

## More on Biblical Interpretation

### The five C's of Interpretation

- C \_\_\_\_\_

### Culture

Every part of the Bible is set with a cultural and historical background.

We naturally tend to see the Bible through the eyes of our current culture and norms.

#### Open question

How many cultural and historical differences can you name between living in the US today and the first century AD in Palestine when Jesus walked the earth?

How about when Abraham lived, or Moses, or Daniel, or Nehemiah, David, Samson, Elijah?

### Consultation

This means using secondary sources in studying the Bible

Question: Parts of the Bible have been studied as the source of knowledge of the one true God for thousands of years, and the completed scriptures for nearly 2000 years. How likely is it that others in that time have recorded their thoughts on the meaning of scripture and how likely that some of those thoughts may be profound and enlightening?

CAUTION: Secondary sources should always be seen as tools, not ultimate truth. The order of study is always Biblical text first and other sources second. These all represent someone else's thoughts. Remember from last week, all scripture is Spirit given and understood in the Spirit.

Here are some tools

#### 1. Study Bible

- a. Some have wide margins to make your own notes...don't be afraid to mark it up
- b. Many have cross references, notes at the bottom, maps in back, abridged concordance.

2. Concordance
  - a. An unabridged concordance is a great tool. Keep it on your desk.
  - b. There are many good ones, but Strong's and Young's are two.
3. Bible dictionary...like it says, words in alphabetical order.
4. Bible handbook or almanac
  - a. Very helpful in understanding historical and cultural context
5. Biblical Atlas...for exact geography with historical accuracy
6. Bible commentaries. Know your authors and purposes. Ask for help.

It's the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Who uses books?

Logos software...incredibly helpful but quite expensive.

Exercise:

Clear your mind of all you might know about Jonah and read Jonah 1:1-3. Does this all make sense to you? What questions do you have?

Let's look at Acts 15. Read vs 1-2. Questions were raised and council called. Now look at the final conclusions of the council Acts 15:29. Does that strike you as an odd conclusion? In answering, consider what the prevailing Roman culture looked like and what the early church looked like (see Acts 13:13-16). The food issues were also discussed extensively in 1 Corinthians. Read 1 Cor 10:31-33. Does this shed light on the council's decision?

Do you see that understanding these passages requires comparison, context, culture and historical background (found in consultative sources)?