



GRASPING GOD'S WORD

A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible

Grasping God's Word

- Repetition of words
- Contrasts
- Comparisons
- Lists
- Cause and effect
- Figures of speech
- Conjunctions
- Verbs
- Pronouns
- Questions and answers
- Dialogue
- Means
- Purpose/result statements
- General to specific and specific to general
- Conditional clauses
- Actions/roles of God
- Actions/roles of people
- Emotional terms
- Tone of the passage
- **Connections between Paragraphs and Episodes**
- **Story Shifts: Major Breaks and Pivots**
- **Interchange**
- **Chiasm**
- **Inclusio**

Grasping God's Word

- **Historical-Cultural Context**
 - **Why do we need to search for its Historical Context?**
 - **We are to see what really is being said**
 - **Makes the passage to come alive with emotion and intensity**
 - **Knowing the history helps clarify its meaning and reveal its relevance to our life**
 - **We should approach the Word of God the way the Word of God was given**
 - **Simply “We can’t simply ignore “those people living back then” and jump directly to what God wants to say.**

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- **Historical-Cultural Context**
 - *The crucial interpretive principle: For our interpretation of any biblical text to be valid, it must be consistent with the biblical-cultural context of that text.*
 - Historical-cultural context involves the *biblical writer*, the *biblical audience*, and any *historical-cultural elements* touched on by the passage itself
 - Historical-cultural context relates to just about anything outside the text that will help you understand the text itself.

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- **Historical-Cultural Context**
 - **The Biblical Writer**
 - **Find out as much as you can about the Writers Background**
 - **Example – Saul/Paul**
 - **When did he write and what type of ministry did, he have?**
 - **Example – Hosea's wife?**
 - **Understand the writer and the relationship they have with the audience.**
 - **Why are they writing?**

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- **Historical-Cultural Context**
 - **The Biblical Audience and their circumstances**
 - **Example – Mark and Jerimiah**
 - **Most all of the New Testament letters were written as situational or occasional**
 - **They were written to address specific situations faced by the churches**

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- **Historical-Cultural Context**
 - **Other Historical-Cultural Elements**
 - **When it's hard to find the needed info on the author**
 - **We can focus more on historical, social, geographical, religious, political, and economic elements that shape your passage**
 - **The geography or topography are important**
 - **Social customs are placed for religious significance**
 - **Economic issues**
 - **Political issues**

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- **Historical-Cultural Context**
 - **DANGERS – with studying background**
 - **Watch out for inaccurate background information**
 - **Matthew 19:23-24 – camels gate**
 - **Elevating the background of the text above the meaning of the text**
 - **Luke 18:9-14 – the tax collector**
 - **Not to let yourself slowly evolve into nothing more than a walking database of ancient facts**

Grasping God's Word

- **Lists of tools**
 - **Bible Handbooks**
 - **OT and NT Introductions and Surveys**
 - **Commentaries**
 - **Bible Atlas**
 - **Background Commentaries**
 - **Computer Software and the Internet**

**NEXT WEEK
WHAT DO WE BRING TO THE TEXT**

