

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXEGESIS

### IMPORTANCE

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88 B.g.

Exegesis is one of the most important phases of the work of the Bible student. Whether his purpose is to understand the Bible for himself, or to make it plain to others, he must engage in exegesis. The Greek word from which our word exegesis comes, means "to lead" or "to lead out", and this provides the clue to the real meaning of the idea. The science of exegesis has three functions which should be noted at the start:

- (1) to bring out the meaning of a given passage
- (2) to guard against errors
  - a. errors of partial exegesis
  - b. errors of eisegesis
- (3) to test a completed exegesis by its rules in order to prove its correctness.

In the theological seminary curriculum, exegesis is one of the most important disciplines. In the logical order, exegesis follows and therefore presupposes the disciplines of introduction, higher and lower, language study, and apologetics. It therefore assumes that the Bible has been accredited as a divine revelation, that the canon and text have been established, and that the original languages are at the command of the student. Exegesis, as the science of interpretation, precedes and therefore is the indispensable prerequisite for the sciences of Biblical theology and systematic theology. It is the function of practical theology to make usable all the information gleaned from the foregoing disciplines in the ingathering of souls and the edification of the Church.

### Form of Exegesis

Outline.--Set forth the thought of the writer by a concise and clear analytical outline (your own of course!) of the content of the passage. This is best obtained from a grammatical analysis of the text.

Introduction.--Make a study of the context: that is the location of the passage with reference to the life of Christ (Harmony) and its location in the particular Gospel in which it is found. Sometimes not only the immediate context but that of larger sections--even of the whole book--must be summarized.

Exegesis Proper.--This consists in a verse by verse analysis of the text. Discuss the vocabulary and syntax for the purpose of showing how a careful treatment of these unfolds the meaning of the writer's statements. As far as mechanics go, adhere to the standard writing manuals for the correct form in footnotes and bibliography. Graduate students must follow the form for footnotes and bibliography laid down in Kate L. Turabian's, A Manual for Writers of Dissertations, pp. 15ff, 49-52. Undergraduates would find these forms practical and useful.

Conclusion.--Give the essential teaching(s) or emphasis(es) to be found in the passage. What is the significance of the truths discovered for Christian doctrine and for Christian living?

Bibliography.--Make a list in alphabetical order of the works used.

### Procedures in Making an Exegesis

1. Study the context (See Introduction above). Note the development of the thought (analytical outline). Revise this outline if need be after you have completed your actual exegetical studies.

2. Go through the passage verse by verse. Put down every word which a study of its usage and meaning would help to make clear the force of the word in the particular context in which you find it. Be selective. Note the important words. Also write down your opinion concerning the grammatical constructions to be found in the passage: case uses meaning and significance of prepositions, functions of adjectives, use and significance of articles and pronouns, verb uses (Voice, mood