being omitted.
> Jn 7:53-8:11
>> Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, P^{66}, P^{75} all omit
>> UBS gives this an {A} rating (indicates the text is certain) for 7:53-8:11 being omitted.
> Acts 8:37
>> Not in UBS or Nestle-Aland Greek texts.
>> Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, P^{45} (3rd century) all omit
>> UBS gives this an {A} rating (indicates the text is certain) for v. 37 being omitted.

TEXTUAL CRITICISM
Even variants that are clearly incorrect can help in interpretation because they can show how ancient scribes understood the passage. For example, 1 Corinthians 11:10 says that "a woman ought to have authority upon her head because of the angels." What Paul means by authority here is perplexing. Early scribbles puzzled over what this meant as well, and thus in some early MSS the word veil replaces authority. Although clearly secondary and inferior, the word veil was inserted to make the passage clearer and because it harmonized with the injunction in verses 5-6 and 13 to wear head coverings.
> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*

What the texts were written on:
a. papyrus (written on both sides)   up to 8th century
          turned into codex and scrolls
b. parchments (animal hides)   beginning in 4th century
c. paper   12th century
          approximately 1,300 of our mss are written on paper

Regarding the "text families," you may find the following interesting.
- A. Alexandrian
    - Oldest and considered most reliable
    - Modern translations are based on these
    - All of these omit Mark 16:9-20 and John 5:4 (angel stirring water)
    - Most early uncials and a few outstanding minuscules are this text type (Vaticanus & Sinaiticus). However, Mark 16:9-20 is contained in some other early fragments, as well as Church fathers.
- B. Caesarean
- C. Western
- D. Byzantine
    - least reliable as scribes amend text more often
    - KJV based on these
    - most later uncials and nearly all minuscules are this text type

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THE OLDEST FRAGMENT:

The John 18 papyri fragment is P52
    - dates to AD 125 (with 25 years leeway either side)

1. **Papyri** (2nd-4th century AD)
   - ✓ 116 total (Dead Sea Scrolls Fragments)
   - ✓ Sometimes one specific "P" refers to a fragment, while other times tens of leaves.
2. **Uncials** *(upper case lettering)* (4th-10th century AD)
   - ✓ 310 total
   - ✓ Codex's are like bound books
      a. **Codex Vaticanus (B)** - 4th century (Complete Bible now missing Heb 9:14 on)
         - ✓ Has been known since 1475 but the Vatican discouraged work on it. It was carried off to Paris by Napoleon as a prize of war. After 1815 it was returned and eventually Tischendorf got his hands on this too.
         - ✓ The OT lacks Gen 1-46:28, parts of 2 Kgs; Ps 105-137
         - ✓ Currently at the Vatican in Rome
         - ✓ <mark>Widely regarded as the most important surviving biblical manuscript</mark>. Originally probably contained the entire Greek Bible (except the books of Maccabees). However, the final pages of the manuscript have been lost, taking with them Hebrews 9:14-end, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and probably the Apocalypse. Both the Westcott & Hort and United Bible Societies editions are strongly dependent on it. Interestingly, B is the closest uncial to all the substantial early papyri -- to P^{66} and especially P^{75} in the Gospels, to P^{46} in Paul, and to P^{72} in the Catholics.
      b. **Codex Sinaiticus (ℵ)** - 4th century (complete)
         - ✓ Story is that it was found by Constantin von Tischendorf in the middle of the 19th century at a monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai. In 1844 he had been there and saw monks using similar materials to make fires. He had told them not to burn such materials again. He returned in 1859 and a monk (not knowing what it was) directed him to it.
         - ✓ Also contains fragments of Gen, Num, Esth, Isa, Jer, Lam, Joel, Amos-Mal
         - ✓ Currently at the British Museum in London
         - ✓ It is the only uncial to contain the complete New Testament (along with large portions of the LXX and certain apocryphal books). It is the only New Testament manuscript written with four columns per page. Complete Bible but parts of OT lost.
      c. **Codex Alexandrinus (A)** - 5th century (complete)
         - ✓ Brought to England in 1627 by Cyril Lucar after King James died. Cyril Lucar was from Alexandria.
         - ✓ Complete Bible except Psalms
         - ✓ Origin is Egyptian
         - ✓ Currently at the British Museum in London (lies side by side with Sinaiticus)
         - ✓ The first of the great uncials to come to the attention of European scholars. It once contained the entire Old and New Testaments; in its current state, most of Matthew and smaller portions of John and 2 Corinthians are missing.
3. **Minuscules** *(lower case lettering)* (9th-16th century AD)
   - ✓ 2,867 total
   - ✓ KJV based primarily upon these
4. **Lectionaries** (6th-16th century AD) ... 2,420 total
   - ✓ The text of the NT books is divided into separate pericopes, arranged according to their sequence as lessons appointed for the church year. They are used in worship.
5. **Latin Vulgate** (4th-16th century) ... over 8,000 copies written in Latin
   - ✓ Western Church's Bible
   - ✓ Vulgate means "common" or "plain"