**Recap of 12/27/15 (2 Peter 1:19-21):**

1. the reliability of the Scripture, in particular the Old Testament prophecies, is confirmed by its subsequent fulfillment, as in the events the Apostles were eyewitnesses of in the life of Jesus Christ.

2. Since the Bible is authoritative and trustworthy we must “pay attention to it.” It acts as a lamp to light our path and show us the way ahead.

3. 2 Peter 1:20’s warning against “private interpretation” is not a warning that we should not try to interpret the Word of God but that the origin of the Word of God was never originated in the prophet but by revelation from God, as vs. 21 clearly states. “No prophet starts a prophecy himself.” (A. T. Robertson)

4. Rules for Bible interpretation

-Interpret the Bible literally, plainly, from a normal viewpoint, allowing for figures of speech. “When the plain sense of Scripture makes good sense, seek no other sense” (Dr. David Cooper).

-Observe the context, use it to find the passages primary meaning. “A text without a context is a pretext.”

-Interpret Scripture by Scripture, cross-reference the thought not just the word.

-Understand the historical situation, understand Bible history, geography, and customs (use Bible atlases, Bible Dictionaries, Bible Encyclopedias, Commentaries)

-Observe the progress of revelation (distinguish God’s dealings with different people, in different times). Ask “Is this statement, promise, command, universal or temporary?” “To whom is the promise made or warning given?” For example, as illustrated by Alex McFarland: ”In the Old Testament, God gave the Jewish people many commands related to clean and unclean foods as part of the Law of Moses. After Jesus came to fulfill the Law, His followers were set free from these restrictions.” (from: **The God You Thought You Knew**)

-Interpret grammatically (observe the relationships of words to each other. God’s revelation came in words so grammar and syntax are important.

-Question every interpretation, use a critical approach, test your interpretations by how others (especially Biblical scholars) have interpreted the passage.

-Guard against reading into a passage that which is not there, let it speak for itself.