

Lesson 6: Why is Interpretation Needed?

PRESUPPOSITIONS

Jesus' disciples were hoping Jesus was going to redeem Israel and deliver them from the tyranny of the Romans (John 24:21; Acts 1:6). Because of their preconceptions they were unable to see the full scope of the Redeemers work (Luke 24: 25-27, 44-49).

- How did the experience of the risen Christ and His explanation of Scripture change His disciples' view of reality?

The Holy Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, will lead us into all truth, correcting our misconceptions and limited perspectives (John 16:13)

- What are some of your own presuppositions regarding the world?
- In what ways can you surrender your presuppositions to the Word of God to allow the Word itself shape your ideas?

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION

Examples of Interpretation

- Interpreting tongues, spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 14:26,
- The Messiah translated "the Christ" (John 1:41)
- Pool of Siloam translated as "Sent" (John 9:7)
- Disciple named Tabatha translated Dorcus (Acts 9:36)
- Jesus expounded to them upon the what the Law and Prophets said about Himself (Luke 24:27)
 - What does this tell us about the importance of interpretation?
 - Why is it important to study the Word prayerfully no matter what translation you have?

THE BIBLE AND CULTURE

Paul delivered the gospel message in a new context: the philosophy of Greek culture (Acts 17:16–32).

- How do different cultural backgrounds impact how we evaluate the importance of various ideas?

It is important to note that "the meaning of a sentence is not determined just by the individual words that are used but by the context in which those words are employed.

OUR SINFUL AND FALLEN NATURE

The former blind man confessed Jesus as Son of God; the Pharisees who witnessed it did not (John 9:39–41).

Many among the rulers believed but did not voice support of Jesus because they wanted the stay on the Pharisees good side (John 12:42-43).

- What hindered the people in these passages from accepting the truth?
- What words of warning and caution can we take away from these incidents for ourselves?
- Have you ever found yourself fighting against conviction from what you have read in the Bible?
- What did you learn from your experience?

WHY INTERPRETATION IS IMPORTANT

The returned exiles stood and listened to the Book of the Law. The Levites helped the people understand what they were hearing (Nehemiah 8:1–3, 8).

- Why is a clear understanding of Scripture so important for us, not only as individuals but as a church?

Be diligent to study difficult scripture passages with longsuffering and with the wisdom given from the Holy Spirit. For those who do not twist scripture to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:15-16).

- What does this tell us about how important a correct reading of Scripture is?

Theological issues in the Three Angels' Messages (Revelation 14:6–12)

- The Gospel (v6) → process of salvation
- Worship God (v7) → who are you going to love the most?
- God is the Creator (v7) → Creation
- Broken sinful system or God's sinless government (v 8)
- Worship (v9) → choose your allegiance
- Identifying your allegiance → receive the imprint, the seal, of whom you choose as Master/master (v9)
- Those who choose God's enemy will share in his fate (v10) → judgement
- The result of the Final Judgement will be permanent (v11) → focus is result not length
 - What are the theological issues here, and why is a correct understanding of them so important to our mission?

FURTHER THOUGHT

- How do our worldview, our education, and our culture influence our interpretation of Scripture?
 - Why is it so important for us to be aware of the outside influences that we inevitably bring to our interpretation of the Bible?
- In what ways does sin filter how we interpret the Bible?
- How can a better understanding of the biblical times and culture help us better understand passages of Scripture?
- Why is faith important for a proper understanding of Scripture? What is the role of faith in the process of interpretation?