

# The Basics of Biblical Interpretation

## Lesson One: How to Approach the Bible

### The Need for Interpretation

- Nehemiah 8:1–8
- Luke 24:13–35

We read different things in different ways. Consider how you read:

- a letter from a friend
- a newspaper article
- a novel
- a mass mailing
- a technical manual
- a history book

What are your presuppositions? What are your expectations?

Attributes:

The Christian church confesses the following things about the Bible:

1. **Inspired** – though penned by human beings, God himself is the source of the words. Every word of the Bible is exactly what God wanted written. Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21 (c.f. Acts 27:15); Acts 1:16
2. **Infallible/Inerrant** – because the God is the source of the Bible, it is by very nature infallible and inerrant. Titus 1:2; John 17:17; Psalm 33:4
3. **Efficacious** – the Holy Spirit works through the Bible to effect salvation. The Word of God does that which it speaks. Romans 10:17; John 6:63, 20:30- 31; 1 Thessalonians 2:13
4. **Sufficient** – the Bible contains the full revelation of God that we need for salvation. 2 Timothy 3:15

5. **Perspicuous** – that is, clear. The truth about God is clearly revealed and can be known. Psalm 119:105; 2 Peter 1:19a; 2 Timothy 3:15-17
6. **Unified** – though there are 66 books, in two testaments. Because God is the single ultimate author, there is one unified message given throughout. Luke 24:27

How do these attributes affect how we read and approach the Bible?