

Hello. /We will now begin the fourth lecture on biblical hermeneutics. /We studied the **theological principles** of biblical hermeneutics in our last lecture. /We will continue with theological principles in this lecture.

/We studied /that from among the theological principles are biblical clarity, /accommodation of revelation, /progressive revelation, /and interpreting Scripture with Scripture.

/We then began our discussion on **5. The Analogy of Faith**. /“The analogy of faith” is derived from Romans 12:6. /There is also a basic premise for “the analogy of faith,” which is the system of theology contained in Scripture. Thus, there must be one harmonious system of doctrine.

/This means that interpretations of specific passages in the Bible cannot contradict the teachings of the entire Bible. /This is similar to “interpreting Scripture with Scripture.” /This is also related to the unity of Scripture.

/There is an overall diversity of the Bible, and there is a principle that surpasses this diversity to reveal a unity of the Bible. /The unity of theology and the unity of the Bible are subjects that are most discussed in modern-day theology. /Let’s look at the following arguments.

**/(1) The Argument of “Theologies,” Not “Theology.”** /In his book, “**The Religion of the New Testament**,” a scholar named Ernest William Parsons claimed that there wasn’t one theology, but many theologies.

/This was simply a reflection of people’s opinion that there is the Johannine theology, Petrine theology, and Pauline theology in theology. /If this view was true, the analogy of faith would fail to exist.

/As previously stated, the analogy of faith refers to the unity of the entire Bible.

/The Johannine epistles, the Petrine epistles, and the Pauline epistles are all unique in their own ways, /but there is an underlying unity among them.

**/(2) The Argument of a Formal and Systematic Unity.** /Those who asserted that there is one systematic theology in the Bible are those who composed the Westminster Confession of Faith, and they summarized this system into their confession.

/In other words, systematic theology is possible. /The Bible does not tell us everything about the heart of God. The believer is also incomplete in his ability to reason. Thus, there cannot be a complete system of theology.

/However, the theologian’s mission is to organize and systematize the teachings of the Bible. /The theologian must aim to reach a complete system of theology through the Bible.

**/(3) The Argument of Unity of Perspective.** /Some theologians claim that the Bible consists of diversity, and any sort of system is not possible. /Rather, there are perspectives in the Bible about the unity of the Bible.

/These perspectives include, “God is always holy, faithful, and almighty.” /“Man is always with sin.” /“Man can live only by God’s grace.” /The theology of the Bible is formed on these perspectives.

/A representative of this would be Torm. /Bultmann, a scholar who attempted to use existentialist philosophy to interpret the New Testament, also belonged to this category. /He claimed that there are many theologies in the New Testament, and there is no unity of any of them. /His existential hermeneutics is far from biblical hermeneutics.

**/(4) The Argument of the Theology of the Cross.** /The “theology of the cross” is an expression coined by Martin Luther. /This is contrasted with the theology of glory.

/Roman Catholic scholars and theologians in the Middle Ages wrote a voluminous book on theology, as if they studied at the library at the New Jerusalem of heaven or as if they had extensive knowledge like the saints.

/However, Luther believed that sin impaired the existence of man. /The cross exposed our sins, but we received salvation through faith in the cross of the Lord. /We must acknowledge that our knowledge of God was impaired and is not clear because of sin.

/Therefore, theologians can only use the theology of the cross, and not the theology of glory. /Lutheran theologians believe that Protestant theologians include too much reason when writing systematic theology.

/Thus, Lutheran theologians tend to approach the theology of the cross in a more thematic way rather than through a systematic approach. /Both use the term, theology of the cross, but a theologian named Moltmann interpreted the Bible, concluding that Jesus suffered for political liberation.

/He claimed that the essence of Christianity lies in the liberation of the politically oppressed. /Neo-orthodox theologians, such as Barth and Brunner, use the term, theology of the cross. However, we must be aware that their meaning of it differs from that of traditional theology or Luther.

/We must consider the following elements regarding the analogy of the Bible or the unity of the Bible. /Bernard Ramm believed that there is a system of truth that comes from theological statements of the Bible. /He believed that such a system does not contradict the principle of Christ-centeredness.

/We must also acknowledge that there are limits to all systematizations. /As Luther said, we have no choice but to study the theology of the cross.

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**/6. The Argument of the Unity of the Meaning of the Bible.** /There are some who compare the Bible to a piano or a violin. /Just as each instrument makes a different sound depending on who is playing it, the Bible can be interpreted differently depending on the theology of the interpreter.

/“Exegesis” is bringing the meaning of a text to the surface. /However, the type of people we just mentioned put their ideas into the Bible.

/On the contrary, biblical hermeneutics emphasizes the unity of the meaning of the Bible. /This does not mean that we simply perform a literal interpretation of the Bible.

/Rather, we prevent the following errors in interpretation in order to bring out the true meaning of the Bible.

**/(1) We must stay away from allegorical interpretations.** /The allegorical method of interpretation comes from Origen of Alexandria. /Origen was a Christian patriarch who was active in Alexandria of North Africa from 185 to 254 C.E.

/This school is also called the School of Alexandria. /They pursued the meaning of the Bible from outside the passages of the Bible, and in some cases, they strayed from a reasonable range.

/For example, they interpreted Rebekah’s meeting of Abraham’s servant at the spring as our meeting Christ daily at the spring of Scripture.

/In Exodus 1:17, the midwives disobeyed Pharaoh’s order and let the Israelite boys live. In their interpretation, they asserted that male children signified reason and intelligence, and female children signified greed.

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/In this way, they sought to add meaning to the Bible through allegorical exegeses. This would result in forced interpretations.

/The School of Antioch, a school that contrasts with the School of Alexandria, was led by Chrysostom, and sought a literal and grammatical interpretation of the Bible.

**/(2) We must be on guard against heresies.** /There are many types of heresies, such as metaphysical heresies, mystical heresies, scientific heresies, pantheistic heresies, and etcetera. All heresies base their biblical interpretations on the theory that there are many meanings to the Bible.

/Heretics put forth particular theories through the Bible. /Thus, we must emphasize the

unity of the meaning of the Bible.

**/(3) We must be on guard against false pietism.** /Some believers believe, “God speaks through the Bible every day, and he gives instructions for things to be done that day.” /They also believe that the Bible has direct influence on their lives and decisions, and they read the Bible with expectations of specific instructions.

/For example, a believer is hesitant about whether or not he should go on a trip. /He then read the Bible and read about the church at Antioch send Paul and Barnabas off as missionaries.

/Hence, this believer receives this as God’s answer for him to go on a trip. /This type of interpretation asserts the plurality of the meaning of the Bible.

/The Roman Catholic doctrine also uses the allegorical method of interpretation that is based on the plurality of the Bible. The doctrine of many heresies base their theologies on the plural meanings of the Bible.

/We must apply the principle of interpreting the Bible with the Bible, and the unity of the Bible in our interpretations. We must also thoroughly grasp the original meaning of biblical passages and properly apply it to our interpretations.

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/Next, let’s look at the seventh point in theological principles.

**/7. Interpretation and Application.** /The true purpose of interpretation is shown in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. /Let’s read. “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

/However, we must keep in mind that interpretation is one, and application varies. /This implies that the meaning of the Bible that is found through deep and careful study is one. /Yet, passages may speak of different problems.

/Thus, there can be many sermons on one passage. /The application can also differ depending on the purpose of the sermon. /However, the preacher must distinguish the primary meaning of the passage from the application that is derived from it.

/There can be temptations when preaching. /The preacher will want to connect the passage to life today. /In order to accomplish this, the preacher might incorrectly interpret the passage or deliver a wrong meaning.

/The preacher might also use the passage as a motto. The preacher can use a motto to accomplish his goal. /When this happens, the congregation will believe that the sermon is delivering the original meaning of the passage.

/Among Bernard Ramm's methods of biblical interpretation, we have studied the seven premises of theological principles. /Many important principles were introduced through this.

/I hope that you will properly apply these principles to your interpretations. /I also hope that you will properly interpret the Bible, and fulfill the purpose that is written in 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

/We will conclude the fourth lecture on biblical hermeneutics. /Thank you.