

How to Correctly Interpret God's Word 1

Presented by Chris Rosebrough



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Class Premise

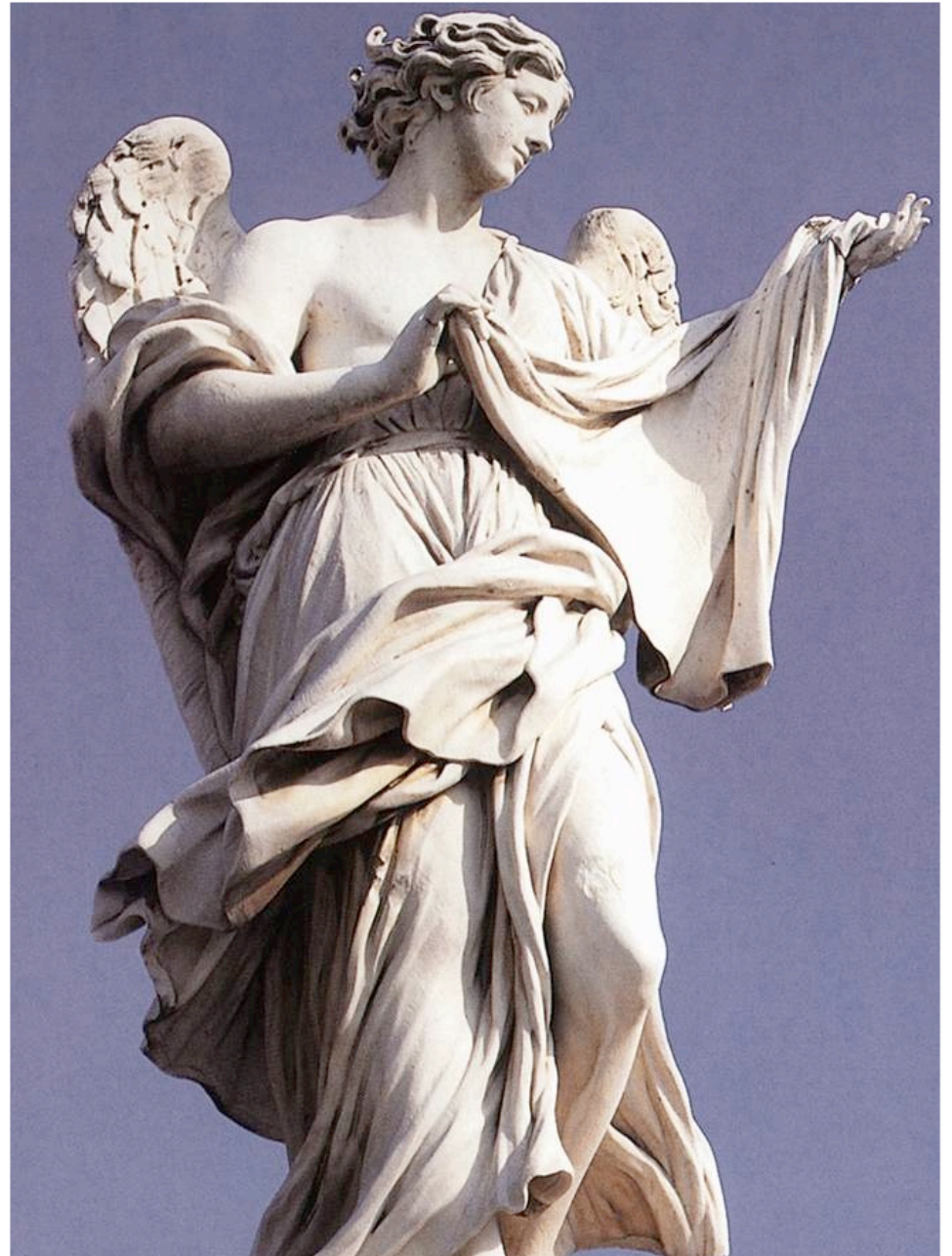
Sola Scriptura - The Bible is the inerrant word of God and the ONLY authority of truth and doctrine regarding the true worship of God

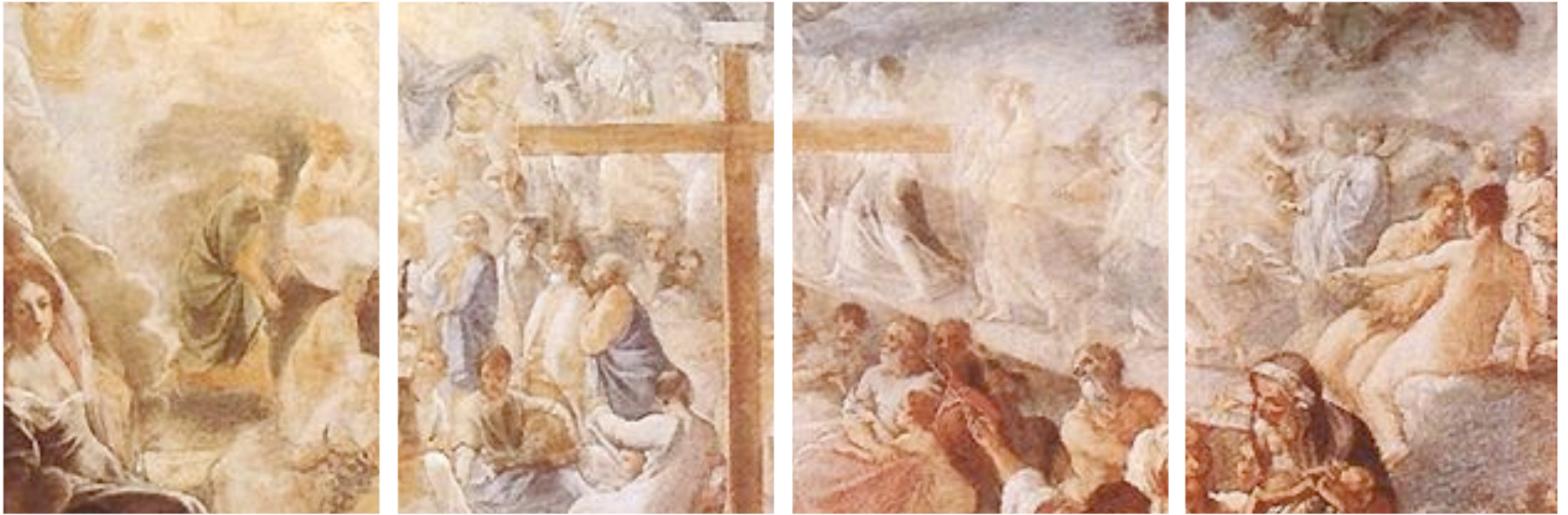
Solus Christus - We are saved through Christ's work Alone

Sola Gratia - We are saved by Grace Alone

Sola Fide - Through Faith Alone

Interactiva - The class is interactive, stop me and ask questions.





How to Properly Read the Bible

- ❖ An Introductory Series on “Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth”
 - ❖ Why this is important.
 - ❖ With examples of how not to Read the Bible

Treacherous Times

2 Tim. 3:1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. **2 For people will be lovers of self**, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3** heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, **4** treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5** having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.



2 Tim. 3:6 For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, 7 **always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.** 8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, **so these men also oppose the truth**, men corrupted in mind and **disqualified regarding the faith.** 9 But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.



2Tim. 3:10 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11 my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. 12 **Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,** 13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, **continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed,** knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood **you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in**



2Tim. 3:16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

2Tim. 4:1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.



2 Tim. 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the word of truth.**



**We are the heirs of the Reformation.
Yet, Protestant churches are falling
(many have already fallen). Not for
lack of Bibles. But from lack of
sound Biblical Teaching and a
tolerance of error.**

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, **and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**



Rom. 16:17 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles **contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught**; avoid them. 18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and **by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.**

Matt. 24:3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

Matt. 24:4 Jesus answered: **“Watch out that no one deceives you.**

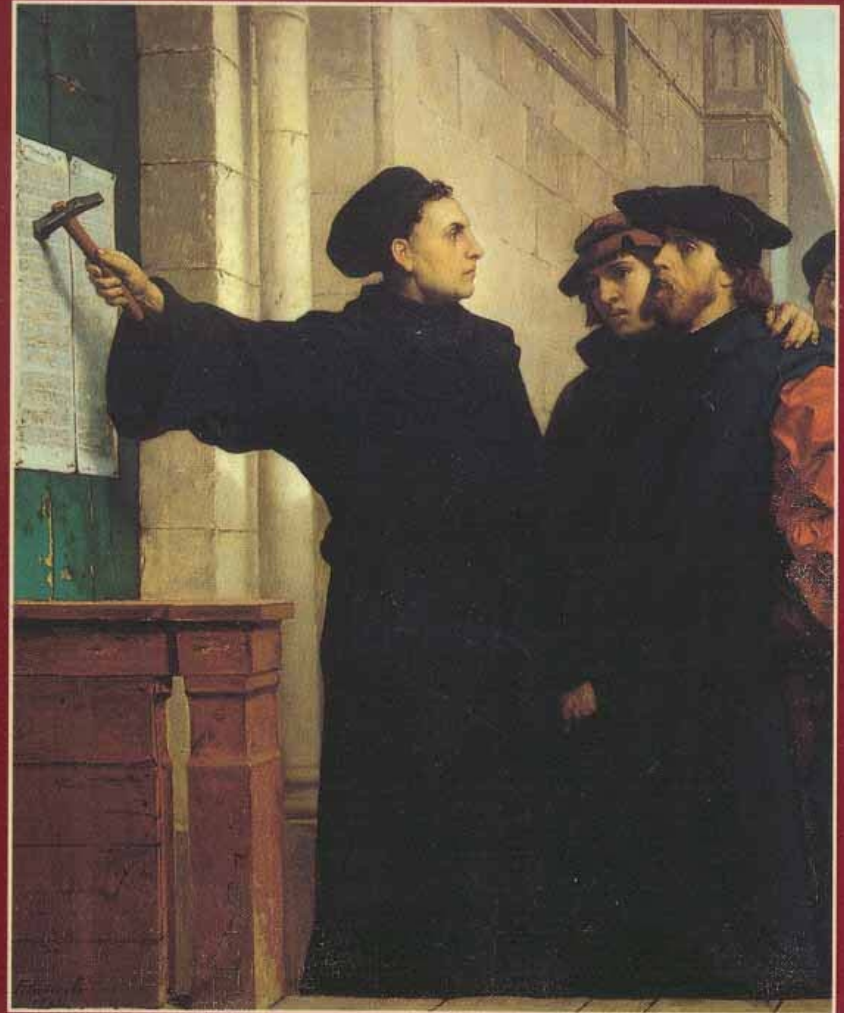


An Under Appreciated Fact of History

“Many students of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, while recognizing the religious nature of the Protestant Revolt, have not been aware that, above all, the movement inaugurated by Martin Luther was a hermeneutical revolution of the first magnitude. Luther’s ultimate break with Rome was made possible by the discovery of principles of interpretation, which were either forgotten or unknown to the Medieval Church. Only as these new principles were found and applied, was it possible for Luther to direct the attention of European Christianity to the teachings of Christ and his Apostles”

Raymond F. Surburg

Concordia Theological Monthly, April 1953



Medieval Biblical Interpretive Method

“Canonized” by Thomas Aquinas

“Objection 1 It seems that in Holy Writ (Scripture) a word cannot have several senses, historical or literal, allegorical, tropological or moral, and anagogical. For many different senses in one text produce confusion and deception and destroy all force of argument. Hence no argument, but only fallacies, can be deduced from a multiplicity of propositions. But Holy Scripture ought to be able to state the truth without any fallacy. Therefore in it there cannot be several senses to a word.



On the contrary, Gregory says [Moral. xx, 1]: "Holy Writ by the manner of its speech transcends every science, because in one and the **same sentence, while it describes a fact, it reveals a mystery.**"

I answer that, The author of Holy Scripture is God, in whose power it is to signify His meaning, **not by words only** (as man also can do), but also by things themselves. So, whereas in every other science things are signified by words, this science has the property, **that the things signified by the words have themselves also a signification.** Therefore that first signification whereby words signify things belongs to the first sense, the historical or literal.

That signification whereby things signified **by words have themselves also a signification is called the spiritual sense**, which is based on the literal, and presupposes it.



Now this spiritual sense has a threefold division.

For as the Apostle says [Hebrews 10:1] the Old Law is a figure of the New Law, and Dionysius says [Coel. Hier. i] "the New Law itself is a figure of future glory." Again, in the New Law, whatever our Head has done is a type of what we ought to do. Therefore, so far as the things of the Old Law signify the things of the New Law, there is the **allegorical sense**; so far as the things done in Christ, or so far as the things which signify Christ, are types of what we ought to do, there is the **moral sense**. But so far as they signify what relates to eternal glory, there is the **anagogical** sense.

Since the literal sense is that which the author intends, and since the author of Holy Writ is God, Who by one act comprehends all things by His intellect, it is not unfitting, as Augustine says [Confess. xii], if, **even according to the literal sense, one word in Holy Writ should have several senses.**



Quadrica (Four-Fold Meaning)

- Literal
- Allegorical
- Tropological - Moral
- Anagogical - Relating to the Eternal Glory



*Littera gesta docet, quid
credas allegoria, Moralis quid
agas, quo tendas anagogia.*

The letter shows us what God
and our fathers did;

The allegory shows us where
our faith is hid;

The moral meaning gives us
rules of daily life;

The anagogy shows us where
we end our strife.



We are told by Hugh of St. Victor (c. 1090- 1141) that the length of Noah's Ark, 300 cubits, is a sign of the Cross, since the number 300 is represented in Greek by the letter tau (Τ), which has the shape of a cross.

Rupert of Deutz (c. 1075-1129) tells us that Proverbs 19:12, "A king's wrath is like the growling of a lion," speaks of Christ in his crucifixion, since then the King of kings roared at the Devil.

Guibert of Nogent 11053-1124} claims that in the darkness which "was upon the face of the deep" in Genesis is a sign of the darkness of sin and worldliness which clouds men's minds, and in the grass which sprouts from the earth, a sign of the fruitfulness of God's word when worldly cares have been cast away.

The Venerable Bede (c. 673-735) explains that the two stones of onyx on the ephod of the Aaronic priesthood described in Exodus 28 suggest in their red color the ardor of charity, or, since they shine like fire surrounded by white bands, the light of knowledge accompanied by the band of chastity.



“The great weakness and deficiency of this method was its obscuration of the true meaning of Scripture. Mixed hopelessly with the allegorical method was an exaggerated typical interpretation. The allegorical methodology allowed the imagination of the interpreter to run wild so that the Bible becomes putty in the hands of the interpreter. Luther protested that his antagonist treat scriptures as if they were a wax nose to be pulled about at will. It was possible for different doctrinal systems to originate by use of the allegorical method, yet there was nothing within the method to distinguish the true from the false.”

“The Roman Catholic Church has always welcomed the use of the four-fold sense of scripture, because this method of interpretation permits the justification of any doctrine whatsoever from either the Old or New Testament”



Luther utilized ONLY the grammatico-historical method of Biblical interpretation.

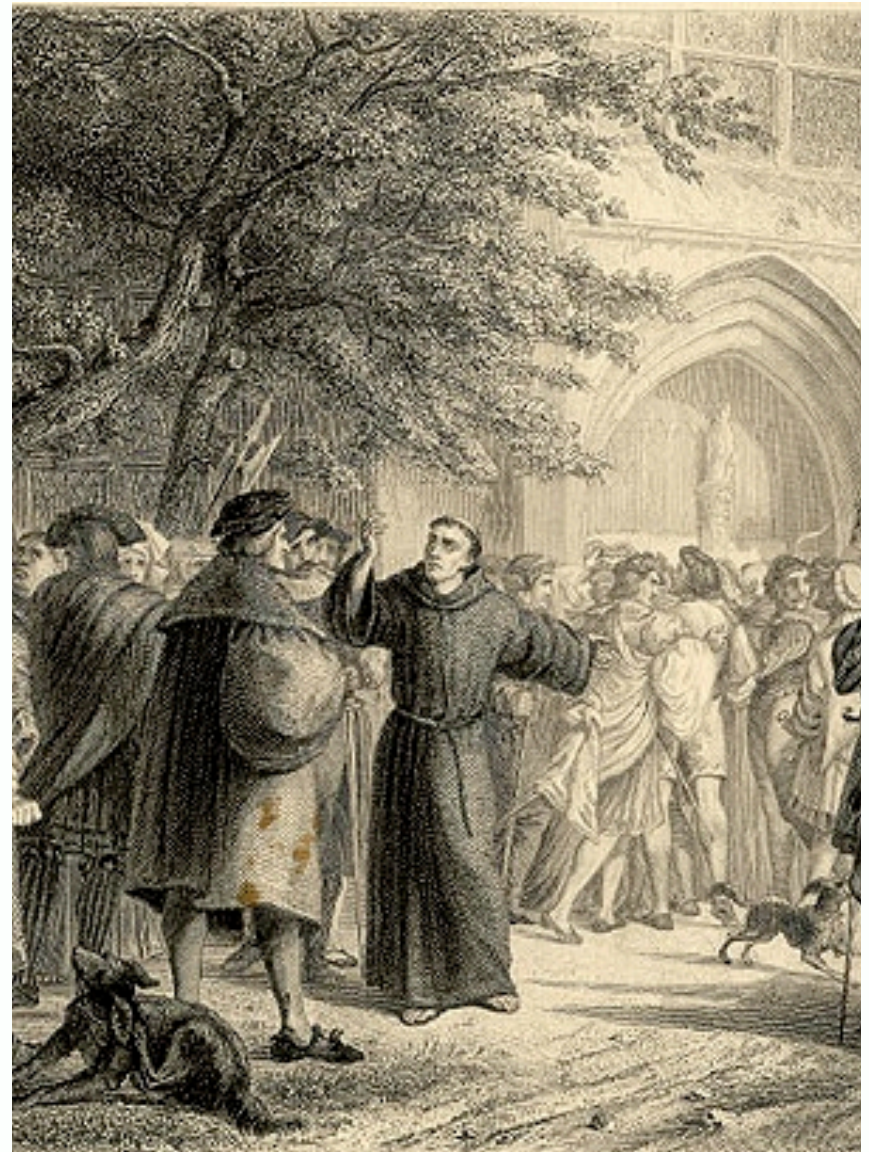
Luther referred to the 'four-fold' method as a 'sport for children'.

Luther worked with the idea that Scripture has but one meaning.

Said Luther, "Scripture shall not have a double meaning, but shall retain the one that accords with the meaning of the words."

"The Holy Ghost is the most simple author and speaker in heaven or earth, therefore His words cannot have more than one, the most simple meaning"

"All that I have done is to farther, preach and teach God's Word; otherwise I have done nothing. So it happened that while I slept or while I drank a glass of Wittenberg beer with my friend Philip and with Amsdorf, the papacy was weakened as it never was before by the action of any prince or emperor. I have done nothing; the Word has done and accomplished everything.... I let the Word do its work!



Assumptions for this Class

1. $A = A$ Law of non-contradiction. There are no flaming snowflakes.
2. There is a such thing as truth.
3. There is a such thing as sound doctrine and it must be taught and defended.
4. Any interpretation that makes ANY doctrine possible is not a valid method of interpretation because it contradicts the first three assumptions.

Therefore:

Liver shivers don't tell us what is true - God's Word Rightly interpreted does

Angels do not tell us what is true - God's Word Rightly interpreted does

Signs and Wonders don't tell us what is true - God's Word Rightly interpreted does

We only listen to teachers and preachers who bring us God's Word Rightly Interpreted!

(It doesn't matter how cool his hair is, how nice his clothes are or whether his book is on the New York Times Best Seller List)

Titus 1:9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in **sound doctrine** and also to rebuke those who contradict it. 10 For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.

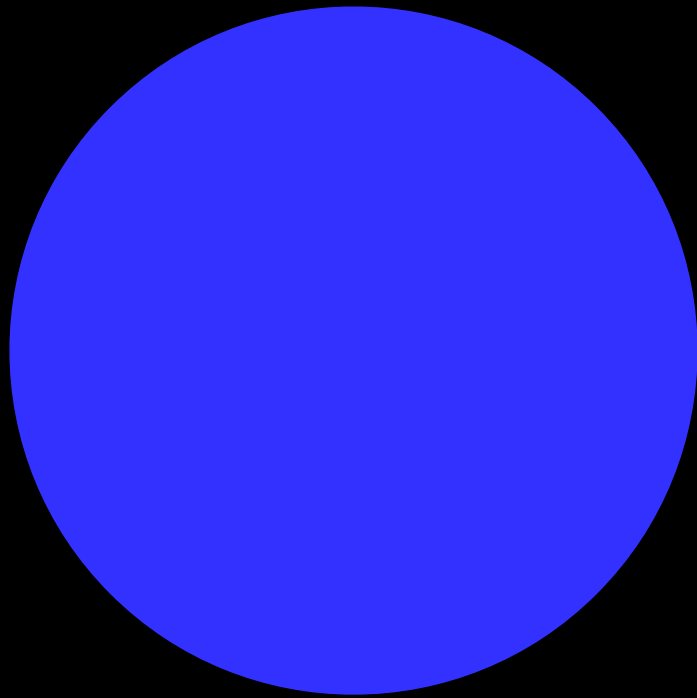
Titus 2:1 But as for you, teach what accords with **sound doctrine**.

2 Tim 4:3 For the time is coming when people will not endure **sound teaching**, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 **and will turn away from listening to the truth** and wander off into myths.

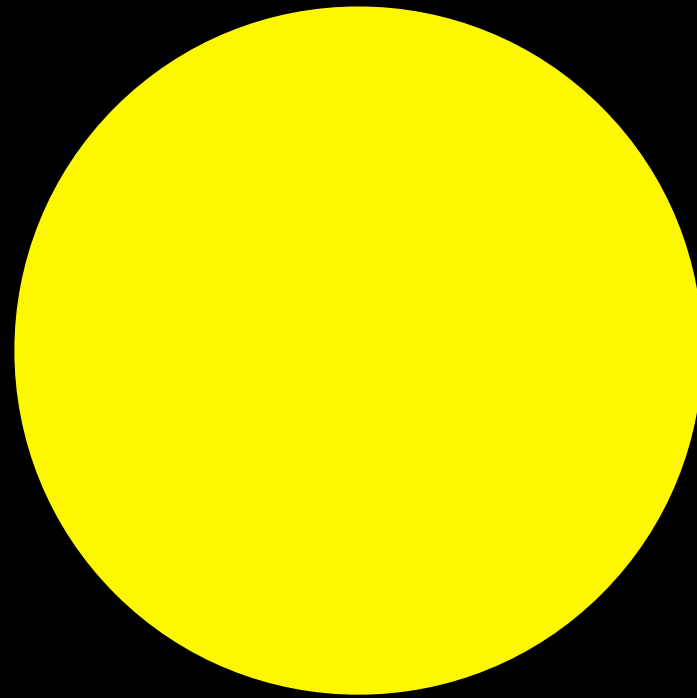


Acts 18:24 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and explained **to him the way of God more accurately.**

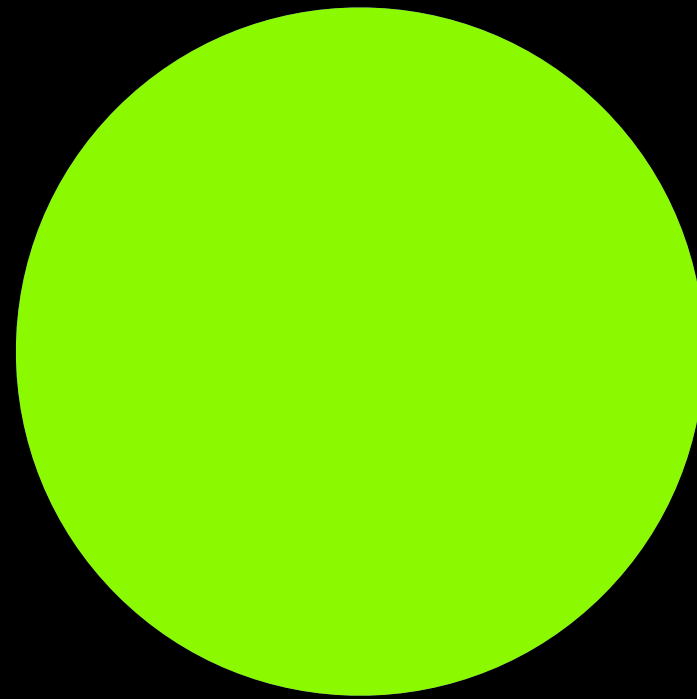




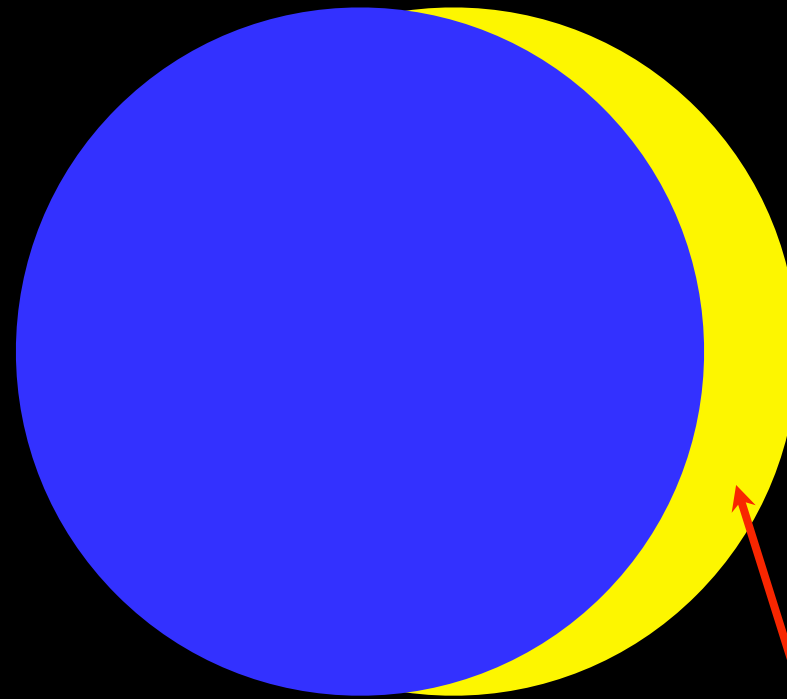
Sound Doctrine



Interpretation



**Sound Doctrine
Interpretation**



Sound Doctrine

Interpretation

This is VERY bad
and
VERY dangerous!

Over the next 3 weeks

You will learn the basics of the Historical-Grammatical Method of Interpretation.

We will begin to using it to interpret God's Word as well as spot error.