

Interpretation

Interpretation (What does the text mean to the author and his audience?)

What does it mean to the author?

What did it mean to the audience? Who were they and how did they understand it?

- *What was their culture? In what ways is it different than ours?*

Bible Dictionaries and Bible Encyclopedias are essential.

Zondervan's, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE). New edition has some liberal tendencies. Not Six day creation, not inerrancy

2000-4000 years ago!

Different culture.

NT slavery not same as Civil War slavery.

Deut 22:5

Deuteronomy 22:8

1 Samuel 11:7

Rom 16:16, KJV, NIV

Salute one another with an holy kiss.

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

- *Who are the people?*

Sometimes ISBE will give good biographical sketches

Sometimes excellent ones can be developed by studying the text.

- What are the action verbs? What is their tense?
- *What do the words mean?*

Get *Vines, TDNTab (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, abridged edition, understandable to non-Greek students), and Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Harris, Archer, Walkie.*

Look up key words, nouns, verbs

NIV Concordance, ISBE

Does the word occur elsewhere and give me more insight?

- **What is the context?**

What follows and precedes the text at hand?

✓ **Grammatical?**

1 Corinthians 1:9 is followed by 1:10

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.

John 3 is preceded by John 2

²³ Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. ²⁴ But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. ²⁵ He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

✓ **Historical?**

What period of history are you in? Before the fall, before the flood, after the mosaic law, before the 70 year captivity, after, before the cross, after the cross.

✓ **Type of Literature?**

History, poetry, didactic, prophetic, narrative.

- **What does the rest of Scripture say?**

Always interpret from the clear and obvious to the unclear and puzzling. E.g., 1 Corinthians 15:29. Any interpretation must bear the weight of the rest of Scripture.

What is this passage talking about? What is the author's main point to his audience?

What is the one thing the whole thing is talking about?

What's the "big idea?"

How does all the above fit into the picture?

Interpretation

Homework

Make an assignment sheet, see sample, take notes on sheet.

Pray daily Psalm 119:18

Over the next 15 weekdays do the following assignments on 3 John.

Week one

Day one, read through verses 1-8 and write down every action verb (or verb forms) that John uses. Read in *What to Do...* pp. 59-62

Day two read vv 9-14 and do the same thing, Read in *What to Do...* pp. 63-65.

Day three, based upon what the author does (I plus an action verb), write 2-3 sentences telling what kind of person he is, what is important to him. Read in *What to Do...* pp. 66-70.

Day four as you think through *who, what, when, where, why,* and *how*, write down five things you learn about. For example

What kind of relationship dose the author and Gaius have?

What kinds of things bring joy to the author?

What do you learn about the power of reputation

Day five, Using the material you read, describe what kind of man Gaius is?

Week two

Day one, Using your ISBE, look up the name Gaius and write down 2-3 things you learn about him and his "career."

Day two, using your NIV concordance, look up each usage of the word "stranger" and write down what you learn about it.

Day three, using ISBE, look up "Diotrephes," and read the article. Tell me 3 things you learn that you did not know.

Day four, ditto day three except do "Demetrius."

Day five Read in *What to Do...* pp. 74-76

Week three

Day one, Using context only, tell where Paul was when he wrote this letter, why he was there, and what he hoped would happen in the future. Read in *What to Do...* pp. 77-79

Day two, Using ISBE, look up the article on Prison. Read only *II. In the NT* (p. 975). List five things you learn about Paul and his imprisonment that might give you insight into his life in general and this book in particular.

Day three: Read the book in its entirety in the light of all you have done. Write down in a brief paragraph the most important teaching that Paul was trying to communicate. What is the one thing he was trying to tell his audience?

What is the one thing the whole thing is talking about?

Day four: Read in *What to Do...* pp. 80-85.

Day five: Review homework and be ready to discuss in class tomorrow.