

INTERPRETING THE SCRIPTURES (Focus on Paul's letters)

Some basic steps to follow: Pray! We need the Holy Spirit!

1. Genre.

What type of literature is this? Within the NT we find Gospels (within that, parables), Acts, **Letters**, Apocalypse- Revelation

2.a) Consider the historical context (Especially with letters).

Insights from Historical, social, cultural, (customs), religious, geographical background

b) Original audience. Read the passage in the light of what it probably meant to those for whom it was originally written

3. Literary context

a) Always interpret a verse in agreement with its context. Don't read words/verses in a vacuum. Consider the whole. What comes before/afterwards?

b) Interpret a passage in the light of all other scripture. Don't allow a passage to deny what we know to be true of God elsewhere in scripture.

c) Don't use an obscure passage to disprove one with a clear, obvious meaning. Interpret the unknown in accordance with the known.

5. Any specific words/phrases repeated needing closer attention?

Meaning in original language?

6. Is there a principle being taught?

7. If so, how might we apply the principle today?

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