



# HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE: THE BIG PICTURE



# 03

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***Hermeneutics:** study of how we understand, interpret and apply the plain meaning of scripture.*



# 03

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With the ‘big story’ in mind, when we read the Bible, we consider:

- the type of literature we are reading
- the context it was written in at the time so we can understand
- what it meant at that time
- to consider how we apply it to our lives now.



# 03

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### **The history of hermeneutics:**

- Jesus quoted from the Old Testament as historical fact
- Jesus rejected interpretation governed by tradition
- Jesus did not ‘allegorise’
- The apostles quoted the Old Testament
- The Reformation (Luther, Clavin etc) emphasised that the church should teach from scripture alone and that each part is understood by using the Bible as a whole



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### Principles:

- Be aware of your own personal presuppositions.
- Acceptance of the divine inspiration of scripture.
- The Bible is not written in deliberately ambiguous language
- Use the studies of others.



# 03

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### Ask Questions:

- Relating to **context**:
- Relating to **content**:
- Relating to **interpretation and application**:



# 03

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*"Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart..."*  
**Colossians 3:15a**

- What does it mean?
- Read Colossians 3:5-15.
- What is the main theme of those verses?
- Re-read verses 13 and 14.
- So what does all of verse 15 mean and how do you apply it?