

# Herman Who?

(2 Timothy 2:15)

- Introduction:
1. I was introduced to the word, "Hermeneutics" in 1980.
    - a. Cool word...could impress people with it.
    - b. "Branch of theology that deals with principles of exegesis.
  2. Simply put, hermeneutics is the science of interpretation.
  3. Ills. of "The Tempting of America" by Robert Bork.
    - a. Can't understand the Constitution – original intent is unknown.
    - b. Constitution must change as society changes.
    - c. Shouldn't be governed by the dead.
    - d. Constitution shouldn't be read as law.
    - e. Constitution is what the judge says it is.
  4. These point mirror "Biblical Hermeneutics."
  5. In this lesson, I want to propose a few hermeneutical principles that will help us understand any text, especially the Bible.

## I. The Silence of the Scriptures

- A. Ills. of Citizen's Drug store and the Tonka Truck.
- B. How one understands the silence of the Scriptures is the single most important ingredient to achieving unity among God's people.
- C. Silence as it relates to the use of Instrumental music in Christian worship.
  1. Permissive?
  2. Restrictive?
- D. Let's allow the Bible to answer.
  1. (Numbers 8:1-26; Hebrews 7:14) Sons of Levi were to be priests.
  2. (Exodus 20:3; Jeremiah 7:3, 31) I did not command.
- E. Far reaching implications if this principle is not understood.
  1. Infant baptism, Pope, Sprinkling, Prayers to saints, animal sacrifices...?
  2. "If you were honestly, from your hearts, engaging in this act of worship to express genuine thanksgiving to your God, and you both believed this to be acceptable to Him, and it was done in such a way that none of your brethren were caused to stumble and none who were lost were hindered from being drawn to the Lord, and if you did not seek to bind this practice upon others, then I would find no reason to condemn your worshipful expression."

## II. Context

- A. We must ask these important questions when considering the meaning of a passage.
  1. Who is speaking?
    - a. (Matthew 12:25) Power of Beelzebub.
    - b. (Matthew 11:19) Drunk and glutton.

- c. (Mark 14:64) Blasphemer.
- 2. Who is addressed?
  - a. (Exodus 20:8) Remember the Sabbath.
  - b. (Matthew 19:16-26) Sell all you have.
  - c. (Genesis 6:14) Build an ark.
- 3. When was it written?
  - a. (1 Corinthians 14:1) Desire spiritual gifts.
  - b. (Matthew 10:5-6) Jews first, then Gentiles.
- 4. Why was it given?
  - a. (1 Corinthians 1:14-17) Lest you say...

### III. Figurative Language

- A. Sometimes I am asked if I understand the Bible literally. My reply is that I understand the Bible "literarily."
- B. In other words, there are parts of the Bible that are to be understood literally, and other parts that are to be understood figuratively.
- C. Does this throw interpretation up in the air?
  - 1. No, of course not.
  - 2. We've been communicating a long time and seem to do well making a distinction.
  - 3. Ills. Wife asks me to get a gallon of milk.
  - 4. "If the literal sense makes good sense, seek no other sense, lest it results in nonsense."

- Conclusion:
- 1. Biblical hermeneutics is a profitable and exciting study.
  - 2. As you apply these principles to the biblical text, you will go a long way in discovering its original meaning and intent.