

Literal Hermeneutic and Expository Preaching

Defending Doctrinal Distinctives

Lesson 1A

Topic	Doctrinal Stance
Bible Interpretation and Preaching	Literal Hermeneutic and Expository Preaching
The Nature of the Bible	Inspiration, Inerrancy, Perspicuity, and Sufficiency
The Trinity	Nicene Trinitarianism
God's Sovereignty in Salvation	Sovereign Election
The Gospel	Repentance and Faith
Baptism	Believer's Baptism by Immersion
Church Government and Church Discipline	Elder Rule and Church Discipline
Creation	Young Earth, Six-Day Creationism
Sexuality and Gender	God-Defined Sexuality and Gender
Roles of Men and Women	Complementarianism
Divorce and Remarriage	Limited Divorce and Remarriage
Miraculous Gifts	Cessationism
Hell	Eternal Punishment
Christ's Return and Kingdom	Premillennialism
The Rapture	Pre-tribulational Rapture

What does this verse mean?

Jeremiah 29:11, 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'

- A) God has good plans for your prosperity in this life and for your salvation in the next.
- B) God has good plans for Israel in covenant love and can be trusted to restore Israel from exile.
- C) God has good plans for the salvation of the world from sin through Jesus Christ.
- D) The meaning of this verse changes depending on the reader.
- E) Only a supernaturally guided religious leader can give the meaning of this verse.
- F) The meaning of this verse has been lost and/or is unknowable.

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The Literal Hermeneutic

AKA, historical-grammatical hermeneutics

The literal hermeneutic is a plain-sense method of Bible interpretation that operates according to the normal rules of human communication and that seeks to understand the original intent of the biblical authors as they expressed their intent in the texts they wrote

Pursues exegesis, not eisegesis

Synonym: literal-grammatical-historical-rhetorical hermeneutics

1. Literal

Does not mean a denial of all figurative language

Does mean: that which corresponds to the plain or normal sense of human communication

Example: “The baby is on the way.”

To understand a passage’s original meaning, start with the most basic interpretation and only move to a figurative interpretation when clues in the context indicate that the figurative interpretation is plainly meant by the original author

2. Grammatical

To understand a passage's original meaning, you must pay close attention to the grammar of the passage, that is, the words and syntax

Example:

Let's eat, Grandpa.

Let's eat Grandpa.

The most serious practitioners of the literal hermeneutic will want to practice grammatical analysis on the original Bible texts

3. Historical

To understand a passage's original meaning, pay attention to the historical occasion of a biblical text as well as the cultural environment in which the text was communicated

The most necessary historical clues for interpretation are always featured in the Bible itself

Historical information from outside the Bible can also be useful

Key info: author, recipient(s), date, and purpose

Example: Jonathan Edwards' *Religious Affections* (1746)

4. Rhetorical

To understand a passage's original meaning, pay attention to the genre and structure

Genre examples: proverb vs. narrative vs. poetry

A text's genre must itself be determined by clues within the text

Every genre must still be approached with the same, plain-sense hermeneutic

Structure example: writing an essay

To discern structure, analyze the content of different parts of the text and look for grammatical links (transition words)

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Three Reasons the Bible Calls for the Literal Hermeneutic

1. The Bible is a human book (Dt 31:9, Lk 20:42; 2 Pt 1:15–16)
2. The Bible is a divine book (Ex 34:27; Jer 2:2; Zech 1:3, 2 Tim 3:16; 1 Pt 1:20-21)
3. The Bible models a literal hermeneutic (Gen 1, Ps 8, Heb 2; Mk 10:8; Mt 12:41; Mt 22:29-33)

Expository Preaching

What is biblical preaching?

Biblical preaching must use a literal hermeneutic

The problem of relevance? (2 Tim 3:16-17; 1 Cor 10:11; Rom 15:4)

Expository preaching is preaching that authoritatively proclaims, clearly explains, and appropriately applies a biblical text to a group of listeners

Only expository preaching fulfills God's commands to teach God's word publicly with exhortation (e.g. Titus 1:9; 1 Tim 4:13; 2 Tim 4:2)

The Bible models expository preaching

Biblical Expository Preaching Examples

Moses in Deuteronomy 1:5

Ezra in Nehemiah 8:1-12

Peter in Acts 2:14–40

Next Time: Frequently Raised Questions
and Objections!