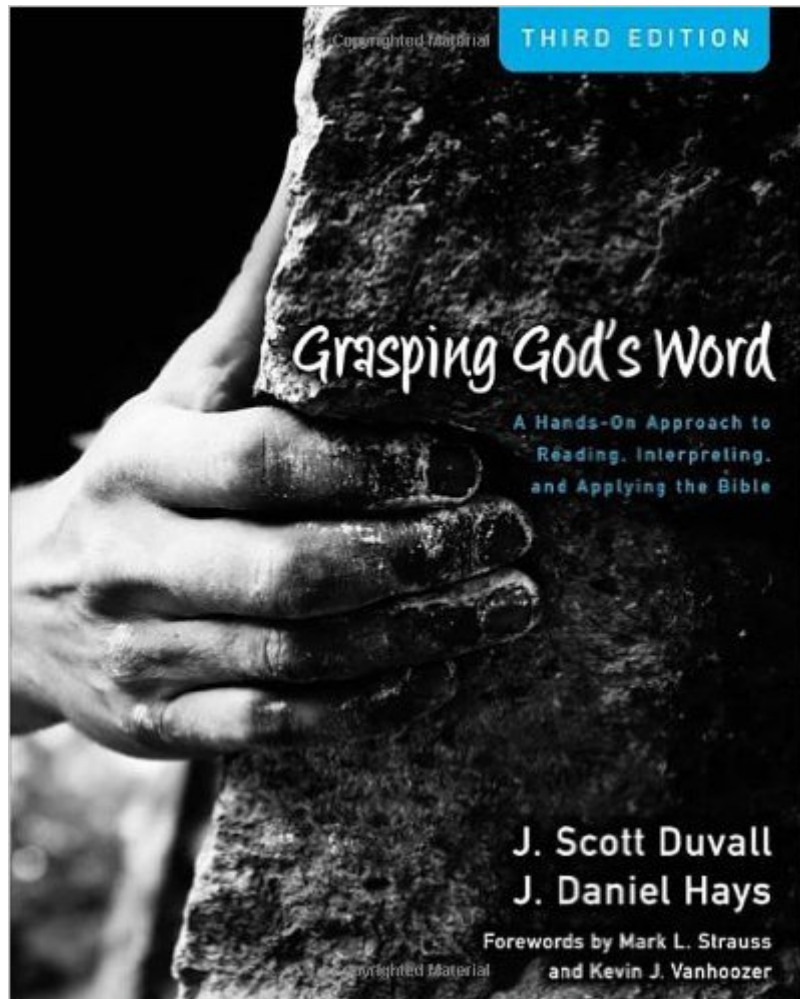


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# Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach To Reading, Interpreting, And Applying The Bible



## Synopsis

Grasping God's Word has proven itself in classrooms across the country as an invaluable help to students who want to learn how to read, interpret, and apply the Bible for themselves. The third edition, revised based on feedback from professors, will continue to serve college-level students and lay learners well in their quest to gain a firm grasp on the rock of God's word. Old Testament scholar J. Daniel Hays and New Testament expert J. Scott Duvall provide practical, hands-on exercises to guide students through the interpretive process. To emphasize the Bible's redemptive arc and encourage correlation across the canon, the authors have included a call to "cross into the rest of Scripture" as an additional step in the Interpretive Journey. This edition has also been rearranged for clarity and includes updated illustrations, appendices, bibliography, and assignments. A website for professors offers extensive teaching materials, and an accompanying revised workbook (Grasping God's Word Workbook, sold separately) gives students additional practice in reading and interpreting the Bible.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grasping God's word is really an excellent intermediate-level book on studying and interpreting the Bible (hermeneutics). It goes into far more depth than more basic introductions to the topic, yet is far more accessible and easier to grasp than more advanced texts like The Hermeneutical Spiral. The approach taught by Duvall and Hays is very practical and easy to remember. To maximize learning you'll want to do as many of the exercises in the book as you have time for. Grasping God's Word is a fine choice both for Sunday School teachers and for a first course in hermeneutics at seminary.

Christians generally know they're supposed to read the Bible and that they're supposed to do something about it, but the Bible doesn't always make sense. The Bible was written to an audience that is removed from us by time and culture, so it's easy to miss what the original author intended to communicate to the original biblical audience. Misinterpretation of the Scripture is unfortunately all too prevalent. In *GRASPING GOD'S WORD*, J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays walk us through a clear and helpful process for responsibly reading, interpreting, and applying the Bible. They call it the Interpretive Journey, and it's an imaginative and motivating description for what encountering God through the Scriptures is meant to look like. The authors outline five steps in the Interpretive Journey: 1. Grasp the text in their town. What did the text mean to the original audience? 2. Measure the width of the river to cross. What are the differences between the biblical audience and us? 3. Cross the principle bridge. What is the theological principle in this text? 4. Consult the biblical map. How does our theological principle fit with the rest of the Bible? 5. Grasp the text in our town. How should individual Christians today live out the theological principle? The authors spend twenty-two chapters elaborating on the steps of this journey, pointing out important concepts such as context, word studies, who is in control of meaning, and the role of the Holy Spirit in interpretation. The last two sections give us some important insights on specific genres represented in the Old and New Testaments. The point of *GRASPING GOD'S WORD* is knowing God more and experiencing the transformative power of God's Word, and this book does a great job of it. There are a lot of really great books out on how to study the Bible. This one is by far my favorite, and I recommend it for anyone who is serious about digging deep into the biblical text. I received this book for free for review from Zondervan, and the opinions contained in this review are completely my own.

This is a highly readable, entry-level textbook on biblical hermeneutics. The authors assume no prior knowledge of biblical hermeneutics on the part of the reader. As such, the material is conveyed in simple, straightforward terms, along with a healthy dose of wit. The book also strikes a good balance between theory and application. Topics discussed include levels of meaning, different literary genres in the Bible, and the role of the Holy Spirit. Every chapter also ends with applicative exercises serving to reinforce learning. Duvall and Hays do a thorough job of walking the reader through the exercises by providing a wealth of examples of their own. I found especially helpful the methodical, step-by-step interpretive process that the book uses. I'd daresay its as scientific an approach as biblical hermeneutics can get. We are constantly reminded to understand the historical and literary contexts of the original biblical audience, to understand the meaning of the text and how

it should be applied to us today. A book that I'd recommend every Christian read in order to interpret the Bible correctly.

This book was for a class of mine and I have to say that although it was a difficult class this book does help bring what the bible says from ancient times to modern times in a smart and thought out way. I like that it shows you how to take a verse that may not be relevant to modern times and then shows the scholar how to interpret the verse CORRECTLY so it applies to today's society and yet still holds on to the meaning of the verse. It also points out how to read the bible without interpreting it in a way that allows people to misuse the bible. By that I mean that there are some so called "Christian" groups that use verses in the bible to justify picketing soldiers' funerals or to abuse their wives. This lesson shows us all how to see and read the bible CORRECTLY so that we can understand the verses without using them for our own agenda. I also bought the "cheat sheet" and I will carry that with me throughout the rest of my studies for a B.A. in Christian Ministries. Very handy. And buy the workbook! The worksheets are in there that you will most likely have as assignments. I bought the workbook and ended up making copies for other class members who did not buy the workbook. It's not that easy to copy the assignment worksheets from the back of the chapters in the text book. The workbook is better.

This is an excellent book for learning how to read and interpret scripture in a correct way. Their 5-step process to understanding the context of verses and how to bring the theological principles to the modern mind is easy to learn and apply. Great for ministers, seminary students, or even the lay person who wants to learn how to make sure they are reading scripture correctly and grasping God's Word for all it's worth! This was one of my text books for a Biblical Hermeneutics class and I loved it.

The book itself is excellent. If you are purchasing the kindle version in order to listen to the text-to-speech option, be warned that it can be hard to follow. In my opinion, the pausing is messed up. It pauses longer at commas than periods, which is the opposite of how it should be. This makes comprehending the text difficult. Also, reading out the long lists of references is tedious and the reading of the Bible abbreviations can be confusing.

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