

## Principles:

1. Having heard the command to subjugate yourself to God, you are then commanded to resist the devil. Those who know doctrine know to stay inside the bubble and trust in God.
2. Therefore, the second imperative is to “stand fast and resist.” Having done so, the devil will vacate the premises.
3. This process needs to be a habitual behavior. You have obviously been to Bible class. This verse and others like it have been taught to you and you have retained them in your soul.
4. If those in verses 1–6 had the doctrinal inventory to follow the system noted in verse 7, then James could skip this dose of Pepto-Bismol.
5. Yet the verse gives the biblically authorized chain of command for the local church: **(1)** the platoon commander is a major: the Bible in its various translations, **(2)** the lieutenant is the pastor-teacher under the command of the Word of God, and **(3)** the sergeant is the Word of God resident in the individual souls of the platoon.
6. This illustration is designed to emphasize how diverse the system of spiritual growth is. Obviously, the Scripture ranks as a five-star general since it contains the immutable truth of the Trinity.
7. But as the system plays out in time, enumerable pastor-teachers will communicate their understanding of Scripture to their platoons.
8. This obviously includes men whose theological systems of biblical interpretation vary dramatically. Yet the truth contained in Scripture must be regarded as absolute.
9. However, since the Protestant reformation, there have been numerous approaches to what the Bible’s message contains. Unfortunately, this has resulted in an accumulation of various denominations whose doctrinal statements vary.
10. There is no need for us to delve into specifics, but in some cases their doctrinal differences are vast.
11. The primary issue that believers must consider is to discover which pastor’s belief system most accurately presents the message found in the pages of Scripture.



12. 'Tis a dilemma. The believer is obviously saved, but how advanced is he in his inventory of biblical ideas? How would he know one pastor's theology from another's?
13. He would not. Ergo, this issue was addressed by the development of denominations. Each "theology" is expressed by the organization's "doctrinal statement," i.e., "These Things We Believe."
14. One may request a denomination's statement and from it a person can determine, at least to a certain degree, the foundational doctrines to which it subscribes and teaches.
15. The sticky point has to do with the statement's orthodoxy. But orthodox according to whom? Who decides what is orthodox and what is not?
16. This dilemma is resolved by one word: hermeneutics: the system for interpretation of the Bible. Several years ago, I taught somewhere between 70 and 80 Bible classes on this system by which Scripture can be competently analyzed to reveal its intrinsic structure, its meaning, its system, its categories, and ultimately its immutable truth.
17. Here is a brief explanation of the biblical system of hermeneutics:

**The biblical documents are ancient, written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. A basic requirement for the understanding of these documents is their grammatico-historical interpretation or exegesis—bringing out of the text the meaning the writers intended to convey and which their readers were expected to gather from it. The grammatico-historical exegesis is commonly practiced in the classroom, and is distinguished from exposition, which is more appropriate to the pulpit.<sup>4</sup> Exposition must be firmly based on exegesis. The study of the principles of interpretation is called hermeneutics.<sup>5</sup>**

---

<sup>4</sup> I argue against the idea that exegesis should be limited to the classroom of seminaries. It is exegesis that produces expanded translations of a passage. This system demonstrates the underlying structure of the text which English translations are forced to ignore, otherwise Bibles would have to be published in multivolume sets.

<sup>5</sup> F. F. Bruce, "Interpretation of the Bible," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, 1984), 565.



18. Hermeneutics is the system by which the human analysis of Scripture can maintain orthodoxy. Scripture must be trusted to reveal itself to the student. It is exegesis that allows the Scripture to reveal itself.
  19. When a verse or a passage is consulted in an English translation without exegesis, then the results of that effort are potentially flawed.
  20. This is where the pastor must consider the category or categories of systematic theology that are being presented by the passage. In addition, the pastor must know what time it is, that is, in which dispensation does the passage refer.
  21. Take for example prophecy. There are prophecies in the Old Testament that have been fulfilled. There are prophecies in the New Testament that have not.
  22. Consider Daniel's prophecy of the "seventy weeks" in Daniel 10:24–27. Sixty-nine of those weeks have been completed while the seventieth week is on hold during the mystery dispensation of the church.
  23. The seventieth week will not occur until the Rapture of the church at which point the Tribulation's seven-year period will commence.
  23. Principle: To know what time it is, the pastor must subscribe to dispensational theology. Many pastors reject this doctrine and as a result their hermeneutics are flawed because they do not know what time it is.
  24. Therefore, the principle: If a pastor's hermeneutics are flawed his interpretation of Scripture will be flawed. As a result, his theology will cause the platoon's advance to suffer.<sup>6</sup>
1. James begins verse 7 with the imperative mood of the aorist active imperative of **ὑποτάσσω** (*hupotássō*): "to subjugate, place in submission; to cause to be in a submissive relationship, to subordinate."
  2. The object of this submission is to God. It is followed by the aorist active imperative of the verb: **ἀνθίστημι** (*anthístēmi*): "to stand against, resist; be in opposition to, set oneself against, oppose."

---

<sup>6</sup> The study of hermeneutics, taught in 2004, is available on the Web sites. It contains 73 hours on the subject and is available via this link: <http://www.joegriffin.org/media-archive/series-subjects/hermeneutics/>.