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# How to Interpret Your Bible

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Topic: Apply: how should I obey what it means?  
Date: September 8th  
Memory Verse: Psalm 12:6

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## Recommended Resources

- I. Grasping God's Word, by J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays

## Overview

- I. Method: As we depend on the Spirit, we must observe, interpret, and then apply the meaning the author intended to convey to the original audience.
  - a. Spirit-led
  - b. Observe: what does it say
  - c. Interpret: what does it mean by what it says
  - d. Apply: how should I obey what it means?
- II. Meaning: what the author intended to communicate. Same for all Christians. Meaning does not change from reader to reader.
- III. Application: response of the reader to the meaning of the inspired text.  
Example: 1 Peter 1:15
- IV. Our method of interpretation is directly connected to how we live.

## Why be committed to meaningful application?

- I. Biblical interpretation demands meaningful application.
  - a. James 1:22-27
  - b. You cannot say you correctly understand the Bible if you do not obey the Bible.

1. Good application comes from good interpretation.
2. Disagreements over application must start with disagreement over interpretation.

## II. Biblical example demands meaningful application.

a. Nehemiah 8:1-8

b. John 14:21

c. Acts 8:26ff

d. 2 Tim. 3:16

e. James 1:25

## How do I do meaningful application?

- I. Observe how the principles in the text address the original situation. (Luke 15:8-10)
- II. Discover a parallel situation in our contemporary situation. (Be sure it is parallel: Phil. 4:13)
- III. Make your applications specific
- IV. Distinguish primary and secondary application
  - a. Primary application: biblical statements directly applicable to you.
  - b. Secondary application: application derived from principle or connected to the primary application.
- V. Apply with the Gospel in mind

## Why is it hard to do meaningful application?

- I. It's hard to do right interpretation.
- II. It's hard to obey.
- III. It's easy to fall into the dangers of application.
  - a. Confusing your application with the meaning.

- b. Disconnecting your application from the meaning.
- c. Limiting your application as **the** application.

## Concluding Suggestions

- I. Appreciate the historical nature of the Bible.
- II. Let the rest of Scripture help you know how to apply.
- III. Let the rest of Scripture put guardrails on your application.
- IV. Ask yourself good questions.
  - a. What sin does this passage convict me of?
  - b. What promise is for me here?
  - c. What can I learn about the character of God?
  - d. What effect does this passage have on the Church?
  - e. How does this change my thinking?
  - f. What action must I stop or start?
  - g. What attitude must I change or develop?