

17. However, each person must make the personal decision to believe that Jesus is the Christ before he may delve into the treasures of wisdom and knowledge preserved within its pages.
18. In the Church Age the believer may be motivated to submit to the content of Scripture because he becomes convinced of its veracity. However his spiritual growth is dependent upon three principles, the two we have just noted and the third we will observe next.
19. These three principles have to do with the transfer of the Word of God from the pages of Scripture to the streams of consciousness of believers. The third is:

- (1) **Interpretation:** This is the duty of a man who has the gift of pastor-teacher. He is to utilize the science of interpretation known as hermeneutics. A summary of this method of biblical analysis is provided by Bernard L. Ramm:

The Protestant ministry is based upon the Word of God as expressed in the inspired canonical literature and as perpetuated in preaching.

One of the most important considerations of the Christian ministry must be the right use of the Word of God.

That theological discipline, which takes as its goal the proper interpretation of Scripture, is hermeneutics. A solid hermeneutics is the root of all good exegesis and exegesis is the foundation of all truly Biblical preaching. Therefore a sound hermeneutics is an absolute *desiderātum*¹ for the minister of the Word of God.²

1. Because the Protestant pastor views the Bible as the inspired Word of God, he must approach his interpretation of the Scripture with a theological frame of reference.
2. When translating a given passage, he must apply the principles of orthodox hermeneutics in his evaluation.
3. We will not discuss the entire subject of biblical interpretation, but I do want to emphasize two concepts that help to define our approach at Grace Doctrine Church: (1) consultation of the original languages and (2) the process of literal interpretation.
4. Dr. Ramm is one of the most respected theologians on the subject of hermeneutics. Following are two more excerpts from his books:

¹ “Desideratum (dē-sid-e-rā'-tum), that which is desired; that which is needed and wanted” (*Webster’s New Twentieth Century Dictionary: Unabridged*, 2d ed., vol. 1 [Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1962], s.v. “desideratum.”)

² Bernard L. Ramm and Others, *Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), 5–6.



The great doctrines of our Christian faith can be established in any responsible or competent manner only by the interpretation from the original languages. The interpreter who interprets Scripture only in his modern language is always working with a linguistic veil between himself and original texts. And he never knows how thin or how thick this veil is.³

5. The best presentation of the original languages for us in the twenty-first century is the amalgamation into a Hebrew and Greek Bible of the most reliable manuscripts extant from the ancient world. The identification of these manuscripts is accomplished under the science of *textual criticism*. On this subject, Dr. Ramm provides more helpful information:

The conservative Protestant interpreter comes to his text believing in its divine inspiration. The interpreter presumes that the Protestant canon has been demonstrated to be the true content of Sacred Scripture. (p. 7)

After the Sacred Canon has been settled, the next task is to determine its truest text. There is no single manuscript of the Old or New Testament which is *the official manuscript*. There are *manuscripts*. A study of these manuscripts reveals many differences. The first task is to collect all the manuscripts and other materials which will help to determine the true text.

Textual criticism is complicated and difficult. Enormous labors have been spent on collecting, collating, and interpreting the readings. This material is presented in critical editions of the Hebrew and Greek Testaments. (p. 8)

After the most careful scrutiny by scholars of the Old and New Testament texts, it is now evident that the Old and New Testaments are the best preserved texts from antiquity. The number of really important variations of the New Testament that cannot be settled with our present information is very small, and the new manuscripts available from the various caves around the Dead Sea show the remarkable purity of our present Old Testament text.⁴ (pp. 8–9)

6. One of the controversies that has arisen in England and America has to do with the veracity of English translations. The ability to print Bibles was made possible around 1450 by Johannes Gutenberg's invention of a printing press with movable type. This was followed quickly by the Protestant Reformation and the English translation of the Bible by William Tyndale, both occurring in the early 1500s.

³ Bernard L. Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics*, 3d ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), 117.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 8–9.



Other translations came quickly thereafter: the Geneva Bible, which became the favorite version of English-speaking Protestants, but church leaders in England found it to be unacceptable. They soon provided an alternative that was called the Bishops' Bible.

Both the Geneva and Bishops' Bibles were to be displaced by the "Authorized Version" in 1611. Also known as the King James Version, it became the Bible of English-speaking Protestants for 300 years. Its inception occurred at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 between Anglican bishops and the Puritans. At that conference, John Reynolds, president of Corpus Christi College, suggested a new translation of the Bible.

King James I agreed to this and commissioned forty-seven language scholars to perform what was formally a revision of the Bishops' Bible. A brief history of the origin of the King James Bible follows:

Elizabeth, Queen of England, had a beautiful cousin, Mary Stuart, who had returned from France in 1561 to take her rightful place as Queen of the Scots. Scotland was in a state of turbulence: the new faith preached by John Knox swept across the locks; and Catholic Mary was held in contempt. Then Mary unwisely married the Scottish Lord Darnley. This created further antagonism to the Scots because he was Catholic.

The Scots had become Calvinistic in their beliefs and resented Mary's Romanism and the influence of her French court. The people were determined that never again should the Roman Church be allowed to gain and hold political power in their nation. Mary was forced to abdicate in favor of her infant son, who then became James VI of Scotland. (p. 47)

James was reared a Protestant. He was taught Calvinistic theology, Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Quite a student, he could discourse on theological subjects in both English and Latin. When Elizabeth died, she left no heirs, thus ending the House of Tudor. James VI was brought down from Scotland and crowned James I of England, beginning the reign of the House of Stuart.

The year was 1603. The Puritans were in revolt against the established church. One thousand Puritan preachers had gathered to write a petition. They beseeched his Majesty and Parliament for a change in the established church service and removal of ... the sign of the cross. This petition became known in history as the Millenary Petition because of the thousand signatures affixed to it. It resulted in the Hampton Court Conference on January 14, 1603, over which King James presided. It was during one of the endless debates that the leader of the Puritans, John Reynolds, said, "May your Majesty be pleased, that the Bible be new translated, such as are extant not answering to the original." (p. 48)



On July 22, 1604, the King announced that he had appointed fifty-four men to make the new translation. How did he select the scholars? His only requirement was that they must be good linguists. Half of them were Hebrew experts and the other half experts in Greek. The list included Anglicans and Puritans, believers and unbelievers. Of those selected, seven men died before the work was begun. Actually, only forty-seven men worked on what we call today “The Authorized” or “King James Version of the Bible.”⁵ (p. 49)

7. The development of English translations has continued until this day and made necessary by the discovery of older manuscripts. Within fifteen years of the publication of the King James Version, Codex Alexandrīnus was discovered in Turkey. It dates to the fifth century and contains most of the New Testament. Since then over 5,000 manuscripts of the Bible have been discovered that are more ancient and more accurate than those that had been used as the basis for the Authorized Version. Major among these were Codex Sinaiticus in 1844, a complete New Testament manuscript dating back to the fourth century, and greater accessibility to the fourth-century manuscript, Codex Vaticanus.
8. B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort established the principles for the science of textual criticism. In 1881 their two-volume work, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, was published and relied heavily on the codices, Alexandrīnus and Vaticanus.
9. In addition to the work of these men we must also mention philologists Adolf Deissmann and Hermann von Soden:

“Von Soden introduces a new theory of textual history. He thinks that in the 4th century there were in existence three recensions of the text, which he distinguishes as *K*, *H*, and *I*, with the following characteristics and attestations. *K* represents Westcott and Hort’s Syrian Antióchian text; it was probably made by Lucian in the 4th century. *H* represents Westcott and Hort’s Neutral and Alexandrian texts between which von Soden does not distinguish. The origin of the *H* text must be regarded as unquestionably Egyptian, in view of the fact that it was used by all the Egyptian Church writers after the end of the 3rd century. *I* does not quite correspond to anything in Westcott and Hort’s system, but has points of contact with their “Western” text. After establishing the text of *I*, *H*, and *K*, von Soden reconstructs an hypothetical text, *I-H-K*, which he believes to have been their ancestor. He then tries to show that this text was known to all the writers of the 3rd and 2nd centuries.⁶

⁵ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Canonicity* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1973), 49–49.

⁶ Kirsopp Lake, “Soden, Hermann von,” in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (New York: The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1926), 25:340.



10. Their research resulted in important advances toward our complete understanding of the Koine Greek. It was Deissmann who discovered in the late 1800s that the Bible was not written in Classical Greek but Koine, the common language of the Roman Empire.
11. The end result of these scholars' research imposes great responsibility upon both pastors and believers in the twenty-first-century church. Pastors today have available to them the closest possible replication of the original manuscripts and a complete analysis of literally every word in the Old Testament's Hebrew and the New Testament's Koine Greek languages.
12. **Illumination** is the ministry of the Holy Spirit under the Grace Apparatus for Perception. This spiritual system of didactics for the Church Age is the subject of:

1 Corinthians 2:9 As it stands written, "Things which the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard [**knowledge gained through empiricism**], also those things which have not entered into the mind of man [**knowledge gained through rationalism**], are those things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

v. 10 But to us God has revealed them through the Holy Spirit. For the human spirit [**imputed at salvation to process divine thought**] investigates all things, even the deep things of God.

v. 11 For what man understands the things of man except man's spirit within him [**human systems of perception that attain academic understanding of the mundane**]? Even so the things of God [**supernatural information unknown to man and imperceptible by the human mind**] no one has known except the Holy Spirit.

v. 12 But we have not received the world's spirit [**human IQ**] but the human spirit from the source of God in order that we might have a permanent knowledge [**οἶδα (oída): to discern spiritual phenomena**] of things that have been graciously given to us under the authority of God.



1 Corinthians 2:9 Which things we teach, not by teaching from the source of man's wisdom but by teaching [διδακτός (*didaktós*): the Divine Academy of Grace Didactics] from the source of the Holy Spirit, bringing together spiritual truth [πνευματικός (*pneumatikós*): masculine; biblical truth] to a spiritual system [πνευματικός (*pneumatikós*): neuter, GAP].

v. 14 The soulish man [ψυχικός (*psuchikós*): the dichotomous unbeliever with a soul but no human spirit] does not accept things from the Holy Spirit for to him they are foolishness, furthermore, he is not able to even acquire academic understanding [γνῶσις (*gnōsis*): academic understanding of biblical truth] because they are spiritually discerned [ἀνακρίνω (*anakrínō*): the Holy Spirit sheds light for the believer to examine, scrutinize, and decide, i.e., **illumination**].

13. From this passage we developed the visual, the Grace Apparatus for Perception or Operation Z:

The Bible, **Λόγος** (*Lógos*) provides divine thought thorough **inspiration**. The pastor, through conservative hermeneutics, **interprets** what the Holy Spirit has directed the human authors to write. He then communicates this to his assigned flock.

14. The Holy Spirit takes the information and teaches, **διδασκός** (*didaktós*), the truths of the *Lógos* to the believer's human spirit which investigates the information by consulting his frame of reference, vocabulary, and doctrinal storage. The information taught and then processed is called spiritual phenomena, **πνευματικός** (*pneumatikós*).
15. Once spiritual phenomena have been discerned in the human spirit, **οἶδα** (*oída*), it is transferred to the soul's mentality for evaluation. The staging area for learning divine truth is the **νοῦς** (*noús*), which is translated in the English by the words "mind" and "understanding."
16. This is academic understanding, **γνῶσις** (*gnōsis*), of spiritual phenomena. The soul has been **illuminated** to a certain principle of divine thought. The information is coordinated with the association cortex of the brain where short-term memory enables the believer to examine, evaluate, and scrutinize the information.
17. He has clear and lucid academic understanding of the truth and its veracity can be spiritually discerned, **ἀνακρίνω** (*anakrínō*), enabling him to make a decision to believe or reject what has been taught.



18. When any spirit-filled believer places his faith in the content of the message communicated under this system, the doctrine is supernaturally transferred by the Holy Spirit into the division of soul's mentality called the **καρδία (kardía)**.
19. It is here that academic understanding is retained in the seven compartments of the stream of consciousness as **ἐπίγνωσις (epígnōsis)**, cognizance of divine thought. The Holy Spirit retains the information in the memory center of the stream of consciousness.
20. In addition the Holy Spirit also creates a memory trace, or a wheel-track of righteousness, in the cerebral cortex of the brain where the believer retains the information in long-term memory for recall and application at a future time.
21. **Illumination** results in enlightenment regarding God's Word and contributes to the believer's spiritual growth which enhances the life and energy of the believer's spiritual walk.

Animation: True life is found in the Word of God. The written Word is the exact replication of the spoken Word which is said to have been "God-breathed."

1. This divine breath carries with it both life and power to the one who inhales its eternal nourishment. We are told of the Word's nourishment in:

Hebrews 4:12 The Word of God is constantly living and powerful, sharper than any double-edged *máchaira*, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit and the joints and the marrow and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart.

2. The Word of God, when studied, penetrates all aspects of the human psyche and physiology. God knows the thoughts and motivations that are found in the soul and human spirit; He knows the influences and temptations that emerge from the body's genetically formed sinful nature.
3. Those who are wise enough to be critiqued and corrected by the Word of God find life and power transferred to them, not only in time but for all eternity.
4. The Gospel when believed provides eternal life and the power of the indwelling and filling ministries of the Holy Spirit.



5. As the believer grows in grace he acquires the increasing quality of life and available power associated with knowing divine thought. He can address the throne of grace in prayer; he can solve his own problems; he can make good decisions from a position of strength; and he can evaluate his environment, circumstances, and challenges by means of divine viewpoint.
6. Lives are changed by the life and power of God's Word. Knowledge replaces ignorance; confidence replaces arrogance; courage replaces fear; and love replaces hypocrisy.
7. At salvation the Word of God breathes eternal life into soul and spirit. As the believer grows in grace the Word of God breathes power into the soul's stream of consciousness.
8. For the advancing believer, the Word of God provides an inexhaustible supply of life and energy that sustains life here on this earth.
9. When the Word is inculcated to the point the believer reaches spiritual maturity, his quality of life is enhanced by escrow blessings in time and eternity.
10. The nourishment that supplies the spiritual nutrients for the growth process is the God-breathed Scripture which is alive and powerful. That which is alive and powerful in the Scripture is now alive and powerful in the believer.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 - We also constantly thank God that when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you received it not as a word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually works, or energizes, also in you that believe.

11. The Word of God is a living, vital agency with supernatural energizing power. It is effectual under the ministries of the Holy Spirit in accomplishing supernatural results in the life of the believer who is positive to its message.

1 Peter 1:23 You have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and eternally abiding word of God.

v. 24 For, "all flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls off,

v. 25 but the Word of the Lord abides forever." And this is the word that has been preached to you.



John 6:63 “It is the Holy Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”

Ephesians 4:11 He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastor-teachers,

v. 12 for the purpose of training and equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the edification of the body of Christ;

v. 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the [ἐπίγνωσις (*epígnōsis*)] knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature believer according to the standard of maturity that belongs to the fullness of Christ [πλήρωμα τοῦ Χριστός (*plērōma tou Christós*): **spiritual maturity**].

v. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be immature believers, driven out of control by every wave, and being blown here and there by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting;

v. 15 but by teaching truth in association with love, you might cause them to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the absolute authority, even Christ.

12. Spiritual growth results in the acquisition of glory in the soul of the mature believer. The attainment of that objective is the subject of our next few principles.
13. The inerrancy and immutability of Scripture expresses the veracity of God regarding His communication to us. Here are ten summary principles that define:

The Veracity of God:

1. God is absolute truth, the expression of His integrity (Deuteronomy 32:4b).
2. In eternity past before any creature existed, each member of the Trinity was true to Himself and therefore had perfect integrity. Each member always possessed perfect integrity base on truth. Man says, “I am telling the truth”; God says, “I *am* ... the truth” (John 14:6).
3. God does not hold truth as being something He acquired; He *is* the truth from eternity past.



4. There is a vast amount of truth that will not be revealed until we get to heaven, but whatever God has revealed for us in time is designed to be learned and understood.
5. We cannot deceive God; we must adjust to His justice through truth: the truth of the Gospel, the truth of rebound, and the truth of Bible doctrine.
6. In veracity, God honors Bible doctrine resident in the soul of the believer.
7. God *is* veracity as an attribute and He therefore must honor truth resident in our souls. God honors His Word wherever it is found.
8. Maximum doctrine in the soul constitutes harmonious rapport with the integrity of God. From this it should be obvious why we cannot grow by our works or good deeds, not even by such normally legitimate works as witnessing, giving, prayer, etc.
9. Since God honors His Word, His Word in the souls of believers is the only thing that will deliver the nation from reversionism and the cycles of discipline.
10. God honors doctrine in our souls and provides divine logistics to support us on earth during our period of spiritual growth.⁷

Principles on Justification

1. Justification means an act of vindication. This is a judicial act of vindication, because we are born under condemnation, being spiritually dead.
2. Justification is an official judicial act which occurs every time anyone believes in Christ. The justice of God acts on our behalf pronouncing us justified.
3. This means, we have a relationship with God forever, having been imputed the perfect righteousness of God.
4. Justification first occurs at salvation:

Romans 3:28 For we maintain that a man is justified [δικαιόω (*dikaióō*)] by faith apart from works of the Law.

(End JAS2-37. See JAS2-38 for continuation of study at p. 371.)

⁷ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *The Integrity of God*, 4th ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2005), 291, 292, 293.



