

Step 1: Grasping the Text in their Town - What did the text mean to the original audience?

Do a structural diagram of the text.

Interrogate the Text:**Observation – What do I see?**

- Repetition of Words – Many times this gives clues to the main point.
- Contrasts – Differences. Look for items, ideas, or individuals that are contrasted with each other.
- Comparisons – Similarities. Look for items, ideas, or individuals that are compared.
- Lists – More than two things is a list. Is there any order to the list?
- Cause and Effect – Very important in the Bible, always be looking for it. Key Words: therefore, for, that, in order that, so that, then, since, because, etc.
- Figures of Speech – Images in which words are used in a sense other than the normal, literal sense.
- Conjunctions – These are words like: and, for, but, therefore, since, because, etc.
- Verbs – The action of the sentence.
- Pronouns – Determine who or what the pronoun is referring to.
- General and Specific – Find the general statements that are followed by specific examples or applications of the general.
- Questions and Answers – Rhetorical Questions, or questions asked within a narrative passage. Identify the question and the answer.
- Dialogue – What is the nature of this dialogue? Who are the participants? Who is speaking to whom?
- Purpose/Result Statements – Phrases or sentences that describe the reason, result, or consequence of some action.
- Means – Does a sentence indicate that something was done by means of someone or something (answers how)?
- Prepositions – A word that helps express the relationship between two or more words. Words like through, by, in, of, on, for, before, according to.
- Conditional Clauses – Clauses that present the conditions whereby some action, consequence, reality, or result will happen. Sometimes introduced by “if” followed by “then.”
- Action/Roles of People and the Actions/Roles of God – What does God do in this passage? What do people do in this passage? What are people encouraged to do or not to do?
- Emotional Terms – Are there words that carry emotional energy or kinship words?
- Tone – What is the overall emotional tone of this passage?
- Connection between paragraphs and sentences – How does the passage connect to the one that preceded it and to the one that follows?

What is the literary genre?

Is the text figurative language. Any language that uses words or expressions with a meaning different from their literal interpretation.

10 basic principles on how to know if the text is figurative language:

- 1- Use the literal sense unless there is some good reason not to.
- 2- When the passage tells you it is figurative.
- 3- If a literal meaning is impossible or absurd.
- 4- If a literal meaning would involve something immoral.
- 5- If the expression is an obvious figure of speech.
- 6- If a literal interpretation goes contrary to the context and scope of the passage.

- 7- If a literal interpretation goes contrary to the general character and style of the book.
- 8- If a literal interpretation goes contrary to the plan and purpose of the author.
- 9- If a literal interpretation involves a contradiction of Scripture.
- 10- If a literal interpretation would involve a contradiction in doctrine.

Step 2: Measuring the Width of the River to Cross - What are the differences and similarities between the original audience and us? (more observation)

**A text cannot mean what it never meant.

**When it comes to meaning, context is critical.

What is the historical-cultural context?

Look at what is before and after your text. Look at reliable commentaries.

- Who is the biblical writer?
- Who is the biblical audience?
- What are other historical elements that need to be understood? Geography/topography, cultural customs, economic issues, political issues, etc.
- How does this passage fit into the larger context (book, Bible as a whole)? Go to cross-references.
- What related scriptures clarify the meaning?

Tools for Identifying Historical-Cultural Context:

<https://www.logos.com/free-edition>

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/>

<https://www.preceptaustin.org/>

<https://relight.app/>

<https://ccel.org/>

<https://www.monergism.com/>

<https://www.ligonier.org/>

<https://www.stepbible.org/>

Step 3: Crossing the Theological Bridge – Interpretation:

What is the theological principle(s) in this text?

What does this text teach us about God?

How can you know God personally through this text?

How is God's covenant fulfilled in Christ through this text?

Is this truth timeless and not just for one culture or situation?

Is this truth consistent with all of biblical teaching?

Is this truth relevant and applicable to both biblical times and today?

How does this truth lead us in worship, obedience and transformation?

Revelation 1

The revelation of Jesus Christ,
which God gave Him
to show to His servants the things that must soon take place.
He made it known
by sending His angel
to His servant John,
² who bore witness to the word of God
and to the testimony of Jesus Christ,
even to all that he saw.

³ Blessed is the one
who reads aloud the words of this prophecy,
and blessed are those who hear,
and who keep what is written in it,
for the time is near.

Greeting to the Seven Churches

⁴ John to the seven churches
that are in Asia:
Grace to you
and peace
from Him who is and
who was
and who is to come,
and from the seven spirits who are before His throne,
⁵ and from Jesus Christ
the faithful witness,
the firstborn of the dead,
and the ruler of kings on earth.

To Him who loves us
and has freed us from our sins
by his blood
⁶ and made us a kingdom,
priests to His God and Father,
to Him be glory
and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Behold, He is coming with the clouds,
and every eye will see him,
even those who pierced Him,
and all tribes of the earth
will wail on account of Him. Even so. Amen.

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega,"
says the Lord God,
"who is
and who was
and who is to come,
the Almighty."

Vision of the Son of Man

⁹ I, John,
your brother
and partner
in the tribulation
and the kingdom
and the patient endurance
that are in Jesus,
was on the island called Patmos
on account of the word of God
and the testimony of Jesus.

¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day,
and I heard behind me
a loud voice like a trumpet
¹¹ saying, "Write what you see in a book
and send it to the seven churches,
to Ephesus
and to Smyrna
and to Pergamum
and to Thyatira
and to Sardis
and to Philadelphia
and to Laodicea."

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me,
and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands,
¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands
one like a son of man,
clothed with a long robe
and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The
hairs of his head were white,
like white wool,
like snow.
His eyes were like a flame of fire,
¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze,
refined in a furnace,
and his voice was like the roar
of many waters.

¹⁶ In His right hand
He held seven stars,
from His mouth
came a sharp two-edged sword,
and His face
was like the sun shining in full strength.

¹⁷ When I saw Him,
I fell at His feet
as though dead.
But He laid His right hand on me,
saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last,
¹⁸ and the living one.
I died,
and behold I am alive forevermore,
and I have the keys of Death and Hades.
¹⁹ Write therefore the things that you have seen,
those that are
and those that are to take place after this.
²⁰ As for the mystery of the seven stars

that you saw in my right hand,
and the seven golden lampstands,
the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches,
and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Check cross references for each verse in Revelation 1 (more interpretation): Understand how the vibrant imagery and themes are used in other Biblical passages.

Revelation 1:1

- Daniel 2:28-29, Daniel 2:45 (things to come)
- Amos 3:7
- Matthew 11:27
- Romans 16:25
- Galatians 1:12
- Ephesians 3:3

Revelation 1:2

- John 1:7 (bearing witness)
- John 5:31-40
- Revelation 12:17
- Revelation 19:11

Revelation 1:3

- Proverbs 8:34 (blessing of wisdom)
- Luke 11:28
- James 1:22
- 2 Corinthians 3:14
- Romans 13:11-12
- 1 John 2:18
- James 5:9
- Revelation 22:7

Revelation 1:4

- Exodus 3:14 (God's name: "I AM")
- Isaiah 11:2-3
- Ezekiel 3:14
- Daniel 7:9, 10:6
- Zechariah 4:2
- Psalm 68:17

Revelation 1:5

- John 8:32 (truth sets free)
- Acts 20:28
- Colossians 1:13-14
- 1 Peter 1:19

Revelation 1:6

- Exodus 19:6 (kingdom of priests)
- 1 Peter 2:5, 9
- Revelation 5:10, 20:6

Revelation 1:7

- Daniel 7:13-14 (coming in clouds)
- Zechariah 12:10
- Matthew 24:30
- Acts 1:11

Revelation 1:8

- Isaiah 44:6 (Alpha and Omega)
- Revelation 21:6, 22:13

Revelation 1:9

- Romans 8:17 (suffering for Christ)
- 2 Corinthians 1:7
- 1 Peter 5:1

Revelation 1:10

- Ezekiel 3:12 (Spirit's influence)
- Acts 20:7

Revelation 1:11

- Revelation 2–3 (the seven churches)
- Zechariah 6:10

Revelation 1:12

- Zechariah 4:2 (lampstands)
- Matthew 5:15

Revelation 1:13

- Daniel 7:13, 10:5
- Matthew 26:64

Revelation 1:14

- Daniel 7:9, 10:6

Revelation 1:15

- Ezekiel 1:7, 43:2
- Daniel 10:6
- Psalm 93:4

Revelation 1:16

- Judges 5:31
- Isaiah 11:4, 49:2
- Hebrews 4:12
- 2 Thessalonians 2:8
- Revelation 19:13-15

Revelation 1:17

- Isaiah 41:4, 44:6, 48:12
- Daniel 8:17-18, 10:9-19

Revelation 1:18

- Psalm 68:20
- John 11:25

Revelation 1:19

- Daniel 2:28, 2:45
- Revelation 4:1, 22:6

Revelation 1:20

- Zechariah 4:2
- Matthew 5:15 (lampstands as churches)