

WELCOME**Our Mission is ONE REAL PASSION**

1. Each **ONE** Matters
2. Be **REAL**
3. Follow the **PASSION** of Jesus

Our Goal is to

- Connect you to Jesus
- Connect you to His community for discipleship
- Connect you to your mission and purpose in life

New to Foothills? Our mission as a church is to do everything we can to help you grow your faith. If you would like to get to know us a little better or begin or continue your journey of faith, speak to an elder or staff member or **contact Foothills at 208-853-0011**, or for more information, stop by the **Connection booth in the Atrium**.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Fill out a **Connect card** using the QR code on the screen or the actual card on the seat back in front of you. Place your prayer request in the ORANGE offering box in the back of the Sanctuary. You can also send a prayer request using this form: [Prayer Request - Foothills Church](#). The staff and volunteers pray over these weekly.

Baptism - One important step in your faith journey is baptism. To learn more about baptism, speak to an elder or staff member or **contact Foothills at 208-853-0011** and we will send you the teaching on Believers' Baptism.

ONGOING/UPCOMING

- **MomCo** - [Foothills Moms Community- MomCo - Foothills Church](#)
- **Small Groups** - [Foothills Church \(churchcenter.com\)](#)
- **MOMENTUM: Find out more here** [Momentum | Foothills Christian Church](#)
- **NEW! CHURCH CENTER App** – Watch sermons live, follow along with the message and take notes, join a group, register for upcoming events, chat with your small group. The app is available in the App Store or Google Play -- search for *Foothills Christian Church*
- **Host the Adsit Family** – [Adsit Home Stays - Foothills Church](#)
- **Rooted Experience** - [Foothills Church](#) – Launches Monday, **January 18**, 6-8:00pm (10-week commitment). \$25 covers cost of the book. If you're ready to grow deeper in your faith, build meaningful relationships, and discover your purpose in God's story, Rooted is for you. Childcare provided.
- **Serving Opportunities:** Fill out a **CONNECT** card or visit the **CONNECTION BOOTH** in the Atrium
 - **FH Kids** – Love kids? Prefer not to teach? Perfect. We have super easy, low-prep roles like Crew Guides and helpers that make a huge difference.
 - **Production** – If you can push a button, we can teach you the rest! Whether you are tech-savvy or brand new, this behind-the-scenes team has a spot for you.
 - **Worship** – If you sing or play, come audition! Our leaders will coach, support, and help you grow.
 - **Sunday Breakfast Team** - Love to cook? We are looking for someone to provide breakfast once a month for the Sunday Morning volunteers -- a fun and creative way to serve your church community.

The Message: It's Just A Book . . . Unless It's Not

Pastor Trent Renner

INTRODUCTION: The news broke recently - YouVersion Bible app has been downloaded 1 BILLION times. The Good News of Jesus and His Kingdom are spreading like wildfire in our lifetime. There is such a hunger for God's Word, and people are pursuing it. While most people are embarking on a new year, new goals, new resolutions, we want to inspire our community towards a new daily rhythm that will ultimately lead to becoming devoted followers of Jesus by spending meaningful time in His Word. It's our hope for this series to be historical and practical, empowering our community to grow in confidence, using all the tools we are learning.

Why is it important to interpret the Bible correctly?

Interpreting the Bible carefully and accurately is crucial for truly comprehending and applying God's Word to your life. However, attempting to apply the Bible to your personal life without first grasping some fundamental realities of interpretation can be disastrous.

The Bible is more a library than a book. It must be understood through the lens of what it would be like to read a Dear Abby response in the paper without knowing the question to which she is responding.

I hope to equip you with some simple tools to help you better know what God is trying to tell you as you read His Word.

First, we must grasp the methods God used to carefully create what we call The Holy Bible.

REVELATION, INTERPRETATION, AND ILLUMINATION.

Or...More easily understood...God to People — People to Paper — Paper to Heart.

Example: LUKE 1:1-3 (NLT)

Many people have set out to write accounts about the events that have been fulfilled among us. 2They used the eyewitness reports circulating among us from the early disciples. 3Having carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I also have decided to write an accurate account for you, most honorable Theophilus ...

Next, we must understand what scholars call PLENARY VERBAL regarding Scripture.

- “Verbally Complete” means all words of the Bible are **EQUALLY INSPIRED** but not **EQUALLY IMPORTANT!**

HOW TO INTERPRET SCRIPTURE

Here are seven basic principles that will help you read and apply the Bible correctly.

1. **Focus on CONTEXT (Context is king).** As you seek to know what something in Scripture means, ask yourself these questions:

- a. Is my interpretation of this part of Scripture consistent with the theme and purpose of the entire LETTER (or Book)?
- b. Is my interpretation consistent with other Scriptures about the same subject, or is there a glaring difference?
- c. Am I considering the cultural context of what is being said?

Example: Luke 10:4 says, “*Carry no money belt, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way.*” Is this verse telling all believers not to bring extra money or shoes with them and to refrain from greeting strangers as they travel? When we examine the context more closely, we see that Jesus gave these specific instructions to seventy of His disciples whom He sent out as missionaries, not as a blanket statement to all believers everywhere for all time.

2. Always seek the WHOLE Word of God. You should never build a doctrine off one or two isolated verses.

Example: Psalm 37:4 says, “*Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.*” Taken alone, this passage could be used to teach that delighting in the Lord is a formula for receiving everything we want! But when we read Scripture as a whole, consulting other clear passages on this subject, we understand that God does not give us everything we want, but He does freely give us all that we need—Himself.

As you read the Bible regularly and become more familiar with the whole counsel of God’s Word, you will be increasingly able to discern whether a teaching is biblical or not.

3. Remember that Scripture will never contradict Scripture.

What do you do when you come across a passage of Scripture that seems to contradict another? It is important to remember: **Every word of Scripture is God-breathed.** That means Scripture never contradicts itself! In instances when it appears to, here’s a good principle: **The best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture.** When we encounter seemingly contradictory truths in Scripture, our responsibility is to diligently handle God’s Word and to bear in mind that the Bible was inspired by an infinite God—and we are finite creatures! We are called to humbly believe His Word, even if we can’t understand or reconcile it at the moment.

**Remember that all Scripture is EQUALLY INSPIRED, BUT NOT EQUALLY IMPORTANT.
PRIORITIZE!!!!**

Are there Bible passages that are more important than others? The Bible says so...

- **John 5:36, Jesus says, “I have testimony weightier than that of John.”**
- **Matthew 23:23 says, “The more important matters of the law”**
- **Matthew 22:36-38 says, “The GREATEST commandment is...”**
- **1 Corinthians 15:3 says, “I delivered to you as of first importance.”**

HOWEVER... Prioritizing Scripture is NEVER in regard to comparing sin with good. Some things are ALWAYS Sin...and other things are always HOLY.

4. Do not base your doctrine on an obscure passage of Scripture.

An important principle of biblical interpretation is that Scripture is clear in matters pertaining to salvation through Jesus, yet some teachings of Scripture are not as easy to understand.

Example: 1 Corinthians 11:10 says, *“Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.”* Because the meaning here is not clear, we should not base a doctrine on it. Our doctrines and beliefs should be based on the clear repeated teachings in Scripture. The more Scripture teaches it, the more essential it becomes.

5. Interpret Scripture literally. Take God’s Word at face value, in its natural, normal sense.

As you learn to recognize figures of speech, literary tools, and literary styles, you’ll be able to discern the meaning of the passage you are studying more accurately. For example, the Book of Proverbs is full of maxims (general truth/rules of conduct) that are often true or generally true. However, they are not promises or prophecies.

Example: Proverbs 22:6, *“Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it,”* does not mean that if you raise your child “right” then they will become believers. That verse acknowledges a common reality and goal: godly parenting can play a key role in developing children who become godly adults. It doesn’t promise it or guarantee it.

6. Examine the author’s intended meaning behind the passage.

Always try to understand what the author had in mind when you interpret a portion of the Bible. Our interpretation of a passage of Scripture must never be one that would be totally foreign to the author who wrote it!

Example: In Philippians 4:13, Paul declares, *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”* Did Paul mean that through Christ we can run marathons, pass a difficult math test, and become President of the United States?

A closer look at the verses surrounding this one reveal that Paul is referring to being able to withstand both poverty and prosperity, remaining at PEACE and having contentment regardless of his financial situation because of Jesus’ strength. It is very dangerous to only read one Bible verse...we should read at least the paragraph and sometimes the whole chapter...The Book of Romans should be read front to back to fully interpret its meaning.

**7. Verify conclusions by consulting reputable sources -- “Safety in counsel of advisors”
(Proverbs 11:14)**

Commentaries, blogs, pastors, podcasts, and books can help you examine the conclusions you’ve come to in your study and weigh them against others’ interpretations. Examine the opposite opinion too. While you should not simply accept what a commentator says without checking their interpretation against Scripture, outside sources can be a helpful safeguard for you in your own interpretation.

Reading and understanding God's Word is a process—it's no wonder God encourages us in 2 Timothy 2:15, *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the Word of Truth."* (NIV)

With the Holy Spirit's help, we can handle the Word with diligence, understanding not only what it says but also what it means—plus, how to apply its life-changing truths to our lives.

SUMMARY

- 1. Focus on CONTEXT (Context is king)**
- 2. Always seek the WHOLE Word of God**
- 3. Remember that Scripture will never contradict Scripture**
- 4. Do not base your doctrine on an obscure passage**
- 5. Interpret Scripture literally**
- 6. Examine the author's intent behind the passage**
- 7. Verify conclusions by consulting reputable sources**

CALL TO ACTION

Read an entire biography (Gospel) of Jesus this week, and have as many spiritual conversations as you can!

Matthew (28 chapters)

- Matthew wrote for a Jewish audience, emphasizing Jesus as the promised Messiah

Mark (16 chapters)

- Mark wrote for Romans, focusing on Jesus as a powerful servant

Luke (24 chapters)

- Luke wrote to Greeks/Gentiles, highlighting Jesus' humanity and universal salvation

John (21 chapters)

- John wrote to a universal Christian audience, focusing on Jesus' divine nature