

Hermeneutics  
Maranatha Bible Church  
Woman's Training Course

# Hermeneutics

## Class #1

### Introduction: Key Terms and Definitions

- As we begin our study of hermeneutics, it is very important that we carefully define several key terms including hermeneutics. You see, there is much confusion in the arena of hermeneutics today and that is largely because of the ever-changing definitions given by many modern interpreters to key terms. Here is a breakdown of the key term we will define in this first class.

KEY TERMS
Hermeneutics
Meaning
Interpretation
Exegesis
Application
Exposition

## I. Hermeneutics:

- Comes from the Greek word *hermeneia*, which means “translation” or “interpretation” (1 Cor. 12:10; 14:26). Eventually the Greek word came to be used to refer specifically to the principles or rules of interpretation that are used when studying a text.<sup>1</sup>
- There are several different “principles” one can utilize when interpreting the biblical text. The principles that the individual uses will have a great effect on the outcome of their interpretation.
- This is why, so many varying interpretations of a particular biblical text exists. It’s not because there is a problem with the text, as if to say God’s Word suffers from a lack of clarity (*perspicuity*). It is because the interpreters are using different hermeneutics (principles of interpretation). We get into trouble when we engage in irresponsible hermeneutics. We will discuss this more in-depth later.

<sup>1</sup> Brad Klassen, *BI 505 Hermeneutics Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Masters Seminary, 2017), 1.

- Now, in discussing the term “Hermeneutics”, let’s consider 3 aspects. Let’s consider,

A. The Development of Hermeneutics

B. The Need of Hermeneutics.

C. The Method of Hermeneutics

## A. The Development of Hermeneutics

- After Jesus returned to heaven, the Church slowly began to entered a new phase. They went from just passing the accounts of Jesus ministry on through oral communication, to writing them down and being able to study the writings. They also began to receive scripture from Peter and Paul, as well as form John, James, and Jude.
- As this began to happen, the early church recognized the need for pastors-teachers to be formally trained in the interpretation of Scripture. In response to this need, two schools of though emerged during the patristic period of church history: Alexandrian and Antiochian.<sup>2</sup> Within these schools, two different methods of hermeneutics developed. Let’s examine each in turn.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.) The Alexandrian School.

- This school was located in Alexandria, Egypt. Clement of Alexandria (c.AD 150-215) was the administrator of the school. At Alexandria an allegorical approach to the interpretation of scripture was adopted. This approach was held to and highly promoted by Clements most famous pupil. His name was Origen (c.AD 185-254). This man succeeded Clement as the school’s director. (see handouts at the end of lesson).
- Now, Origen is one of those guys from church history that causes you to sometimes just scratch your head and say, “What was he thinking?” On one hand he fought vigorously against heresies like Gnosticism and Marcionism <sup>4</sup>But on the other hand he was a universalist, believing that eventually everyone would get to heaven.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The patristic period refers to the life and times of the early church fathers. Most scholars place the dates for this period from the end of the first century to the fifth century AD.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 18.

<sup>4</sup> Marcionism was a heresy in the second century which held to the belief that the teachings of Jesus were incompatible with God of the Old Testament. The man who began this religion (Marcion) taught that Christ was not the Jewish Messiah, but rather a spiritual entity sent by a previous unknown God called the “Stranger or Alien God.”

- He was highly influenced by Platonic thought. So much so that these beliefs bleed over into his theology. It manifests itself in a kind of “Christo Platonism” This view holds the belief that the spiritual is good, and the physical is bad. The crazy thing is, if this kind of thinking is carried out to its logical conclusion you come up with Gnosticism the very Heresy that Origen was fighting against.<sup>6</sup>
- As I said, Origen is credited with propagating and furthering the *Allegorical* method of interpretation of the Bible. Now, he may not have been the actual originator of this method, but, he is perhaps more responsible than anyone else for giving it dignity and allowing it to have such a massive affect on the pulpit of the ages.
- Those who held to this allegorical approach, taught that deeper spiritual meanings were hidden beneath the literal words of Scripture. So, the only boundaries the interpreter had were those of his own imagination.<sup>7</sup>
- Unfortunately, allegory became the dominant method of interpretation in the early church. The second school of thought is known as the Antiochian school.

## 2.) **The Antiochian School.**

- This school of thought was championed much later, around 347-407 AD, and began in the city of Antioch. At Antioch, they taught the literal, historical, and grammatical, interpretation of Scripture. This is the method we hold to here at Maranatha.
- As its name indicates, in this method, the Scriptures are to be taken literally (unless they are obviously not). This method also studies the principles of grammar and the facts of history in order to determine the meaning of the text as intended by the author. This is what we are desiring to get to, the authorial intent. This will be discussed in-depth later.

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<sup>5</sup> Nathan Busenitz, *Historical Theology 1 Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Master’s Seminary, 2016), 92

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 19.

- The first well known preacher to advocate for this method was John of Antioch also known as John Chrysostom (“The Golden Mouth”). However, John was not the first to utilize this method. He was trained by another man who was committed to the literal-grammatical-historical method.
- His name was Diodorus of Antioch. Diodorus believed that allegorical interpretation was dangerous because it opened the door to faulty interpretation.<sup>8</sup>
- Now, Chrysostom served as the Archbishop of Constantinople for six years but ended his ministry in exile in the city of Cucusus in Armenia Turkey. This man’s legacy is one of faithful exposition of the Word of God. He was a true advocate for a verse by verse approach to preaching.
- John encouraged others to adopt this type of approach to preaching, however, this interpretive model (Literal-Grammatical-Historical) did not become the predominant method during the patristic age. Actually, a thousand years would pass before an emphasis on the literal interpretation of Scripture would reemerge.<sup>9</sup>
- The catalyst for bringing a literal-grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture back into the limelight was the protestant reformations call for Sola-Scriptura (Scripture Alone). Before we move on to look at the second aspect regarding the term hermeneutics which is the need for hermeneutics, let’s discuss the reformation regarding the topic of hermeneutics.

### **The Reformation.**

- On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door at Wittenberg, Germany. As I said, the concept of Sola-Scripture was critical in the development of his theology. He was convinced that Scripture alone, apart from church councils and tradition, contains the truth that is necessary to experience God’s forgiveness.
- So, you can see that when one has a high view of Scripture, it will lead you to adopt a literal approach to the interpretation of any biblical text. Luther (although he was not perfect) had a massive impact on how we interpret Scripture today.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 20.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

- He advocated three principles of interpretation. 1.) Scripture is the only form of revelation and must be interpreted by itself. 2.) Every Scripture passage has one simple meaning. 3.) Some problems exist in Scripture that simply cannot be resolved.<sup>11</sup>
- Luther's literal approach to interpretation went completely against the Roman Catholic allegorical approach. Luther was not the only one using this approach at the time. Men like John Calvin were also using the literal-grammatical-historical approach to interpretation. This form of hermeneutics ruled the day until the Modern era, beginning in the seventeenth century.

### **The Modern Era.**

- During the age of enlightenment, 1715-1789, an erosion regarding the authority and infallibility of Scripture began to take place. This happened with the development of German higher criticism. Men like Emanuel Kant held to a hermeneutic that abandoned the concept of literal-grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture.
- They were no longer seeking to discover the authorial intent of a biblical text (the objective meaning the author had in mind when he wrote), rather they were focusing on the subjective meaning that the reader imposed on the text. So, instead of asking the question, "What does the text mean?" The question then became, "What does the text mean to me?"
- So, the emphasis moved from focusing on God's ability to communicate one objective meaning to all readers, to the human's ability to receive various subjective meanings for each individual. As you can see, this places doubt upon the authority and infallibility of Scripture. It can essentially mean whatever you want it to mean.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 21.

<sup>11</sup> It must be noted that Luther was not always faithful in following a literal hermeneutic. Also, out of a struggle to reconcile some biblical texts with one another, he placed Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation at the end of his translation of the New Testament. He did accept them as Scripture but had questions about their value in relation to some of the other New Testament books.

<sup>12</sup> Robert L. Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics, The New Versus the Old* (Grand Rapids MI: Kregel Publishing Company, 2002), 41.

- During the nineteenth century the focus began to change for the good. Men like John A. Broadus (the president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in the 1800's) were strong proponents of the literal-grammatical-historical method of hermeneutics.<sup>13</sup>
- During the twentieth century, the growth of hermeneutics as a field has been exponential. We see men like John Stott, Walter Kaiser, and Grant Osborne, men who continue to provide valuable insight for those of us who embrace the literal interpretation of Scripture.
- So, as we make our way through this class on hermeneutics, just remember that we are standing on the shoulders of very godly men, there is nothing that will be taught in this class that is new or novel. It has all been taught before.
- Now, let's move on to the next aspect of the term hermeneutics that we will discuss today. We move from looking at the history of hermeneutics to looking at the need for hermeneutics.

## B. The Need of Hermeneutics

- Some may say, "But I have the Holy Spirit, so I don't need hermeneutics." The ministry of the Holy Spirit of giving believers an understanding of scripture (*Illumination*), does not negate the need for hermeneutics, but rather empowers it.
- We need to understand that we are participating in hermeneutics every day as we communicate with other human beings. When you talk to your spouse, they have to use hermeneutics (principles of interpretation) to determine what you are saying. They interpret your words based on principles such as the context of your statement, the use of hyperbole or sarcasm, the understanding of cultural and geographical nuances and several other things.<sup>14</sup>
- However, with everyday conversations, these principles are so axiomatic (self-evident) that we are not even aware that we are utilizing them. Now, this changes

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<sup>13</sup> Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 24.

<sup>14</sup> Brad Klassen, *BI 505 Hermeneutics Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Masters Seminary, 2017), 2.

when we are separated from the writer by an entirely different language, or when we are separated culturally, or historically, or when we are from a vastly different geographical location, or if we are separated from the writer in all of the above areas. When this is the case, the task of interpretation is no longer facile (simplicistic).<sup>15</sup>

- These aspects are very real barriers to interpretation. The greater the linguistic, cultural, historical, and geographic realities of the writer differ from your own, the more difficult the task of interpretation is. As we read the Bible, we find ourselves with a body of work that is, in large part, completely different from our current dispensation. Therefore, hermeneutics are not only recommended for successful Bible interpretation they are absolutely necessary.
- To help us see the importance of hermeneutics an illustration of a river is sometimes used. In other words, these interpretive barriers are said to represent a vast river that separates the ancient author and his circumstances from us and our current circumstances.<sup>16</sup> Now, to help you understand this we are going to take each barrier and examine them a little closer. Let's begin with the language barrier.

### 1.) The Barrier of Language.

- The language that the biblical author uses (specifically the words and grammar) is the most obvious separation any interpreter will face. For instance, I want you to read these examples:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν Υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

- The first is the Hebrew text for Genesis 1:1; the second is the Greek text of John 3:16. So, as you can see, to the extent that these languages are far from our everyday experience, our lack of knowledge of them creates a barrier for our accurate understanding. You can see how important good Bible translators are in helping us cross the language barrier.
- The bottom-line of this language barrier is found in the words the author uses (*his lexica*) and the way in which he connects them grammatically

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<sup>15</sup> Bernard Ramm, Protestant Biblical Interpretation, *A Textbook of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids MI. Baker Book House, 1970), 4.

<sup>16</sup> J. Scott Duvall, J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands on Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2012), 39.



(*his syntax*). It also extends to the kind of literature he writes (*genre*). Figures of speech can also be a language barrier. So, the language barrier is one way we are separated from the original authors and their worlds. Another way is by Culture.<sup>17</sup>

## 2.) The Barrier of Culture.

- The farther one's culture is removed from the cultures and customs described in the Old and New Testaments, the larger the barrier will become in understanding the revelation of God given through that culture.
- For example, Middle Eastern interpreters can more easily identify with many of the customs described in the Bible (raising sheep, living in the desert, tending olive groves), those in other parts of the world- those from urban settings for example- will have far greater difficulty.<sup>18</sup> The third barrier we face is that of geography.

## 3.) The Barrier of Geography.

- Now, the geography of the Bible is essentially the stage on which the redemptive works of God find their place. We have to remember that God revealed himself and His will for mankind in a specific geographical location. When Scripture talks about things that can be affected by geography, the interpreter needs to have a keen understanding of what is going on here.<sup>19</sup>
- For instance, we see in 1 Kings 18:34-35, the account of Elijah on Mount Carmel with the prophets of Baal. In this account, he orders four pitchers of water to be filled and poured on the alter before the calls down fire from heaven.
- Now, this was taking place during a drought, so where in the world did, they get this water? Well, if you know the geography of the area around Mount Carmel, you will know that it is located approximately 2 miles away from the Kishon river, and about 5 miles away from the Mediterranean sea.
- So, once you understand that, getting this water to the site of the alter is not that difficult to understand. Okay, so we have looked at the language

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<sup>17</sup> Brad Klassen, *BI 505 Hermeneutics Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Masters Seminary, 2017), 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 5.

barrier, the cultural barrier, and the geographical barrier, now we come to the fourth barrier making up the river. This is the historical barrier.

#### 4.) **The Barrier of History.**

- We need to realize that the historical settings of the Old and New Testaments are centuries removed from us. So, even if we are familiar with all of the other areas that make up this river i.e. language, culture, and geography, you are still faced with this huge historical gap.<sup>20</sup>
- With that being said, you can see that it is essential when interpreting the Bible, that we put aside our own modern assumptions and transplant ourselves back into the historical context of the biblical writer.
- Now, obviously when getting to the application of a biblical text we have to return to our own context, but we need to begin in the context of the writer. So, here are the four barriers that make up the “River of Interpretation” that must be crossed.

<b>The Four “Barriers” the Interpreter Must Cross</b>			
<b>Language</b>	<b>Culture</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>History</b>

- So, the bottom line is that the purpose of Hermeneutics is to build a bridge to cross that great rushing river. We will call it the LaCuGH*i* river. We need to use good hermeneutics to help us build the interpretive bridge and arrive at the meaning which the biblical writers intended.
- The principles you use in searching for the authors intended meaning of any particular biblical text, will have substantial implication on whether you find it or not. So, we have looked at the need for hermeneutics, now we will move on to discussing the Method of Hermeneutics.<sup>21</sup>

### **C. The Method of Hermeneutics**

- Now that we understand the various barriers that need to be overcome as we approach a biblical text, we need to ask the question, who determines these principles of interpretation that we are to use to overcome these barriers? After all there is no chapter or verse in the Bible which provides us with a list of the principles of sound

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<sup>20</sup> Brad Klassen, *BI 505 Hermeneutics Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Masters Seminary, 2017), 5.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

hermeneutics. So, where do go to learn which principles are to be used and which ones are to be rejected?<sup>22</sup>

- The quick answer is that the principles of interpretation which are to be used are those which are most consistent with the nature of Scripture itself as well as the reader. In other words, good hermeneutical principles are those which are in line with the nature of the Bible (pure, holy, inherent, and infallible) and which understand the nature of man (fallen and sinful).<sup>23</sup>
- The method of hermeneutics that will be promoted in this class is known as the Grammatical-Historical Method. This method will be dealt with in-depth in a later class. Now, as we move through the key terms and definitions of our study, we have looked at the actual term Hermeneutics, we have discussed both the need for hermeneutics and the method of hermeneutics, now we move on to looking at the term “Meaning.”

## II. Meaning:

### A. The Goal of Interpretation – *Meaning*

- As we come to any biblical text, the goal in our interpretation process is to find the meaning of that text. As you come to the Scriptures you utilize the principles of hermeneutics in the process of exegesis. Exegesis means to lead or to pull meaning out of the text. We will discuss this more later. Exegesis is the goal of hermeneutics. So, what is the source of meaning in the text?

### B. The Source of Meaning – *Intent*

- To determine the meaning of the text, we need to understand the authors intent in writing what he wrote. This intent can be determined by the words and grammar he used.
- With that in mind, we as the reader, must always ask one vital question, “*What did the writer intend by his words?*” We need to remember that the author was aiming at a specific target audience, and that had an impact on how he constructed the text. Another helpful question to ask as you approach a text is, “*What did the original readers understand the author to be saying?*”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Brad Klassen, *BI 505 Hermeneutics Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Masters Seminary, 2017),8.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

- This is where many scholars, either intentionally or inadvertently, muddy the waters. They will say that there can be many meanings to a text. This is not true, the author of any text in the bible had only one intended meaning for what he was writing.<sup>25</sup>

### **C. The Number of Intents – *One***

- We need to think about this, since the meaning of a text is what the author intended the text to say and not what the interpreter wishes the text would say, there is absolutely only one meaning found in each passage.<sup>26</sup>
- So, the principle of *Authorial Intent* leads us consequently to the principle of *Single Meaning*. In other words, The meaning of a biblical passage does not change from person to person or from culture to culture. Friends, the generation gap does not give an interpreter license to twist the scripture in order to make it mean what they want it to mean.
- No, the meaning of scripture remains constant and objective. It is stable, you could say it is frozen in time. Any notion of multiple or unknown meanings in Scripture must be rejected. There was one single intent of the author and therefore there is one single meaning to what he wrote. Now, in looking at our list of key terms, we move from looking at Meaning, to looking at Interpretation.

### **III. Interpretation:**

- Interpretation of the biblical text is the process one undertakes to ascertain or reconstruct the authors intent. So, interpretation is the process by which one seeks meaning.
- So, accurate interpretation occurs when we are able to align our understanding of Scripture as closely as possible with the understanding of the author when he wrote the particular text we are looking at. Next, we will look at the term Exegesis.

### **IV. Exegesis:**

- The word “exegesis” ultimately comes from the Greek verb ἐξάγω (ex-ag-o) which means “to lead out” or “to show the way”. We see this verb being used to describe God’s act of leading Israel out of Egypt in Acts 7:36, 40; 13:17; Heb. 8:9). So, when we talk about doing “Exegesis” we are talking about leading or pulling the meaning out of the text.

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<sup>25</sup> Brad Klassen, *BI 505 Hermeneutics Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Masters Seminary, 2017), 9.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

- Exegesis takes place as you apply valid principles of interpretation (Hermeneutics) to a text of Scripture. With that being said, if you apply poor principles of interpretation (Hermeneutics) to the text the outcome will be questionable.

### **A. Exegesis vs. Eisegesis**

- We need to distinguish exegesis from eisegesis. Eisegesis comes from the Greek verb meaning “to lead into”. Eisegesis occurs when the interpreter “reads into” a text a meaning which is not intended by the author.
- Eisegesis becomes a very strong temptation when a text seems to teach something contrary to one’s opinion, or when you are wanting to find a text to justify a particular conclusion. We also need to understand that eisegesis does not just happen among false teachers or immature Christians.
- Even good Bible teachers can “lead into” a text a true idea, but not one intended by the author. In other words, they may be teaching a right doctrine, but from the wrong text.<sup>27</sup> Exegesis focuses on the original languages. Now, if you are not a student of Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek, you must exercise care in the translation you use.
- For serious Bible study, literal translations are essential. Literal translations strive to preserve (as closely as possible) the wording, style, and structure of the original text. Paraphrases (although they may be useful) can be misleading when used in careful Bible study.<sup>28</sup> Moving on to look at our next key term, we will look at the term application.

### **V. Application:**

- Now, once we have examined the text accurately applying the principles of hermeneutics in the process of interpretation and we come to a conclusion of what the passage means, we than must relate that meaning of the text to the circumstances of our own life. This is the living out of the facts uncovered by exegesis.

#### **AN IMPORTANT AXIOM TO REMEMBER:**

There is only one meaning to a text of Scripture, however, many applications can be made from that one meaning.

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<sup>27</sup> Brad Klassen, *BI 505 Hermeneutics Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Masters Seminary, 2017), 10.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

- Without application, interpretation is merely a mental exercise. We have to do more than just understand what God says, we must also obey it (James 1:22-25). The final key term we are going to define today is that of “Exposition.”

## **VI. Exposition:**

- Webster’s Dictionary defines “exposition” as: “the act of expounding, setting forth, or explaining.” So, with that in mind, Bible exposition is the careful act of explaining the meaning of a passage of Scripture within its context.
- Expository preaching is the type of preaching that focuses on preaching systematically through one segment of Scripture at a time. Dr. Richard Mayhue summarized the essential elements of expository preaching as follows:
  - 1.) The message finds its sole source in Scripture.
  - 2.) The message is extracted from Scripture through careful exegesis.
  - 3.) The message preparation correctly interprets Scripture in its normal sense and its context.
  - 4.) The message clearly explains the original God intended meaning of Scripture.
  - 5.) The message applies the Scriptural meaning for today.<sup>29</sup>

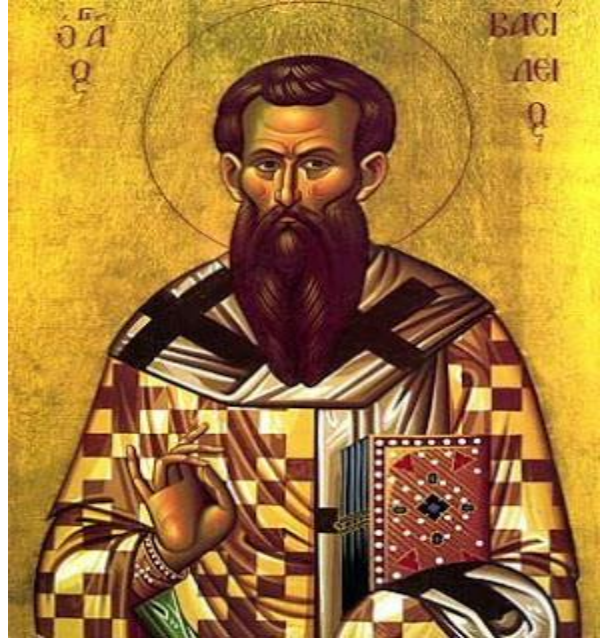
That is it for class number one. This was an introductory class in which we looked at the definitions of key terms regarding the topic of hermeneutics. Next we will look more at the method of accurate interpretation.

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<sup>29</sup> Brad Klassen, *BI 505 Hermeneutics Class Notes* (Sun Valley CA: The Masters Seminary, 2017),13.

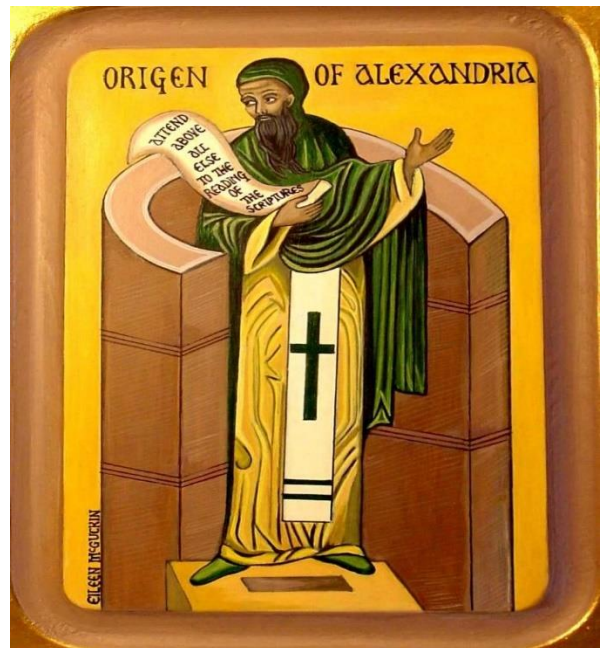
### Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215)

- Titus Flavius Clemens was the head of a Training school in Alexandria Egypt.
- He was the teacher of Origen.
- He was the leading proponent of making use of Greek philosophy in an effort to defend Christianity. He did not see philosophy as contrary to Christianity, but rather complementary to it. He even asserted a kind of *Christo-Platonism*.
- His three most well-known works are his *Exhortation to the Greeks (Heathen)*, *The Instructor*, and *the Miscellanies*. (You can find all three on-line).<sup>30</sup>



### Origen (c.182-251)


- A Christian scholar, theologian, and one of the most distinguished of fathers of the early church.
- Highly influenced by Platonic thought (and an idealism in which material things are not that important, but spiritual things are).
- He wrote commentaries on nearly every book of the Bible. His work titled, *De Principiis*, was one of the earliest attempts to systematize Christian doctrine. (available online).
- Later determined by the First and Second Councils of Constantinople in 545 and 553 to be a heretic for his views such as the preexistence of souls and universalism. Though these views are in error, Origen was a great apologist and defender of the faith.<sup>31</sup>



<sup>30</sup> Nathan Busenitz, Historical Theology 1 Class (Sun Valley CA: The Master's Seminary, 2016), 91-92.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

## **John Chrysostom** (c. 347-407)

- One of the greatest preachers of the early Church. Born in Antioch around 347-49.
  - His Father Secundus was a high-ranking civil servant but died shortly after Johns birth. His mother was a devout Christian who decided never to remarry. She devoted herself to bringing up her young son.
  - As a young man, John pursued a career in Law, however immediately after finishing his law studies, John decided to pursue a life of ministry instead.
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- John sat under the teaching of Diodore of Tarsus. Diodore was very important in shaping Johns approach to expository preaching. Diodore was quite scathing in his criticism of the allegorical approach to hermeneutics. John drank deeply of Diodores teaching. When John became a preacher, he stuck closely to this method, sticking close to the text of Scripture and explaining its clear meaning. He did this through a meticulous study of the meaning of words and historical backgrounds.
  - In 372, John left Antioch all together to join with the hermits on nearby Mount Silpios. Six years later, after suffering ill health from severe fasting and sleep deprivation from his time at the hermitage (designed to help one draw closer to God) John returned to Antioch in 378.
  - For the next 12 years John preached at Antioch. He preached verse by verse and chapter by chapter through books of the Bible. Johns forthright preaching stirred up enemies within the government as well as within the clergy. He was exiled to the remote inhospitable fortress town of Pityus at the far east end of the empire. John was forced to walk in the scorching heat and torrential rain. His body collapsed early on at a small hamlet called Bizeri.
  - Racked with fever and his skin baked as red as a brick, Chrysostom died at the age of 58. His last words were, “Glory be to God for all things.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> N.R. Needham, 2000 Years of Christ’s Power, *Part One: The Age of the Early Church Fathers* (London EN: Grace Publications Trust, 2011), 231-244.