

interpretation

Determining what a passage means



Interpretation: What does it mean?

- How is meaning determined?
- Who determines meaning?
- Examples in Scripture of determining meaning



General Rules for Interpretation

- Literal sense
- The Analogy of Faith
- The Synthesis Principle
- Grammatical Historical



The Literal Principle

- When you read The Bible, assume God is speaking in normal language, common everyday communication.
 - If it says man, it means man.
 - If it says the man went somewhere, it means he went somewhere.
 - If it says he built a house, it means he built a house.

This is understanding Scripture in the literal sense of language



What does it mean to interpret Scripture according to its literal sense?

Interpret the Scripture according to its literal sense

In other words, interpret The Bible as you would any other piece of literature



Definitions of Literal

- Being in accordance with, conforming to, or upholding the exact or primary meaning of word or words. This may be figurative or non figurative words as long as you whole the primary meaning of what is meant by the author's word, you are taking them literally.
- Word for word; verbatim: a literal translation
- Avoiding exaggeration, metaphor, or non embellishment; factual; prosaic; a literal description; a literal mind.



What is the Analogy of Faith

- This principle states that Scripture alone is sufficient (Sola Scriptura)
 - *Scripture interprets Scripture*
 - *The best commentary on The Bible is The Bible.*
 - *The Bible is authoritative*



What is the Grammatical Historical Method

- A passage has one basic meaning, which is firmly rooted in historical truth, and related accurately according to the common principles of human language.

“You can’t know how to apply the Bible to life, unless you understand what the Bible really says.”



The Grammatical-Historical Principle

The Grammatical Principle

- The Bible passage uses language the way any normal person would.

The Historical Principle

- The Bible passage is “historical”, relating real, interconnected historical events, that must be acknowledged and understood before the various teachings of the Bible can make sense or have application



The Synthesis Principle

- The Synthesis Principle is what the Reformers called the “*analogia Scriptura*”—the Scripture all comes together.
- One part of The Bible does not teach something that another part of The Bible contradicts.



Get started right

Ask the right questions up front

- Get the context and the background
 - Who wrote it?
 - Who was it written to?
 - Why was it written?
 - What was the situation at that time?
 - What was the original intent of the speaker? The writer?
 - What did the 'hearers' hear? Was it what was intended by the speaker?



General Guidelines for Interpretation & Application Handout

- Review these helpful hints for applying the general rules of interpretation and application that you just learned
- Begin a study
- Apply these guidelines as you have questions
- Prayer
- Fellowship



Apply what you have learned when you study...

- Read and observe
- Interpret (see handout with principles)
- Apply His Word to your life (see the next section)

