

If you don't dig into the text, you will never find more than what you have already seen in the past. You are not trying to interpret or apply yet, you are simply observing. This is part of:

Step 1: Grasping the Text in Their Town – What did the text mean to the biblical audience?

A. Repetition of Words – Many times this gives clues to the main point.

Does it repeat itself in next sentence?

How many times does this word occur in this passage?

Does it have a definite article?

What other word is repeated?

How many times is that word repeated?

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵ For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. ⁶ If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. ⁷ Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort. Which word repeats itself in the first sentence?

B. Contrasts – Differences. Look for items, ideas, or individuals that are contrasted with each other.

What is being contrasted?

What is the point of the contrast?

Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Ephesians 5:8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

1 John 1:5-7 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

C. Comparisons – Similarities. Look for items, ideas, or individuals that are compared.

What is being compared?

What is the point of the comparison?

Proverbs 25:26 Like a muddied spring or a polluted fountain is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.

James 3:3-6 If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. ⁴ Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵ So also the tongue is a small

member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell.

D. Lists – More than two things is a list.

Is there any order to the list?

Are the items grouped in any way?

1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

Romans 8:29-30 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

E. 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.*

What is the cause listed?

What is the effect of the cause?

Is there more than one set of cause-effect relationships?

John 3:16-18 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

F. Figures of Speech – Images in which words are used in a sense other than the normal, literal sense.

- The Bible has many figures of speech, which requires learning or reviewing the various forms.
- What is a figure of speech? A use of words in other than their ordinary sense, place, manner, or arrangement, and intending other than their straightforward, literal meaning.
- A figure of speech is a designed and legitimate departure from the laws of language, in order to emphasize what is said.
- Why use figures of speech? They add beauty, variety, and force to a composition. They are for the purpose of emphasis. Therefore, we cannot ignore or neglect them.
- The real sense and truth are found in the figure, not in the bare, literal word meanings.
- Ignoring figures of speech has led to great errors, as some take the literal figuratively and others take the figurative literally.

Visualize the image, what do you see?

What image is the author trying to convey with this figure of speech?

1. Simile - a figure of speech that draws comparison by correspondence or resemblance.

Revelation 1:14 The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire

2. Metaphor - a figure of speech that makes a comparison by actual representation.

Deuteronomy 4:20 But the Lord has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.

3. Hyperbole - a figure of speech consisting in exaggerated or extravagant speech used to create a strong impression and not intended to be understood literally.

Judges 7:12 And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the East lay along the valley like locusts in abundance, and their camels were without number, as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance.

4. Irony - a figure of speech using words to express something other than, and especially the opposite of, the literal meaning.

1 Corinthians 4:8 Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you!

5. Euphemism - the use of good or acceptable words for bad or offensive things or subjects.

Daniel 5:6 Then the king's color changed, and his thoughts alarmed him; his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together.

6. Dysphemism - (opposite of euphemism) uses harsh/offensive words instead of pleasant or acceptable ones.

Philippians 3:8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

7. Anthropomorphisms - gives physical attributes to God, which graphically present His character.

Job 4:9 By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger they are consumed.

Exodus 3:20 So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go.

8. Personification - where an abstraction or spiritual concept or thing is given personal traits.

Proverbs 1:20-22 Wisdom cries aloud in the street, in the markets she raises her voice; ²¹ at the head of the noisy streets she cries out; at the entrance of the city gates she speaks: ²² "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge?

9. Parable - an extended simile or metaphor with the comparison vague enough to make it dark.
Matthew 13:1-23

G. Conjunctions – These are words like: *and, for, but, therefore, since, because, etc.* Very important, don't skip them. These are the mortar that holds the bricks of the text together. Determine what role they are playing in the sentence. What purpose do they serve? Often, conjunctions are the key to identifying many of the things we have already talked about.
Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...

H. Verbs – The action of the sentence. An active verb is performed by the subject. A passive verb is performed upon the subject by another.

What tense is the verb (past, present, future)?

Is it a command (imperative)? Is it a statement of fact (indicative)? Is it active or passive?

Is it continuous action?

Imperative = A command (Ephesians 4:22-24 above)

Indicative = A statement of fact (Ephesians 2:5; John 3:16) God did this.

Why does it matter?

Colossians 3:1-4 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Romans 8:29-30 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

I. Pronouns – Determine who or what the pronoun is referring to.

Singular or Plural?

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

Philippians 1:29-30 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰ engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Go back to the text over and over again and find more and more observations. This forces you to discover details.