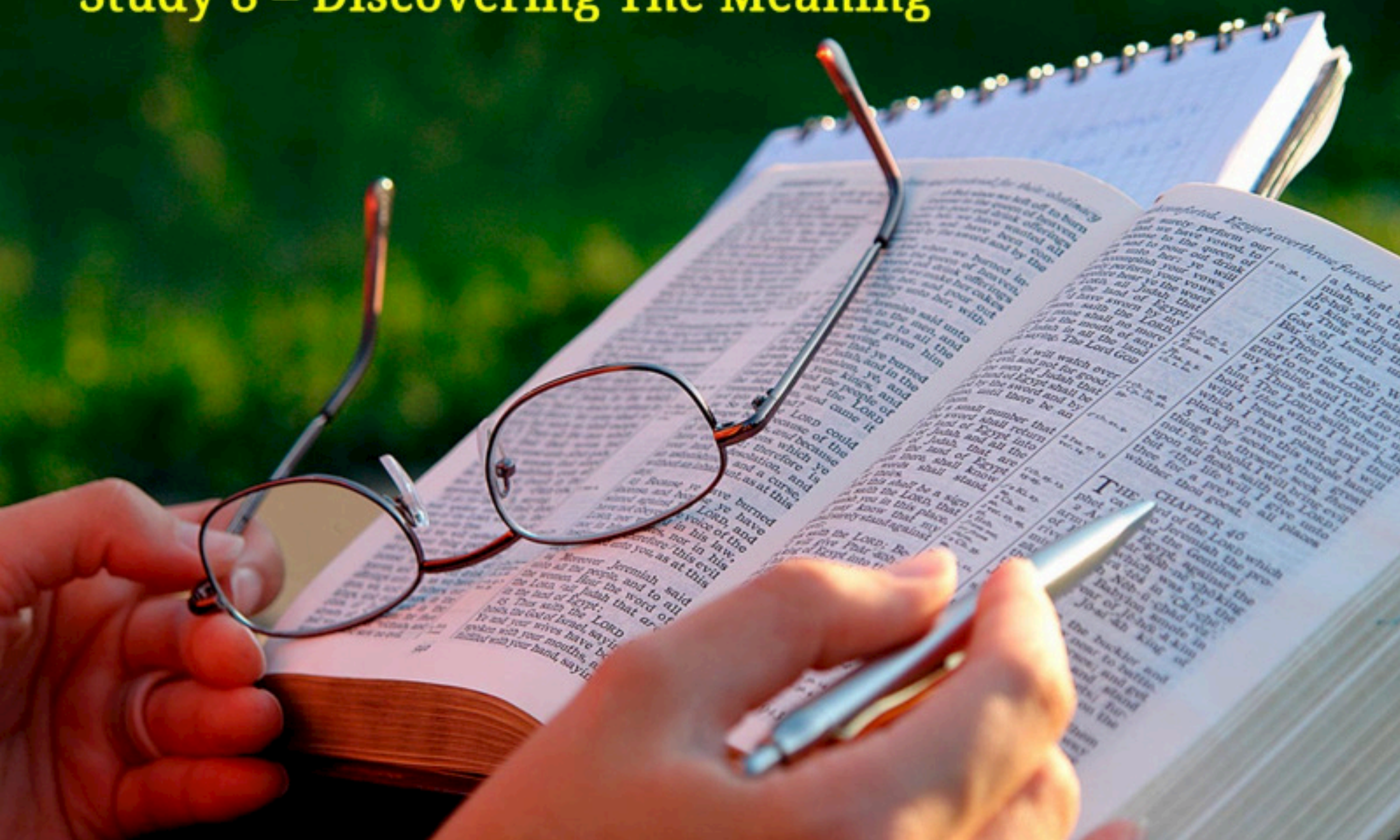


How To Study The Bible

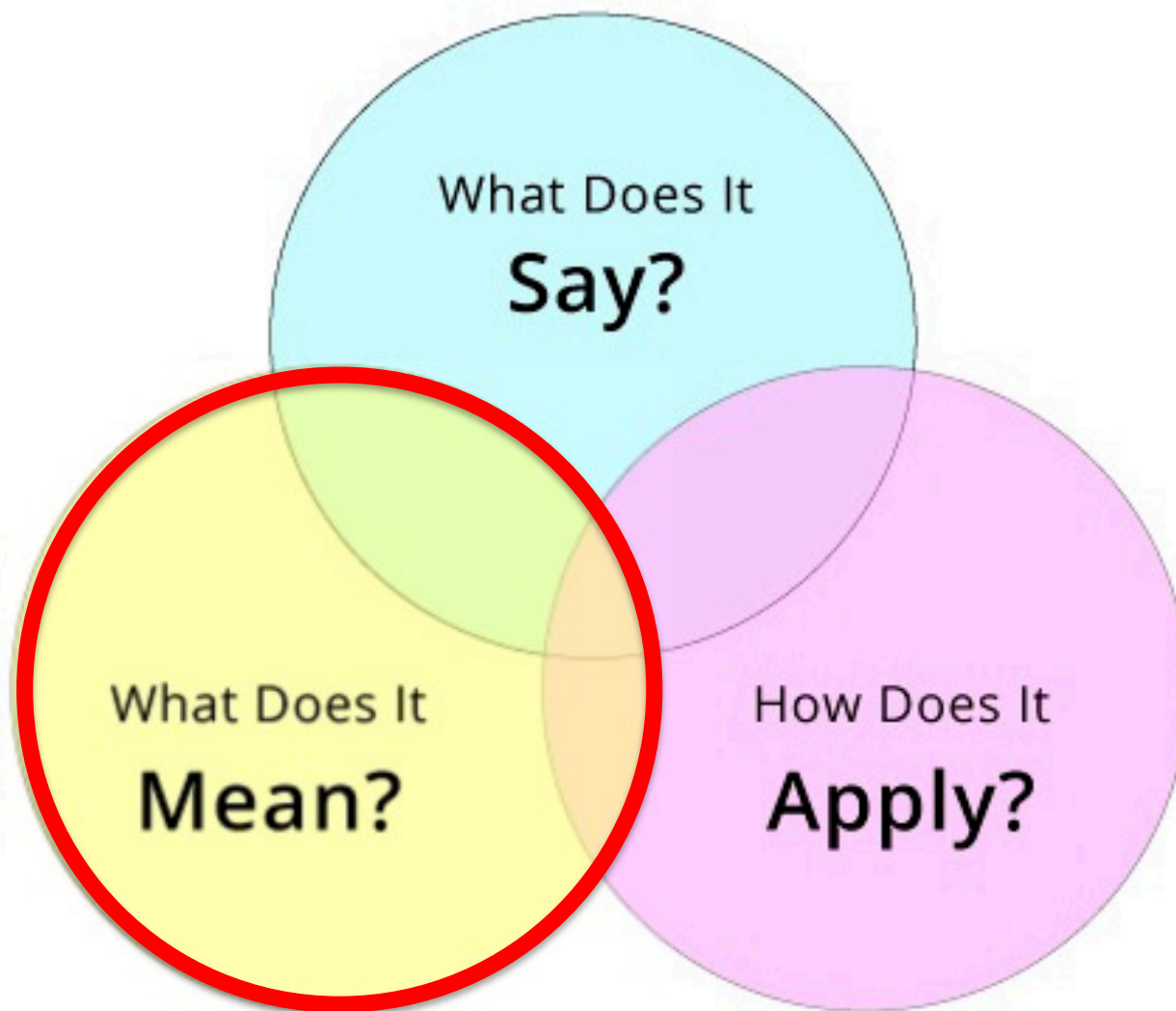
Study 8 – Discovering The Meaning



The Plan

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Session 1 | Why Study The Bible? |
| Session 2 | Why We Can Trust the Bible |
| Session 3 | How to Prepare to Study the Bible, part 1 |
| Session 4 | How to Prepare to Study the Bible, part 2 |
| Session 5 | Preparing To Know What The Bible Says |
| Session 6 | What Does The Bible Say |
| Session 7 | Tools For Determining the Meaning |
| Session 8 | Discovering The Meaning |
| Session 9 | How To Apply The Meaning |

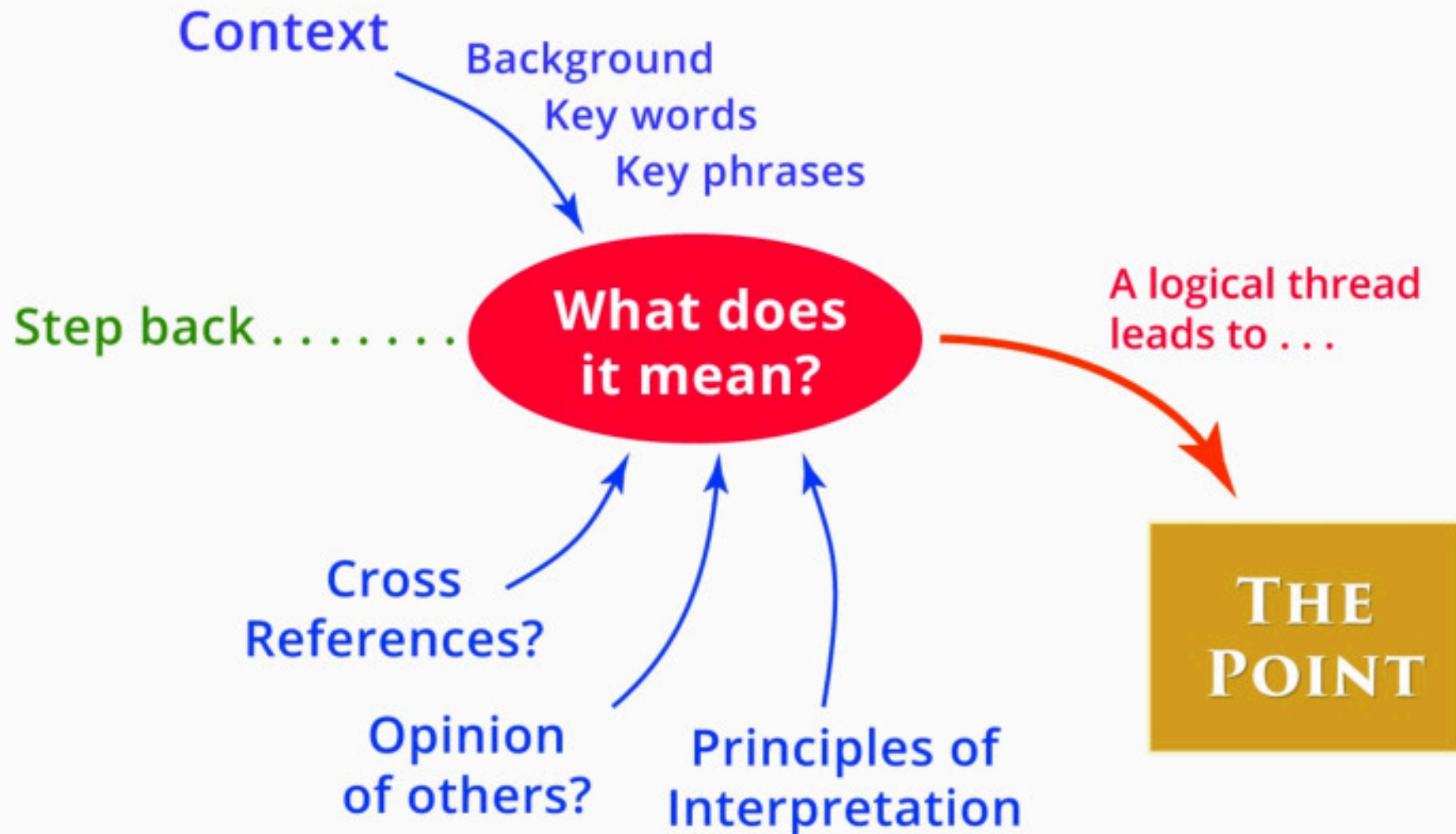
SMA – Pattern Of The Saints



SMA – Four Reading Steps!



IN THE TRENCHES







What Does Matthew 15:21-28 Mean?

1. We have already asked these questions:

Who is mentioned in the passage?

What happened?

When?

Where?

Why?

How?

Who said what?

2. We have studied Mark 7:24-30, a parallel passage.

3. We have looked at key words, verbs and phrases.

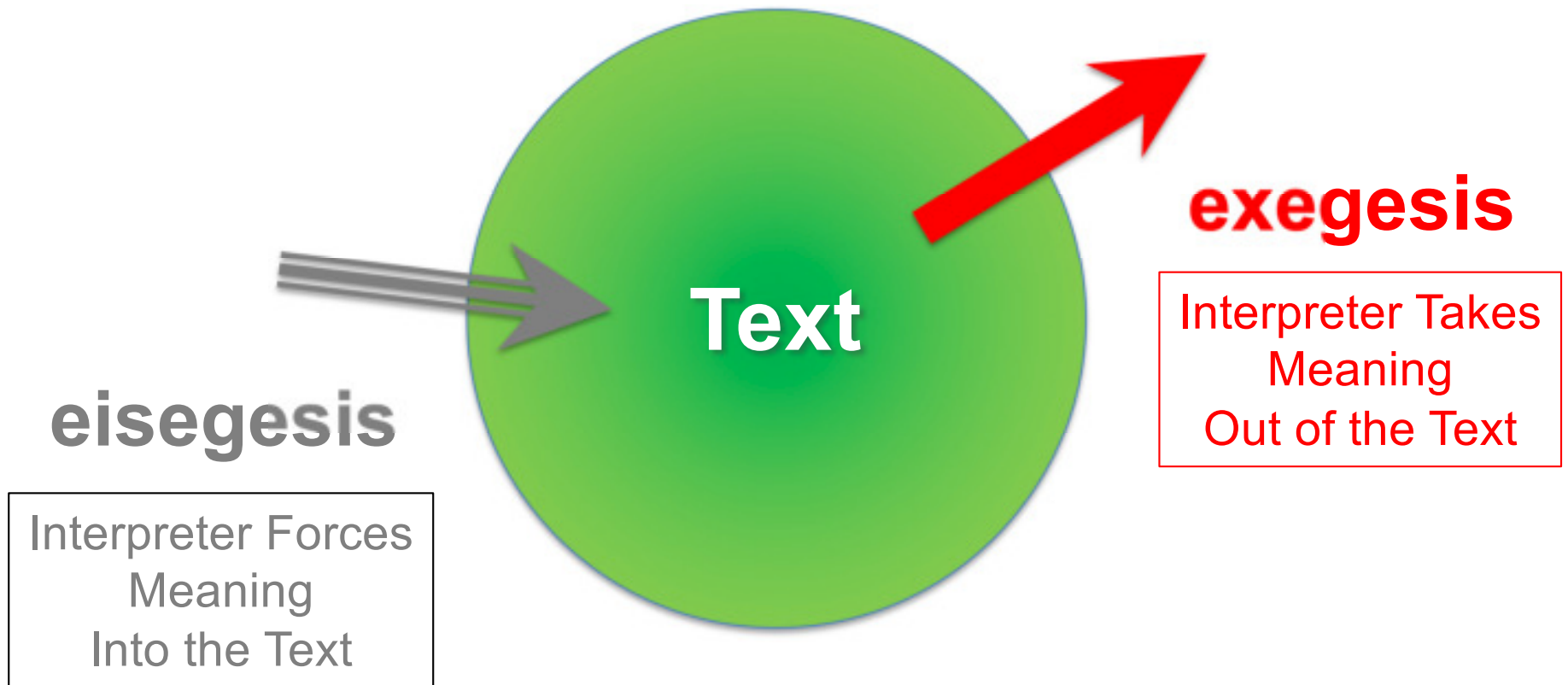
2 Timothy 2:15

Be diligent to present
yourself approved to
God as a workman who
does not need to be
ashamed,
accurately handling
the word of truth.

Crooked cut

**Accurately Handling
= “straight cut”**

Guiding Principle of Interpretation



Next Steps!

- 1. Pray and meditate on what the passage mean.**
- 2. Ask the “Why?” and “How?” questions. These usually lead to the meaning and interpretation.**
- 3. Evaluate your interpretation against the interpretations of other trusted authors.** Check with authors before the 1900s, if you can.
- 4. Develop your interpretation consistent with principles of biblical interpretation.**

Interpretation Principles, part 1

Examples From Matthew 15:21-28

- 1. Understand Scripture literally, unless it is clear that it is figurative** – It is clear that “lost sheep of the house of Israel,” “children,” “dogs,” and “crumbs” are figurative terms.
- 2. The culture, history, language, and geography may affect the meaning** – The Canaanite, the cities of Tyre and Sidon, “Son of David,” dogs, crumbs, and “woman” are historic, geographic, and cultural.
- 3. The context may affect your understanding of the passage** – Does Matthew 15:15-20 help us understand the heart of the Canaanite woman?
- 4. Avoid proof texting (a series of verses that do not actually prove your point).** – Someone claimed that Psalm 119:176 explains the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But the passage is not about Israel.
- 5. Let Scripture interpret Scripture** – *All Scripture fits together.* John 4:9, 27 help us understand the significance of the woman speaking to Jesus.

Interpretation Principles, part 2

Examples From Matthew 15:21-28

6. **Scripture does not contradict Scripture** – Mark 1:32 appears to contradict Luke 4:40. Jews had different definitions of sunset (Talmud Shabbat 34b-35a and Talmud in Pesachim 94a). Mark used the definition that sunset occurred when the sun dropped below the horizon. Luke used the definition that sunset occurred when the sky was dark. **Therefore, this principle will guide the selection of cross-references.**
7. **Obscure passages must give way to clear ones.** – There are no other Scriptures that can help us understand 1 Corinthians 15:29. This is an obscure verse. **This passage is not obscure.**
8. **No truth should be gleaned from uncertain textual readings** – **There are no uncertain textual readings in this passage.**
9. **If Scripture has not spoken, we are wisest to be silent** – **We cannot prove that unbelievers usually have greater faith than believers from this passage.**

Violation of “If Scripture Has Not Spoken, We Are Wisest To Be Silent.”

Some claim this passage proves that God is a trinity.

In Matthew 28:19-20 we read, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Interpretation Principles, part 3

Examples From Matthew 15:21-28

10. Scripture is the only certain source of truth - not our experience or science . . . 2 Timothy 2:15. For example, evolutionary theory must be subject to the truth of Scripture. When Scripture speaks, it speaks truth.

An amazing example:

<https://www.neverthirsty.org/blog/speaking-out/the-young-old-earth/>

“As a Matter of Fact” (Forbes)

by James Burke

Throughout the 16th century, as it gradually dawned on everybody that Columbus hadn't, after all, hit some islands off Japan or India (where he was headed at the time) but that he had in fact come across an entirely new continent, everything epistemological hit the fan. For a comfortable 2,000 years, life, the universe, and everything had been what Aristotle and the Bible said it was. And neither of them had ever mentioned America. So what was it doing there?

Things got rapidly worse in the first decades of the 17th century, as people like Galileo started seeing other centers of attraction, such as Jupiter circled by its moons. To compound the felony, sailors started coming back across the Atlantic to Europe with hundreds of new American animal and plant species that were not described on Aristotle's list.

Put yourself in their place. It was beginning to look as if all bets were off (or as John Donne had it: “The new philosophy calls all in doubt”). To anybody occupying a throne by the grace of church authority (i.e., most of them), this was a situation devoutly to be missed. In the desperate search for some way to bail out the sinking ship or shut the stable door, a couple of quick thinkers came up with some solutions. One was a French engineer named Rene Descartes who was run off because he was too apt to make cracks about Jesuits. Descartes suggested the only way to find the truth was to go on doubting until you stripped away all dubious elements so as to arrive at a point where what remained was so self-evident that it was beyond doubt. That would be the truth.

These desires can be so strong they induce hallucinations. In the late 19th century, at the University of Nancy, France, the recent discovery of X rays convinced people that other rays should be there too. Sure enough, once some guy demonstrated N rays (named after the town. They became a hot ticket to a Ph.D. And, no doubt, somebody got such a degree, in N-ray studies. Then one day some visiting American, who hadn't heard about these rays, said the truth was he couldn't see them. Sure enough, when everybody looked closer, nor could they. Collapse of theory.

This kind of collapse riddles the history of the so-called truth-finding sciences. Here's a list of the greatest hits of scientific theory collapse: For centuries it was known that disease came from miasma, a foul air emanating from marshes and putrescent materials and such creepy stuff...until 1864, when Louis Pasteur discovered germs. For centuries electricity was a fluid...until 1820.

It was a well-known fact that rotten apples spontaneously generated little worms and grubs found inside them...until 1767.

The atom was indivisible...until 1877. All organisms that exist were made at Creation...until 1858. Creation itself happened in 4004 B.C....until 1779, when the date became 75,000 years ago; until 1846, when it became 100 million years ago; until last year, when the figure rose to 13 billion.

In the end, the can of worms Columbus opened with his trip to India is this: There is no truth to find. Truth is what you want it to be: omelettes, or miasma, or supreme deities. It's all the product of the humongous, game-playing brain in your head. I'm not arguing that there isn't some ultimate reality out there in the mess around us, but that all we're likely to be able to do is interpret the mess. And today's interpretation won't be tomorrow's.

Interpretation Principles, part 3

Examples From Matthew 15:21-28

- 10. Scripture is the only certain source of truth - not our experience or science . . .** 2 Timothy 2:15. For example, evolutionary theory must be subject to the truth of Scripture. When Scripture speaks, it speaks truth.
- 11. Be teachable . . . be willing to reconsider what you believe!**

Summary of the Meaning

Matthew 15:21-28 and Mark 7:24-30

Summary of Meaning – v. 21-22

Matthew 15:21-28 & Mark 7:24-30

1. **Jewish men did not talk with Canaanites or with woman.—**
John 4:9, 27 and Galatians 2:15. → Reveals Christ's love for others.
2. **“To cry out” → Reveals the woman was repeatedly shouting loudly for mercy.**
3. **“Son of David” is a messianic term. — Matthew 1:1, 20 → Reveals the woman may have believed Jesus was the Messiah.**
4. **“Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed.” → Reveals the woman was in anguish.**

Summary of Meaning – v. 23-24

Matthew 15:21-28 & Mark 7:24-30

1. **He did not answer her a word.** — John 3:16; 1 John 4:16 → He did not ignore her because she was a Gentile woman.
2. **“Implored”** → Reveals the disciples were repeatedly begging Jesus to send her away.
3. **“Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us.”** → We do not know if they Jesus to heal her, and then send her away. But it is clear that Jesus did not send her away. Why?
4. **“I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”** — Matthew 10:5 ; John 4:22 → Some claim this reveals the disciples wanted Jesus to do as she asked, then send her away. But maybe Jesus was simply refusing to take any action. Or, maybe Jesus wanted the woman to hear this statement.

Summary of Meaning – v. 25-27

Matthew 15:21-28 & Mark 7:24-30

1. **“Began to bow down before Him”** → Her bowing was an outward form of pleading.
2. **“Not good to take the children’s bread.”** — Mark 10:24; John 13:33; 21:5 → Children can refer to Jews, even to the disciples. Verse 24 suggests children refers to the Jews. She is an outsider.
3. **“Dogs”** → Refers to pet dogs, which Gentiles owned. Jesus is showing her kindness. Jesus infers she is like a pet dog.
4. **“The crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.”** → Crumbs were the result of people cleaning their hands on bread.”
5. **“Crumbs”** → She is willing to take whatever Jesus will give her, even filthy crumbs. She humbled herself.

Summary of Meaning – v. 28

Matthew 15:21-28 & Mark 7:24-30

1. **“Your faith is great.”** → Climax of the account. But why did Jesus say her faith was great?
2. **“Her daughter was healed at once.”** — Mark 7:29-30 → Demon left the daughter immediately.
3. **“What are some applications?”**

***Applications Are in
the Next Study***

On The 50 Yard Line

“Things To Do”

Assignment

- **Read Matthew 15:21-28 and Mark 7:24-30.**
- **Outline the passage.**
- **What is the point?**
- **Determine the application.**