

THE APPLICATION PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

1. What a great study this has been.
 2. Bless the Lord for the tools that has been provided to enrich our study of the Scriptures.
 3. We have established that:
 1. In order for us to grow as Christians we must:
 1. Study the Word of God.
 1. Faithfully
 2. Prayerfully
 3. Daily
 4. These tools:
 1. Expository study
 2. Topical
 3. Textual
 4. Supplemental tools:
 1. Full Mention Principle
 2. First Mention Principle
 3. Christ o Centric Principle
 5. Clear understandings
 1. The Covenantal Principle
 2. The The Study of numbers
 6. These tools with the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit of God will really help us when it comes to our spiritual growth and the nourishment that our spiritual man needs and craves.
 7. So today we will look at the Application Principle.
 8. By definition: It is that principle of Biblical Interpretation that makes an application only after a correct setting of the text has been made.
 1. We must remember that the Old Testament Scriptures were written for us, but not necessarily to us or about us.
 1. (Rom. 15:4) **Rom 15:4** For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.
 2. 1 Cor. 10:6 **1Co 10:6** Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted
 2. So after giving a passage its true setting and proper interpretation, then we may use it for the purpose of example and application.
5. Keep in mind The Bible is:

1. No ordinary book. It is the Word of God.
 1. It is infallible, Holy Ghost inspired. Written for us and to us.
 2. It is first and foremost a spiritual revelation; so without spirituality it is impossible to understand its contents and rightly interpret its various parts (1 Cor. 2:13-16). **1Co 2:13** Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

1Co 2:15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

1Co 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

3. Interpretation is needed not because of the Book, but because of man's fallibility. Sin has marred even our mental capacities to understand God's revelation.

1. REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE

1. Prayer

1. Seeking the Holy Spirit for direction
2. Seeking the Holy Spirit for illumination

2. Common Sense

1. Common sense is simply the ability to discover harmony in things that agree and to distinguish things that differ.
 1. If we had no common sense there would be no difference between Christianity and Mohammedanism; there would be no difference between Law and Grace, and no difference between truth and error.
2. We must begin with the knowledge and understanding that God has given and not come to the Bible with a speculative mind.
3. Another must is to have faith in the Inspiration of the Bible:
 1. We must believe that the Scriptures are God's Word.
 2. We must believe that they are infallible as given by God and that we are fallible.
 3. Therefore there can be neither are there any contradictions in God's Word;
 4. The contradictions are with us and our inability to understand a book that has been written by an holy

and righteous God.

5. If one doesn't believe that the Bible is God's Word, then he will put more dependence on human reason than Divine revelation.

3. Perpetual Mental Industry

1. God has told us to "study" and there is absolutely no substitute for this (2 Tim. 2:15).
2. "Study" says W. Graham Scroggie "is brain sweat". Search the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). Act 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

3. Obedience to the Word

1. Knowledge and understanding will come to us in the measure that we are obedient to God's Word (Rom. 16:19,25-26).
2. If we rebel and refuse to obey what God has said, we will remain in ignorance.

4. Purity of Life

1. The Bible is a spiritual book. It is God's Holy Word. We must strive for experiential holiness in order to understand the Word. The Word cleanses, and as we obey it, it will purify our lives (Jn. 15:3; 17:17; Eph. 5:25-26).

2. Knowledge of Contemporary History

1. A knowledge of the nations mentioned in the Bible will enhance an understanding of the times. Such nations are Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Syria, Egypt, etc. All of these will throw light upon the Bible, as God's people came in contact with these nations. The Bible is an eastern Book, and its oriental setting will help in understanding much of its content.

2. Customs of Bible Lands

1. Many of the manners, customs, and modes of speech are what they were in Abraham's time. Life in the East is most uniform.
 1. The copper ewer or basin with which the girded slave (John 13:4) washes the feet is the same size and pattern in every home.
 2. The material, style, and color of a woman's dress are the same as that worn by all women of her station from time immemorial.

3. Fields are divided by boundary lines of stones loosely piled up on a wide base. Other land marks are also used.
 4. Barley harvest proceeds wheat harvest by about two weeks.
 5. The early rains come in October-November; the latter rains in March-April (Deut. 11:14; James 5:7).
 6. The summer is dry with scorching winds from the desert.
 7. Crops are carried to a thrashing floor, which is a bare exposed surface of rock.
 8. Threshing is done by the feet or oxen, or by heavier sledges having sharp pieces of iron or basalt.
 9. Winnowing is done by tossing the mass of grain and chaff before the wind.
 10. Sifting is necessary to remove stones, dirt and weeds.
 11. Houses have flat roofs. The streets are always filled with diverse scenes, such as blind men, beggars, lepers, water-sellers, etc.
 12. In the home guests recline at meals. People usually sit to do their work.
 13. Often the animals live with the people in the same large room. The wild flowers and grass of the fields are used for fuel.
3. Expect to Understand the Bible
 1. Many regard the Bible as a sealed Book, not to be fully understood. And if it is understood, then only by an initiated class of priests (Eph. 3:3-4; Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; 2 Tim. 3:14-16).
 2. Ignorance of the Word is sin against both self and God. The Scriptures were written that we might know (John 8:31-32; 20:31).
 4. HINDRANCES FOR PROPER INTERPRETATION
 1. Human Applause and Appeasement
 1. Many have been led astray from the truth because of human applause and to seek human favor.
 2. The Truth will never be popular with some people.
 3. It will bring opposition and often persecution.
 4. Vanity on the one hand and flattery on the other can be hindrances to interpretation and application of the Truth.
 5. The honor of man, either personal or for others, will always be a hindrance to the Truth.

5. Incoherent Bible Study

1. This has been called "The hop-skip and jump method". Here one studies the Bible without regularity or system.
 1. One is apt to study some favorite book, chapter, or verses.
 2. The Bible should be studied by books.
 3. Begin at the beginning as one would do in reading any other book.
2. Sectarian or Religious Creeds can be a hindrance
 1. Men set up their creeds or tenets of belief in what they think the Bible teaches. Many interpret and apply the Word in the light and for the delight of denominational teaching.

6. METHODS THAT PREVENT PROPER INTERPRETATION

1. There are some methods of great value in Bible Study, but there are also some that will lead the Bible student astray.
 1. The Mystical Method
 1. This originated in heathenism, and came by the way of priesthood. It declares that only men specially endowed and inspired by the Spirit can interpret Scripture.
 2. It removes the Bible from the common man. Scriptures have been taken completely out of context and interpreted to mean something else than originally meant.
 2. The Allegorical Method
 1. This method takes the words of the Bible to mean something else than they mean. It puts a secondary meaning to the Word. So that everything one reads means something else than intended by the Spirit.
 2. Clement of Alexandria (150-220?) a Greek theologian and Church Father has a definition of this method as follows: "Did you ever read a book of dreams, or a dream book? You dream of a dog and it means one thing and you dream of a snake and it means something else." So the Bible needs interpretation just as a dream needs interpretation. According to Clement when one reads of swine in the Bible, it doesn't mean swine but something voluptuous or unclean. An eagle stands for robbery, a raven stands for greed, and a hog stands for

injustice. So the Bible can mean anything that men make it mean.

3. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) a Swedish philosopher and religious writer adopted this theory. To him every statement in the Bible has a meaning such as no sane person would gather from the Bible. This is supposed to be a spiritual interpretation given by some inner light. Some people always equate Jerusalem and Zion with Heaven and make these earthly places mean something never intended by the Scriptures.

3. The Rationalistic Method

1. This is the method of unbelief. Nature is here the standard and reason is the guide. If the Bible can be made to harmonize with human reason it is all right, otherwise it is mystical. Only that which harmonizes with reason is valid. Here there is no room for faith. Reason is the standard and guide.

4. The Apologetic Method

1. This false method maintains the absolute perfection of every statement in the Bible.
2. This is the other extreme of the Rationalistic Method. By the Apologetic Method everything in the Bible is regarded as coming directly from God.
3. The Devil said to Eve: "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). This is a record of what the Devil said; but it is not from God. Much in the Bible is an inspired record of what the enemies of God said. David committed the sins of adultery and murder, but that does not make him our standard. Abraham and Isaac lied about their wives which lies were sins.
5. This method takes for granted that if a man was once inspired he is always inspired. It is not the man that is inspired but the record is inspired.

6. The Literal Method

1. This method takes everything in the Bible literally. But much in the Bible is written in figurative language. When Jesus said: "Take my yoke upon you" He was not speaking of a literal physical yoke (Matt. 11:29). This is a metaphor, in which one thing represents another. The "Yoke of the Law" was a common phrase among the rabbis to express the burdensome nature of its ordinances and traditions

(See Acts 15:10). Isaiah says: "All flesh is as grass" (40:6; 1 Pet. 1:24). This is a figure of speech called simile, where one thing resembles another. In Psalm 22:6, the Psalmist says of our Lord: "I am a worm and no man". This is a figure called Meiosis, or a belittling. This figure denotes a much greater depth of humility and affliction than words can express.

7. THE APPLICATION PRINCIPLE DEMONSTRATED

1. Second Samuel chapter nine is the story of Mephibosheth and David, in which a lost soul of the House of Saul is taken from his condition of guilt through grace to glory in David's household.
 1. The Historical Setting
 1. Before making any application of a text one must be honest with the historical setting of the story.
 2. This story takes us back to Saul, Jonathan and David. From the day that David killed the giant Goliath and the Hebrew maidens sang: "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands" (1 Sam. 18:7-8)
 3. Saul was very angry.
 4. Saul then became the bitterest enemy of David.
 5. He sought to take his life twice, hunting and hounding him as a wild beast in the wilderness (1 Sam. Chs.24,25).
 6. But David never retaliated, but instead spared Saul and showed him kindness.
 7. David and Jonathan formed a love covenant which never was broken: "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (1 Sam. 18:1).
 8. This covenant issued out in another covenant: "But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever; no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth" (1 Sam. 20:15).
 9. Then when David had made an end of war and established his throne in Jerusalem he enquires if there is not one left of the House of Saul that he may fulfill his covenant with Jonathan.
 10. He discovers a servant of Saul named Ziba, who tells him of Mephibosheth, living in Lo-debar, in the house of one Machir, son of Ammiel.

11. David then sends for this lame man and brings him to his palace at Jerusalem where he found favor with David.
12. His land is restored and he eats continually at the king's table all his life.
2. So much for the historical setting; now we are ready for the spiritual application.
 1. The Spiritual Sequel
 1. David is here a type of Christ and Mephibosheth of the condemned sinner.
 2. God's wonderful purpose and program in Christ takes us from a condition of condemnation, through His compassion, unto a glorious coronation.
 2. So Mephibosheth comes to David:
 1. By Way of Condemnation - He was "lame on his feet" (2 Sam. 4:4).
 2. He was lame because of the fall of another (2 Sam. 4:4).
 1. This reminds of Rom 5:12,6). He was lame on both his feet (2 Sam. 9:13), totally incapacitated to walk.
 2. Every sinner is totally incapacitated to walk in the path of God's righteousness.
 3. He was a homeless man.
 1. Machir means "sold" and Lo-debar means "no pasture". "No peace" and "no pasture" spells homelessness.
 2. He was in the house of bondage (Rom 7:14).
 3. Redemption is God's way of purchasing us out of bondage (Isa. 61:1).
 4. He was also a hopeless man. He says of himself: "such a dead dog as I am" (Vr. 8). God had utterly rejected Saul and all his house. There is nothing good said about a dog in Scripture, and a dead dog is certainly worthless. (See Deut. 23:18; Rev. 22:15; Tit. 1:15; 1:16; Phil. 3:2; Ps. 22:20,16; Isa. 56:11; Matt. 7:6; 15:27). Rom. 3:10,23 shows our condition as a natural man outside of Christ.
 5. By Way of Compassion - David now redeems his promise and reveals his grace and mercy. It came first through his word (Vrs. 1,4). "And God said" and there came forth a regenerated creation. "God called unto Adam" and there was hope for fallen man (Gen. Ch. 1; 3:9). It is by the Word of God that faith cometh and that we are regenerated (Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23).

4. The way of David was to send his chariots over mountains and deserts and bring this lame man to his palace (Vr. 5). God has acted when He sent His only begotten Son to earth (Jn. 3:16)
5. The will of David was to show him kindness (Vr. 7).
 1. Mephibosheth had nothing to expect, but on the will of another he came into this blessing (Eph. 2:7; Rom. 11:36). All is for the glory of Christ.
 2. By Way of Coronation - His portion was first everlasting peace. He dwelt in Jerusalem, the City of Peace (Vr. 13). Christ is our peace (Eph. 2:14,17). He had everlasting plenty. He sat continually at the king's table (Vr. 13). Our riches are in The Heavens (Eph. 1:3; 2:7). As Mephibosheth came from absolute poverty to plenty, so do we. But Mephibosheth remained "lame on both feet (Vr. 13); so we will have the old nature until the resurrection. But let's keep the lame feet under the table of God's blessing. The riches of grace saved us; the exceeding riches set us in the Heavens with Christ.