Hermeneutics 101 – Learning to Study & Apply the Bible
Session #1

2 Peter 1:20-21 (HCSB)
20 First of all, you should know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from one’s own interpretation, 21 because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Introduction to Hermeneutics 101

1- Get everyone’s contact information (email & cell phone)

2- The Big Goals of this Study:
   • Learn how to get around in your Bible (names of books, table of contents, concordance).
   • Get comfortable reading and studying on your own.
   • Learn a method that is useful, simple, and reproducible.

3- Weekly Schedule
   • Pair up: Scripture Memory & Pray Together
   • Review Last Week’s Study & Bible Reading
   • Learn a New Hermeneutics Principle

4- Expectations
   • Daily Bible-reading
   • Use the skills you are learning
   • Scripture Memory
   • Teach someone what you are learning

5- The Nature of the Bible:
   • Revelation: the self-disclosure of God to His creation in deed and word
   • Inspiration: the means by which God has revealed Himself to us through the writings of men
   • Hermeneutics: the human attempt to understand the meaning of God’s special revelation

6- Overview of the Inductive Bible Study Method:
   • Observation: What do I see? (4 weeks)
   • Interpretation: What does it mean? (4 weeks)
   • Application: How does it work? (4 weeks)
Session #1: Observation

Opening Illustration: Items on the Table

What lessons have you learned from this simple exercise?

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Bible Observation Principle #1: Words are Important!

1- The importance of noticing terms (types of words)
   a. Nouns (people, places, things, states, or qualities)
   b. Pronouns (substitutes for other nouns)
   c. Verbs (express action, state, or relationship between two things)
   d. Adjectives (modifiers of nouns)
   e. Adverbs (modifiers of verbs)
   f. Prepositions (begin phrases that express spatial or temporal relationships)
   g. Conjunctions (connects words, phrases, clauses)

2- The importance of defining words
   a. Every word has a range of meaning
   b. Example: Give every definition you can think of for “trunk”:
      _____________________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________________
      _____________________________________________________________________________
   c. Every word is used only in one sense of their definition at a time
   d. Example: The homeowner cut branches off the trunk in order to make more room in
      his driveway for his truck.

Bible Observation Practice #1: Ask Good Questions!

1- Who?
2- What?
3- Where?
4- When?
5- How?
6- Why?

Remember:
Wise interpretation is based on abundant observation.
Foolish interpretation is based on inadequate observation.
Get Into the Text:

First By Yourself-

ACTS 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Make 20 Observations: (remember: don’t jump ahead to interpretation – just observe!)

1 ______________________________________________________________
2 ______________________________________________________________
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20 ______________________________________________________________

Now with the Group-

Go around the table and share five of your best observations about the text with the others in your group. As others share, write down five observations that you didn’t get on your own:

1 ______________________________________________________________
2 ______________________________________________________________
3 ______________________________________________________________
4 ______________________________________________________________
5 ______________________________________________________________
Lessons Learned:

What lessons did you learn by forcing yourself to make 20 observations about one verse?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

What lessons did you learn by listening to other people’s observations?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Do it Again (for practice at home):

Joshua 1:8 - This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth; you are to recite it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it. For then you will prosper and succeed in whatever you do.

Final Observation Tip (as you observe in your reading next week):

Look for things that are emphasized in the text

Scripture Memory (for next week): 2 Peter 1:20-21