

PTI Conference  
Preaching Workshop 2  
Understanding and Expounding the bible



Work of preaching is to explain and tell people the word of God and to apply it to their lives. Source of God's word for us is the completed revelation of the bible. The start of our work in preaching that word is to understand those words.

The words of the bible have an **intended meaning** and it is this we must understand.

2 Tim 3:16-17 All scripture useful, all carefully crafted by God for us.

### Problems to avoid

**Hidden meanings** – some avoid the plain meaning to unlock some hidden meaning.

Allegories, symbolism, spiritualising all avoid the plain meaning.

**Fitting everything into your system** – some try and fit every part of bible into their system without understanding the intended meaning first. Parts that don't fit end up in ingenious explanations!

**Human reason** – in our scientific age, many embarrassed by anything supernatural. Explains away the miraculous or to excuse bible writers for primitive understanding.

### Principles to apply

Seven questions to ask yourself as you study the bible:

*What does God expect of me in this work?*

To remember that the almighty God has spoken here! This is revelation from him, we need his help to understand it. Our first act must be WORSHIP.

*What is the grammatical meaning of the words?*

Bible is unique book, but still a book. Words, sentences, paragraphs etc. are arranged in certain order to give their meaning. Give careful attention to the plain meaning.

*What is the literary style?*

Bible is written in different styles and it makes a difference to the **intended meaning**. Need to pay careful attention to literary style or get confused!

*What is the context (immediate and wider)?*

Without this you can make it say anything you want! Context is vital restraint.

*What is the historical setting?*

Bible has storyline from start to end. It makes a difference WHEN and WHERE something was written.

*What do other parts of the bible say on this passage?*

Bible is self-interpreting book with a single diving author. Don't forget to check other passages.

*How does this passage point to Christ?*

It is all about him (Luke 24:25-27).

**Ways to improve: improve your bible knowledge, read what others have written, develop skills to help in understanding the text.**

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