



# Biblical Interpretation

## Terminology

### HERMENEUTICS

The process of interpreting the Bible. Includes all the rules, principles, theory, and methods of interpreting the Bible. It covers the process from trying to understand the original meaning of the verses to what it means to us today.

### EXEGESIS

Is the process of interpreting the original meaning of the text.

### EXPOSITION

Is the process of applying Biblical passages to modern times.

### Tools

- Study Bible with commentary
- Bible dictionary

To understand the Bible properly we practise hermeneutics by first applying exegesis because we want to find out the original meaning of the Bible. Secondly, we do an exposition of the text because we want to apply the message to our lives today.

## Steps to help find meaning in a Biblical text.

1. Read the text several times.

Look for:

- a. Themes
- b. Main points
- c. People involved
- d. What happens
- e. etc

Ask questions

- make a list of questions
- what don't you understand?
- what is puzzling?
- etc

2. Understand the Context of the story

- a. Read sections before and after the text.
- b. Use the Bible dictionary to understand words and their meanings.

3. Historical Background

- a. Author – who wrote the text?
- b. Audience – for whom was it written?
- c. Date written.
- d. Reason for writing.
- e. Cultural or life setting when it was written.

### Activity:

Choose one of the following references and apply the steps to help find the meaning of the text.

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
- Philippians 2:6-11
- Matthew 28:16-20
- Romans 8

4. Read the Study Bible commentary on the text.

5. Literary interpretation

- a. What style of writing is used e.g. parable, historical narrative etc

6. Gather all the information together.

- a. What meaning did this passage have for its original audience?
- b. What meaning does this text have for us today?