

*“The Bible is the Word of God in such a way  
that when the Bible speaks, God speaks.”  
~ B. B. Warfield*

**Observation-What do you see?  
Interpretation-What does it mean?  
Application-How does it apply to me?**

**--- OBSERVATION ---**

**Key Structural Observations:**

Comparison-the association of like things or themes (like, and, so, also; James 3:3-6)

Contrast-the association of opposites (but; Mt. 7:24-27)

Repetition-the reiteration of the same terms (love is repeated 8 times in 1 Cor. 13)

Continuity-the extended treatment of a particular aspect (1 Cor. 13 & 14 are a continuation of 12)

Climax-the high point, or most crucial part of a section of material. By definition, there can only be 1 climax per section of material (Ruth 4:13-14)

Pivot-the material suddenly changes direction or flow of thought (1 Cor. 7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 15:1)

Interrogation-the employment of a question (Mark 8:27-29)

Rhetoric-the employment of a rhetorical question (Rom. 3:1,9; 4:1,9; 6:1, 15)

Dialogue-a conversation between 2 or more characters. Often found in narrative literature.

Particularization-the movement from the general to the particular (Mt. 6:1-18)

Generalization-the movement from the particular to the general (James 2)

Causation-the progression from cause to effect (Rom. 1:18-32)

Substantiation-the progression from effect to cause (Rom. 8:18-30)

Instrumentation- The setting forth of the “means to an end” as well “as the end itself.” This involves the factor of purpose (John 20:30-31)

Explanation-the presentation of an idea followed by its interpretation (therefore, because, since; Mark 4:1-20)

Introduction-the inclusion of the background for events or ideas (Dan. 1)

Summarization-the employment of an abridgement either preceding or following a unit of material (Josh. 12)

Prepositions point to any number of relationships:

Means: by His blood  
Accompaniment: with Jesus  
Location: in Him; on the earth; at Ephesus  
Benefit: for His glory  
Motion: to heaven; from the dead  
Direction: toward us  
Origin: the Word of God  
Characteristic: the Father of glory; the Holy Spirit of promise; the day of redemption  
Identity: pledge of our inheritance  
Position: over all; at His right hand  
Permeation: through all  
Entrance: unto the lower parts  
Opposition: against the devil’s schemes  
Conformity: according to the flesh  
Time: before the foundation of the world.

Conjunctions join words, phrases, or clauses:

Contrast:: but (Eph. 2:4, 13)  
Comparison: just as (4:32; 5:25)  
Correlation: as...so (5:24)  
Reason: because (2:4; 6:8); for (2:8); for this reason (1:15; 3:1, 14)  
Result: therefore (2:11); consequently (v. 19); then (4:14)  
Purpose: that (4:28); in order that (1:12, 18); so that (v. 17).  
Conclusion: then (4:1); so (v. 17)  
Time: when (1:13); until (4:13); finally (6:10)  
Addition: also (1:18); in addition (6:16)  
Concession: although (3:8)

Interjections are single words that express a negative (not, nor), interrogation (why), affirmation (certainly, indeed), or exclamation (surely, oh, ouch, phooey).

**ALWAYS ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WHEN OBSERVING: WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? WHY? SO WHAT?**

**--- INTERPRETATION ---  
Grammatical Steps for Interpretation:**

1. Examine the etymology of key words, including its original meaning & any different meanings that develop from it.
2. Discover the usage of the key words: (a) by the same writer in the same book; (b) by the same writer in other books; (c) by other writers in the Bible; (d) by other writers outside of the Bible
3. Discover how synonyms & antonyms are used.
4. Analyze the sentence & its elements, noting its parts of speech, the kind of sentence it is, the kind of clauses it has, & the word order.
5. Consider the influence of each part of the sentence on the thought of the whole.
6. Decide which one of several possible meanings of key words that best fit the thought of the passage.
7. Consider the contexts: (a) immediate context; (b) context of the paragraph or chapter; (c) context of the book; (d) context of parallel passages; (e) context of the entire Bible.

\* Key words are those that are emphasized, related, alike, dissimilar, and repeated.

**Qualifications for Interpreting the Bible:**

- (1) No one can fully welcome the truth of Scripture unless he or she has placed his or her trust in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died on the cross for his or her sins and rose again (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; 1 Cor. 2:14)
- (2) Reverence for and interest in God and His Word are essential to interpreting the Bible properly (2 Tim. 3:15)

(3) Prayerful attitude & humility.

(4) Scripture should be approached with a willingness to obey them, a willingness to put into practice what has been learned in the Word.

(5) The interpreter must depend on the Holy Spirit by making sure that he or she is rightly related to the Holy Spirit, the Illuminator and Convictor of Truth (John 14-16; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 1:1-23; 3:9) .

Before you study the Scripture examine yourself to see if you have unconfessed sin in your life. You never want to hurt, hinder (Eph. 4:30), or quench, that is, smother, the Holy Spirit's influence in your life (1 Thess. 5:19).

If so, confess, admit, or acknowledge to God your acts of disobedience (1 John 1:9). Yield yourself to the Holy Spirit and be under His control (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16-18).

**GENERAL TERMS TO KNOW:**

**HERMENEUTICS:** The Science (principles) and art (task) by which the meaning of the biblical text is determined.

**EXEGESIS:** The determination of the meaning of the biblical texts in its historical and literary contexts.

**EXPOSITION:** The communication of the meaning of the text along with its relevance to present-day hearers.

**HOMILETICS:** The science and art by which the meaning and relevance of the biblical text are communicated in a preaching situation.

**PEDAGOGY:** The science and art by which the meaning and the relevance of the biblical text are communicated in a teaching situation.

**WHEN STUDYING THE BIBLE ALWAYS REMEMBER TO READ: thoughtfully, patiently, critically, meditatively, purposefully, microscopically, imaginatively, repeatedly, acquisitively, selectively, prayerfully, & reverently.**