

How to Study the Bible

Presuppositions

Welcome

Audio and handouts posted on the website

Pray

Our class today is devoted to the topic of presuppositions.

What Are Presuppositions?

The American Heritage Dictionary - Pre-sup-pose 1. To assume or suppose in advance
2. To require or involve necessarily as an antecedent condition.

In a day-to-day example – you presuppose that the air is breathable. You don't wake up in a panic each morning wondering if the air will be breathable today. We presuppose that.

In Relation to Hermeneutics:

We Do NOT Mean:

That everyone comes to the Bible with their own pre-understandings of what it means and how it should be interpreted, **and these ideas are all correct or acceptable – that is relativism.**

What do I mean by relativism? Truth/interpretation is relative to the individual making the truth claim. "My truth" vs "your truth" kinds of things.

Have you ever heard something like this? This usually comes out ultimately in some form of the person saying, "Well that's just your interpretation." That's an issue of hermeneutics and the presuppositions of hermeneutics, so this is not what we're referring to when we talk about presuppositions and hermeneutics.

That there is no truly objective, unbiased way to understand the Bible. This is pure subjectivism.

We DO Mean:

There are some basic facts about the Bible that must be understood before one can truly understand the Bible as God intended. In other words, **you need to have biblical presuppositions from the Bible, about the Bible, in order to study the Bible and understand it as God intended.**

By the enabling work of the Holy Spirit, we must put aside all personal biases, and approach the Bible as objectively as possible.

Our pre-understandings about the Bible or a particular text should be submitted to whatever the text of the Bible says when understood in its natural and normal sense.

This is possible. Many evangelical scholars will say that this isn't possible, that you can't set aside your presuppositions, so you just need a theological grid which you place over the text and use as a lens through which you see the Bible.

I would argue that this flattens your understanding of the Bible and causes you to interpret the Bible in light of your theology instead of considering and evaluating your theology in light of the text at hand.

IE the warning passages in Hebrews...

Who Has Presuppositions?

Essentially, **everyone** has presuppositions about the Bible or about certain texts in the Bible, every time they approach the Bible whether that's in hearing a sermon, reading it on a regular basis, or studying it in an in-depth way.

Therefore, the question is not what are your presuppositions or what are my presuppositions, but the question is – are the facts you hold about the Bible or a biblical passage in line with the facts that the Bible reveals about itself?

We must understand that in our Politically correct, relativistic culture there are some presuppositions about the Bible that are correct and there are some that are incorrect.

We must be willing to lay down any understanding of the Bible that we had previously when we come to understand a particular text accurately, as it was intended to be understood by the original author.

Where Do Presuppositions Come From?

Suspect Presuppositions:

- personal religious background (atheist, liberal, conservative, denominational, theological. . .)
- personal experience

Reaction to a legalistic childhood

Reaction to a legal-less background

What your parents taught you – did not teach you (because of what they taught you – you don't respect them, so you reject what they think about the Bible).

Experiences in school, college, work, family, neighborhood, part of the country raised in

Appropriate Presuppositions

Where do appropriate presuppositions come from? From one singular place – **the Bible**

In other words – we are not trying to figure out the best way for “me” to understand the Bible or “you” to understand the Bible as if it's subjective and based upon the individual and their experiences.

We want to know the best way for “anyone” – in any culture, in any part of the world, with any background – to understand the Bible, because the Bible tells us how to understand the Bible.

We only want to know the facts about the Bible that help us to understand the Bible in the way God intended us to understand the Bible.

“ . . . the principles for interpreting the Bible are simply descriptions of the way people think and read when they seek to understand the meaning of any writing. They are not inventions, they are discoveries. Rather than being created, they are observed. If they were arbitrarily devised by man, then each person could make up his own rules. But since these principles are part of the way man normally communicates, they are to be considered universal. They are not special rules applicable only to Bible study.” Basic Bible Interpretation, Roy B. Zuck, pp 60-61.

What are Biblical Presuppositions?

Our goal – simply understand what the Bible says about itself Using McQuilkin’s two areas as a basis:

1. The Bible is Supernatural in Character

God is the ultimate author of the Bible. The Bible is a divine book. It is revelation from the Creator of the universe to mankind.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

This means the Bible has ultimate authority over what is true/false, what is right/wrong, what is good/bad.

This means the Bible is without error as a whole and in its parts. If there is something that looks like a contradiction, more than likely, we have not understood it correctly.

This means the Bible is completely trustworthy and reliable to base one’s standards for living and thinking.

The writings – not the writers were inspired. The process by which the Divine message was communicated was through man. The Spirit superintended, oversaw, carried the men along, so that what they spoke were God’s very words.

2 Peter 1:21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

The Bible is completely sufficient to reveal everything that is necessary to live exactly as God wants us to live.

2 Peter 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

Psalms 19:7-14 **Psa. 19:7** ¶ The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;

The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

Psa. 19:8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;

The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Psa. 19:9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;

The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

Psa. 19:10 They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;

Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

Psa. 19:11 Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;

In keeping them there is great reward.

Psa. 19:12 Who can discern *his* errors? Acquit me of hidden *faults*.

Psa. 19:13 Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous *sins*;

Let them not rule over me;

Then I will be blameless,

And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.

Psa. 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart

Be acceptable in Your sight,

O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CHARACTER</u>	<u>PRODUCT</u>
LAW	PERFECT	RESTORING SOUL
TESTIMONY	SURE	MAKING SIMPLE WISE
PRECEPTS	RIGHT	REJOICING HEART
COMMANDMENT	PURE	ENLIGHTENING EYES
FEAR	CLEAN	
	ENDURING FOREVER	
JUDGMENTS	TRUE	
	RIGHTEOUS ALTOGETHER	

Only a person who is born again can understand the God-intended significance of the Bible for a person's life individually or a group of people collectively (a church, a family, a nation, the world).

1 Corinthians 2:14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

Apart from the sovereign and supernatural work of God, will we accept, believe, embrace, and submit to the Word? No.

Do believers still need divine, supernatural aid when it comes to understanding this supernatural book? Yes:

Eph. 1:15 For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, **16** do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; **17** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. **18** I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, **19** and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might...

God's Word presupposes and claims to be a supernatural book, that can only be discerned and understood supernaturally. Does that have implications for Bible study?

Massive implications... Should you just sit down and think you can understand God's Word, apart from God's help? No – so what should you do every time you seek to read and study the Bible?

Pray. We so desperately need God.

Piper's *Reading the Bible Supernaturally* is a big help here...

A – **Admit** your need for God's help – John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

That includes Bible reading, as we've seen, so we need to pray

P – **Pray**

How should we pray when we come to the Bible? Does the Bible have something to say about how we pray about reading the Bible? Are there biblical prayers for reading the Bible? Yes!

I – **Incline** - Psa. 119:36 Incline my heart to Your testimonies

And not to *dishonest* gain.

O – **Open** Psa. 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may behold

Wonderful things from Your law.

U – **Unite** - Psa. 86:11 Teach me Your way, O LORD;

I will walk in Your truth;

Unite my heart to fear Your name.

S – **Satisfy** - Psa. 90:14 O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness,
That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

L – **Lead** - Psa. 119:35 Lead me in the path of Your commandments,
For I delight in it.

And when we pray, we mustn't pray in an unbelieving way. We **TRUST** that the Lord will work – as he has promised. Not only are there prayers in the Bible about reading the Bible, there are promises in the Bible about reading the Bible – did you know that?

There's big all-encompassing promises:

Rom. 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

Psa. 84:11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield;

The LORD gives grace and glory;

No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

And there are also specific promises that God gives about his Word:

Psa. 25:8 Good and upright is the LORD;

Therefore He instructs sinners in the way.

9 He leads the humble in justice,

And He teaches the humble His way.

Prov. 2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom;

From His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding.

7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;

He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

Psa. 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;

The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

- 8** The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
- 9** The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.
- 10** They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
- 11** Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;
In keeping them there is great reward.

2Tim. 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; **17** so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

So then, because the Bible is supernatural and requires the supernatural working of God, should we just pray and pray and pray and trust and trust and seek the supernatural work of God through some divine lightning bolt hitting us in the head and causing us to learn the Bible via osmosis? No of course not, because not only is the Bible a supernatural book, it's also a natural book:

2. The Bible is Natural in Character

God used men (humans) to transmit His Word.

2 Peter 1:21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

God used normal, human communication to reveal exactly what He wanted us to know and understand.

Narrative, poetry, law, prophecy, letters are all normal human means of communication.

In other words – when a person comes to understand a passage in its normal, literal originally intended sense they have come to understand what God says. There are not hidden, mysterious other meanings of a passage than what the author meant – what the author meant is what God means.

This is the presupposition of the Bible. The Bible presupposes that meaning, in the words of John Piper, “is what the author intended to communicate by his words.” - “The meaning of a biblical text is what the author intended to communicate by his words.” (RTBS, 301)

The central issue in understanding the meaning of the Bible is to remove your own ideas and submit to the ideas you find in the Bible, as you discover its natural, normal meaning.

This plays into how we read the Bible as well – we read it in a natural way that we would read and receive human language.

So we have to do things like put forth effort to understand:

2 Tim 2:7 Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

This is why Piper calls it “the natural act of reading the Bible supernaturally”.

As we admit our need, pray for God’s help, trust his promises, we have to **ACT** in obedience. We have to think about, consider, seek to understand the authors’ intended meaning – which is primarily what we’ll be getting at in the second half of the class – what are the actions we take to understand the authors’ intended meaning?

((to fill out Piper’s acronym, APTA – T – **Thank** – Eph 5:20, “...giving thanks in all things...”))

THE CLARITY OF SCRIPTURE

The Bible is a supernatural book, and a natural book, but it is also clear.

One of the fundamental realities the Bible presupposes is that it is clear.

God provided a revelation that can be understood, as God intended it to be understood despite human limitations.

“This suggests that the Bible was not written in an unintelligible code to be deciphered by some magical formula. Since it was written in the languages of the people (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek), it did not have to be decoded, deciphered, or translated. Those who read the Bible did not need to read into, beyond, or between words for some ‘deeper’ or other-than-normal meaning. God communicated truths about Himself in the languages of the people who first read the Scriptures – languages they knew. The basic presupposition of interpretation is that God is a God of sense, not of nonsense. By this, I mean that whatever God reveals through His ancient spokesmen must have made sense both to them and to their hearers. . . . The very fact that we have a Bible at all, from the human standpoint is an indication that it made real sense to the people. It spoke to them where they were.” Basic Bible Interpretation, Roy B. Zuck, pp 61ff.

By the clarity of Scripture we mean that God has written something humans can readily understand.

Martin Luther developed the idea of the clarity of Scripture:

The RCC had a theory of Scripture – both Christ and the Spirit mystically indwell the RCC, the Church shares the mind of Christ and the Spirit. Only the Church truly knows the meaning of Scripture – so whatever they come to say that it means is what it means

Even if that meaning defies a normal understanding of the text of Scripture. 1. **External** Clarity

External clarity of Scripture was the grammatical clarity. If an interpreter follows the laws of language or the rights of language, he can know what the Scripture specifically means.

2. **Internal** Clarity

The internal clarity of Scripture is the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart or mind of the believer, illuminating his mind to see the truth of Scripture as the truth of God. By the use of scientific philology and the illumination of the Spirit we arrive at the clarity of Scripture, and there is no need to resort to the Church.

But this does not mean the Protestant interpreter knows the meaning of everything in Holy Scripture. That there are passages that are puzzling and have to date yielded to the skill of no interpreter must be candidly admitted.

Words and sentences occur in the context of a conversation, in the context of language, and in the context of a culture. Their meaning depends in a large part to these contexts in which they occur and without that context it is either difficult or impossible to know the meaning of the words or sentences.

Like a letter you might receive.

So these are some fundamental presuppositions the Bible has about itself that shape how we study the Bible. But the Bible also has presuppositions about how we should interpret the Bible.

The Scripture's Presuppositions about Biblical Interpretation: (From Jon Anderson notes)

1. Language is a God-Given Ability to Transfer Meaning between People
2. Meaning is Determined by the Author/Speaker
3. The Single-Meaning is the Literal Meaning
4. The Divine Author's Intention Equals the Human Author's Intention
5. Clear Meaning is Accessible to the Original Audience
6. Understanding Comes from Submission to God's Word

The Scripture's Presuppositions about Biblical Interpretation:

1. Language is a God-Given Ability to Transfer Meaning between People

- God-to-God—Gen. 1:26ff; 3:22; 11:6-7
- God-to-Man-In-His-Image—Gen. 1:28-30; 2:16-17
- Man-to-Man—Gen. 2:23

The Scripture acknowledges that there are challenges to communication, post-fall:

- Human Limitation

Mistakes, limited knowledge, translation and ignorance of other language (Gen. 11:1-17; contra Neh. 8:1-8, "...v.7 the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place. 8 They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading." 12; e.g. of limitation or mistake, cf. 1 Cor. 5:9-10)

- Human Sinfulness

Unwillingness, insubordination, unbelief (e.g., any lie, such as **1Kings 13:18** He said to him, "I also am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" *But* he lied to him.)

2. Meaning is Determined by the Author/Speaker

- Every instance of God taking offense at failure to obey *what he said* presupposes that God has the right to determine the meaning of what He said (cf. Lk 6:46, "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?")
- Jer. 19:5, "and have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, a thing which I never commanded or spoke of, nor did it *ever* enter My mind;"

- Besides, if someone tells you that they don't believe that meaning is determined by the speaker/author, just take them at their word by asserting that you are glad that they agree with you that meaning is determined by the author/speaker!

We looked at this a couple of weeks ago, but I can't help but review these passages that so clearly show us this:

1Cor. 5:9 I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; **10** I *did* not at all *mean* with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. **11** But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler — not even to eat with such a one. **12** For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within *the church*? **13** But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.

John 21:20 Peter, turning around, *saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following *them*; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" **21** So Peter seeing him *said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?" **22** Jesus *said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me!" **23** Therefore this saying went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but *only*, "If I want him to remain until I come, what *is that* to you?"

John 11:11 This He said, and after that He *said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep." **12** The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." **13** Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. **14** So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,

3. The Single-Meaning is the Literal Meaning

Single

This is presupposed every time God holds the audience accountable for *not* doing what was commanded, and every time the audience is blessed for doing what was commanded (Josh. 8:31; 11:15—"according to all" is used of obedience to God nearly 100x in the OT, e.g., Gen. 6:22; 7:5..."Noah did according to all that God/the LORD commanded him" [in building the ark])

Single-meaning is required for the fulfillment of predictions to have the intended effect (e.g., Ezek 7:1-9, "**Ezek. 7:1** Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me saying, **2** "And you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD to the land of Israel, 'An end! The end is coming on the four corners of the land. **3** 'Now the end is upon you, and I will send My

anger against you; I will judge you according to your ways and bring all your abominations upon you. 4 'For My eye will have no pity on you, nor will I spare *you*, but I will bring your ways upon you, and your abominations will be among you; then you will know that I am the LORD!"; Isa. 41, 45, 48).

How could the birth of Isaac have been significant unless the prediction that Abraham and Sarah would have a promised son within one year, meant only that and not *also* something else (cp. Gen. 18:10, 14 with 21:2)? How could Christ have fulfilled the OT any more than anyone, or everyone else, could have according to a different sense?

Literal (according to the literal function of grammar):

o Grammar of the text (*number*, e.g., Gal. 3:16; *tense*, e.g., Matt. 22:32)

Gal. 3:16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as *referring* to many, but *rather* to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

Matt. 22:32 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."

o Context of the passage (e.g., 1 Cor. 9:9 and Paul's comment about Deut 25:4 makes sense *only* in light of Deut. 24-25)

4. The Divine Author's Intention Equals the Human Author's Intention

- The difference between Moses and God is indistinguishable when he speaks prophetically (e.g., Lev. 8-10)
 - **Lev. 8:31** ¶ Then Moses said to Aaron and to his sons, "Boil the flesh at the doorway of the tent of meeting, and eat it there together with the bread which is in the basket of the ordination offering, just as I commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat it.'
 - **Lev. 8:32** "The remainder of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn in the fire.
 - **Lev. 8:33** "You shall not go outside the doorway of the tent of meeting for seven days, until the day that the period of your ordination is fulfilled; for he will ordain you through seven days.
 - **Lev. 8:34** "The LORD has commanded to do as has been done this day, to make atonement on your behalf.
 - **Lev. 8:35** "At the doorway of the tent of meeting, moreover, you shall remain day and night for seven days and keep the charge of the LORD, so that you will not die, for so I have been commanded."
 - **Lev. 8:36** Thus Aaron and his sons did all the things which the LORD had commanded through Moses.
- There is no difference between listening to God or His prophets (2 Chron. 20:20)

- “They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the LORD your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed.”
- There is no difference between listening to God or His apostles (1 Th. 2:13; 4:3-8; 2 Pet. 3:16)
 - **1Th. 2:13** For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it* not as the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.
- But contrast 1 Pet. 1:10-12

1Pet. 1:10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries, **11** seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. **12** It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things into which angels long to look.

o The OT prophets *did know*:

- §♣ Grace to come
- §♣ The Messiah
- §♣ His suffering
- §♣ His glories
- §♣ The order, suffering and then glory
- §♣ That this was for a future generation

o The OT prophets *did not know*:

- §♣ The identity of the Messiah (in other words, by reading their own prophecies, they knew of Christ, but not Jesus of Nazareth—this takes the word translated *what person* as a masculine; otherwise, if neuter, then it would also be modifying *time*... “what season *and* what kind of season”)
- §♣ The precise time of fulfillment (the interrogative pronoun “ref. to class or kind, *of what kind?*” [BDAG]) Because of their expectation, which rose from the clear meaning of these prophecies, they would have been looking, like Simeon, for the precise circumstances involved in getting Messiah to earth.

5. Clear Meaning is Accessible to the Original Audience

- God holds the audience accountable for the message (Gen. 3)
- God’s revelation presupposes clarity

- If God can communicate clearly to man through a donkey (Num. 22:28ff), how much more does He have the ability to communicate clear meaning through a man's native language!
- The threat to receiving revelation is not a lack of hermeneutical textbooks, but rebellion, refusal to listen, and presumption against God (e.g., Deut. 1:26, 43)
 1. **Deut. 1:26** "Yet you were not willing to go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God;
 2. **Deut. 1:43** "So I spoke to you, but you would not listen. Instead you rebelled against the command of the LORD, and acted presumptuously and went up into the hill country.
- God declares that the inability of man to obey the commandments is moral, whereas the accessibility to the meaning of the commandments is available to all (Deut. 30:1-14)
 1. **Deut. 30:1** "So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call *them* to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, **2** and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, **3** then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. **4** "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. **5** "The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.
 2. **Deut. 30:6** "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live. **7** "The LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. **8** "And you shall again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments which I command you today. **9** "Then the LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the LORD will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; **10** if you obey the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul.
 3. **Deut. 30:11** "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. **12** "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get

it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' **13** "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' **14** "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.

- What is the only example of a biblical author's writing being unclear? A: *The un-inspired letter of Paul to the Corinthians immediately prior to the letter that is called 1 Corinthians*. In 1 Cor. 5:9-10, we find out that this letter that Paul wrote was actually unclear to the Corinthians. Because of the mistake, or poor communication, Paul clarified what he meant in 1 Cor. 5. It is no surprise that there are not any examples of honest misunderstanding of *inspired* Scripture on the part of the original audience. All misunderstandings are culpable.

o Today, of course, there are misunderstandings due to both ignorance and limitation *and* sin.

6. Understanding Comes from Submission to God's Word

- Psalm 119:130; (cp. 36:9) "**Psa. 119:130** The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple."
- Psalm 119:97-100 "**Psa. 119:97** O how I love Your law!
- It is my meditation all the day.
- **98** Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies,
- For they are ever mine.
- **99** I have more insight than all my teachers,
- For Your testimonies are my meditation.
- **100** I understand more than the aged,
- Because I have observed Your precepts."
- Psalm 111:10 "**Psa. 111:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
- A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*;
- His praise endures forever."
- John 5:43-44 & 7:17-18
 1. **John 5:43** "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. **44** "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the *one and* only God?"
 2. **John 7:17** "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself. **18** "He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.
- Understanding grows and deepens, but that doesn't make the earliest understanding of truth any less certain. For example, you can understand a passage and they study it a second time, and again, your appreciation

and understanding of the implications grow, but this is different than saying all interpretation is provisional, and there is no determinate meaning.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FIELDS OF THEOLOGICAL STUDY

