

Understanding and Implementing Oneness Apostolic Hermeneutics

For Sound Biblical Interpretation



- Foundational Lesson 1 -
from the
**Restoring Oneness Apostolic Truth
In The Last Days**
Comprehensive Study Guide Series

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PREFACE: TAKING THE OATH

Oneness Apostolic Truth through Hermeneutics (OATH)

This study guide was written in the Spirit and under the directive of the Apostle Paul, who while dealing with doctrinal error and division in the Galatian church, wanted unity through truth to prevail. If there was serious error a mere 20 years after the birth of the church, certainly there is error in the church today 2000 years later.

Though we do not have the face to face witness of Jesus or the Apostles today, we do have a reliable, compiled book of the scriptures, powerful study tools and methods, and the same Holy Ghost to guide us into all truth.

This work was not written primarily for the scholarly class of Bible students, theologians, or religious educators. It was written for the average Apostolic believer who desires to understand the Scriptures for himself. The intention is not to impress readers with academic language, technical terminology, or complicated theological systems. The purpose is to demonstrate that Scripture can be understood when it is read carefully, honestly, and in its proper context and basic principles are applied. Its goal is to help believers see how Scripture interprets Scripture, how context governs meaning, and how apostolic doctrine can be recovered when we allow the Bible to speak for itself.

Every believer should be able to examine doctrine by the Word of God. Truth should not be locked away behind seminaries, denominational traditions, or scholarly gatekeepers. The apostles preached plainly. Jesus taught plainly. The Scriptures were given not only to experts, but to the people of God.

Personally, I have taken an OATH before God to pursue, embrace, and promote the apostolic doctrine delivered through the writings of the apostles and other biblical authors, while rejecting man-made teachings, rules, traditions, and beliefs regardless of their origin, popularity, or denominational acceptance.

I understand that challenging the traditions of modern Apostolic churches and organizations may bring criticism, disdain, and even persecution. So be it. My desire is that readers would take the same OATH: to examine our teachings afresh, return honestly to the Word of God, and seek the same apostolic truth across all Apostolic Pentecostal churches.

Error is not harmless. Departing from truth can carry serious consequences, even salvational ones. Therefore, our loyalty must be to Scripture above tradition, and to apostolic doctrine above the teachings of men.

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:14-16 KJV)

INTRODUCTION

This Oneness Apostolic Study Guide was created for the Glory of my God, Jesus Christ, with the sole intention of restoring His Church to the fullness of the Truth that He intended from the beginning of the church.

The Protestant Reformation which began in 1517, simply reformed the perceived most significant flaws of Catholicism with focus on a few central doctrines. As a result, a dirty church evolved from its dirty foundation.

The true Apostolic Church is not a product of the Reformation. It is not a denomination. It pre-existed Catholicism and the introduction of the pagan Trinity. It has always existed continuously since Pentecost in 33 AD under many various names embracing the Oneness Apostolic Pentecostal doctrines.

It did not exist in any prominent form in America until the early 1900's, six years *after* the Holy Ghost was poured out on Azusa street. At that time, Pentecostalism was introduced into North America but the wonderful and powerful beginning of that movement did not include the Oneness Apostolic faith. That movement was begun by Trinitarians seeking to know if God still moved the same ways as He did in the book of Acts. God proved that He did, and His church was still the Book of Acts church!

In 1914, we see the first recorded baptisms in America in the Name of The Lord Jesus Christ as the revelation of the Mighty God in Christ was taking shape under the newfound Light of the Holy Ghost being poured out. Acts 2:38 and the Oneness of God doctrines were being revived, not reborn (they never died). The holiness movement followed shortly afterwards as the Holy Ghost dwelling in men compelled them to live holy in accordance with Apostolic teachings.

It was truly an exciting time for God's church. However, there was a mistake made similar to the one that happened during the Reformation. In fact, a type of reformation took place in our movement, where the common Protestantism of those days was reformed to accommodate the modern Oneness Pentecostal experience. The doctrinal focus was on Apostolic Christology, soteriology, and holiness. Studies were focused on these three main areas while other doctrines of varying degrees of importance were neglected. Instead of applying the same due diligence to them, many of these doctrines were simply borrowed and subsumed into the faith from Protestantism (which inherited many of their tenets from Catholicism). If we allow this in our churches today, then we are not true Apostolic pedigree, but have our lineage running through the annals of Rome.

It's true that the Protestants did much research and debate on many of their doctrinal views and a great deal of books and commentaries were written by them. Some of it was good; some not so good. Bear in mind, these were religious men operating without the Holy Ghost. Yes, they were studious, but they were Biblically unsaved men without the Spirit of Truth in them to guide them. The end result for some of the doctrines of the revived Oneness Church that *supposedly* came from early Apostolic teachings, passed through the hands of the Protestants and Catholics. The revived Oneness church failed miserably, just as the Protestants did, to toss out the centuries of tradition and error. We still have not gone back to the beginning (which to do so today is taboo)

to gain original Apostolic truth from scripture only, without the errors and filters of millenniums of false doctrines.

Yes, today it is unstated taboo to challenge the common doctrines of the Jesus name churches, despite the fact that there is great variation among them. Some dissenting beliefs will get you tossed from the local assembly and even from the parent organization. An open mind to revisiting Apostolic Truth does not exist. This has created an environment where doctrinal errors have led to more errors compounding the problem because no one wants to acknowledge they may be wrong. Ministers training young, new ministers, perpetrate the errors along with a warning, "Conform to what I teach you or you will never preach in this church or carry a license in the organization." Yet, these pastors who enforce their doctrinal positions, are in direct conflict with other churches in the same area, organizations, and fellowships. Don't think for a second that outsiders and potential converts don't see this. This has deflated the effectual impact of the entire Jesus name movement.

If you think I'm wrong on this, I challenge to take a closer look at the variation in doctrines and standards among any five Jesus name churches in your city. Then show me these churches doing greater things than Jesus did as *He said we would do*. Where is the power and the miracles; the signs and wonders that should follow us? Where are the dead raised, the terminally ill healed, and the demons cast out with consistency, confidence, and expectancy that the Apostles had? Today, we see a demon possessed man or woman and we shun them, hide from them, and pretend they are not there. Jesus and the Apostles never acted so shamefully. They welcomed them with open arms and delivered them, healed them, disciplined them, and sanctified them; fit for the Master's use to win others! Our modern Apostolic movement is only a shadow of what God intended when He setup twelve ordinary men to change the world.

This author and former pastor has seen and experienced all of these miracles mentioned above and more with stunning frequency and consistency, because of the empowerment that comes from embracing Apostolic Truth. God still wants a Book of Acts church today, but our pet false doctrines, rituals, and traditions have prevented Apostolic power and revival.

Imagine if we could minister with the power and authority of the Apostle Peter how we could impact the world. This author believes we still can and should. Don't take this as a rebuke, but an awakening; a moment to reflect and an opportunity to be and do *all* that God has intended for you and His church.

"Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." -Apostle Peter

Restoring Apostolic Truth and Tradition

Our work will be progressive, adding new lessons, doctrinal content, and minor revisions. The purpose of the revisions is not to change our views or doctrines, but rather for clarity and textual corrections if necessary. We will be releasing many studies on a variety of subjects in no certain order. Undoubtedly, we will be covering popular and controversial subjects that no one wants to talk about or challenge. Yet our views will be presented under the microscope of sound Apostolic hermeneutics to dispel the engrained web of erroneous traditions and teachings that have handicapped our movement.

I have spent 40 years studying the beliefs of the world's "Christianity" of just about every sect and subject and comparing them to the scriptures and Apostolic teachings. My foundation was the King James Bible, refined Apostolic hermeneutics, prayer, and the Holy Ghost. My motivation has always been a sincere desire to see our churches in unity and full of wonder-working power and truth. There exists much confusion, division, and judgmentalism within our churches. I know of two churches next door to each other with a literal common wall that can't fellowship because of dividing "truth".

The time has come to give the Apostles' teachings a fresh look and restore the fullness of the power and revelation that Jesus has always intended for His church guided by men whose ONLY motives are to see people saved and unified around truth. These lessons will likely shock you when confronted with truth based solely on sound interpretation of the Bible. My hope is you will find them refreshing and exciting, and at a bare minimum, interesting and inspiring, and worthy of a deeper, personal study of the scriptures.

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Lesson 1: Apostolic Hermeneutics For Sound Biblical Interpretation

1. HERMENEUTICS OVERVIEW

1.1. What Are Hermeneutics?

Hermeneutics are the science of biblical interpretation. They are the essential guidelines and rules we must adhere to in order to arrive at sound and consistent scriptural interpretations. Many different people and groups have defined their own set of hermeneutics, but your average Christian does not apply any hermeneutical guidelines when reading the Bible. We as Apostolics have a great advantage because our hermeneutics are built on a more sure foundation of faithfully embracing the essential Apostles' doctrines and the understanding of the One God, Jesus Christ. Although I have never seen an article on Apostolic hermeneutics; you are privileged to be the first to receive my lesson on Apostolic hermeneutics. Doctrinal lessons using these hermeneutics will follow.

1.2. Are Hermeneutics Necessary?

Absolutely! Hermeneutics are essential to sound biblical interpretation. You will refer to them in the back of your mind EVERY TIME you read or hear someone teaching you about the Bible; to discern truth from error. There are over 40,000 different "Christian" religions and denominations worldwide all teaching something different. Yet the Bible says there is only ONE true church, and even the Oneness churches today are vastly divided over doctrine.

How did all these false churches and doctrinal variations come to be? By failing to apply the essential guidelines of scriptural interpretation. They have defined and interpreted scripture by taking text out of context and manipulating its meaning to fit their own preconceived beliefs and agendas. These errant teachings get handed down from generation to generation, and in the process, get new spins and variations.

We should take note that even simple English sentences can be ambiguous or easily misunderstood. We must use certain methods of interpretation to understand the original intent and true meaning of the author. For example, this simple sentence, "I saw a man on a hill with a telescope" could be interpreted six different ways and all six of them would be a legitimate possibility. All six are significantly different, but we want to know the original intent of the author. Many people would assume a particular, derived interpretation of this simple sentence without even realizing there are multiple possibilities. In light of this likelihood for error, consider the complex writing styles in the Bible. Yes we need hermeneutics! Here are six possible interpretations of the simple sentence above and evidence of the need for hermeneutics:

1. I saw a man who was on a hill through my telescope.
2. I saw a man who was on a hill who had a telescope.
3. I was on a hill and saw a man through my telescope.
4. I was on a hill and saw a man who had a telescope.
5. I saw a man who was on a hill which had a telescope on it.
6. I saw a man from a hill which had a telescope on it.

There are currently 1.5 BILLION Protestant and non-denominational Trinitarians who think they are saved but are not. These people have put the hope of their eternal destiny in a few verses out of context, such as John 3:16, Romans 10:9, and Ephesians 2:8-9. This is 1.5 billion people who blinded to proper use of hermeneutics, if they even consider any hermeneutics at all.

Recently in an *Apostolic* forum online, someone posed the question, “Why didn’t Jesus ever say He was God?” At the time there were 73 responses and *not one* of them gave the right answer; “It’s a mystery”, “He was humble”, “John 20:28”, “1 Timothy 3:16”, and even several said, “because He *wasn’t* God.” One has to wonder how it’s possible that so many Apostolics don’t know their Bible. The correct answer to this specifically worded question is Revelation 1:8 and Revelation 21:7. Using *hermeneutics*, we can establish that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the First and The Last, and the Beginning and the Ending. This person claiming these titles for Himself also claims He was “dead and is alive forever more”. John said he was like unto the Son of Man, so we know this is Jesus. Now this same person claiming these titles also directly claims to be God and the Almighty in the verses mentioned above. Further study linking common terms proves that this same Person is seated in the throne and is also called the Lord God Almighty. Without hermeneutics, 73 out of 73 of these people didn’t know that Jesus *did* claim to be God. Adding to the delusion, many Bible publishers have these words of Jesus printed in black letters when they should be red! Without hermeneutics, the publishers have deceived many Apostolics.

I encourage you as Apostolic Christians and ministers, to be noble readers and open yourself up to revisit the scriptures using sound *Apostolic* hermeneutics to see if these things being taught in our churches today are true. These noble men heard the word of the Apostle Paul himself, yet searched the scriptures daily to see if they were true. I admonish you to consider the evidence from the scriptures contained in these lessons.

“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.” (Acts 17:11)

This lesson will be the foundation of EVERYTHING I will teach you. Unfortunately, the modern-day Apostolic churches have not gone back to the Bible for themselves to read the scriptures in light of these guidelines. This has led to the Apostolic churches promoting false teachings and forfeiting the power that Jesus gave to His apostles and the true church — which church we are! Again, Jesus said that his church would do *greater* things than He Himself did, but where do we see that happening? We don’t. Why is that? Because many of the false teachings of the false churches were created to excuse the fact that they are powerless, and the Apostolic churches actually embrace and practice those same teachings. Yes it is very sad, but it’s not too late to educate our churches to restore the God-given power we are supposed to have. I have seen the dead raised, devils cast out, terminal diseases consistently and instantly healed! My life has been filled with signs and wonders since the first day I began searching for truth, and refusing to blindly accept everything that came across the pulpit. Those who do so will have a different set of beliefs depending on which pulpit they sit under.

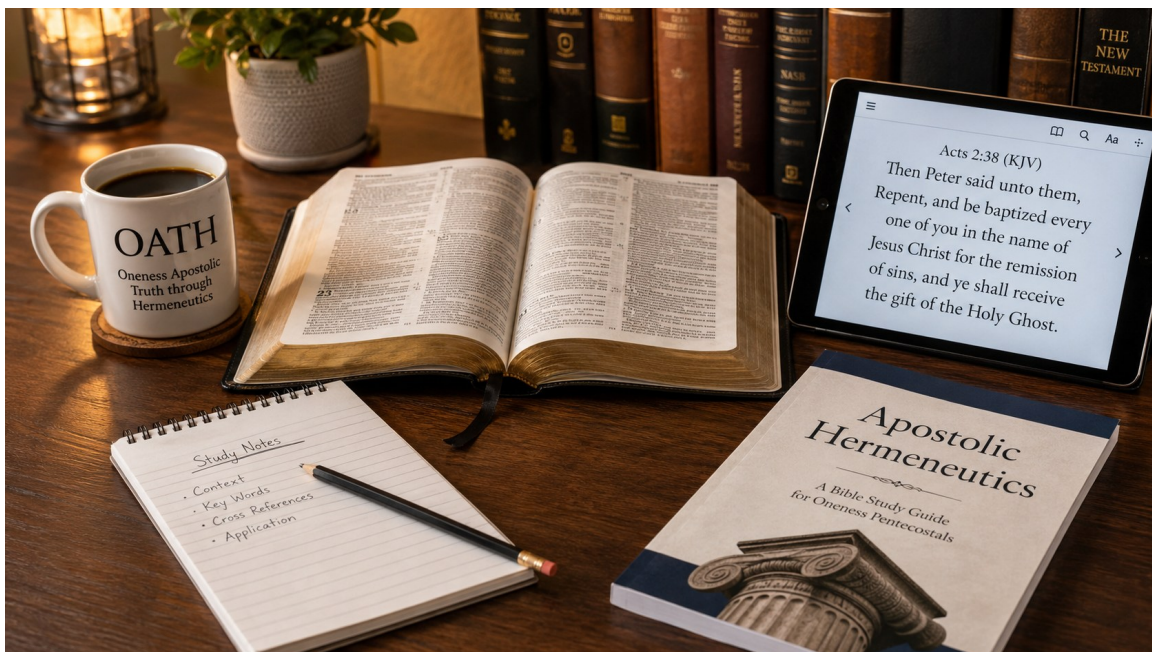
This is my motivation for these lessons: to empower the Apostolic churches with Truth, understanding, and power, and to restore the Apostles' doctrines to their original form.

1.3. Teaching You To Teach Yourself

Give a man a fish and he will go hungry tomorrow; teach him to fish and he will never go hungry. In this first lesson, my goal is to teach you to “fish, clean, and consume” the Word of God for proper understanding and the original intent of the Author. It is not my intent to incite rebellion or dissent in the churches, but rather to create a culture of transparency, sincerity, unity, and a desire for fellowship based upon truth. We all want revival and to see lost souls birthed into the kingdom. Yet, over the last 35 years I have seen countless potential souls walk away because of doctrinal variations and false teachings in the church.

The future lessons I will teach are all based upon the hermeneutic guidelines set forth here. You will see how to arrive at truth and apply it in your own studies and beliefs. Jesus said a house built upon sand will fall, but a house built upon the rock will withstand every storm. Today's storms are the storms of confusion and division founded upon a weak foundation devoid of essential principles of interpretation. Your salvation requires that you be not deceived by any means.

If you are willing to grasp and apply the hermeneutical principles set forth in this study guide, you will absolutely see the Word of God in a new light, equipping you to learn and to teach to the best of your God-given abilities.



2. BASIC GLOSSARY OF ESSENTIAL TERMINOLOGY

The following glossary is a brief explanation for some of the terms we will use throughout our lessons. When encountering a word you do not understand, always look it up in a dictionary, and don't simply skip over it or assume its meaning.

Doctrine: The interpreted teachings of individual subjects, e.g. salvation, oneness, hell, baptism, modesty, etc. Even false teachings can be considered doctrine but they are false doctrine because they do not align with the Bible. In our studies we want our doctrines to be true and pure, biblical, and correct.

Hermeneutics: The science, rules, and guidelines applied to scriptural interpretation to arrive at sound, consistent interpretations.

Exegesis: Implements established hermeneutics to correctly interpret a *specific* passage in the Bible.

Theology: The study of God. This would include Christology.

Christology: The study of Jesus Christ concerning His divine nature, His human nature, His attributes, His character, His beliefs, and the essence of who He was and is.

Soteriology: The study of biblical salvation

Eschatology: The study of the Last Days, including prophecy, the gathering together and the coming of the Lord. I prefer not to use the word "rapture" partly because it is not found in the Bible, also and carries with it an implied interpretation, which we should try to avoid. Suffice it to say, there will be a "gathering together" and the church "caught-up together" with Jesus. I will discuss the importance of trying to make every effort to communicate and teach using actual biblical language and terms rather than man-made terms which can have misleading implications.

Salvational Issue: These are doctrines which leave no room for error. We MUST have the correct interpretation or we cannot be saved. There are many, but one example is the Oneness of God. There exists overwhelming teaching from the entire Bible that God is ONE and unless you believe that He is absolutely, indivisibly ONE you cannot be saved. Trinitarians and others are outside this scope of belief and CAN NOT be saved with eternal life unless they come to the revelation of the oneness of God and obey Acts 2:38. Acts 2:38 is another salvational issue. There is no salvation outside of Acts 2:38.

Heresy/Heretic: A person or group that promotes non-biblical teachings. It is interesting to note that for 1900 years the Oneness Apostolic Pentecostal churches have been declared to be heretical by the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and its Trinitarian predecessors, resulting in much barbaric persecution. Even more ironic, is the fact history views Catholicism as Christianity as one and the same. What's even worse, many people today, both religious and secular, consider Catholicism as **orthodox** (normal, traditional, the accepted standard of) Christianity, and Oneness Pentecostalism as "heresy".

Trinity/Trinitarian: The false theology that God exists as three distinct divine persons. This doctrine was officially established in the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) At the **Nicene Council** in 325 AD. Among prominent early trinitarians were **Tertullian, Polycarp, Hippolytus, Justin Martyr, Augustine, and Irenaeus**. The Trinity was formalized by the RCC in the Nicene Creed, the Apostle's Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. These early Trinitarian fathers heavily persecuted Oneness groups and often misrepresented them by distorting and perverting their beliefs to make them appear as being evil. Tertullian and Hippolytus were particularly militant and deceptive in their attacks on Oneness Apostolic Pentecostals.

Binity/Binitarianism: The false theology that God exists as two distinct divine persons.

Arianism: This is a false belief that God the Father is God and that Jesus the Son of God is not God. This false doctrine dates back to the early formation of the Catholic Church. Modern day **Arians** and their heresy are found in many religious groups, most notably the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Unitarianism: Similar to Arianism in their belief that Jesus is not divine. Some historians have falsely referred to Oneness groups as **Unitarians or Arians**, leading ignorant teachers today to do the same. Like **Unitarians**, we do reject the pluralistic nature of God, but we do NOT embrace the concept that Jesus is separate from God and merely human. For this reason, we are often referred to as **Unitarian**. **Unitarians** are rapidly growing in numbers and spreading into many new frontiers, including the Oneness Apostolic Churches. They are easily identified with their bold claim, "Jesus is not God."

Oneness: The belief that God is One and His name is Jesus or Yeshua in Hebrew; God the Father manifest in the flesh. Oneness. Jesus Christ alone is God and the true God of the Holy Bible. Many Oneness ministers today are drifting from this undeniable truth into other heretical variations and perverting the truth that Jesus made clear, "I and my Father are ONE." Here is some historical context regarding the **Oneness Apostolic** movement:

Oneness Pentecostals are not a denomination, nor are they a recent development. We have existed throughout the centuries since Pentecost. **Oneness Pentecostals** were referred to by themselves and their contemporaries as:

Modalists (One-God believers), **Glossolalists** (tongue-talkers), **Monarchians**, (One-God believers), **Patripassionists** (The Father suffered), **Manichaeans**, **Montanists** (followers of Montanus), **Sabellianists** (followers of Sabellian), **Nestorians** (followers of Nestorius), **Anabaptists** (re-baptizers, **Apostolics**, **North African Apostolics**, **Cathari**, **Albigensens** and more. Other Oneness Apostolic groups include the followers of **Noetus**, **Mamas**, **Mani**, **Paul of Samasota**, **Priscilla**, **Praxeas**, **Algerus**, **Bruno**, and others.

Two Catholic Popes actually embraced Oneness: Pope Zephyrinus (199-217 AD) and Pope Calixtus (218-224 AD). Pope Calixtus, openly embraced **Oneness** and its teachers, but after heavy persecution from Hippolytus, he recanted his beliefs just prior to his death in 224 AD.

In addition, because Arians existed in the first and second century, Oneness Pentecostals were often falsely accused of being Arians, Therefore, recorded history referring to Arians could actually be Oneness Pentecostals instead.

It should also be noted that Oneness Pentecostals were heavily persecuted prior to the Catholic Inquisitions by The Catholics and early Catholic fathers that preceded the establishment of the Roman Catholic church. This persecution by the Catholic System dates back to the second century.

The verbose definition of **Oeness/Modalism** above is to demonstrate that **Oeness** is not a modern religion or denomination, but rather **Apostolic Oeness Pentecostal** Acts 2:38 believers have existed continually throughout history since Pentecost in 33 AD, despite barbaric persecution. They have always been the true church with Apostolic lineage beginning with the Apostles of Jesus. We are not Protestants as many Catholics claim today. Rome has tried to claim the title of “Apostolic” for her apostate church, but they are imposters, murderers, and have never taught the Apostles’ teachings. Their doctrines are all perverted interpretations of the Bible mixed with man-made traditions. We will do some future lessons on Oeness, taking Oeness deeper than most Oeness churches teach or understand. “Why do that?”, you ask. Because this entire study is about discerning truth and error. We want all of the truth, not just some of it. If this deeper truth comes from the Bible, we want to shine the light on the discussion. Modern Oeness doctrine has a flaw and has opened the door for confusion and even gives our antagonists the upper hand. Many people have rejected Oeness because of this blemish. So stay tuned for ALL of our future lessons, which we will present with hermeneutical application, not the errant traditions of men.

During the Catholic inquisitions instituted by three different popes, millions of Oeness Apostolics, Jews, and non-Catholics were raped, tortured, burned alive, robbed of all their possessions, brutally murdered, and slaughtered en masse for over 1200 years. Some sources have the death toll as high as 60,000,000. This number may be overly inflated, but historical certainty places the actual number in the tens of millions. It is easy to see how our movement and teachings were slandered, misrepresented, and deleted from the annals of history.

For a more extensive history glossary, see the Apostolic History Outline by the late Rev. Marvin M. Arnold, distributed free of charge with this lesson plan. I have no affiliation with, or endorsement from Bro. Arnold but have read some of his books and do recommend you purchase them if you’re interested in the truth concerning Apostolic Church history. They are available online; just search his name and “Apostolic church history”. Everyone reading my lesson plan should also read Bro. Arnold’s document on Apostolic Church History. A more extensive version is available for purchase in a large softcover booklet.

As of this, also exists online version available reading Located at this [URL](https://online.flipbuilder.com/hzov/dcrp/mobile/index.html#p=1):
<https://online.flipbuilder.com/hzov/dcrp/mobile/index.html#p=1>

3. HISTORICAL EVIDENCE AND APPLICATION IN OUR STUDIES

In our glossary in the previous chapter, we referenced history as support for the Oneness doctrine and proof of existence of the Apostolic Church going back to Pentecost. Trinitarians and Catholics attempt to do the same as evidence for their beliefs. The big difference is that their early “fathers” rejected Acts 2:38 and tongue-talking, proving that these were not Spirit-filled men. Their fruit for the most part was unbiblical at best, which includes persecution, forced conversions, lust for power and notoriety, greed, violence, and rejection of the most fundamental and clearly taught Apostolic doctrines. The early Oneness movements on the other hand, were humble, non-aggressive, and the victims of the RCC and her proponents, often martyred for their Oneness beliefs, baptism in Jesus’ name, and as “witches” for speaking in tongues.

Hermeneutics involves gathering as much information as possible. An investigator who does not have all the information could lead to an innocent person going to jail. In our previous example of “the man, the hill, and the telescope”, there is no way to know which interpretation is the correct one without gathering more information. Sometimes, history can provide valuable information. The writers of the New Testament often referred to the “history” of the Old Testament for validation and understanding of their own writings.

Clearly, history must be approached with caution, since the RCC destroyed most of the Oneness literature and also controlled the narrative for nearly 2000 years with their own historical works. Yet truth can shine through darkness, just as we have a reliable Bible today. There are also historical records by those who controlled the narrative that *admit* to their own evils and such, and so we have no reason to believe they are lying. As recently as 20 or 30 years ago, the RCC admitted to their atrocities of torture, rape, robbery and slaughter of millions of innocent people. Today, through their documentation, their atrocities and numbers have been greatly downplayed. This goes to show that some *older* historical records are more reliable than some of the *newer* ones. I have a massive library of older books which are filled with valuable information when approached properly.

An interesting side note is that credible historians tell us that early Oneness groups were **Millenarian**, believing that the biblical **Millennium** (one thousand year reign of Christ on the earth) is present now in the church age and not in a future dispensation. Does that make it so? Not necessarily, but certainly should inspire study as to why they believed this. Our studies will take some historical evidence into account. We not only want to acknowledge that Oneness churches existed throughout history as our lineage to Apostolicity, but we want to consider their teachings and beliefs that existed before the modern revival of the 20th century in America. History is not definitive evidence of truth, but can shed light on our studies. For example, there exists in the Oneness document arsenal a historical chart with highly credible references which shows how all early baptisms were in the name of Jesus until the Catholic church *changed* the formula to “Father, Son and Holy Ghost.” We then see later that people called ana-Baptists (“re-baptizers”) were martyred for rejection of the Catholic formula. So again, history certainly has its place in our studies.

As for **millenarianism**, we stated earlier that we have researched *many* various existing doctrines and compared them to the Bible in light of Apostolic Hermeneutics. We have done this to see if there is any credibility to their existence. Arguably, there is little in scripture about this mysterious, future 1000 year reign of Christ on the earth, and many theories as to its purpose and function. In a future lesson, **millenarianism** will face the litmus test of scripture and proper interpretation methods. Stay tuned for this and dozens of other exciting lessons where we put doctrines on trial where the Bible is the final judge.

4. GENRES

Genre (pronounced 'jon-ruh'): genre is the different types or categories of scripture found in the Bible.

4.1. Book Genres are the main genres generally used to classify each book of the Bible as follows:

GENRES IN THE BIBLE

OLD TESTAMENT BOOK GENRES (39 BOOKS)

The Law (5) Books Of Moses	Poetry (3)	Minor Prophets (12)
Genesis (Creation Story)	Psalms	Hosea
Exodus	Song Of Solomon	Joel
Leviticus	Lamentations	Amos
Number		Obadiah
Deuteronomy		Jonah
	Wisdom (3)	Micah
	Job	Nahum
	Proverbs	Habakkuk
	Ecclesiastes	Zephaniah
History (12)		Haggai
Joshua		Zechariah
Judges	Major Prophets (4)	Malachi
Ruth	Isaiah	
1 & 2 Samuel	Jeremiah	
1 & 2 Kings	Ezekial	
1 & 2 Chronicles	Daniel	
Ezra		
Nehemiah		
Esther		

NEW TESTAMENT BOOK GENRES (27 BOOKS)

Gospels (4) Life of Under the OT Law	EPISTLES (21) Paul's Letters To The Churches (9)	EPISTLES Paul's Ministerial Letters (3)
Matthew	Romans	1 & 2 Timothy
Mark	1 & 2 Corinthians	Titus
Luke	Galatians	
John	Ephesians	
	Philippians	EPISTLES General Letters (8)
Church History (1)	Colossians	Hebrews
Acts	1 & 2 Thessalonians	James
		1 & 2 Peter
	EPISTLES Paul's Letter To Bro. Philemon (1)	1, 2, & 3 John
	Philemon	Jude
		EPISTLES / NT Prophecy Apocalyptic Vision Of John (1)
		Revelation

Genres are important because they were written at specific times to specific audiences for a specific purpose. For example, the **genre of Law** was given by God to the Jews through Moses. This was the foundation of the Old Covenant. The Law was NOT given to the church and the church is NOT bound by the Law or the Old Covenant. In fact, the Bible forbids the church to practice the Law. The **genre of Wisdom** was not given to the church either, but its principles are timeless and can be applied to our individual lives. **Historical books contain the literal accounts** of the Jews under their kings and prophets in the Old Testament. They are not to be taken figuratively or symbolically. They are for reference and important principles can be derived from them, but we do not use the historical events as examples we would to apply to our lives, e.g., we would not go to war and kill people who oppose the church.

One Genre missing from the chart above is the **genre of Creation**, found in Genesis chapters 1 to 3. It is a genre all its own. There are hundreds of various interpretations of the Creation and specific aspects of the Creation. Most of these are erroneous at best, because they have ignored critical hermeneutics to arrive at the right interpretations. Many say it can't be definitively understood or it's interpretations don't matter. I disagree. Not only can it be understood, it's essential that we do understand the opening texts and the introduction to the Bible.

You will notice in the chart above under the **genre of New Testament History** is the Book of Acts. Acts is the literal history of the early Apostolic Church. It is not to be taken symbolically and it is NOT to be dismissed as many false churches claim, "That was just for the church back then; it does not apply to the church today." In fact, the Book of Acts is exactly what we as the church are to live, expect, and promote. We see biblical salvation, miracles, and the supernatural power given to the church through the gifts of the Spirit which are: the word of knowledge, gift of faith, the gift of healing, the gift of miracles, prophecy, the discernment of spirits, diverse tongues, and interpretation of tongues. We should see all of these in "ACTION" in the church today.

The genre of the **Epistles** are letters written to the NT (New Testament) Apostolic Churches of that day. They are literal instructions to the NT churches. The doctrines contained in the epistles have NOT changed or become outdated. They absolutely apply to the true church today. They are written to people who were ALREADY saved so we do NOT rely on the epistles to find out how to get saved, though MOST false churches today do exactly that! We are to go to the Book of Acts to see the unsaved actually getting saved.

The Genre of the **Gospels** are the historical record of the Life of Jesus but are also mixed with prophecy, figurative parables, OT Law, NT principles, Jewish culture, and **hyperbole** ('hi-purr-bowl-ee'; or hyperbolic language). **Hyperbole** is exaggerated language used to make a point. For example, Jesus said if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. This is **hyperbole**. The overwhelming body of scriptural context teaches us that if we struggle with sin, to overcome it with repentance, prayer, fasting, and obtaining grace from God, not to literally pluck our eyes out or chop our hand off. God's grace gives us the power to overcome sin if we truly desire it.

Many people take **hyperbole** literally, leading them to false doctrines which leads to even more false doctrines. Jesus taught that it is hard for the rich to go to heaven and that God will provide for our material needs. Some extremists believe that we are not supposed to have any jobs and that God will feed us if we simply preach the Gospel. This is a tragic approach to the Bible. Your family will starve and go homeless and the world will not hear your message of salvation because they will have no respect for such a person who believes and promotes this nonsense. When confronted with this reality, they must invent new false doctrines to justify their actions. Hyperbole must be identified and applied properly. A hermeneutic we will discuss later, dispels this false teaching just mentioned. The Bible also says, if a man will not work and provide for his family, he will not eat and is worse than an infidel.

A modern example of hyperbole is a common metaphor used in America. We say, "It's raining cats and dogs out there". We mean it's raining heavy, not literally pets falling from the sky. This is an extreme illustration of hyperbole, but consider the ramifications if someone interpreted our statement literally! Unfortunately, some people do this with the hyperbole found in the Bible.

Much care must be taken when interpreting the **Gospels** because of the many mixed types of language found in them. They are complex and we must also understand that in them, Jesus addressed Jews bound by the OT (Old Testament) Law and also spoke to the apostles regarding His instructions on how to implement and maintain the NT church. These two different perspectives are not to be conflated (mixed together). We need to recognize the difference. For example, Jesus taught to keep the Sabbath. Here He was speaking ONLY to the Jews who were still under the Law. This was NOT instructions to the Apostles to teach and uphold in the NT Church. We know this because the NT epistles teach that ALL of the Law has been fulfilled and done away with including the OT Sabbath requirements. In some cases, Jesus used OT prophecies and principles that were to be implemented in the church, though usually accompanied by His deeper understanding, purpose, and guidance.

The Genre of **New Testament Prophecy** found in the Book of Revelation, is clearly the most complex book in the Bible with its profuse symbols, numerology, non-linear chronological time-line, and extraordinary imagery. Many try to understand this book with their carnal minds and come up with all kinds of outrageous interpretations.

Great care, strict adherence to hermeneutics, and prayer must all be applied when one decides to make a serious effort to understand the Book of Revelation. Most of the symbols interpretations come from other books of the Bible, most notably the OT Book of Daniel, or from within Revelation itself. The Book of Daniel is a natural partner to the Book of Revelation, and an in-depth study of either of these two books should never be attempted without referencing the other.

The Bible uses **Numerology** fairly consistently throughout, and this numerology in Revelation is no exception. A study of biblical numerology is a must have prerequisite to studying Revelation. Revelation is also filled with much hyperbole and fantastic imagery. Perhaps the greatest challenge of interpreting Revelation is determining what is literal, figurative, hyperbole, and how it all lines up chronologically, as well as *identifying* the many metaphors and symbols.

5. LOCAL AND MIXED GENRES

In addition to the general genre classifications of the individual books of the Bible, there are many books in the Bible which have one or more different genres mixed or embedded within a passage, chapter, or across several chapters. As we get deeper into our studies, you will learn to be more aware of these genres which include:

Parabolic: language (passages containing parables; very figurative and symbolic yet very powerful.

(example: the parable of the wheat and the tares, the pearl of great price, etc.)

Figurative/Symbolic/Metaphoric: individual words or phrases meant to symbolize something else.

(example: white/purity, darkness/confusion or evil, serpent/Satan, fig tree/national Israel, seed/descendants, and many others)

Symbols can have *different* meanings and can also be misinterpreted. Here is a link to some basic bible symbolism (click the link): bibleuniverse.com. Not all symbolism you find on the internet is correct, so don't assume, but check multiple sources and also consider the context and other uses of the symbol.

Idioms: Words given to a certain people who understood those words because of their existing culture. In America we have Hurricanes. In Asia, they are called Typhoons. I may use the word hurricane, but the Asian reader understands it to be typhoons. This is relevant because Jesus' teachings were directed to Jews. Some of those teachings were future prophecies that would affect the whole world. Yet, the fact remains He was speaking directly to Jews so he used Jewish terms relevant to the Jewish culture that we must understand in general, broader, or more modern terms. Idioms can also represent meanings not deducible from the words presented.

(example: In Matt chapter 24, Jesus foretold the events of His coming. This is a prophecy for our modern times, and for the whole world. Yet he mentioned Judea, the sabbath, those on the rooftops, even the winter. He was not only speaking to people in Judea, or the Sabbath (Saturday) or about Israel's cold winters. Tropical places can have cold winters; we do not worship on the Sabbath, anymore, and we do not live in Judea in Israel. He used these terms because His audience was Jews. He would have posed His warning to those in New York City, or to a church that is not required to keep the Sabbath because His Jewish audience would not understand these future things.). He was also expressing extreme danger and catastrophic conditions.

Numerology: Numbers that have a deeper meaning as symbolism.

There are many books and resources online regarding biblical numerology. Be aware that each number can different meanings depending on the context. Some understanding of biblical numerology is essential as numbers can offer deeper insight into scriptural interpretation. Some numbers are fairly consistent in their usage, such as 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 12, 40, and 80.

(example: The number 7 generally represents completeness and covenant. The book of Revelation uses this number profusely. The seven bowls, plagues, and trumpets represent the completeness of God's final judgement. The seven golden candlesticks are the seven spirits of God representing the completeness of God in Jesus Christ.)

Hyperbole: As explained in the previous chapter, this is using exaggerated metaphoric statements to stress importance.

(Examples: Jesus said if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. This was Hyperbole. Jesus was stressing the dangers of sin and importance of repentance. He also said you must hate your mother and father, your family and yourself or you are not worthy to be His disciple. Again, this is hyperbolic language stressing the importance of putting Jesus far above everyone and everything else in your life.)

Prophetic: stating future events. We must be careful to understand prophecy because much confusion and error has resulted in false doctrines due to not recognizing or misunderstanding prophecy.

Didactic: Teaching, imparting doctrine, morality, discourse, instructions

(examples: The beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5, 1st and 2nd Timothy instructions to pastors)

Apocalyptic: This is similar to prophecy in that it is foretelling the future, but much more stress is placed on destruction, judgement, wrath, and the end of the world.

Literal: Many things written in the Bible are literal and meant to be taken as literally. The epistles are a good example of literal language. The Apostle Peter wrote *“Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”* (1 Peter 1:16) This is a literal statement and cannot be excused away. The usage of “be” here is an action verb (meaning do something) followed by an adjective or a description of what to do. Peter was quoting Leviticus 20:7. This portion of scripture in Leviticus places heavy emphasis on sexual purity. He was exhorting us to live holy. This is also a perfect example of using scripture to interpret scripture. Although holiness covers a broad spectrum of lifestyle, Leviticus chapters 17-20 are a valid interpretation for Peter’s instruction of holiness and sanctification. Peter is not bringing the church back under the Law, but is in fact conveying principles of certain qualities that God demands in a Christian and his or her lifestyle. Much of what is written in the epistles is literal language.

Historical: The Bible is filled with factual historical events. The Gospels and the Book of Acts give account to things that happened in life and times of Jesus and the early church under the Apostles. Historical writing can convey principles relative to the church today or just provide the setting for a certain people living at a certain time.

The books of Chronicles and Kings are rich with history in the OT times of the kings. Certainly we can gather principles from them, however, the historical accounts are literal. We should not apply them to us. For example, we would not use the account of David slaying the giant with a stone as a means of overcoming our tall, troublesome neighbor. This may sound extreme, but many false doctrines have been created by using historical biblical events and applying them to the church today.

(example: the Rev. Sun Yung Moon, founder of the Unification Church, saw God playing matchmaker with Adam And Eve. He then created an entire religious movement around this. He began playing matchmaker with people who have never even met, while claiming this was the only way to New Testament salvation and finding favor with God. The children of these matched couples would also be saved because their blood had been restored to purity before the fall in the garden. Moon would hold revivals in stadium with 60,000 people and join the hands of two random people in marriage, sometimes not even speaking the same language. His “church” has influence in 100 countries and about 3 million followers). In cannot be understated that understanding how to apply historical content is vital.

6. BROADER INTANGIBLE HERMENEUTICS OF FAITH

There are certain beliefs of a broader view that have already been established with sound hermeneutics and revelation of the Holy Ghost that we must employ every time we approach scripture. In fact, these beliefs we must employ in prayer, in our lifestyle, and in everything we do. Losing sight of these essential elements of faith will undoubtedly affect our relationship with God and our understanding of Him, His Word, and the Truth. We will cover them here briefly and note that they are essential intangible keys to understanding the Bible.

6.1. Covenant Theology

A covenant is an agreement between two parties, e.g., “I’ll do this IF you do that”; “I’ll give you this box of mangoes IF you give me \$20.” Covenant Theology is the doctrine that embraces the belief that there are two main covenants between God and His chosen people. The two main covenants are the Old Testament of Law given to the Jews and the New Testament of Grace given to the Church (both Jews and Gentiles) which was paid for with the blood of Jesus Christ. Jesus fulfilled the Law when he was on earth, something no other man could do. After He fulfilled it, he nailed it to the cross and it was forever done away with. Most churches do not fully understand this and try to bring the Law of Moses into the New Testament church. The sad part is many APOSTOLIC churches do this too, without even realizing the seriousness of this error. Then they use man-made reasoning to justify their actions or to convince you that it’s *not really* the Law. Teaching the Law in Jesus’ blood-bought church is a salvational issue. This is one of the many reasons I am presenting these lessons. We must have a proper understanding of this matter and know exactly how and where to draw the line.

Jews are the natural born Israelites. Gentiles are you and me; not natural born Jews—the people from all nations of the world. The Old Covenant of the Law was given strictly to the Jews for their salvation. There were a few exceptions where God saved gentiles (non-Jews) because of their great faith that pleased God. Today, there is only one people of God, the church. We should note here that ultimately, the Jews were NOT saved by keeping the Law, because no man except Jesus was able to do that. In their efforts to keep the Law *to please God*, their works were accepted by God as an act of faith, to which God granted them coverage of the future blood of Jesus to seal their salvation. So it was their faith that saved them, not the works of the Law, which only served to teach them the righteousness of God and the will of God, and to test their faith.

In the Book of Galatians, Jewish leaders came into the NT (New Testament) Apostolic Church set up by Apostle Paul and were obligating the gentiles in the church to be circumcised. What they were essentially doing was bringing the OT Law into the NT church and Paul was furious about this. Now there is nothing wrong with circumcision today, unless you are doing it religiously and out of obedience to the Law. Those who think they are doing it to conform to the Bible and please God are actually doing it in DISOBEDIENCE to God, because you CANNOT teach or mandate (require) OT teachings in the NT church. Read Galatians 1:6-14, 2:15-21, 3:1-13, 22-29, 4:1-31, 5:1-18, where Paul actually places a curse on anyone who teaches the Law in the NT church.

He said that they teach a perverted Gospel. You can also read Romans chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 where Paul overwhelmingly declares the fleshly OT Covenant of Law has been replaced by the spiritual NT Covenant of Grace. He forbids mixing the two. He goes as far as to say if you're trying to keep the Law, you are no longer covered by the blood of Jesus (Romans 3:19-28, 8:1-17, Galatians 4:21-31 and others as well).

Understand also that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were placed in the NT in all Bibles. They actually belong in the OT because Jesus lived and died under the OT Law. The New Covenant did come into existence until the day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost was first poured out in Acts Chapter 2. That was beginning of the New Testament and the New Covenant of Grace.

Understanding Covenant Theology is essential to sound biblical interpretation. The OT is profitable for understanding the principles and character of God, but it is not to be used to impose OT commandments on the NT Church.

A great example of the importance of understanding the distinction between covenants is the thief on the cross. Trinitarians will say, "the thief wasn't baptized and he didn't speak in tongues. He was saved by faith alone. He didn't even repent, he died a thief." This is a terrible abuse of scripture and complete ignorance of Covenant Theology. The thief (along with Jesus) died under the OT Law, the Old Covenant. NT salvation of repentance, baptism in Jesus Name, and receiving the Holy Ghost with speaking in tongues did not come into existence until 50 days after the death of Jesus on the day of Pentecost in Acts Chapter 2.

In summary, the church is now the Israel of God in the New Covenant of Grace. There is only one Door and one plan of salvation for both Jews and Gentiles. There is also only one dispensation for obtaining salvation through the Apostolic Church which spans from the first coming of Christ until the second. Then comes the end.

6.2. Acts 2:38 Soteriology (Salvation)

If we are to be true to Jesus, to the Word of God, to the doctrine, and to our own selves, we must acknowledge that there is no salvation outside of Acts 2:38. We cannot make exceptions for anyone or any scripture that some Trinitarian may produce that they say proves otherwise. We acknowledge that there are good Trinitarians, but there are no saved Trinitarians or salvation for anyone outside of Acts 2:38 and the historic Apostolic Oneness Pentecostal Church. Remember we are not a denomination, but rather, there is one Church that Jesus setup and died for, not 40,000 different denominations.

6.3. Oneness Theology/Christology

We must acknowledge there is no salvation outside of the belief that there is one God the Father, and He was manifest in the flesh as the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord. The Father experienced every aspect of humanity including human suffering (mentally, emotionally, and physically) through that flesh. God experienced temptation, and even tasted the experience of death in a human body. However God did not die. The Spirit of God remained alive in Christ and caused the mortal body of Jesus to rise again. This is what happens when we die: the mortal body dies, but the eternal Spirit of the Father in us will raise us from the dead also.

Because the name of the Father is Jesus, and because all the fulness of God was in Christ, we may rightly declare that Jesus Christ is God. Not another person or deity, but The Everlasting Father, the Mighty God, the Holy One, whom we worship! Jesus is the God of the Bible and the only True God. This is an essential hermeneutic to properly interpreting scripture.

Be wary of the early church “fathers” writings. Catholic and Protestants give heavy weight to these early writings and often cite them as evidence of Apostolic intent. Keep in mind these writers also gave us the Trinity, purgatory, praying to dead saints, Marian (Mary) doctrine, holy water, the rosary, the mass, the Pope, as well as dozens of other abominable teachings, traditions, and institutional “truths”.

6.4. Holiness

Holiness is not optional. Without it, no one will see the Lord. (Heb 12:14). Holiness is built upon one’s relationship with God, His Word, and His Spirit. True holiness comes from the heart and a desire to please God in everything we think, say, and do. This cannot be legislated; this is the role of the Holy Ghost working in us. Walking in the Spirit comes from prayer, reading the Bible, and developing a relationship with Jesus Christ.

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” (Gal 5:16)

“Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Gal 3:3)

If one has a sincere relationship with God, they will live holy, inwardly and outwardly. Holiness is an essential aspect of our faith. God calls us to be humble, kind, patient, loving, generous, sexually pure, separate from the world and its idols, and to demonstrate modesty with our finances, material possessions, and outward appearance. If we want to understand scripture, we must be pursuing a life of holiness.

6.5. Prayer

We must believe that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. His greatest rewards are spiritual, not financial or material. Through prayer we acquire understanding, wisdom, grace, courage, strength, compassion, and revelation in the Word of God. The lack of prayer, faith, humility, and sincerity are intangible hermeneutics that has led to many serious doctrinal errors and spiritual ruin while seeking biblical understanding. Not only do they arrive at outrageous doctrinal positions, but they become arrogant, carnal, and unteachable leading to even more false interpretations of scripture.

7. ESSENTIAL TANGIBLE HERMENEUTIC RULES AND GUIDELINES OF SOUND INTERPRETATION

7.1. SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION: Scripture Interprets Scripture. Whenever possible, use the primary rule of using scripture to interpret scripture. Too often people use their own human reasoning as the primary means of interpreting scripture. This is very dangerous and almost always leads to false doctrine. There is nothing wrong with using human reasoning AFTER we have let the Bible give us God's reasoning. A simple example of this is found in Matthew 28:19.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (Matthew 28:19)

Carnal men took this verse and applied human reasoning to interpret without scripture as the primary interpreter. Trinitarians say this verse PROVES that God is three separate persons and that this is the official baptismal formula. As we read this verse we can clearly see that this verse doesn't say that at all. Instead, if we use OTHER verses in the Bible to interpret this verse we instead come to the correct conclusion that this verse is referring to Jesus Christ ALONE who is the Father, the Son, And the Holy Ghost and the name referred to in Matthew 28:19 is Jesus!

A. Jesus is the Father (Isa 9:6, Jn 14:6-11, Jn 10:30)

B. Jesus is the Holy Ghost (Jn 14:16-18, and combine Eph 4:6 with Col 1:27)

C. Jesus is the Son (many scriptures)

Furthermore, when the APOSTLES obeyed and implemented Matthew 28:19 in ACTS 2:38, we see they actually used the singular name of Jesus because Jesus is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Failure to use Rule #1 has caused BILLIONS of people to be baptized into a false Trinity god and are lost for eternity without salvation. Never does the Bible say God is three persons or three of ANYTHING. "God is ONE" is a repetitious theme found in the Bible from cover to cover. Whenever possible, we must rely on other scriptures for our primary method of interpretation.

7.2. CONTEXT: Always Maintain Context

Too many people grab a verse or part of a verse to create a doctrine. We must ALWAYS first consider the local context of the passage, then the context of the chapter, then the context of the OT or NT, and finally the context of the entire Bible.

7.2a Context Of The Passage

Always, take a phrase or a verse or a portion of a verse and examine it in light of the passage (relative surrounding verses). In our example below, we will see the power of proper use of this hermeneutic.

Example: All non-Oneness churches claim that Jesus is not the Holy Ghost because He said that He would send another Comforter (referring to the Holy Ghost). (John 14:16). However, in light of the information provided in the surrounding passage, we can easily conclude that Jesus *is* the Holy Ghost!

The Bible plainly states that the “Comforter” is the Holy Ghost: *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost... (Jn 14:26a)*. As stated, all non-oneness churches reject the fact that Jesus is the Holy Ghost. They point to John 14:16 where Jesus said He would send “another comforter”, thus “proving” that Jesus is not the Holy Ghost. Yes, Jesus did say that in John 14:16, but in the LOCAL CONTEXT of the passage we read in verse 18, Jesus says, *“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”* Jesus is declaring Himself to be the Comforter to come, which is the Holy Ghost.

Here is the full passage, which includes the essential context. the Bible is very clear that Jesus Himself is the Comforter, the Holy Ghost:

(John 14:16-18)

(16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

(17) Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

(18) I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Why did Jesus say He would send another comforter? Jesus was their fleshly comforter while he walked the earth, but He was going to go away. He became the present comforter on earth in the Spirit after He ascended up into heaven. He sent the Holy Ghost (the SPIRIT of Christ) into our hearts as the new presence of Christ in us. Romans 8:19 demonstrates that the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Holy Ghost are the same Spirit:

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom 8:9)

7.2b Context Of The Chapter

Using this same passage to demonstrate the importance of **local context**, we can also look at the context of the chapter. As we read from the beginning of verse one, Jesus is implicitly telling the disciples that He is God and He is the Father. Therefore it should come as no surprise that He is also telling them that HE is the Spirit of God, The Holy Ghost.

7.2.3 Context Of The New Testament

The entire New Testament points to Jesus as The Creator, The Saviour, The Redeemer. Read John Chapter 1, Col 1:14-19, Col 1:27, Col 2:9-10, Rev 1:8, Rev 4:8, Rev 21:7, Tit 2:13, Jude 25).

7.2.4 Context Of The Old Testament

The entire context of the OT declares there is only One God, who is the Creator, Saviour, Redeemer, and who is the Father. In the NT we see Jesus as that one same God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim 3:16)

7.2.5 Context Of The Bible

In the Book of Isaiah, God tells us that Jesus (and the Word of God) will speak to us in knowledge and provides a formula for grasping this incredible biblical knowledge. The formula is as follows:

“But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.”

(Isa 28:13)

We see that we must *assemble* our doctrine carefully and draw from the various references to the topic at hand. The Bible truly does interpret the Bible, so we cannot ignore those definitions just because they are in a far-away chapter. This beautiful passage also comes with a warning. That those who reject sound interpretation methods will fall backward, be broken, snared, and taken.

Context is critical to sound doctrine. I have debated Bible with thousands of people over the last 30 years. I have seen that 90% of these people are in doctrinal error because they do not apply Rule #1 and Rule #2. They ignore context and cut out part of a verse to establish their doctrines. In doing so they usually have to fill in the support for their views with wacky, outlandish man-made nonsense and end up arriving at non-biblical or anti-biblical conclusions. If you had a couple of years of free time, I could tell you the many outrageous false doctrines I have heard over the years. All because they overlooked Isaiah’s warning and relied on their own methods of interpretation and understanding.

7.3 INTERPRETATIONAL HARMONY: All Scripture Is Truth

One of the most common and ugliest methods that people use to debate the Bible when is when they use scripture to overrule scripture. A perfect and simple example is that 99% of all world Christians believe that John 3:16 is the correct salvation message. This is why people say you do not need to repent, be baptized or speak in tongues or live holy. When you present Acts 2:38, they will inevitably present John 3:16 as a superior text that overrules the many verses on repentance, baptism, and receiving the Holy Ghost as a separate essential event in the salvation process. Even Acts 2:38 does NOT overrule John 3:16 but rather the two passages must be harmonized. This is done by showing the many passages that support Acts 2:38. We know that Acts 2:38 is very clear and specific and is told it is for ALL, so it can’t simply be ruled out as insignificant and irrelative. It MUST have a literal meaning and application. On the other hand John 3:16 is a general statement and Acts 2:38 does not invalidate John 3:16 or belief for salvation, but defines how we believe by DOING Acts 2:38.

Almost all TRUE doctrines of the Bible have some passages that *seem* to conflict or offer some level of resistance with the given doctrine. People will grab a vague verse that may or may not be relative to the doctrine at hand and try to use it to contradict a doctrine that has sound support from the body of scripture. This tactic is often employed due to their extreme ignorance to the Bible or they have an agenda. When we find difficult passages that seem to oppose or contradict our doctrine we must seek harmony between the two. There are rules for doing this as well, mainly by examining the difficulties in light of other hermeneutical rules. The bottom line is this: if you are using scripture to overrule scripture, you need to re-examine your doctrine.

7.3.1 The Least Common Denominator Method. There is another element of harmonizing scripture that we must consider so we will mention it here. The “least common denominator method” is one we must *avoid*. People often think they see the whole picture when they only have one or two pieces of the puzzle. They pick one piece and declare that’s all there is. They then say the rest of the Bible must be subject to this one verse of a given doctrine. For example, If we ask someone to describe a car, and they respond, “it has tires”, that would be somewhat misleading because although it is true that tires are essential to the functionality of a car, there’s more to a moving car than just tires. A car also has an engine, transmission, frame, body, radiator, battery, alternator, spark plugs, complex systems including, electrical, cooling, braking, suspension, fuel injection, HVAC, and now navigational equipment and electronics. “Tires” alone, would be an inadequate, non-functional description of a car.

Like the tires on a car, people do this with scripture all the time. They say John 3:16 is the complete salvation message and eliminate the many other aspects of true Apostolic salvation. They will say, “see, all we have to do is believe”. This is the easy route for them, which requires they do next to nothing. They will find other verses that seem to fit with their easy-believism such as Rom. 10:9 and Eph 2:8 and insist that faith is all that is needed. When confronted with the *many* other verses that demonstrate other actions required for salvation, including repentance, water baptism, and receiving the Holy Ghost with the sign of speaking in tongues, they declare them subject to John 3:16, making them null and void. This just concerning the topic of the initial salvation experience, then there are the *many* passages that teach sanctification, holy living, continued daily repentance, sobriety, sexual purity, Christian character, and others that are also required to maintain our salvation. They ignore and reject those pieces of the puzzle also and say, “Nope, just faith, that’s all we need.” They are using the **Least Common Denominator Method** and they deny the many other BIBLICAL aspects of receiving and maintaining salvation, by refusing to acknowledge that there are other necessary parts to a functional automobile besides tires.

Many Apostolics tend to overlook the inward aspect of holiness which is also required for salvation because. They focus on three main tenets (Oneness, Acts 2:38, and outward holiness standards) and ignore the weighty matters of love, sincerity, compassion, humility, kindness, mercy, generosity, moderation, and longsuffering. In a way, they are looking at only a few pieces of the puzzle, and ignoring the rest. This is easily detected in people who are judgmental, critical, harsh, prideful, insensitive, self-centered, and think they know everything.

The least common denominator method has it’s tentacles in other common “Apostolic” teachings today and this is a dangerous road. As we stated earlier, there are many doctrines taught in Oneness churches that line-up with Trinitarian teachings because they came from Trinitarian theology. The purpose of this lesson plan is to reexamine these teachings in light of scripture and to have enough humility and hunger for Truth to admit we are wrong *when we are wrong*.

7.4. **CLEAR AND WEIGHTY SCRIPTURE:** Greater reliance on clearer and more numerous scriptures.

One of the most challenging aspects of Bible interpretation is when we encounter vague or mysterious passages that are difficult even when applying other important hermeneutical rules. There also can arise difficulty when two doctrines seem to clash in different passages and we must decide which one is the more appropriate fit. This is when the Clear and Weighty rule comes into play. Here is an excellent example of **clearer scripture**:

These are some of the “strongest” verses that Trinitarians use to support the Trinity and their claim that Jesus is *not* the Father. We cannot ignore them as they potentially could have merit in supporting their Trinity doctrine. However, as *proof* of the Trinity doctrine, they are weak, vague, and, unconvincing at best.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image” (Gen 1:26a)

“Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Eph 1:2)

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Mat 28:19)

Here are some of the verses that support Oneness and that Jesus *is* the Father.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” (Isa 9:6)

“If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” (Jn 14:7-10)

There are many more that I could provide, but these two verses alone are exponentially more clear, direct, and convincing that Oneness is more Biblically correct than *all* the verses Trinitarians use to support the Trinity. If I didn't know anything about the Bible and was presented these comparisons for the first time, I would choose the obvious conclusion that Oneness is correct. In Isaiah 9:6, the Bible outright declares that Jesus is the Father. In the second passage, Jesus says ‘you have now seen the Father’. If there is any doubt, He clarifies His statement by asking the rhetorical question, “Have I been so long with you and you don't know *me*” in response to Phillip's request to see the *Father*. The passage ends with Jesus telling Phillip *which deity* dwells in Him and does the mighty works, and it's not “God the Son.” No, It's *“the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.”* This is the power of clear and weighty scripture!

The weighty passages provide undeniable strength and truth

Here is an example of the weightier scripture hermeneutic:

The phrase, the “Holy One” occurs 52 times in the Bible; 46 of them are in the OT and refer to Yahweh. Six are in the NT and refer to Jesus Christ. To embrace the concept of *two* “Holy Ones” is an oxymoron (self-conflicting statement e.g., “I saw a car speeding slowly”). Two “Holy Ones” also invokes a chaotic and irrational concept of God, basic math, basic language, and nature. Furthermore, there are no (zero) occurrences of “Holy Three”, Holy Trinity”, or Holy three in any form found anywhere in the Bible. The term “Holy Trinity” literally means “Holy Three.”

We believe in the Biblical Holy One, the everlasting Father— the Lord Jesus Christ, the God of the Bible — plainly *and numerously* depicted 52 times in scripture. Trinitarians believe in the non-biblical “Holy Three”; the god of man and the RCC, never stated ONCE in scripture. In terms of weightiness, the score is 52 to zero. We conclude then that the Trinity doctrine is anti-Biblical and that Holy One implicitly proves that Jesus is that One!

7.5 Aligning Scripture

Another very powerful hermeneutic is the one that God said Jesus would use when He preached to us in the flesh. *“Line upon line, here a little, there a little” (Isa 28:10b, 28:13b)*

Aligning scripture involves taking relative verses or passages and connecting them in sequence to create a broader context of the subject matter. Think of taking pieces of a jigsaw puzzle from the pile and fitting them together to reveal the more of the picture. Using a Bible that provides cross references can be very helpful (however, we strongly recommend against owning or studying with a Scofield Reference Bible).

We present the following example:

First we will Demonstrate that Isaiah knew only one God — the Father. Then we will demonstrate that Isaiah’s God (the Father) is alone the creator of all things and there is no other deity, person, or being beside the Father doing the creating.

And finally, we will prove that Jesus Christ is the Creator, thus proving that Jesus is the God of Isaiah, the Father.

The God of Isaiah was the Father:

*“Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: **thou, O LORD, art our father**, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.” (Isa 63:16)*

*“But now, O LORD, **thou art our father**; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.” (Isa 64:8)*

The God of Isaiah (the Father) was the only God. There was no “God the Son” or “God the Holy Ghost”:

(Isaiah 44:6, 8)

*(6) Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and **beside me there is no God**.*

*(8) Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. **Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any. I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me:** I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, **that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.***

Apostle Paul backs up Isaiah’s claim that the Father is the only God:

*“One Lord, one faith, one baptism, **One God and Father of all**, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Eph 4:5-6)*

The God of Isaiah (the Father) was the only Creator:

“Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;” (Isa 44:24)

"For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else." (Isa 45:18)

Jesus Christ is the Creator:

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." (Jn 1:10)

Colossians 1:16-17

(16) *For by him [Jesus] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

(17) *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

Since there is only One God, the Father, and He created all things alone and by Himself, and because Jesus is the one who was in the world and created all things, we can deductively conclude that Jesus and the Father are the same God. Now add 1 Tim 3:16 to the equation, and we have the Biblical assessment of One God—the mighty God in Christ! This again is the power of applying proper hermeneutics.

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Timothy 3:16)

Again, I will try to keep my example simple here. In Matthew 28:19 trinitarians will argue that baptism is to be administered in "the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." We can apply several hermeneutics to understand this verse. First, **'Bible interprets Bible'** and actual baptisms in the Book of Acts interpret Matthew 28:19. Also, this is the only verse which prescribes this "formula". In Acts we see **clear and weighty** (many) baptisms in the name of Jesus (because Jesus *is* the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.) This inspires a closer examination of the usage of "name" in Matthew 28:19 which is singular. Another hermeneutic rule we will discuss later is that **words have meanings**. Not only is the word 'name' singular, the actual word is 'name', not 'title'. Trinitarians use extreme sloppiness by allowing a singular term to be applied plurally, and a complete redefinition of the word 'name' to mean 'titles'. This is absolute rejection of hermeneutics in favor of a predetermined agenda. This is the genesis, origins, and methodologies of false doctrine.

7.6 SETTING: Who is Speaking, Who is the audience, And What Is The Setting.

Not everything in the Bible is for you and me. We would not take God's commands given to the Israelites to slay their enemies and apply that to our lives. Much of the Old Testament covers the Law, and the Law was fulfilled by Christ—ALL of it, and we are not under the Law — not even the 10 commandments given to Moses for the Jewish people. There is no such thing as "moral Law", which we will cover in a future lesson soteriology. However, much of the Old Testament contains insight into the character of God and also His timeless principles. We are under the Covenant of Grace, and the Law was schoolmaster to teach us God's principles. Under Grace, we do NOT turn God's principles back into commandments. Under the power of the Holy Ghost, we are at liberty to love God, please Him, live above sin, and walk in the light of the principles of God.

7.7. DYNAMIC PROPHECY: Recognizing and Understanding Dynamic Prophecy

You won't hear this anywhere else, but **almost all prophecy is dynamic**. Everyone I have ever discussed prophecy with or read their teachings (that's a lot of people), do not understand **Dynamic Prophecy**. In a nutshell, Dynamic Prophecy means that Biblical Prophecies can have multiple or dynamic fulfillments. People read a prophecy in the OT prophets, or a NT prophecy in the Gospels, and they will say, "that one is past, it was already fulfilled", or they will read another and say, "Oh that one must be future because it hasn't yet been fulfilled."

As we study prophecy in these lessons here, I will show you how to recognize **Dynamic Prophecy**, where a specific prophecy can be fulfilled multiple times with different dynamics, for different people, living in different eras, past, present and future! I will provide just two examples here, but there are numerous dynamic prophecies and when we look at them as such, interpretation takes on a powerful, and exciting new dimension.

In the book of Zechariah, The Lord encourages His people to repent and rebuild the temple. In Chapter 6:9-15, we see the prophet encourage the people by telling them to make crowns of silver and gold and place them upon the head of the high priest Joshua, the son Josedech. Now look what The Lord has to say to this man Joshua:

"And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zec 6:12-13)

Although God was referring to the *literal man Joshua* who was alive and present in that day, this prophecy had its greater fulfillment 600 years later in the man Christ Jesus. This language used for the man Joshua was almost too reverent for any human being, and clearly depicts Jesus as the true recipient of this prophecy. We see clearly here that words given to a man, a people, or a generation can have future fulfillments. What most people don't realize is that almost all prophecy fits this mold and God uses it profusely throughout the Bible. Understanding this will alter the way we interpret prophecy and doctrine.

What is incredibly fascinating about this dynamic prophecy in Zechariah, is that the prophet in proclaiming these verses, was actually naming the name of the messiah. Zechariah is the only person in the entire OT who actually stated the name of the messiah (who would come 600 years later). Joshua and Jesus are the same Hebrew name. By declaring the crowns of gold to be placed on the head of Joshua the high priest, Zechariah was at the same time declaring the crowns of gold would be placed upon the head of Jesus (Joshua or Yeshua) the true Royal King and High Priest six centuries later.

Furthermore, this prophecy could appropriately be fulfilled in *both comings* of Jesus—2000 years ago when He was born of a virgin, and when He comes again in the clouds of heaven to be seated upon His throne of glory.

7.8. TYPES AND SHADOWS

The previous rule flows smoothly into **Types And Shadows**. In the example above from Zechariah, we established a powerful example of dynamic prophesy which goes hand in hand with **Types And Shadows**. In the 6th book of the Bible, Joshua is chosen by God to lead His Old Testament people into the promised land flowing with milk and honey. This is exactly what Jesus (Joshua, Yeshua) does with God's people in the New Testament.

Not coincidentally, the number 6 represents man, because man was created on the sixth day. Joshua is the 6th book of the Bible. The *man* Joshua of the OT was a type of Jesus in the NT, both men with the same name and both delivering their people with salvation. To the Jews under Moses' leadership, salvation was deliverance from Egypt and bondage, into the blessed paradise of the promised land. To the church today born on Pentecost, the man Joshua (Jesus, Yeshua) is delivering His people from Egypt (the world) and Bondage (sin) into the Promised Land (heaven, eternal life, and the spiritual land of bliss and paradise found in Jesus Christ.) **Types And Shadows** are a powerful tool in understanding and interpreting scripture when applied properly.

7.9. WORDS HAVE MEANINGS

Words do have meanings, and we need to know those meanings to understand the original intent of the author. When not sure, use a dictionary or refer to the Greek. One of the worst abuses of scriptural interpretation I have seen is people ignoring the elementary definition of a word in context and subtly replacing it with a definition that sounds copacetic, but significantly changes the original intent of the author. This method of perversion of Truth is so widely used, that it has become the primary weapon for arguing *against* Apostolic doctrine. The examples are too numerous to list here, but it is safe to say that Oneness, Acts 2:38, and holiness have all been undermined with this perverse method of interpretation.

For the most part, I use the KJV and am comfortable using it as my main version, as its translation seems to harmonize well with Apostolic teachings. I also think that other supporting translations can be used for supplemental clarification, though there are certainly bad translations out there to avoid. Many are clearly slanted against the original intent. Do some research on the translations you are using. If you see the word "unto" in Acts 2:38, dump that translation as these Bibles' publishers reject the necessity of baptism altogether.

As for the Greek and Hebrew Lexicons, I use them fairly often but mainly for clarification and basic word meanings, not for extensive translation. For example, 'hell' and 'temple' both have three different underlying Greek words, and it's very helpful to know which one is being used. However, all too often, people use the lexicons to overrule the context. They use a Greek definition that has multiple meanings and then pick one that undermines the natural reading of the text and overrules other hermeneutics to arrive at an interpretation that fits their agenda or denies Apostolic truth. I am a firm believer that one does not need to be a Greek/Hebrew scholar to arrive at Truth and Apostolic doctrine. For the most part, I believe the King James scholars got the wording right. Always try to stay true to the stated words as written as much as possible, except when not possible or symbolic, figurative, or hyperbolic language is clearly intended. Two books that require special attention to this rule's exception are Daniel and Revelation, which profusely use words to invoke spiritual imagery and hyperbole. This can commonly apply to all prophetic genres as well. As a general rule though, words have consistent, fundamental meanings.

One way to check yourself if you are straying from the original language, is to vehemently enforce context. One of the most damning doctrines of the modern church era is OSAS ("once saved, always saved). Proponents of this doctrine teach there is nothing you can do to lose your salvation. They emphasize that works cannot save you. However, in ALL of Apostle Paul's writings that reject "works salvation", he is referring to works of the Law. He is in no way condemning spiritual works of righteousness which God requires as proof of our genuine born-again experience and transformed life. Holiness and sanctification are not optional.

One of the common signs that someone is promoting their own private interpretation is when they say, "this means...". This should always be a warning to you to verify their "meaning" aligns with the text. Pastors, and yes, even Apostolic pastors are guilty of forcing their own agenda and beliefs into the text and upon the church, and this is how they do it. All too often, "This means" what I want you to believe; just ignore what the scripture is really saying and "believe me" instead. This is what this entire lesson plan is intended to resolve. We all need to check our spirit and ensure what we're promoting is biblical, not what we want, heard, or is beneficial to us personally.

Key Words and Terms can be crucial to establishing global context within a verse. Look for central words and terms in the verse or passage. Check how they are used in other passages. Terms like "Holy One", "resurrection", "last day(s)", "coming", and many others hold very consistent meaning across scripture.

7.10 Red Letters

Red letters were added by the publisher to denote the words of Jesus. However, there are several places in the Bible where the red letters are WRONG, and even conflict with other publishers' usage of red letters using the same KJV translation. Example:

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Revelation 21:7)

Most Bibles have this in black text, however this is incorrect. Using sound hermeneutics to interpret this verse, we can positively conclude that this is Jesus speaking and this verse should be in red for Bibles printed by the publishers of Red Letter Bibles. About 99% of the red letters have been properly designated, however, there are instances of errant red letters in the Gospels and In Revelation from most publishers. We will do a stand-alone lesson on this in the future. In the meantime, just be aware that the red letters may be colored wrong depending on your specific publication and version of the Bible.

7.11 The Apostolic Blueprint Has **NOT** changed

Many people claim that Acts and some of Paul's writings were "just for the church back then. In this way, they make obsolete the gifts of the Spirit, miracles, baptism of the Holy Ghost, and essential Apostolic doctrine. They have essentially kicked the Holy Ghost and the power thereof out of their "churches". Tradition, ceremony, philosophy and ritual have replaced the power of God with dead, ineffective humanism.

7.12 The Apostle's Weighty Interpretations

The revelatory nature of scripture is a process that develops over time and amongst different authors. Many of the prophets writing in the Old Testament did not fully understand what they were writing because at the time they penned it, it had a degree of ambiguity. In some cases, future events provided more insight to allow for a clearer understanding. Sometimes later authors provided additional information in their writings that aided in a more robust interpretation.

Even the Apostles were clearly mystified to Jesus's teachings and His doctrine, and much more so during the time when He was present with them. However, after they were filled with the Holy Ghost, their understanding was opened and suddenly they were grasping, writing, and preaching the mysteries of God. They understood the Old Testament writings and the teachings of Jesus. For this reason, their interpretations weigh heavy in understanding and interpreting scripture. We should give much weight and credibility to them, rather than trying to re-interpret them.

For example, we know that John 3:3-5 was a stumbling block for Nicodemus, and likely was for the disciples as well. There were other teaching by Jesus that were related to the born-again theme, but again the disciples didn't realize that at the time. But today, having the finished canon, we can see clearly in the writings and teachings of Luke, Peter, and Paul, that Acts 2:38-39 and Acts 19:1-5 were timeless, Apostolic revelations that established the foundations of the church and built the Gospel structure on the foundation that Jesus laid.

It is highly unlikely that the disciples fully understood the depth of what Jesus was saying when He claimed to be the Father in John chapter 14. For if they did, they would have likely fled in terror, or fallen prostrate in the mud, paralyzed and unable to get up. This is not an exaggeration. The Jews were the people of God and every fiber of their being revolved around Him. They had heard the stories and miracles of God in their ancestor's lives and knew of His power and glory. Yet, God was an invisible mystery to them for thousands of years. They waited for God to send their Messiah, but had no idea that it would be God Himself. This further proves they didn't understand OT writings or they would have been looking for the very coming of God according to the writings of Isaiah.

However, from the writings of the Apostles, we know that at some point they realized the Mighty God and Everlasting Father had been among them, and walked and talked with them face to face. This is the power of Apostolic interpretations. It is their profound insight that gives us the ability to know and understand Jesus as they did.

In my future lessons baring my attempts to restore True Apostolic Doctrines and overcome generations of false teachings within the Jesus Name churches, I will rely heavily on Apostolic interpretations and emphasize the importance of accepting them over traditions and the commandments of men. We must be careful to incorporate them as they saw them and not to spin, add to, or take away from them. When the Apostles stress a point, we should pay attention. When the Apostles are silent, we must proceed with extreme caution so as not to inject our philosophical views into God's church. The Law was holy, and the Apostles were tutored heavily under it, but they also understood it had no place in the church and the Covenant of Grace. We want what the Apostles had and taught, nothing more and nothing less.

8. METHODOLOGY

Relying on these foundational hermeneutics to safeguard against personal interpretation is not only practical, but essential to arriving at Apostolic truth. But there is still another level that must be employed when establishing any and all doctrines. Methodology takes scriptural truth established through sound hermeneutics and connects them into absolute doctrines that harmonize with other doctrines. Yes, the Bible is a vast wealth of knowledge, wisdom, revelation, and mystery, but we should be able to arrive at truth with most any subjects we choose to study. If there are possibilities outside of scripture, we need to leave them alone and move on or keep them to ourselves. Philosophy has no place in the church of the living God. Don't run around telling people you believe your pets will be in heaven. I could go on about the philosophical nonsense that saints and ministers alike say they "believe."

8.1 Consistency

When establishing doctrines to conform to the Apostles' intent, we must look for consistency and common ground. Most of the apostles' teachings and principles have multiple occurrences and common terms and phrases. Too many false doctrines have been established through conflating irrelative passages and ignoring those that do relate. We should look for consistency in content and intent.

A prime example of this is that many churches and even some "Apostolics" claim baptism does not involve water, but is strictly *spiritual* baptism, or that baptism is "washing by the Word". This may seem preposterous, yet many are being deceived by this teaching. The proponents of this false doctrine ignore the relative passages to gather consistency. No, Acts 2:38, Acts 19, and Acts 10 do not specify water, and that is their main argument. However, in Acts chapter 8, we see people who were baptized, but had not yet received the Holy Ghost. This is evidence that water and spirit baptism are two different events biblically, they serve two different purposes. This is consistent throughout the New Testament. The use of literal water is consistently used for cleansing the body, soul, and spirit in scripture and in even nature. And of course, we can connect Jesus's new birth command of *water* in John 3:3-5 with Peter's command to be baptized, and the Phillip and eunuch's water baptism experience in Acts 8:38. Consistency weighs heavily in favor of water baptism despite not being specifically mentioned in several Acts baptisms.

8.2 Themes and Principles (Thematic Principles)

Doctrine is not only established through clear, direct statements, but can also be established through **Thematic Principles**. Like a court case where there is concrete evidence of DNA, witnesses, video recordings, and confessions. However, a verdict can be reached without any of those, where there is ample or overwhelming circumstantial evidence. This might include a combination of evidence found at the crime scene matching evidence found in the suspects home, or workplace, a video of the suspect's vehicle driving down the victim's street about the time of the crime, the suspect's own written statements that he hated the victim and wished he were dead, an associate of the suspect claiming that the suspect bragged about the murder, or a *motive* that the suspect stood to gain financially from the victim's death.

Thematic principles are themes and principles that run heavily interwoven through scripture and offer substantial evidence for establishing doctrine. For example, the Bible does not specifically forbid smoking cigarettes. There is not a single scripture that mentions them. However, there is a theme-based principle that our bodies are made in the image of God, ultimately intended to house the Holy Ghost, and that defilement of our bodies through various means is unacceptable to God. The Bible does plainly state that piercings and engravings on our body is one such defilement. There are plain scripture regarding gluttony, and sexual sins against our body. The Bible even says that abusing our spouse is an abuse of our own body as we are considered by God as one flesh. Clearly, the principle exists that negative treatment of our bodies is sin. Cigarettes have proven and establish health risks. There is no question that we can establish a doctrine based on principle that smoking cigarettes, crack, cocaine, meth, marijuana, or any other drug is detrimental to our physical, mental, and spiritual health and should not be a part of a Christian's lifestyle. Does that mean we can judge a visitor who smokes or has a drug problem? No.

Caution, restraint, and common sense must be considered when establishing doctrine in this manner. An Old Testament theme could potentially only apply to the Old Covenant of the Law and we cannot bring the Law into the New Covenant of Grace and mix the two. Because we are Apostolic, we should expect to see Apostolic text confirming the principle at hand. Lack of these boundaries can result in overreaching, extrabiblical standards and doctrines. Some examples of this would be *forbidding* the use of cold medicines and pain relievers, all stimulants such as coffee, tea, sugar, soda, and certain herbs, prescription drugs, eating pepperoni or shellfish (which actually conflicts with Apostolic teachings of Grace), and certain activities such as jobs that involve a reasonable amount of danger (most labor jobs involve some level of danger), flying on airplanes, overseas travel, skiing, etc.

Another example of bad application of **Thematic Principles** would be how Trinitarians acknowledge that the term "Trinity" is not in the Bible but say that there is ample evidence provided as a prevalent Bible theme. They use scriptures that very poorly demonstrate the Trinity, and they think that if they use enough of them they have a consistent theme throughout the Bible. True, the term Oneness isn't in the Bible either, but the concept of One God is. Scripture presents a powerful, consistent witness that Jesus is God manifested in the flesh: He is revealed as the Father, Creator, Saviour, and Holy Ghost; He receives worship, forgives sins, dwells in His people, and declares that we are complete in Him. From beginning to end, these passages form a strong biblical theme that Jesus Christ is not merely sent by God, but is the fullness of God revealed to us.

Some of these examples may seem obvious, and we would never cross these lines of Biblical interpretation. However, in future lessons, we will demonstrate how many churches and pastors today have done exactly this, despite the damage it has done to Jesus' blood-bought church and all in the name of "principle". We fully acknowledge doctrines based upon principle and even general principles. However, we reiterate there must be restraint and a certain threshold of evidence for individual "mandates." I can tell my Apostolic son to avoid all association with criminals and gangs, but that would include those who are trying to turn their lives around and

in dire need of God. To exclude them could be considered an overreach of the principle. Perhaps I should trust him to lean on guidance of the Holy Ghost and prayer. Jesus fellowshipped criminals, lepers, and tax collectors for the purpose of saving their souls, yet there are times we may need to disfellowship even our own family if they are undermining our parenting and trying to turn our children away from Jesus and the Apostolic Faith.

8.3 Natural reading and flow

There is an approach to scripture which I have found to be so profound it cannot be overlooked, though people who embrace convoluted doctrines and end time scenarios have never considered. Although God is the ultimate author of scripture, it was penned by godly, humble, sincere men without deceptive motives or personal agendas. They were writing to inform and to be understood. If we allow ourselves to open up to the natural flow and intent of the text *in context*, we can see through the veil of our own filters and preconceived ideologies. This is the acid test that all *true* Apostolic doctrines can and will pass. Often when reading a chapter with a sincere mindset, one will actually perceive doctrines they embrace coming to mind and beautifully harmonizing with the Bible, or an unsettling, anxious feeling in your gut that something is wrong. This is a warning in the spirit that what we have believed or been taught, regardless of the source, is problematic and conflicting with the Word of God. In this case, we need to choose truth, be willing to confront error, and study further to show ourselves approved unto God. While reading in the natural flow of scripture, one will also feel elation as various *false* doctrines come to mind; failing the acid test of scriptural truth.

One the most beautiful manifestations of joy comes when you open your mind and spirit to read the Bible in this manner and you begin to see not only a particular doctrine harmonizing with the Bible, but when you see the many various doctrines you embrace harmonizing with *each other*. Unfortunately, many common teachings in the Jesus name churches today clash with scripture and each other. My prayer is that if your eyes are reading this at this moment, you will be thrilled at what you are hearing and not angry, because you love Truth and are willing to reconsider everything in the true light of scripture as opposed to scripture mixed with man-made teachings handed down for generations. That is the purpose of the this lesson plan and the doctrinal positions we will examine going forward.

If there is any intent *by God* to deceive nested in scripture, it is intended for the insincere, unrepentant, and those who have pleasure in unrighteousness. Otherwise, believe that God wants you to know and understand the Bible and its precious truths. The Word of God is like a pearl of great price or a treasure hid in a field that He willingly sells to anyone who wants it bad enough and who is willing to sell all they have to purchase it.

Much of the Bible contains this natural reading flow - that is, a simple straight-forward, presentation. It is direct and says what it means. Two very common errors have emerged when applying this method of reading the Bible:

1. **Many people assume that the entire Bible is written this way and ignore other important hermeneutics. This is perhaps the number one reason that so many false doctrines exist in the world today.**
2. **Many people apply the opposite extreme. They try to read too much into the text or redefine the text as they read. This happens when our minds have been filled with false teachings over a long period of time. We read one thing but our mind translates it to something else as we're reading. We change the definitions of words and the meanings of phrases as we read to match the interpretations we've been taught. This is the number one reason that Apostolics have been misled by errant doctrines and why we need to go back to the Bible and re-examine the scriptures in light of sound, Apostolic Hermeneutics.**

We have dozens of examples of this which have led to many false teachings within the Jesus name churches. We will reserve them for the actual lessons themselves. You will be amazed at the degree to which clear scripture has been manipulated to say something completely contrary to the original intent of the author. When this happens, it usually require one to force contrary interpretation in other passages as well.

The only example we will provide at this time is 1 John 5:7

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." (1 Jn 5:7)

We use this verse to make another point as well which we will address first. Many people say this verse was added at a later date and does not belong in the Bible. This author refuses to entertain such arguments. This can open a huge can of worms and much debate that profits nothing and no one. Whether it was added or not, in the natural flow of the text it absolutely fits with my theology and does not support a Trinity god.

When I read this I see that there are three of something that bear record to the truth in heaven (v6 also helps establish this mindset). We don't yet know what these three are because at this point they are not defined. It doesn't say "persons", "clouds" "stars" "angels" or "elephants". But because of the context "bear record" we do understand they are proofs or evidences. As we continue reading in v7, we see and understand that these three are in fact just that (proofs or evidences):

1. **The Father who is GOD! He is the proof in heaven that the truth is the truth.**
2. **The word which is the word of God—scripture, the Bible. The Bible is proof of the truth, the gospel, and the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. "Thy word is truth!"**
3. **The Holy Ghost; the *Spirit of Truth*. This is the Spirit of God which dwells in men and reveals the things of God to us. This is critical to the intent of the author because the whole purpose of "bearing record" is directed at MAN. God does not need to bear record of anything to Himself. He does this by bearing witness *in* us by the Holy Ghost — the Spirit of God. God does not need a third person to do this.**

So allowing our brain to naturally comprehend the flow of the verse we see that John is telling the *church* that we have three proofs or three evidences in heaven that bear record of the truth to us:

1. **God Himself—we see Him in everything; the intelligent design of creation, nature, and even when we look in the mirror. Romans 1:20 boldly states this fact.**
2. **The written Word which is our access to the mind of God. It's also our tangible access to the presence of Jesus who *is* the written Word, though His flesh is no longer present with us.**
3. **The Holy Ghost; the Spirit of grace; God present with man and in man, our comforter, our teacher, Christ in us, the hope of glory.**

“...and these three are ONE”, not THREE! I don’t see three persons in my mind or in the text. Yet in the mind of trinitarians when they get to the last part of this verse they see “these three are *three*”!!!; *three persons*; three *separate distinct* persons. They see three beings, three deities, and then having absorbed this horrific vision into their understanding because of foul indoctrination, they now must convert the word “one” *back into* “one” to fit their narrative. However, in their mind they can *not* see “one”. They still see three and having allowed this perversion to permeate their brain and their spirit, they can no longer interpret scripture in the natural flow, but become vulnerable to interpreting scripture according to what they’ve been told and not what the author intended or what scripture is clearly conveying. Example:

Matthew 28:16-20

(16) *Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.*

(17) *And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.*

(18) *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

(19) *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

(20) *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Trinitarians read this passage above, and when they encounter verse 19, their mind sees only one thing: “Trinity”. This is because that is what has been taught regarding this verse for at least 1800 years beginning with the Catholic fathers.

In the *natural* reading of this passage, we see the focus is Jesus Christ and that He is the central figure of the Gospel—“they worshipped Him”. We also see that He, *Jesus* has all power in heaven and in earth. When we arrive at verse 19, we see that this verse is about baptism in the context of discipleship—bringing others to JESUS. Jesus gives a simple instruction of how to do this—baptizing them. But not just dunking them in water; but to apply the *name* in baptism which brings them to Jesus—which by *no coincidence* is “JESUS”!

In the natural progression or flow of the passage, when we encounter the noun “name”; singular, in our minds that “name” equates to Jesus. We “see” the beautiful description that Jesus is giving us of Himself — who He is and why He has all power in heaven and earth: because He is the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost.

Verse 19 is not about the Godhead, but again, in contextual flow, about Jesus Himself and an instruction on how to reconcile others to Him. We naturally comprehend this relative point if we haven’t been told for 1800 years that this is a verse about the “Trinity”.

Oneness Apostolics actually do this also, but with other verses and passages that have been ingrained falsely in our minds originally by Catholic and Trinitarian teachings, as well as agenda-driven doctrines promulgated within our churches for generations. If you don’t believe me but you’re curious about my claim, I encourage you to pay close attention to all of my upcoming lesson plans. The light of the truth is about to shine into darkness where darkness does not belong in the Apostolic Oneness churches.

9. CONCLUSION

Hermeneutics are essential to establishing true doctrines, but they are not the only medium that must be employed. There is no substitute for diligent prayer, sanctification, meditation, and study.

I use the free eBible e-Sword for study, research, and searches. It provides all the functionality and resources I need. I also have 2 hard Bibles that I curl up with on the couch to read combined with prayer and meditation. My rare book collection has helped me to understand church history, along with origins, abuses, and false doctrines of the many false religious institutions which have deceived the world. I have also spent 30 years collecting information from the horses' mouths to find what they truly believe (and not relying on hearsay). I have visited their pastors, collected their pamphlets, invited them into my home, and researched their websites. I have done my due diligence and I will share with you in these lessons the fascinating, factual data I have compiled over decades.

Having built this foundation for establishing doctrine, we can now move forward with the individual lessons to declare Apostolic Truth and Doctrine. We do not want assumptions, man made doctrines, or falsehoods in our churches. We want Apostolic Truth. The time has come to reexamine the teachings of the Oneness Apostolic churches in light of sound Apostolic hermeneutics. In the lessons that follow, we will do just that. Jesus did not die for a church filled with man-made interpretations of scripture, and doctrines and traditions that originated in non-Apostolic men and organizations. God did not setup a church without providing adequate instructions for Spirit-filled men to understand. Unfortunately, we hold doctrines today that have been reinterpreted and perverted with the passage of time, and have not tested them with essential, sound methods.

Some men might say, "there are divisions because I'm right and they are wrong." This is not an unusual attitude for human nature, but I think we can all agree that many, many men have had this same mindset that were wrong. If you were wrongly accused of murder, you would gladly provide your DNA to prove you are right. I encourage you to examine these lessons with the same zeal to prove your doctrines are right.

The lessons you will begin to read will likely shock you because we have been conditioned by the modern teachings that did not originate with the Apostles. As you read, I pray you will feel the power and revelation of the Holy Ghost flowing through the pages. The Spirit of Truth is powerful, and not even the devil can overcome it. May you be blessed to finally understand the original intentions of the Apostles' teachings for their church as God gave it to them.

9.1 Some final words on hermeneutics

Billions of people claiming to know Christ have died over the last two millennia without His salvation and the knowledge of who He is, and there are billions more alive today with the same problem. These lost people continue to hold a high level of influence over gullible souls who do not understand hermeneutical principles. With the proliferation of social media and the bombardment of mass doctrinal error, understanding hermeneutics can make the difference in one's salvation.

There are those who will read this and say, "Doctrine doesn't matter, all I need is faith in Jesus." To those people I would say, you likely don't even have the biblical Jesus in whom you are placing the hope of your salvation. The Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and many others all have *a Jesus*, but not *the* Jesus; the only One who can offer true salvation. Since nothing else matters in life if you do not know the real Jesus, we will close this lesson plan with a brief hermeneutical dissertation of the biblical Jesus, and ask you to consider who the Bible says He is using a hermeneutical approach.

Arians, Unitarians, and Binitarians who deny that Jesus is God, must look at this following verse and declare that the word "and" in "great God *and* our Saviour Jesus Christ" proves two different, distinct beings. They *must* force this interpretation to fit their agenda that denies Jesus as the One and only Supreme Deity. Some Trinitarians would affirm this position.

*"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the **great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;**"*
(Titus 2:13)

However, in the local context, the global context, and the natural reading flow of the text, we are easily able to dispel this faulty and egregious interpretation. In the next verse, v14, we read that this great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ is clearly defined using the singular pronoun, "himself":

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." **(Titus 2:14)**

In the broader context of the New Testament we see dozens of times that Jesus is the *one* coming. Nowhere does the Bible state or demonstrate there are *two* coming; just Jesus *Himself!* Jesus Christ *is* the Great God and Our Saviour. Once again, sound hermeneutics magnifies the truth! In the Context of the entire Bible, God the Father alone is the Saviour, yet when Jesus is manifest in the NT — *He alone* is the Saviour.

A similar position is taken by many with John 20:28:

“And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”

In this verse, ‘Jesus is God’ deniers say Thomas was merely making an expression of excitement like “OMG”, which by the way, was forbidden in the Law for the Jews to use the term “God” in that manner. Essentially, Thomas would have committed sin equivalent to cursing and likely to be rebuked by Jesus, not commended. Then the deniers go to the original Greek language and perform a major spin on the plain and direct intent of the author. Now let’s just read the natural flow and context including the previous and subsequent verses:

John 20:27-29

(27) *“Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.”*

(28) *“And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”*

(29) *“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”*

Anyone with an honest and sincere heart and without a man-made agenda can see what is happening here. In the natural flow, Jesus is proving he rose from a barbaric, graphically convincing death. Thomas who previously doubted Jesus’ legitimacy, now gets the revelation of who Jesus is. He then makes the bold and powerful declaration to Jesus’ face that Jesus is “my Lord and my God”. To which Jesus partially commends him, but is somewhat disappointed that it took this manifestation of the risen Christ to convince him. Only a dishonest heart would deny that Thomas was affirming the full glory and deity of Jesus Christ.

There is no surprise here that Thomas is calling Jesus Lord and God. Applying the hermeneutical principle of global context, Jesus was worshipped 13 times, declared Himself to be God (Rev 21:7) and is also called The Almighty and Lord God Almighty (Rev 1:8, Rev 4:8), the mighty God and everlasting Father (Isaiah 9:6), and God with us (Matt 1:23) along with dozens of other passages in both the Old and New Testaments that implicitly and explicitly declare the full deity of Jesus Christ. The Epistles are a plethora of scripture denoting the full deity of Christ.

We hope you have found this lesson plan useful and exciting. We are about to open up the Bible in ways you have likely never seen before in our upcoming doctrinal lesson plans. We will be employing these sound hermeneutics to examine dozens of doctrines from a variety of subjects and sources to see if they are Apostolic or not. We also hope that you love truth enough that when the Bible shines the light on man-made assumptions, traditions, and errors, you will embrace the light of the truth and leap for joy. Be forewarned, persecution may follow. Embracing truth has never fit comfortably with those who reject it.

The only foundation we have for Apostolic Truth and doctrine is the evidence of the scriptures. There are those who will say that holy men prayed and came up with a different and better interpretation, or they will say, “that’s not what my pastor teaches and I believe him”. To do this is no different than the Catholic Church who invented their own grossly false, man-made Interpretations of the Bible. We reject all false interpretations and man-made doctrines regardless of who originated them. Jesus is the Truth and the Light.

All the glory to Jesus — the Saviour of my soul and the God of the Apostolic Faith.

“To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” (Jude 25)

10. OATH LESSON PLAN EXERCISE

On a separate sheet of paper, write out your thoughts and answers to the following

1. Give an example of interpretational harmony. Find 2 verses that seem to clash and harmonize them. You should use other verses or passages to demonstrate how they harmonize.
2. Apply 3 other hermeneutical principles of your choosing regarding a verse or passage. Give a brief description of how you applied hermeneutics to arrive at the original intent of the author.
3. Name three early Oneness Apostolic Movements. Provide some details about each, such as who was their leader, the time period of the movement, and any details you can find about their beliefs. Use the online study booklet provided earlier in this study as well as any other research material you can find. We Also recommend "History of the Christian Church" by Philip Schaff. This is a massive unbiased compilation of early church history. The first two volumes reveal a lot about the early years of our movement.
4. Provide a scripture with hyperbolic language and explain why it is hyperbole.
5. Describe in your own words what idioms are.
6. Give an example of a doctrine based upon thematic principle and explain why it fits the qualifications of a thematic principle.
7. Give three scriptural examples of symbolic/figurative/metaphoric language and state what you believe the symbols or metaphors represent. You can use context or other verses to support your interpretation of the symbols.
8. Do an electronic word search for the *phrase* "last day" in the Bible. What two very significant things occur on the last day? (Your eBible should allow an *exact phrase* search.)
9. Summarize in your own words the purpose and importance of Apostolic hermeneutics.

