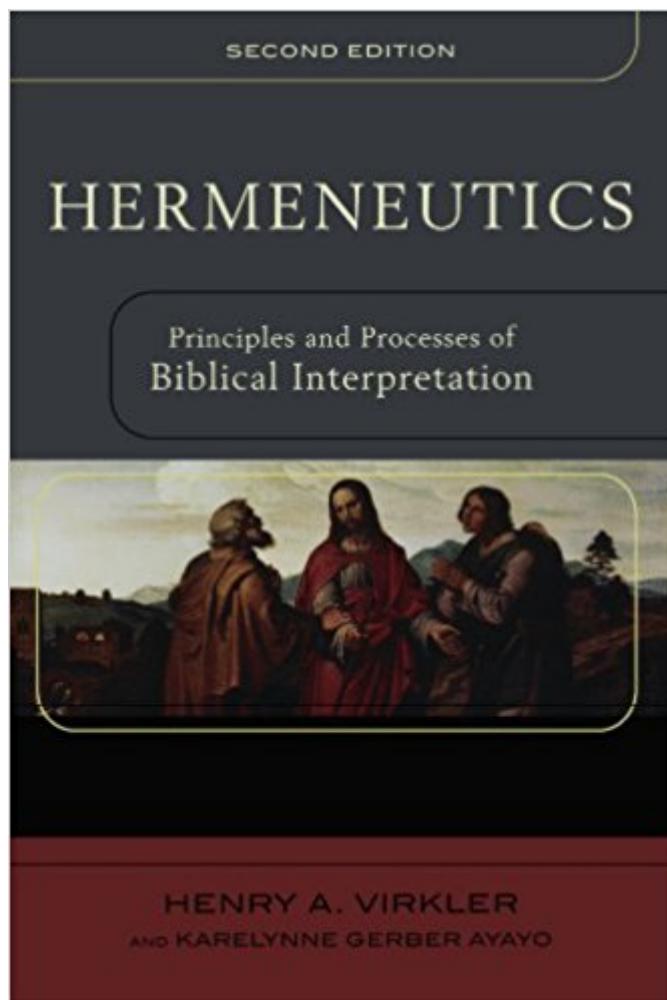


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# Hermeneutics: Principles And Processes Of Biblical Interpretation



## **Synopsis**

If non-specialists learn the correct principles and processes for hermeneutics, much more accurate and helpful biblical interpretation can be accomplished. Hermeneutics gives the reader not only an understanding of the principles of proper biblical interpretation but also the ability to apply those principles in sermon preparation, personal Bible study, or writing. This popular book outlines a five-step hermeneutical procedure that includes: (1) historical-cultural and contextual analysis, (2) lexical-syntactical analysis, (3) theological analysis, (4) genre identification and analysis, and (5) application. The second edition includes updated material covering developments in hermeneutics over the past twenty years. An Instructor's Resource C.D. containing teaching suggestions, Powerpoint slides, suggested answers to exercises, and supplementary handouts is available to Bible college and seminary professors.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I teach Hermeneutics at Huntington College and have switched to Virkler's text for my class for a couple of reasons: 1) The text is clear, easy to understand and logical, 2) The methodology is simple, concise and easy to remember, 3) The chapter on application is especially helpful for students, and 4) Each chapter has Brain Teasers (BT) that challenge students to apply what they have learned. This is great text for laypersons and undergraduate students because of its readability and brevity. I would not recommend it for graduate study (or you could just supplement it) because it lacks details on the history of Biblical interpretation and because it does not detail modern

hermeneutical movements.

Virkler does a wonderful job of laying out hermeneutical principles in an orderly and logical way. He gives an overview in the beginning of each chapter and then he gives a summary at the end. This feature helps to summarize the material into understandable groupings. There are exercises at the end of most of the chapters allowing you to use the skills you attained by reading the previous chapter. Virkler gives an objective overview of this topic by presenting various views and then referring you to books from both sides that will further your study of the more specific topics. (i.e. dispensational & covenantal theories.) If you are looking for a balanced and objective introduction to hermeneutics, this IS the book for you!

Virkler has developed an excellent system of hermeneutics, and has put it together in a way that is easy to understand. I can't tell you how helpful it is to have him state what he'll cover at the beginning of the chapter, cover it, and then review at the end (similar to the way Mounce does in Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar). It makes it all so easy to grasp! This being said, I gave this book 3 stars instead of 5 because in the examples he provides, he doesn't put his own methods into practice at all! In nearly all of his examples from the Bible it is obvious that he had his exegetical outcome settled by his theology before he even looks to see what the text actually says. When this happens, your theology shapes the Bible instead of the Bible shaping your theology! It is amazing that someone that understands the principles of hermeneutics so well could exegete so poorly. But read the book and take his principles to heart, it is worth it. Just don't pay much attention to his examples.

Interestingly, this introduction to hermeneutics was written by someone who does not consider himself a theologian nor an exegete. Dr. Virkler is a professor of psychology who sensed the need for an introductory text on hermeneutics that translated theory into practical exegesis. His goal in this work was to not only provide a reader with the principles of interpretation needed to exegete Scripture, but to also be able to apply them in sermon preparation or personal Bible study. With this goal in mind, Dr. Virkler included exegetical exercises at the end of almost every chapter dealing with specific passages and involving real life situations. His presupposition throughout this work is that the meaning of a text is the author's intended meaning. This is a great all-around hermeneutics text since it follows a logical structure, is fairly comprehensive and allows the reader to practice what he has learned with the "brain teasers" included. All in all, this is a great text.

Verkler's goal in this work was essential to provide christian laety with a volume on Biblical interpretation that was useful for not only understanding but implemeting the text of scripture. I feel that he has met his goal. Verkler addresses the issues that are typically involved in hermeneutics; history of Biblical interpretation, lexical/syntactical elements, theological models, etc. But he makes it clear that application of scripture is ultimately the purpose of hermeneutics and ultimately his goal in this work. This is a very easy to understand, basic treatment of hermeneutics that will aid in further study. I would recommend this work to anyone who does not wish to, in the words of Matt Damon in 'Good Will Hunting', "...drop a hundred fifty grand on an education you could've gotten in buck fifty in late fees at the local library".

The content is good , and well written. There are exercises at the end of each chapter. The author does not provide any aided answers to the exercises. What he says is that you have to be a teacher or pastor so you can order a free instructor's resource CD, which provides the answers. How am I suppose to learn from this book without the answers to assist me? He could have provided answers for half of the exercises. Because of the later, this book is good for a teacher, not for a self learning student of the Bible. He recommends another book for more detail on the subject. Continuity and Discontinuity (Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.): Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments

I took this course via correspondence with Dr. Virkler as the instructor. This is a superb book with very sound Bible study techniques. It teaches the importance of literal translation- meaning: finding the author's intended meaning. The process he teaches is flexible and applies to all types of reading, although it is tailored to the study of God's Word. The book teaches us to let go of our predisposed ideas if they conflict with what is found in Scripture. He teaches all the tools to finding the information needed to get to the true meaning of Scripture. If we all followed these principles, the divisions between Christians would be all-but-nonexistent.

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