

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION - REVIEW

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

Rule 1: *Work from the assumption that the Bible is authoritative*

Rule 2: *The Bible interprets itself; Scripture best explains Scripture*

Rule 3: *Saving faith and the Holy Spirit are necessary for us to understand and properly interpret the Scriptures*

Rule 4 - *Interpret personal experience in the light of Scripture and not Scripture in the light of personal experience.*

Rule 5 - *Biblical examples are authoritative only when supported by a command*

Rule 6 - *The primary purpose of the Bible is to change our lives, not increase our knowledge*

Rule 7 - *Each Christian has the right and responsibility to investigate and interpret the Word of God for himself.*

Rule 8 - *Church history is important, but not decisive, in the interpretation of Scripture.*

Corollary - *The church does not determine what the Bible teaches; the Bible is to determine what the Church teaches.*

Rule 9 - *The promises of God throughout the Bible are available to the Holy Spirit for the believers of every generation.*

GRAMMATICAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

Rule 10 - *Scripture has only one meaning and should be taken literally.*

Rule 11 - *Interpret words in harmony with their meaning in the time of the author.*

Rule 12 - *Interpret a word in relations to its sentence & context*

Rule 13 - *Interpret a passage in harmony with its context*

Rule 14 - *When an inanimate object is used to describe a living being, the statement may be considered to be figurative*

Corollary - *When life and action are attributed to inanimate objects, the statement may be considered figurative*

Rule 15 - *When an expression is out of character with the thing described, the statement may be considered figurative*

1) *A word cannot mean more than one thing at a time*

2) *When at all possible, a passage should be interpreted literally*

Rule 16 - *The principle parts and figures of a parable represent certain realities. Consider only these principle parts and figures when drawing conclusions*

Rule 17- *Interpret the words of the prophets in their usual, literal and historical sense, unless the context of manner in which they are fulfilled clearly indicates they have a symbolic meaning. Their fulfillment may be in installments, each fulfillment being a pledge of that which is to follow.*

HISTORICAL RULES OF INTERPRETATION

Rule 18 - *Since Scripture originated in an historical context, it can be understood only in light of Biblical history.*

Rule 19- *Through God's revelation in the Scriptures is progressive, both Old and New Testaments are essential parts of this revelation and form a unit.*

Rule 20 - *Historical facts or events become symbols of spiritual truths only if the Scriptures so designate them.*

THEOLOGICAL RULES OF INTERPRETATION

Rule 21 - *You must understand the Bible grammatically before you can understand it theologically.*

Rule 22 - *A doctrine cannot be considered biblical unless it sums up and includes all that the Scriptures say about it.*

Rule 23 - *When two doctrines taught in the Bible appear to be contradictory, accept both as scriptural in the confident believe they will resolve themselves into a higher unity.*

Rule 24 - *A teaching merely implied in Scripture may be considered biblical when a comparison of related passages supports it.*