

How to Study the Bible

Word Studies/Languages/Cross References/Analogy of Faith/Commentaries

Review

Ch 1 – the gospel deeds of leaders in the church

The gospel teaching and deeds of leaders in the church

Homework for next week: CH 2-3...

Ch 2 – the gospel deeds of people in the church

Ch 3 – the gospel deeds of gospel people in the world

Segment Divisions

Paragraph Themes

Chapter Themes

Author

Date:

Purpose:

Summary:

Theme:

Key Verse:

Key Words:

1:1-4

1:5-9

1:10-16

2:1-15

3:1-11

3:12-15

1

2

3

WORD STUDY & ORIGINAL LANGUAGES

Would a Chinese native do well to understand something about the English language if they were to comprehend a daily newspaper in America?

Absolutely! There are phrases, idioms, customs, metaphors and other uses of English that an individual in any other culture, speaking any other language would need to know if they were to understand a typical American newspaper.

The same is true of the Bible. It was not written in English but in:

_____ HEBREW

_____ ARAMAIC

_____ GREEK

While many of our English Bibles do an excellent job in rendering the original languages of the Bible, it is helpful to understand terms and phrases as they were originally given.

Here are a few simple thoughts to consider when researching a word or phrase in its original language:

1. Etymology

Etymology is the study of the development of words – where words came from and derived their meanings.

For example – **episkopoj** – episkopos

Comes from two words:

epi epi = “over”

skopoj skopos = “to see”

the term means “overseer”

OR – **ekklhsia** – ekklesia

Comes from two words:

Ek ek = “out of”

Kalew kaleo = “to call”

The term literally means “the called out ones”

But – be careful with etymology. This is not the best way to discern what a term means. The only way to understand the way a term was intended to be understood is to see how the term is used in its _____ CONTEXT.

2. Square-Up the _____ CONTEXT

How do you determine the way a word is to be understood?

For example:

Both Paul and James both used the term “justification”

But, in their respective contexts, they mean totally different things by the same term.

If all you did was look up the word in a dictionary, you may not be able to tell what the INTENDED meaning of the term is.

See the chart called “Squaring Up the Context”

3. Pay attention to the _____ GRAMMAR

This is where Bible study can become more involved.

Etymology almost always takes a back seat to _____ SYNTAX (grammar – the way words are arranged in a sentence).

You don't have to be a grammar scholar to comprehend Greek or Hebrew Grammar. But, if you have not had much training in these languages, be careful about making dogmatic statements based upon grammatical information.

There are helpful tools available that allow anyone who can read numbers, understand some basics about Greek and Hebrew words and grammar.

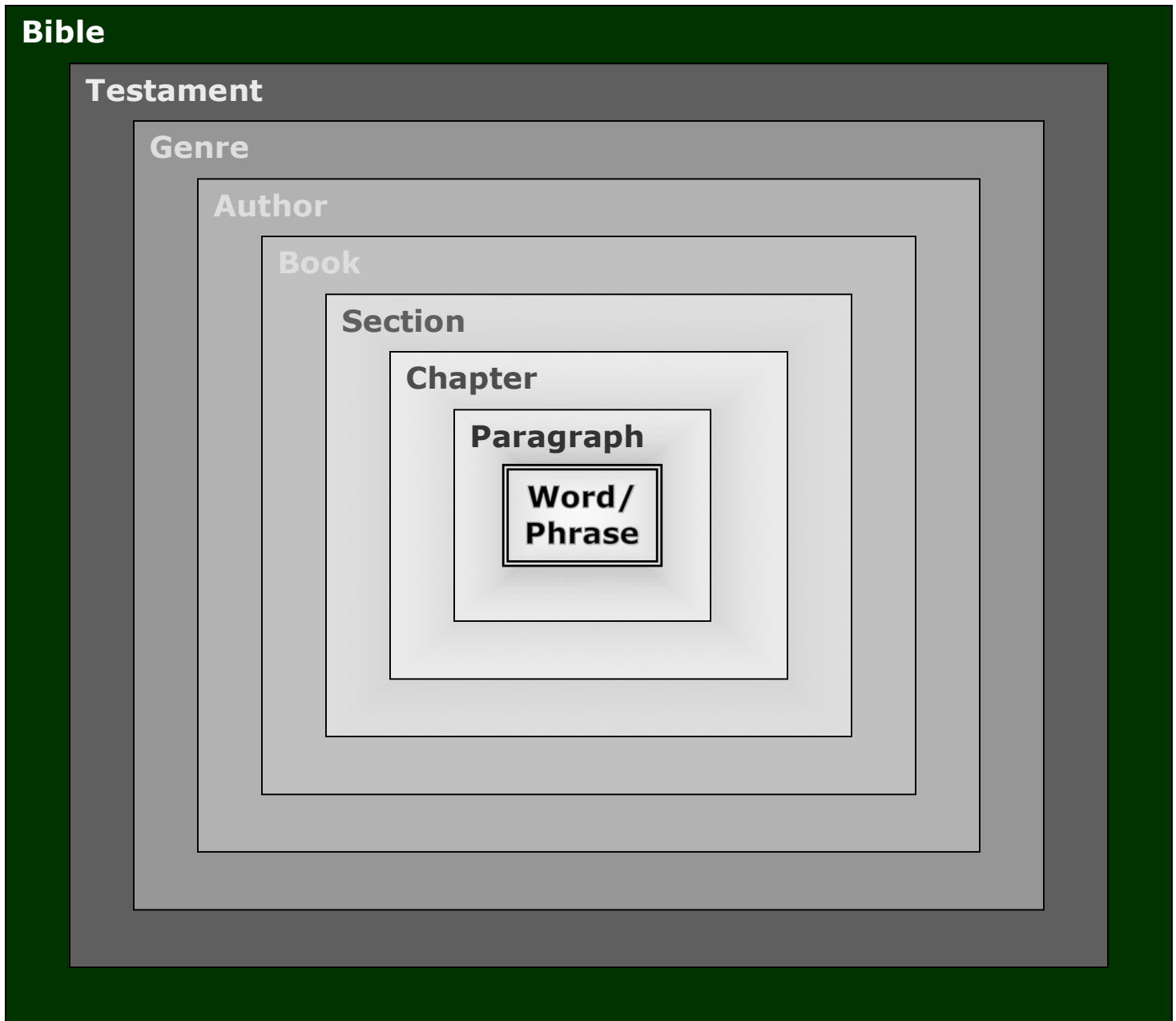
Which words should you pay the most attention to:

Make sure you study the _____ VERBS closely.
They have distinct features that may determine meaning.

Prominent _____ NOUNS

Squaring Up the Context

Obtaining the Correct Meaning of Biblical Words



(1) First understand a word in its basic definition **(2)** See if the word is used again in the paragraph **(3)** Find out if/how the word is used within the same chapter **(4)** Trace the word's usage in the section of the biblical book it falls within (i.e., 1 Cor 12-14) **(5)** Trace the word's usage by the same author **(6)** See if the word is used in similar types of literature (if in a letter, look at how it might be used in other letters; if a Gospel, other Gospels) **(7)** See how the word is used within the Testament (Old/New) it falls within **(8)** Check out its usage in the entire Bible.

If you took the word away from the sentence and it were to make no sense whatsoever, it is probably a word you should do some study on.

Don't be intimidated by Greek and Hebrew – but don't be overawed by it either. Many of our English Bibles render the original languages well enough for anyone to obtain the right and intended meaning of any given passage.

For the best and most careful Bible study we recommend all of these translations:

New American Standard Version

English Standard Version

New King James Version/King James Version

TRYING YOUR HAND AT IT:

For Nouns: Let's try one and see how the process works:

For our purposes, we will choose a proper noun, that is a name: Titus.

1. Look up the word/name "Titus" in the concordance.
2. Using your chart, "Squaring Up the Context," trace the usage of the name, "Titus." Write down and list what you learn about Titus on another sheet of paper.
3. Looking back at the concordance, notice the number beside the references to the name, "Titus." Use this number and look up the definition of the name in the dictionaries provided. Add any pertinent notes from what you learn below the notes you took in step 2. What does his name mean? What is the etymology of his name?

For Verbs: Let's try just one and see a bit about the process:

For a quick example, we will choose the verb "promised," found in Titus 1:2.

1. Look up the word in the concordance.
2. Using the "Square Up the Context" chart, trace how the word is used and translated in other places. Write down any pertinent notes and verses that seem to have a similar context and meaning as you find in Titus 1:2. What are some of the differences in other verses? Why?
3. Using the "Word Study New Testament," notice the letters above the word and then find their definitions on the accompanying explanation page. Write down the tense, the voice and mood. What do these things suggest about this word and its usage here in Titus?

Some other significant words you could look up:

Nouns:

Elders in 1:5

above reproach 1:6

Overseer 1:7

Verbs:

exhort 1:9

refute 1:9

reprove 1:13

The books you will need to begin:

- ESV or NASB Exhaustive Concordance (whatever version you are using)
- The Complete Word Study New Testament
- The Complete Word Study Dictionary, New Testament
- Biblestudytools.com
- Accordance mobile app

Word Study Helps for Titus

Promised

Basic Dictionary: epaggeilato/epaggellomai

ἐπηγγείλατο verb indicative aorist middle 3rd person singular from ἐπαγγέλλομαι

[GING] ἐπαγγέλλομαι

ἐπαγγέλλομαι—**1.** *promise, offer* [Mk 14:11](#); [Ro 4:21](#); [Gal 3:19](#); [Hb 6:13](#); [Js 1:12](#).—**2.** *profess, lay claim to* [1 Ti 2:10](#); [6:21](#). [pg 70]

Concordance:

^{ESV} **Mark 14:11** And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.

^{ESV} **Acts 7:5** Yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him, though he had no child.

^{ESV} **Romans 4:21** fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.

^{ESV} **Galatians 3:19** ¶ Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.

^{ESV} **1 Timothy 2:10** but with what is proper for women who profess godliness--with good works.

^{ESV} **1 Timothy 6:21** ¶ for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.

^{ESV} **Titus 1:2** in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began

^{ESV} **Hebrews 6:13** ¶ For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself,

^{ESV} **Hebrews 10:23** Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

^{ESV} **Hebrews 11:11** By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised.

^{ESV} **Hebrews 12:26** At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens."

ESV **James 1:12** ¶ Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

ESV **James 2:5** Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?

ESV **2 Peter 2:19** They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.

ESV **1 John 2:25** And this is the promise that he made to us--eternal life.

The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament

1861. ἐπαγγέλλω *epaggéllō*; fut. *epaggelṓ*, from *epi* (1909), an intens., and *aggéllō* (n.f., see *anaggéllō* [312]), to tell, declare. To proclaim as public announcements or decrees; hence to announce a message, summons, or a promise. In the Class. Gr., used more in the sense of announcing a summons, issuing a command. In the NT, used only in the mid. voice, *epaggéllomai*, as a deponent verb meaning basically to announce oneself, offer oneself for a responsibility or service. Used primarily as “to promise” in Mark 14:11; Acts 7:5; Rom. 4:21, *apēggelmai*, with mid. meaning; 2 Pet. 2:19, and “to profess” in 1 Tim. 2:10; 6:21 with the meaning of pretending. When used with this special meaning, the word and its deriv. refer to God’s divine promise of spontaneous salvation. To render a service. (See Acts 1:4, *epaggelian* [1860] “the promise”; 7:5; Rom. 4:21; Titus 1:2; Heb. 12:26; James 1:12; 2:5; 1 John 2:25.) Used in an absolute sense, meaning to give a promise (Gal. 3:19 with pass. meaning; Heb. 6:13; 10:23; 11:11; Sept.: Esth. 4:7).

Deriv.: *epangelía* (1860), an announcement, message; *epáγγελma* (1862), promise; *proepaggéllō* (4279), to promise before.

Titus

Basic Dictionary: Tito

Τίτω noun dative masculine singular proper from Τίτος

[GING] Τίτος

Τίτος, ου, ὁ *Titus*—1. friend and helper of Paul [2 Cor 2:13](#); [7:6](#); [8:6](#); [12:18](#); [Gal 2:1](#), [3](#); [2 Ti 4:10](#); [Tit 1:4](#).—2. surnamed Justus [Ac 18:7](#) v.l. [pg 201]

Concordance

ESV **2 Corinthians 2:13** my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.

^{ESV} **2 Corinthians 7:6** But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

¹³ ¶ Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

¹⁴ For whatever boasts I made to him about you, I was not put to shame. But just as everything we said to you was true, so also our boasting before Titus has proved true.

^{ESV} **2 Corinthians 8:6** Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace.

¹⁶ ¶ But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same earnest care I have for you.

²³ As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.

^{ESV} **2 Corinthians 12:18** I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps?

^{ESV} **Galatians 2:1** ¶ Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me.

³ But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek.

^{ESV} **2 Timothy 4:10** For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

^{ESV} **Titus 1:4** ¶ To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament

5103. Τίτος *Títos*; gen. *Títou*, masc. proper noun. Titus, a Gentile who was probably converted to Christianity under the preaching of Paul (Titus 1:4). Paul did not subject him to the rite of circumcision, although some have inferred he was strongly urged to do so (Gal. 2:3–5). Titus was the companion of Paul in many of his trials and missionary journeys (2 Cor. 7:6, 13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23; Gal. 2:1, 3) and was entrusted with several important commissions (2 Cor. 12:18; 2 Tim. 4:10; Titus 1:5). He was sent by Paul to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10) and was left in Crete to establish and regulate the churches (Titus 1:5). Tradition relates that he was bishop of Crete, and died there at the age of ninety–two. Paul calls him his brother (2 Cor. 2:13) and wrote an epistle to him instructing regarding the proper discharge of his ministerial offices in Crete, a difficult

field due to the character of the inhabitants who were noted for lying, idleness, and gluttony (Titus 1:12). The epistle was probably written from Asia Minor in the year A.D. 65 when Paul was on his way to *Nikópolis* (3533).

CROSS REFERENCES AND SCRIPTURE INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE

By this we mean that the Bible is its best interpreter.

We can use the Bible to understand the Bible.

The Bible does not contradict itself, it interprets itself.

One or more Scripture passages help to understand the meaning of another text.

John 3:5; Ezekiel 36:25-27.

We also mean by this:

That obscure passages in Scripture should give way to more clear passages.

i.e.,

NAU Matthew 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

NAU Luke 6:20 And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

Poor physically or spiritually?

– “Scripture is interpreted by Scripture” is simply to say that God determines the meaning of His words. This is not an opening up of a “Pandora’s box” but a control on meaning. It confines the meaning of any text to that which fits with the rest of Scripture. This has an obvious result in two important hermeneutical principles: (1) that obscure passages of Scripture should be interpreted in light of the clear passages, and (2) whenever a NT writer explicitly interprets an OT text, this interpretation is true. *Let the Reader Understand*, Dan McCartney & Charles Clayton, p. 160.

Be careful of building biblical doctrines on isolated Scriptures or verses that do not provide enough information to come to a full conclusion:

1 Corinthians 15:29 – Baptism for the Dead

Luke 2:36-38 – Roman Catholic Proof for Nuns

1 Peter 2:24 – Proof that God is with Benny Hinn

John 3:5 – Baptism is necessary for salvation

Acts 2:38 – tongues and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit are mandatory after Salvation as a 2nd experiential work of grace.

How can you find good cross references?

1. A Bible with cross references in the margin. Most Bibles contain these. Look to see if your Bible does. You will probably see alphabetical references in superscript form beside a particular word. Go to the margin and locate the appropriate verse and alphabetical reference. Look up the verses listed and see what light they shed on your passage. Why were these verses included?
2. Use a concordance and “Square Up the Context.”
3. Use a Cross Reference Book, like the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge.
4. Commentaries often have many Cross References. However, at this stage, we aren’t using commentaries so appeal to them after you have done all the work you can without the aid of a commentary.

ANALOGY OF FAITH

One of the biblical facts about the Bible is that it is a perfect book, in that it does not contradict itself from one part to the other. When understood correctly, every part of Scripture will complement and not contradict any other portion of Scripture.

As we saw in the previous section, Scripture is its best interpreter. In the previous principle “Scripture Interprets Scripture,” we saw that the meaning of a particular verse or passage in the Bible may become clearer when examined by other passages that address the same concept or particular teaching. Colossians 3:16 [Let the word of Christ dwell within you richly] helps us to understand what Ephesians 5:18 [be filled with the Spirit] actually means. So then, one Scripture may shed light on another Scripture.

But, this can be taken a step further. Because there is total unity in the Bible, one can also develop an accurate understanding of particular topics within the Bible. This is what is called the Analogy of Faith.

DEFINED:

Analogy of Faith says there is one unified, consistent, harmonious system of faith (belief) in the Bible. That is, to put it in negative terms, no point when correctly understood will contradict another.

Why is this important?

It allows us to do “Systematic Theology.”
i.e., What is God Like?

What is the Holy Spirit Like and What Does He Do?

Is God a Trinity?

Develop a full understanding of Human Nature, Sin, Heaven, Hell, Angels, Demons, Satan, Creation, the return of Jesus Christ

It functions as a “check-point” on our interpretations.

If our interpretation of a passage contradicts what is clearly taught in numerous other passages on a single subject, our interpretation is probably wrong.

EXAMPLE:

Romans 4:1-5; James 2:22-24

Notice what is the same:

- both passages are talking about “justification”
- both passages use Abraham as an example
- both passages are talking about “faith”
- both passages use similar phrases – “justified by works”

Notice what is very different:

Romans 4 says:

- Abraham is NOT justified by works
- Faith, not works is what justifies

James 2 says:

- Abraham WAS justified by works
- Faith alone does not justify

So – are these direct contradictions? Is justification by faith alone or by faith and works?

The clarity comes by examining each text in its own context first:

Romans 4

V 10 – points to a period of time before his circumcision when he was justified by Faith

V 13 – talks about the promise to Abraham and his descendants – this is speaking about the period of Abraham’s life spoken of in Genesis 12-17

The argument being made in Romans is that faith alone is what makes a person just before God – faith is what brings salvation to the unsaved – no works could bring salvation, or that would give man a reason to boast before God (v 2).

James

V 21 – points to a period of time after his circumcision (AFTER he had already been justified by faith – Romans 4)

V 21 – is a different reference than Romans 4 – James 2:21 refers to Genesis 22, not Genesis 12-17.

The argument being made in James is COMPLETELY DIFFERENT than the argument being made in Romans 4. James 2 is addressing those who say they have true faith, but there is nothing in their life to prove that genuine faith exists (works). James 2 is not talking about GAINING salvation through works; rather, it is talking about PROVING that genuine salvation ALREADY EXISTS, by the works a true believer does.

V 22 – says works perfected faith – faith already existed in Abraham and his works demonstrated his faith.

V 24 – being justified by works in James 2 is referring not to a justification before God, but before others. It is a demonstration of true faith not a receiving of faith (Romans 4).

NOTE – Some use this apparent contradiction to say that Paul did not believe that works were necessary to demonstrate saving faith, and James believed that works were necessary to gain and maintain faith.

Both views are wrong. Paul did believe that good works were the proof and demonstration of saving faith. The analogy of faith helps us here: see Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:11-14. James did not teach that salvation is gained by works or kept by our works. He merely asserts that works demonstrate faith. In other words, Paul and James are actually teaching the same thing. There is no contradiction.

IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES

McQuilken's comments are helpful here:

The first step in doing a topical study or building a systematic structure of biblical teaching is to analyze each passage, examining it to determine the author's intended meaning.

There are varying degrees of importance in systematizing data:

1. The clear passage is to be preferred above the obscure.
2. Greater weight is to be given to teaching often repeated.
3. Direct, literal teaching should be given preference.

The structure of Bible doctrine must be built on the sure foundation of literal passages containing direct teaching. It should not be built on figurative, poetic, or historical passages, unless that picture language or those historical passages are literally interpreted by Scripture.

4. Later revelation takes precedence over earlier revelation.

ALSO:

Keep this in mind about Analogy of Faith

- this principle does not come at the beginning of any study of a biblical passage or even a comparison of passages. IT COMES AT THE VERY END OF THE HERMENEUTICAL PROCESS and serves as a point to check your interpretations with what the rest of Scripture says about a particular doctrine.

Consider Robert Thomas' comments:

We are . . . proposing a conscious effort to postpone its part in the interpretive process until the very end. In fact, we may even suggest that it not be a part of the exegetical process at all. It should be a double check on completed exegesis. Its removal from among the hermeneutical principles could be a safeguard against abuses. Its value would thereby be negative: Is there any reason why the meaning of the text reached by objective exegetical principles cannot be harmonized with the previous impressions about the unified teaching of Scripture?

Evangelical Hermeneutics Robert L. Thomas, p. 75.

Using Commentaries

Consult Commentaries

1. Commentaries can be extremely helpful in interpreting a passage.
 - a. Understand the benefits of commentaries.
 - i. Allows us to profit from the in-depth study and scholarship of others.
 - ii. Helps us to come at the text from a different viewpoint.
 - iii. Helps us to check the results of our study.
 - iv. Shows us areas we have left out in our study.
 - b. Recognize the dangers of commentaries.
 - i. They can become a crutch for not studying the Scriptures ourselves. Therefore, they should be used as the last step.
 - ii. They are not infallible and thus can have interpretations that are not correct.
 - iii. They sometimes skip over what appear to be crucial issues and questions.
2. There are some important guidelines for using commentaries.
 - a. If just getting started with this process, use a single volume general commentary.
 - i. The Wycliffe Bible Commentary
 - ii. The Bible Knowledge Commentary
 - b. For those more advanced, use in-depth, exegetical commentaries which deal with grammar, etc.
 - i. The Expositor's Bible Commentary
 - ii. New Testament Commentary

Resources

Here is a summary of the resources we have suggested you use in the Bible Study Process. These sources make a good list to begin your Bible study library.

Books on Hermeneutics & Bible Study Methods

Basic Bible Interpretation by Roy B. Zuck.
Protestant Bible Interpretation by Bernard Ramm.
How to Study Your Bible by Kay Arthur
Methodical Bible Study, by Robert A. Traina

Basic Reference Works

The MacArthur Study Bible
The Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary
Survey of the New Testament, Paul Benware
New Testament Survey, Robert G. Gromacki
New Testament Introduction, Donald Guthrie

Word Study & Cross Reference Works

New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance
Complete Word Study New Testament
Complete Word Study Old Testament
Complete Word Study Dictionary, New Testament
Complete Word Study Dictionary, Old Testament
Treasury of Scripture Knowledge

Commentaries

Commentaries for Biblical Expositors, James Rosscup

Web Resources

<http://swbcls.org/equipping-class-and-sunday-school-teacher-resources>

Includes links to several good web sites with Bible study tools, books, and commentaries.

Bible Study Software

Bible Works: best for quick searches (eliminates the need for a concordance); quick access to a variety of helpful study resources.

Logos: One of the largest collection of biblical resources available.