

How to Study the Bible
Grace Bible Fellowship Church – Winter 2020

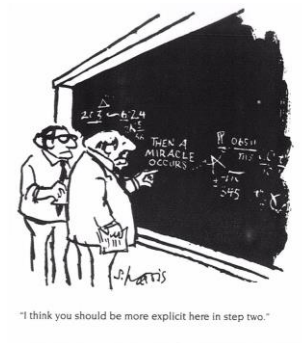
TEACHING NOTES

Week 5: Interpretation: Big Picture, Main Point

February 16, 2020 – Keys to Proper Interpretation

Graphic: "Then a Miracle Occurs"

Discussion: Bypassing Scriptural Authority



Review: OIA (see OIA Bookmark)

- Observe** - "What Does it Say?" {previous weeks}
- Interpret** - "What Does it Mean?" {this week and next}
- Apply** - "What Does it mean for Me?" {final 2 weeks}



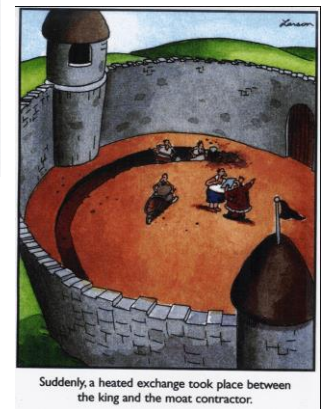
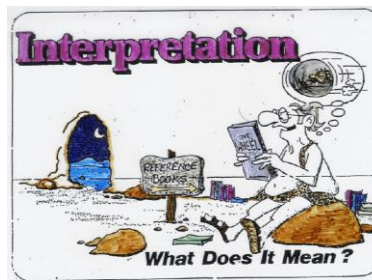
Review: Keys to Perceptive Observation

Content
Who, what, when, where, why, how

Context
Audience, Culture, Geography
Genre, Structure, Tone
Chapter, Book, Biblical Theology

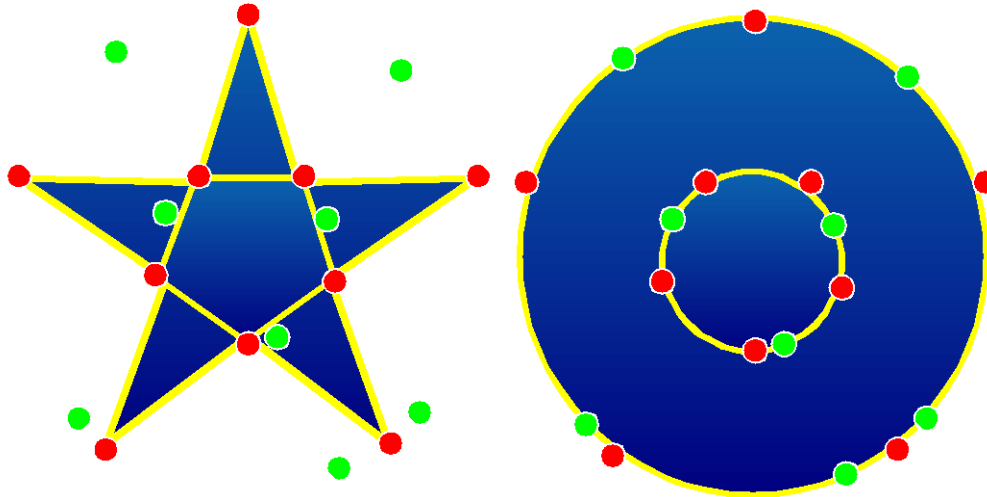
Interpretation: What Does it Mean?

- **Graphic:** "Interpretation"
- **Graphic:** "Moat Contractor"



Observation and Interpretation:

- *Graphic Illustration: Dots - are they Star or 2 Circles ...*



- In observation we see the dots, in interpretation we connect the dots
- How connect dots on screen? Star
- Look at star - 5 points, sharp points, all interconnected
- Look closely – some dots not fit perfectly in star ...
- What if closer observation revealed more dots ... how fit them into the star?
- Can not ... remove star and reinterpret dots
- Actually 2 circles! - not 5 points, not points at all, not all interconnected...

Need good Observation or Interpretation is doomed to failure!

Keys to Proper Interpretation

Big Picture: discuss this week

Main Point: look at next week

**** Goal: To understand what the AUTHOR really meant**

- Big Picture:

1) Ask Interpretive Questions

- this forms the bridge between observe and interpret

- some key questions to ask :

- **Why?** Why did the character do that? Why did the author tell the story this way, with these details, and this tone? Why this story, not some other?

- **What is the significance of ...**

- **What is the Implication of ...**

Ex. Eph. 1 - Why is it significant that God is active and we are passive?

- Why does Paul pray for these 3 things?

2) Answer Interpretive Questions

- ask lots of questions, but **realize Lots of Wrong, or Irrelevant Answers**

- **BE CAREFUL:** Only answer those questions the passage does, and only as far as it does! God may not tell you what you want to know - accept that. And let that help you to step back and see what the real point is. Also, major on the majors.

Ex. - Eph. 1 - Remember in chapter 1 we noted the tone/ structure of the passage and realized it was not a theological argument as much as worship and an encouragement to believers. While you would be right to say that it talks about predestination, you would be wrong to say Paul's point is to build a proof of it here. Just as you would be wrong to expect this passage to tell you all about the HS, just because he is mentioned here.

3) Fit All the Pieces Together

- Start to put the pieces together - ask what the big picture looks like

- What is the overall picture Author is trying to paint?

Picture of good interpretation:

read **Methodical Bible Study** - Page **94** (re-creation from Beethoven's 9th)

- Main Point:

Finish the sentence **"The Authors main point is ..."**

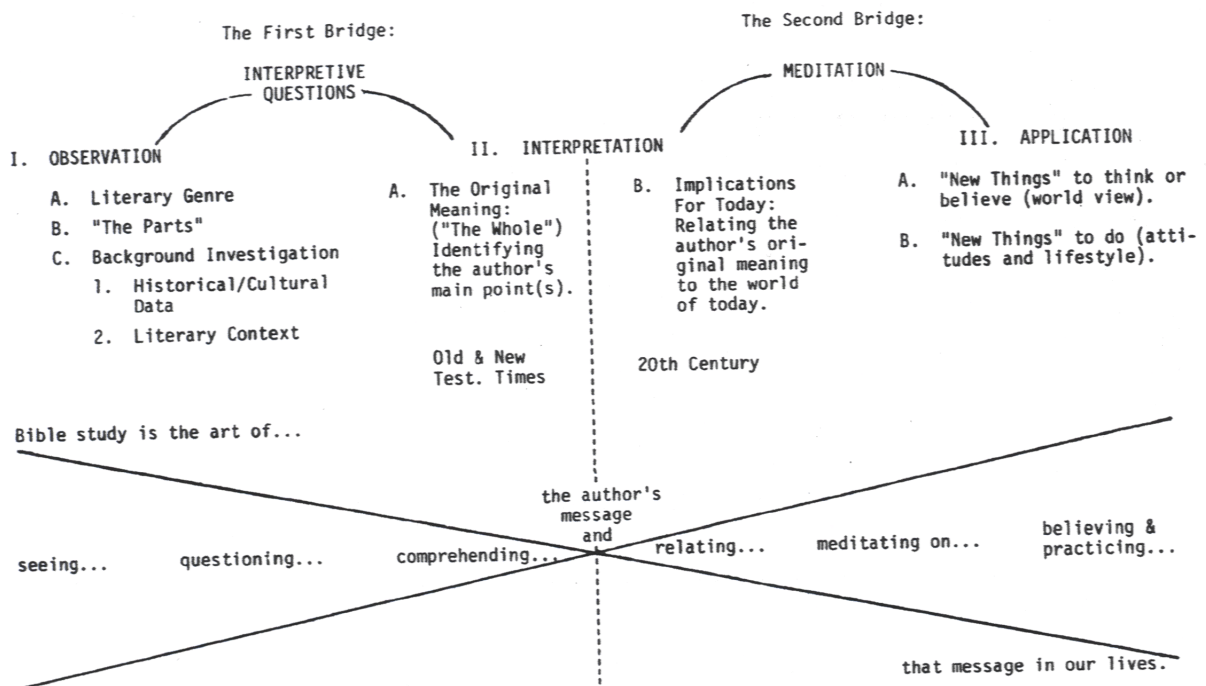
In many ways this is the **central point** of our entire Bible Study

- everything up to now is leading to this
- everything we do next will flow from this

Diamond Hunting for:

- 1) Meaning to Original Audience
- 2) Author's Central Point
- 3) Implications for Today

{ discuss OIA Convergence Illustration below }



Key Principles for Proper Interpretation

1) Interpret the Bible by the Bible

- NOT Read with Bible in one hand and Time magazine in the other
- BUT Read with Bible in one Hand, Bible in the other!

2) Interpret Literally (or better, literarily ... as is proper for the type of literature)

- Bible not trying to hide secret meaning, or confuse, or be spiritual
- take what it says at face value, take most straight forward meaning
- NOT : Literally DOES need to take into account literature

(Lion of Judah does not mean furry main and big teeth!)

3) Interpret Objectively

- Do not bring own idea, look through God's eyes as neutral observer
- not possible - cannot divorce self of background – BUT work to understand your own biases and see beyond them ... also where other voices helpful (more on that in 2 weeks)

Goals for Biblical Interpretation

GOAL 1: Accurately understand the key truths of the passage

- We want to figure out how all the pieces fit together into one picture
- See what the AUTHOR wants us to see, NOT what we want to see

GOAL: looking for God's Truth

- We want to find TRUTH, not just find "all possible interpretations"
- In Bible Study - not have "good discussion", but find GOD'S TRUTH

And thus meet GOD.

Today's Study: Ephesians 2:11-22 { Page 3, Line 43 – Page 4, Line 60}

Home Study: Ephesians 3:1-22 { Page 4, Line 60 – Page 6, Line 85}

Read: Article 5 "Satan's Strategy"

Week 5: Ephesians 2:11-22

February 16, 2020 – Made One

Ephesians 2:11-22 {Page 3, Line 43 – Page 4, Line 60}

OBSERVATION

1) **THEREFORE** - based on the fact you were dead, but God made you alive

REMEMBER - God knows we will forget, so reminds us to remember - this should flag this section as of key importance - we must bring it to remembrance, not allow self to forget it.

2) **At One Time:**

- **Gentiles** in the flesh

- **Uncircumcision** - here need context - what is circumcision?

{need for context – in this case OT context – covenant with Abraham}

Remember / at that time

- **Separated** from Christ - not “In Christ”

- **Alienated** from nation of Israel - not part of God’s people

- **Stranger** to covenant of promise - promises of God not for you

- **Hopeless**

- **Without God**

3) But Now ... IN CHRIST

(Same structure as 1st half of chapter - dead...but God ; alienated...but now)

- Far off are brought near (in the blood of Christ)
- Made one with God's People (because he is our peace)
- He has broken down dividing wall / hostility

(Note: wall of temple - Stott page 91)

- He has done 3 things:

1) Abolish law

2) Created one new man

3) Reconciled us to God and Each Other

4) Christ Made Peace

- 1) Accomplished ... on the cross
- 2) Preached ... to those near and far off
- 3) Access Granted... to the Father, in the Spirit

5) We are No Longer Aliens - We Belong to:

1) God's Kingdom

Are fellow citizens with the saints

2) God's Family

No Longer Strangers / Sojourners

3) God's Temple

Are members of God's household

God's House:

- Built on **foundation** : apostles and prophets
- **Cornerstone** : Christ himself
- Structure **Joined** together
- Structure **Grow** into Holy Temple - in the Lord
- We are **built** into it - in the Lord
- It is a **dwelling place for God** - in the Spirit

INTERPRETATION

All along God has been **building a house** / **creating a people** for himself

We **were not part** of this house, not part of this people

Therefore we had no hope in the world

But in **Christ** **God broke down the wall** keeping us out

(Think about the curtain between the holy of holies,

Also think about wall between gentile court and temple)

Now we are **part of temple**, **part of people of God**

Thus have **hope**, can claim promises

Thus also **need to be built** on same foundations

APPLICATION