

Lesson 13 Notes – 03/06/2008

The Study of Words

Characteristics of Words

1. Range of meaning
2. Only one meaning in each context
3. Context helps determine meaning
4. Words have histories
 - a. Roots, prefix, suffix
 - b. Original meaning or usage

Which Words to Study

1. Ultimately... ALL
2. Technical terms
3. Obscure, rare or unknown (to you)
4. Pivotal words in a context
5. Repeated words in the context
6. Controversial & doctrinal terms
7. Those translated differently in other passages or translations

Doing a Sample Word Study – Ephesians 3:16-22

1. Focus on just three words in the Greek text, using an interlinear Bible, an expository dictionary, and an exhaustive or Greek-English concordance
2. **Surpasses** – 3:19
 - a. Greek: *huperballo*
 - b. Defined:
 - 1) Huper + ballo
 - 2) Exceed, go beyond the limits, “hyperbole”
 - c. Other passages:
Ephesians 1:19; 2:7
2 Corinthians 3:10; 9:14
 - d. Insert definition back into passage
3. **Imagine** – 3:20
 - a. Greek: *noieo*
 - b. Defined: consider, think, understand, perceive, comprehend, imagine
 - c. Other passages:
Ephesians 3:4
Matthew 15:17; 2 Timothy 2:7; Hebrews 11:3
 - d. Insert definition back into passage
4. **Immeasurably More**
 - a. Greek: *huper-ek-perissou*
 - b. Defined:
Huper – over, beyond, more
ek – from, out, over
Perissos – exceedingly, beyond measure
 - c. Other passages: 0
Perissos – Matt. 27:23; Mark 10:26; Acts 26:11

- d. Insert definition back into passage
- 5. We can see, by substituting definitions back into this passage, that Paul is using hyperbole to emphasize how great is God's activity on behalf of the church. For example, "*He (God) is able to do 'over and above that which is over and above that which is beyond measure more' than we could ask or 'think or comprehend or perceive.'*"

Using Commentaries

1. A commentary is essentially the writings of someone else who has done the same work you are being trained to do! They have examined the background, context, literary structure and grammar, and words of the passage; determined the author's intended meaning for the original recipients or hearers; then tried to make suitable application of that meaning to us today.
2. **Why not use commentaries. . . before doing your own research?**
 - a. Robs you of the joy of discovery. Reading the comments of others is like going to the market and buying a fish, rather than going fishing to catch the fish. The end result may be the same, but the knowledge, experience and satisfaction very different.
 - b. Not fulfilling your God-given task to reading and understanding His Word for yourself. It is not just for the experts (commentators) to do.
 - c. Hearing the commentator first is likely to "poison the well" or "prejudice the jury" so that you do not independently decide for yourself the meaning of the passage.
 - d. There is no guarantee the commentator is more likely than you to properly exegete the passage.
3. **Why to use commentaries. . . after thoroughly doing your own research?**
 - a. Brings additional scholarship to bear on the explanation and interpretation, especially for very difficult or confusing passages.
 - b. Give additional insight, or corrects unintended error or mistakes in your interpretation. Best by far to have multiple commentaries to hear a (possible) variety of explanations.
 - c. Gain new insights and areas for research and study. "Two heads are better than one."
4. Kinds of commentaries
 - a. Remember our earlier discussion of relevant Biblical research resources:
 - 1) Those with good, conservative *scholarship*
 - 2) Those with a recent *date*
 - 3) Consider carefully the *perspective and bias* of the author
 - 4) How *useable* is the arrangement of the book
 - b. Beware those who are championing a specific doctrinal point, or focus strictly on one viewpoint, not seriously acknowledging other possible explanations.
 - c. One or two volume whole Bible commentaries – very brief, not overly useful.
 - d. One author sets – maybe good, but perhaps no variety of perspectives.
 - e. Multiple volumes with multiple authors – each hopefully an expert in his particular book or section of Scripture.
 - f. Popular or devotional commentaries – not much background or context, usually an emphasis on present application without first demonstrating the original meaning.
 - g. Teaching commentaries – special editions designed with questions, study helps, and illustrations for Bible class teachers to use. Again, may not have much background.