

BIBLE 101 — Week 17

The Invisible Reading Filter

Scripture Focus: Matthew 16:18 · Revelation 3:15–16 · Revelation 3:20

KEY VOCABULARY — scan this before you watch

Term	What It Means
Eisegesis	Reading your own ideas INTO the text — like a _____ who's already decided the verdict before the trial
Exegesis	Drawing the author's original meaning OUT of the text — like a _____ coming to learn from a teacher
Theological Grid	The invisible web of _____ and assumptions that shapes how you read — like wearing colored glasses you've forgotten are on your face
The Familiar Passage Problem	The tendency to stop asking _____ about verses we think we already know — our brain goes on autopilot

I. THE INVISIBLE READING FILTER

Nobody — and I mean nobody — approaches the Bible as a complete blank _____. It's impossible.

Your church background, your culture, your family, your personal struggles and joys — all of that creates a _____ that shapes what you see in the text.

The problem isn't having the lens. The problem is _____ that you're wearing it.

The core conflict: Are we reading our ideas _____ — or are we drawing the author's meaning out?

II. EISEGESIS vs. EXEGESIS

	EISEGESIS (eise = into)	EXEGESIS (ex = out of)
What is it?	Reading your own ideas _____ the text	Drawing the author's original meaning _____ of the text
Analogy	A _____ who's already decided the verdict	A _____ who comes to learn from a teacher
Approach	Flipping through the Bible for _____ to prop up your case	Showing up with _____, not pre-made answers
Attitude	Making the Bible _____ with you	Letting the Bible _____ and even correct you

Exegesis takes a lot of _____ and a willingness to be surprised — or maybe even proven wrong.

III. THE THEOLOGICAL GRID: COLORED GLASSES

Most eisegesis happens through something we can call our theological _____ — that invisible filter we were talking about.

It's the whole web of beliefs and assumptions you've picked up over your entire _____.

The colored glasses analogy:

- If you wear colored glasses long enough, you completely _____ they're on your face
- You start to think the world really _____ that color

Key point: The goal is NOT to get rid of your grid — that's literally _____. Everybody has one. The real danger is when we cling to our grid so tightly that we _____ and bend the text to make it fit — instead of letting the text challenge and reshape us.

Example — Matthew 16: "On this rock I will build my church"

"And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

— Matthew 16:18 (ESV)

- **Catholic grid:** The rock is _____ himself — the first pope
- **Protestant grid:** The rock is Peter's _____ of faith

Same words, different _____. This is the theological grid in action.

IV. THE FAMILIAR PASSAGE PROBLEM

The verses where we're most likely to fall into eisegesis aren't the obscure, difficult ones. They're the ones we think we know by _____.

What happens:

- When you come across a verse you've heard a thousand times, your brain goes on _____
- It doesn't really read the words anymore — it just pulls up the old _____ of what you've always been told it means
- You assume you know, so you stop asking _____

And that right there is the perfect breeding ground for _____.

Case Study — Revelation 3:20 ("Behold, I stand at the door and knock")

The popular understanding:

- Jesus is gently knocking on the door of a _____ heart
- He's outside, waiting patiently to be invited in to _____ them
- Used all the time as a call to _____

But what does exegesis reveal?

The very first question: Who was the original _____?

Just a few verses earlier, Jesus says to the exact same people:

"I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth."

— Revelation 3:15–16 (ESV)

The context flips everything:

- Jesus is NOT talking to unbelievers outside the faith — He's speaking directly to the _____ in Laodicea
- A church full of believers He just described as disgustingly _____ and spiritually complacent
- This isn't a call to salvation for outsiders — it's a call to _____ for insiders
- Jesus isn't an outsider trying to get in — He's the _____ of the church who's been pushed out
- He's knocking on the door of His own _____, calling believers back into real relationship

Verdict: The popular view is pure _____.

II PAUSE & REFLECT

Think about Revelation 3:20. Before today, how did you understand the 'knocking at the door' image? How does seeing the original audience — a lukewarm church — change the meaning for you?

V. THREE PRACTICAL GUARDRAILS

Guardrail 1: Always start with the original _____

- Before you ever ask "What does this mean to _____?" — ask "What did this mean to them?"

Guardrail 2: Zoom _____

- Never read a verse in _____. Read the paragraph. Read the whole chapter.
- Context is your best friend — it's the brake pedal that stops you from running away with your own _____

Guardrail 3: Study with people who see things _____

- One of the best ways to suddenly realize "Oh wow, I'm wearing _____ glasses and they're wearing yellow ones"

The closing question:

Your theological grid — is it a helpful lens that brings the text into clearer _____?

Or has it become a _____, walling you off from what the text is actually trying to say?

The bottom line: The goal of reading isn't just to confirm what we already _____. It's to be truly open to what God might be trying to tell us.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What 'colored glasses' do you wear when you read the Bible? What beliefs, church traditions, or assumptions shape what you see — and how often do you stop to notice them?

2. Think of a verse you've known by heart for a long time. Try reading the full paragraph around it this week. Does the context change, deepen, or confirm the meaning you always assumed?

3. Of the three guardrails — original context, zooming out, and studying with people who disagree — which one is hardest for you? Why?
