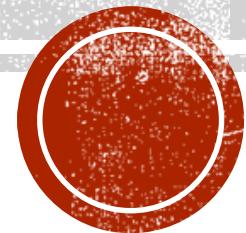


THE FOUNDATIONS OF SCRIPTURE: PART XII

**The Foundation of God's Word:
Summary**



THE FOUNDATIONS OF SCRIPTURE

- The Nature of God's Word (Scripture's Doctrine)
- The Makeup of God's Word (Scripture's Canon)
- The Preservation of God's Word (Scripture's Text)
- The Transmission of God's Word (Scripture's Translation, 3 Parts)
- The Interpretation of God's Word (Scripture's Meaning, 6 Parts)



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE NATURE OF GOD'S WORD

- Types of Revelation

General Revelation:

Revelation that is heard by all; all people should know God through this revelation, but they cannot be saved by it (Psa 19; Rom 1:18-23)

Special Revelation

Revelation that has come specifically to God's people, that speaks of his nature, purposes, and salvation (John 1:1; Heb 1-2)



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE NATURE OF GOD'S WORD

- Revelation is Communication

2 General Authors:

Scripture is both the product of human exertion and desire, and overseen and inspired by the Holy Spirit

Human Authors

The human authors are limited in many respects:

Time, culture, humanity



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE NATURE OF GOD'S WORD

- Revelation is Communication

If they are limited, are there errors?

In a word, no. These are normal limitations in human communication, and do not amount to errors when thought of through that lens. But, this also means that we must not be fixated on an inappropriate sense of “perfection”

We should rather focus on the fact that God's word is trustworthy, profitable, good, and truthful



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE NATURE OF GOD'S WORD

- Revelation is Communication

Role of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit superintends the ***production*** of Scripture, making sure that the exertion and desires of the human author align with the Spirit's desire for the text (see 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21)

***Scripture is neither dictated (and thus all HS),
nor just inspired (thus all human),
but has two real and authentic authors***



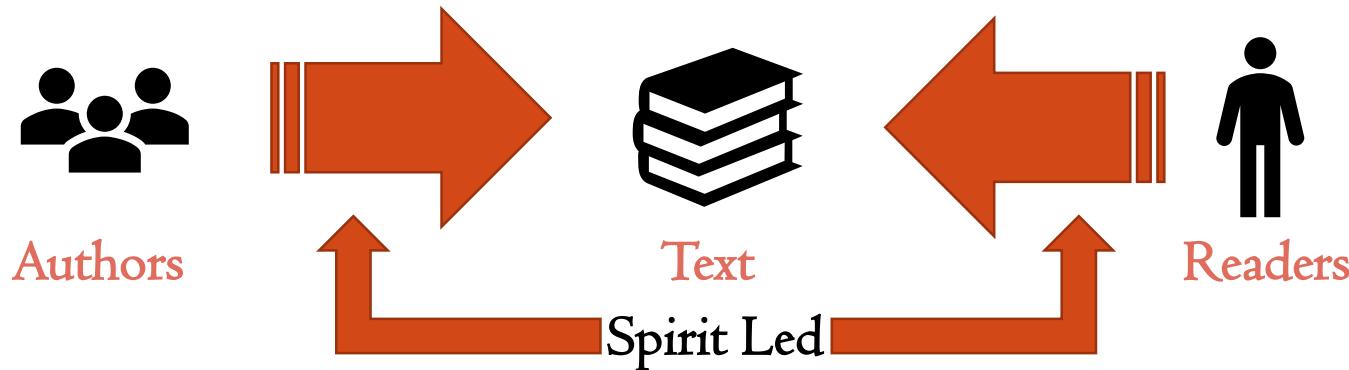
THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE NATURE OF GOD'S WORD

- Revelation is Communication

Role of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit also superintends the *reception* of Scripture, making sure that the exertion and desires of the human reader align with his desire for the text (see 2 Cor 3:13-18; John 14-16)

So:



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE MAKEUP OF GOD'S WORD

- The OT Canon

Set by the time of Jesus:

See Matt 23:34-45; Luke 11:49-51; 24:44-45; 2 Tim 3:16-17

Understood by Jews as settled

Apocrypha never (until Council of Trent) considered Scripture

Pseudopigrapha, Mishna, and Talmud are extra-canonical writings by the
Jews



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE MAKEUP OF GOD'S WORD

- The NT Canon

Need for a NT canon:

Oral transmission

Budding heresies

Persecution

Codex



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE MAKEUP OF GOD'S WORD

- The NT Canon

What was needed for a writing to be recognized as a part of the NT canon?

Apostolicity

Catholicity

Theological Unity



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE PRESERVATION OF GOD'S WORD

- What is text criticism?

The study of NT and OT texts and their transmission to determine the best possible readings of the text.

3 Questions:

Can we trust scribes?

What kind of errors do we have?

What principles help us?



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE PRESERVATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Can we trust scribes?

Yes.

They thought they were dealing with Scripture, showed signs of careful editing, and most errors are insignificant



ΗΛΕΙΑΝΩΝ ΗΛΕΙΑΝΩΝ

Spelling mistake

Added text

Gal 4:27

Sinaiticus 4th C Africa

ΘΗΑΙΑΤΗΝΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ
Vaticanus

Rom 5:1

4th C
Africa

ΣΗΜΩΝΙ ΔΙΚΑΙΩΣΕΙΝ
ΤΕΓΟΥΝΕΚΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ
Hearing mistake

ΤΟΝ ΘΑΙΑΤΟΥ ΚΥΗΜΑ
ΙΥΧΑΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΠΡΟ
ΑΓΩΗΣ ΣΧΗΚΑΜΕΝ
ΕΙΣΤΑΝ ΧΑΙΤΗΝ
ΕΛΛΕΓΤΗ ΚΑΜΕΝ ΚΑΙ

Rom 5:2

Abbreviated text

THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE PRESERVATION OF GOD'S WORD

- What kind of errors are in the text?

Mostly unintentional:

Sight

Hearing

Writing

Judgment



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE PRESERVATION OF GOD'S WORD

- What principles help us?

Both internal:

Most difficult; doesn't conform to other passages, liturgy, theology

And external:

Earliest; best quality manuscripts; wide geographical witness



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE TRANSMISSION OF GOD'S WORD

- The history of transmission

From the beginning, people of the Bible knew that it was important for people to be able to read their Bibles!

So, the LXX and Targums were made of the OT

Early copies of the NT were made in Latin (Vulgate), Syriac, Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Georgian



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE TRANSMISSION OF GOD'S WORD

- The history of transmission

When the RC church started to dominate, so did the Vulgate:

Priests primarily read the text, and were some of the only who could read, and did so in Latin

No real need for translation... until:



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE TRANSMISSION OF GOD'S WORD

- The history of transmission

John Wycliffe, Pre-Reformation Reformer

While Wycliffe started the translation movement in English, William Tyndale was the most important figure:

Great Bible (1539)

Geneva Bible (1560)

King James' Bible (1611)



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE TRANSMISSION OF GOD'S WORD

- The theory of transmission

Formal:

Seeks to keep the FORM of the originals as close as possible

Good for: word-connections, text structure, metaphors across Bible

Dynamic:

Seeks to keep the IMPACT of the originals as close as possible

Good for: clearer indication of meaning, easier, more readable English



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE TRANSMISSION OF GOD'S WORD

- The theory of transmission

Formal and Dynamic:

Neither is best, but both use mixtures of the other

Problems:

No language is precisely the same as others. There is always meaning lost in any translation, but this meaning can be recouped in other ways:

Preaching, study notes, commentaries



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE TRANSMISSION OF GOD'S WORD

- Gender in transmission

Of all the problems, the problem of grammatical gender in Greek is perhaps the most difficult:

English follows “natural” gender, and therefore the connection between grammatical and sexual genders is strong.

Greek does not; therefore grammatical gender quite often means nothing in respect to sexual gender. This provides a large amount of tension in English



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE TRANSMISSION OF GOD'S WORD

- Gender in transmission

How, then, should we handle this problem?

First, when the Greek or Hebrew is clearly generic, use generic English, and do not try to maintain the “gender” of the original languages

Second, realize that there will always be difficult cases, and no matter what decision is made, there is always a loss

Third, we can always “make-up” for our meaning loss through other means



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Goals of Interpretation:

Why do we have a Bible? NOT:

Bible codes

Health and wealth

To justify ourselves

History alone



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Goals of Interpretation:

Why do we have a Bible?

Salvation

Good works

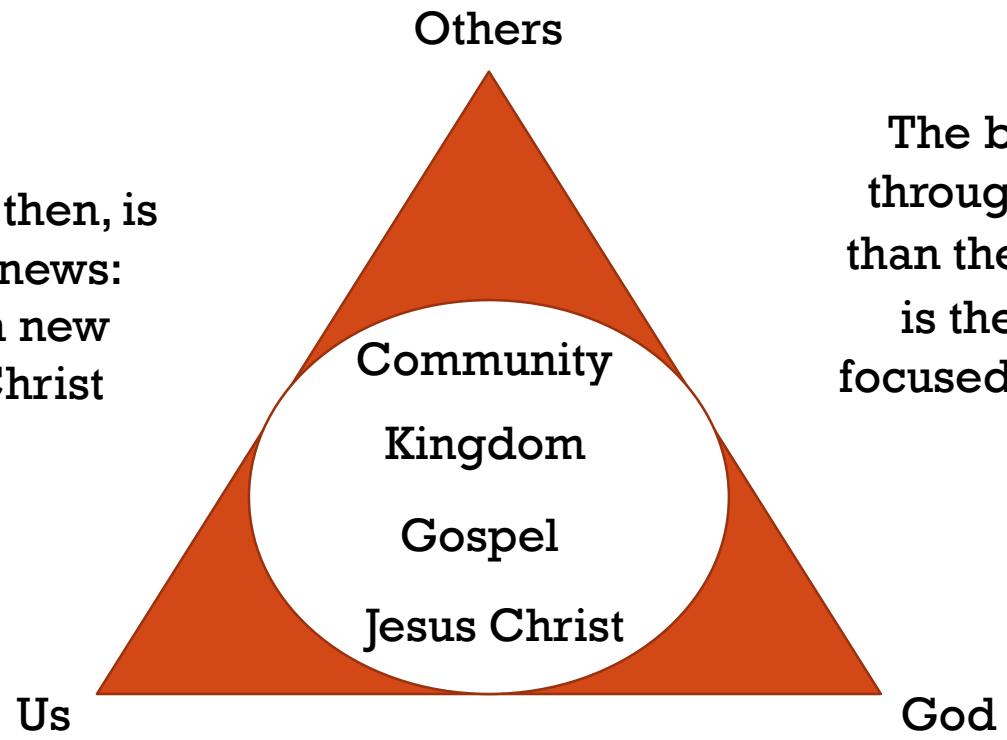
God's glory



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

■ Goals of Interpretation:

The **end goal** of Scripture, then, is the proclamation of good news: God's project of making a new Kingdom through Jesus Christ



The building of **Community** through the word is nothing less than the **Kingdom** of God, which is the content of the **Gospel**, focused and shaped by the person of **Jesus Christ**



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Tools of Interpretation:

What tools do we have to help us?

Common sense

The Holy Spirit

Community



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- **Genre**

What is genre?

Simply put: it is a general type of art, music, or literature. Typically, works included in a specific genre have common structures and content, with a good deal of flexibility.

Why is genre important?

Each genre provides truth in unique ways; to misunderstand genre makes it much more likely that you will misunderstand how truth is being presented, and thus more likely to miss the truth



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- **Genre**

What types of genre do we have in the Bible?

Genealogies ([Genesis 5](#); [Matthew 1](#)); Historical Narrative ([1,2 Kings](#); [1,2 Chronicles](#)); Bio ([Gospels](#)); Law ([Leviticus](#)); Epistle ([Romans](#), [James](#)); Poetry/Song ([Exodus 15](#); [Psalms](#)); Proverb/Wisdom ([Proverbs](#); [Job](#)); Prophecy ([Isaiah](#), [Jeremiah](#)); Apocalyptic ([Daniel](#); [Revelation](#)); Lament ([Psalm 137](#); [Lamentations](#))

Each of these has their own specific way of presenting truth



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Literalness

While often told that we should interpret the Bible “literally,” it is unclear what many mean by this term. Perhaps a better way to put it is to say that we should try to find the truth of a genre in the manner that a genre typically presents it:

Therefore, we follow the rules for each genre



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Narrative

1. Not all narrative is prescriptive, some is descriptive
2. It is not just history, and the provision of facts
3. Context is king in interpretation
4. Look for authorial, editorial, narrator, or key actor comments
5. Thematic statements and repetition
6. Plot progression



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Proverbs

1. Proverbs are not statements of promise or absolute truth
2. Proverbs need to be read in their covenantal setting
3. Proverbs must be contextualized



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Poetry
 - 1. Hebrew poetry works on form and function
 - 2. Poetry is meant to elicit right emotions, not factual accuracy
 - 3. Biblical poetry typically includes parallelism: synonymous, antithetical, synthetic, chiastic; with combinations also frequent



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Epistles

1. Epistles are simply letters that follow a common pattern: salutation, thanksgiving, body, exhortation, and conclusion
2. Although they can include many genres, generally epistles are interested in presenting facts in a more narrow way than metaphor or poetry
3. Therefore, we must be careful to understand accurately the narrow meanings of words used, the occasional nature of epistles, the logical flow of an argument, and to read them in their larger biblical context



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Prophecy
 - 1. Prophecy is not just fore-telling
 - 2. Typically, judgments are conditional
 - 3. They often use figurative language
 - 4. Do not always be dragged down by the details



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Figurative Language
 - 1. The statement is logically impossible
 - 2. The statement produces conflicts
 - 3. The statement is interpreted in a non-literal way
 - 4. The statement is not literally fulfilled



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Figurative Language, cont.'
 - 5. The statement, taken literally, would not achieve the stated goal
 - 6. The statement uses universal language
 - 7. The statement uses a form prone to exaggeration



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Gospel
 - 1. Gospels have many of the same rules as historical narrative
 - 2. But the Gospels are also focused on a person, not events or chronology
 - 3. The over-arching purpose of the Gospels is to get us to see the person, work, and character of Jesus Christ



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- Canonical Reading

1. Just as other books have internal contexts (so Gal 1 is needed to rightly understand Gal 3) so we should understand that the Bible serves as its own context, which must be taken into account
2. Reading in this manner helps to understand how the Bible is put together, to see a larger meta-narrative, and to keep us from having a canon-within-the-canon



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S WORD

- NT use of the OT
 1. They used the OT for rhetorical purposes (Rom 10:5-9)
 2. Blending of events (Isa 14:3-15)
 3. Corporate Solidarity (especially kings for people)
 4. NT authors saw themselves living in “the end of days” (Acts 2)
 5. Scripture is Christological (Psalm 2, 16, 110)
 6. “Fulfil” doesn’t always mean what you think it means (Matthew 2:13-15)



THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD: SUMMARY: THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S WORD

The summary of our foundation can be put this way:

God has given and preserved for us his word through normal, human means of communication.

Because it is given through normal, human means of communication, it is understandable by us in our own language; it is neither too lofty nor too difficult for us

Because it is God's word, superintended by the Spirit, it is never too simple for us; but contains deep wisdom and truth to be searched out diligently.

