



Holy Bible

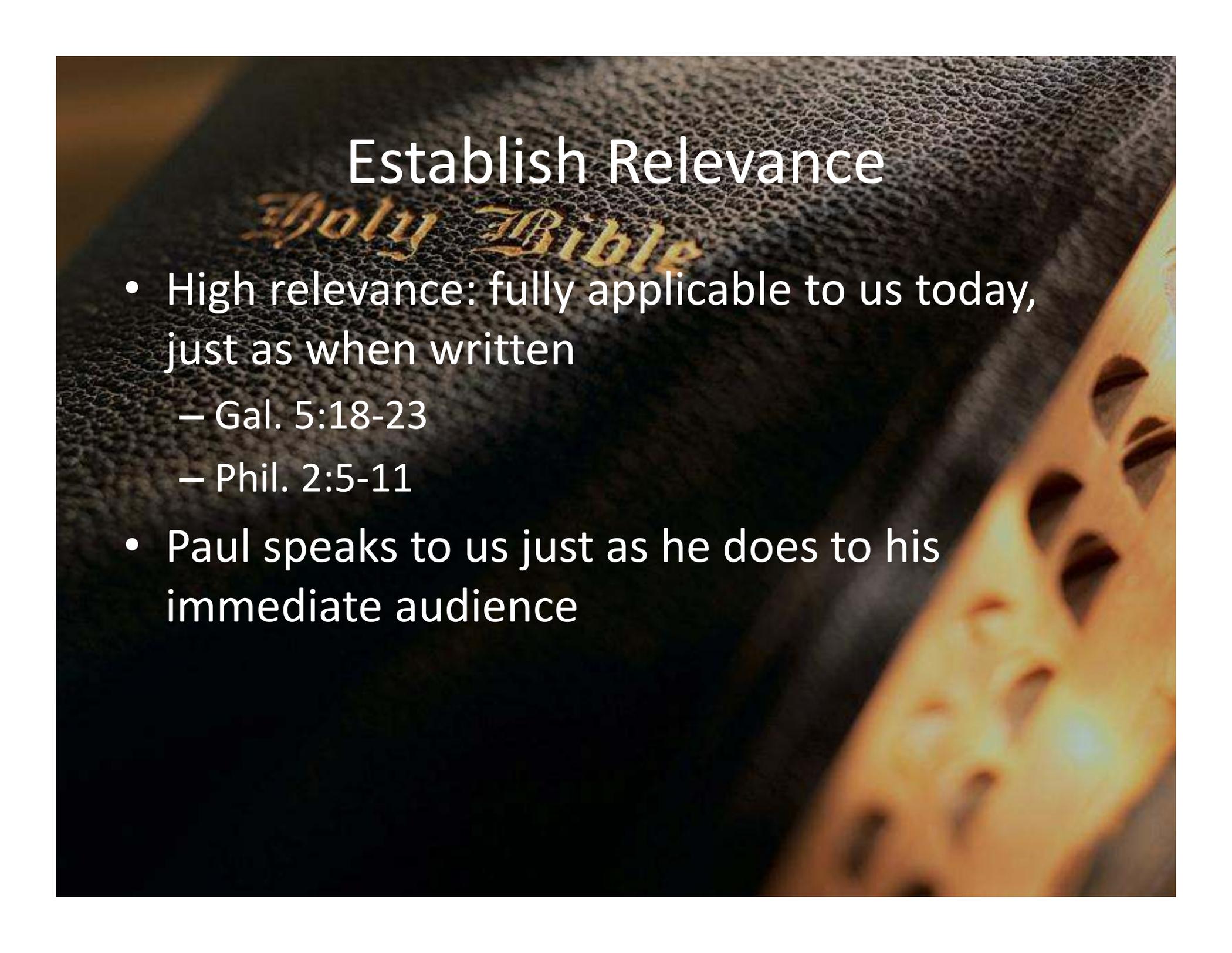
Using the New Testament

Understanding The New Testament Is Critical For Its Use

- 2Tim. 2:15 - “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
- 1Peter 3:15 - “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”
- How can we be certain we are properly applying the New Testament?

Establish Relevance

- Begin at the beginning; do not skip steps
 - Illustration: teaching salvation by beginning with five steps of obedience. Start with where the prospect needs to begin.
- Before we use or apply any passage from the NT, we must first establish relevance of the passage to our current state
 - Not a subjective concept; always consider passage relevant unless there is a compelling reason not to



Establish Relevance

- High relevance: fully applicable to us today, just as when written
 - Gal. 5:18-23
 - Phil. 2:5-11
- Paul speaks to us just as he does to his immediate audience

Establish Relevance

- Moderate relevance: Directed in a particular context, but we can derive lessons from it
 - Rom. 2:17-29 - Context is firmly established: Paul wrote to Jews who justified themselves by their lineage. While not directly relevant, we learn how to avoid taking pride in our personal heritage and background
 - Jesus' promises to His disciples in John 14-17 are only for the apostles, but can help us understand our relationship with God and how His word came to us

Establish Relevance

- Low relevance: A passage firmly rooted in a context without much application for us
 - The conclusions of Paul's letters involve direct messages to specific persons - Rom. 16; Phil. 4:2-3
 - It is not as if we can learn nothing from them, but we understand their full application was for specific times and settings

Establish Authority

- Authority in the New Testament is established by three means:
 - Divinely authorized commands
 - Divinely approved examples
 - Divinely generated implications

Establish Authority

- Divinely authorized commands
 - Rom. 12
 - Eph. 6:1-4
- Commands instruct us in what we must do or must not do
 - 1John 2:3-5 - “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.”

Establish Authority

- Divinely approved examples
 - 1Cor. 11:1 - “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.”
 - Phil. 3:17 - “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.”

Establish Authority

- Examples that are approved by the inspired apostles establish Divinely approved patterns for us in which we can have confidence that we please God when we follow them
 - Acts 20:7 - “Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.”
 - 1Cor. 16:1-2 - “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”

Establish Authority

- Divinely generated implication (commonly and less accurately called “necessary inference”)
 - Authority must come from God, and therefore He must imply something before we can draw an inference or conclusion from it. If God has not implied a matter, any inference we draw is in error. It is more accurate when speaking of Divine authority to describe this third aspect of it by means of where it comes from, that is, something God has implied.

Establish Authority

- Acts 8:34-39 - That Philip must have preached about baptism is implied since he preached Jesus, and the eunuch asked to be baptized
- Matt. 25:31-46 - That helping those in need is critical to salvation is implied when Jesus described the Judgment in terms of how one helped those in need
- Matt. 22:29-32 - “Jesus answered and said to them, You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. 31 But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 32 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

Establish Application

- It is not enough, however, to simply see commands, examples, and Divine implications; we must consider their applications. How do we carry out the instructions?
- The instructions are either general or specific.
 - General applications: a broad outline of responsibility with liberty in practice
 - Specific applications: When God speaks in specifics, we must follow the specifics without modification

Establish Application

- In commands, preaching the Gospel
 - Matt. 28:18-20
 - We are told to go preach, but not given specifics on how to go, or where and with whom to begin
 - The only specifics are that at some point all nations must hear the commands of Christ

Establish Application

- In examples, assembling on the first day of the week for edification and communing
 - Acts 20:7
 - The first day of the week, but when, where, and how long?

Establish Application

- Divine implications often provide authority on a general level, but do not address other details
 - The Lord implied that helping those in need will be part of the Judgment - Matt. 25:31-46
 - Nothing is said about how many, how much, how often; this is left up to individual application

Establish Application

- Specific applications: When God speaks in specifics, we must follow the specifics without modification
 - Heb. 7:14 - “For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.”
 - 2Sam. 7:7 - “Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’”

Establish Application

- In specific authority, if something is not mentioned, it is not allowed
- In a command, we must do precisely what is written
 - Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
 - Specific command to sing, no command to play instruments; therefore, we sing without instruments
 - When God specifically commands a matter and its means, it excludes all other matters and means.

Establish Application

- When an example is specific, we follow the specifics without variation
 - 1Cor. 11:23-26 - unleavened bread and fruit of the vine for the Lord's Supper follows the example of the original institution of the Lord's Supper
 - To require only one cup in the Supper goes beyond the example as given in the NT and creates an application not authorized

Establish Application

- “The specifics of authority” determine what we should do when nothing is written on a matter (commonly and less accurately called the “silence of scripture”)
- If God’s authority is absolute, and God has communicated His will, then anything He has not communicated is not authorized.
 - In general authority, silence grants liberty in application
 - In specific authority, silence prohibits individuality in application

Establish Application

- With liberties, if some have untrained faith in a particular means of fulfilling God's will, we must respect and accommodate them by finding a mutually agreeable way to apply the NT instruction
 - Rom. 14:1 - 15:2

Understanding The New Testament Is Critical For Its Use

- God has never failed to communicate His will to humankind, regardless of the means or dispensation
- God, who is capable of creating the world with a word, is capable of communicating with His creation in such a way as to be completely understood by His creation
- We can understand and practice the NT the way God intended when He inspired its writing

Understanding The New Testament Is Critical For Its Use

- Eph. 3:3-4 - “how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ”
- 1John 5:20 - “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”