

## A review of grammar...the importance in understanding words...

Bible study is no more than careful reading, taking notes, and reflecting on the information. God's intent is to speak to us through His Word and in a manner that would capture our hearts. Observation is simply a careful survey of the content.

**TIP:** While the Bible is Holy, its pages are not; so mark it up with notes!

### What does the word / term mean?

How does the author **use** the word or term here and other places he has authored? What is his intended meaning? Can we assume that we know the author's definition of the word or term?

Example: In John 17:26, John 3:16, and John 14:21 the same word "love" is used towards three groups of people. Does "love" have the same meaning in each of these passages?

- 1) John 17:26: "And I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."
- 2) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."
- 3) John 14:21: " He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

### What was being conveyed by those words to the initial readers (audience)?

Example: In the case of love, everyone can understand the parental distinctions of that love as the parent considers the love for their child, for a familiar child, and for an unfamiliar child. In the above example, the word for "love" was "agapao" which was used identically in each of the verses. In John 17:26 (Jesus is praying), "agape love" is towards His beloved Son; in John 3:16 (Jesus speaks to Nicodemus), "agape love" is towards the human race; and in John 14:21 (Jesus speaks to His disciples), "agape love" is towards Believers. To the Greek speaking audience, it revealed, that unlike them, God made no such distinctions with deep esteeming love; all are His children whether it be His only Son, humanity, or Believers.

### Are there any *similar* words or *opposite* words to help you understand the author better?

Example: Notice how both similar and opposite words are used to convey the meaning of love.

"Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous;

love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly;

it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails...(1 Cor 13:4-8)."

**What is its original Hebrew or Greek?**

Example: Two distinct Greek words, “phileo” and “agapao,” are translated as the same English word “love.” To learn about their distinctions, use a concordance.

One cannot assume that the author uses words with the same meaning as the reader. This is just the first step; there are other factors that affect the meaning of words and how they in turn affect our understanding of ideas and concepts.

**TIPS:**

1. Many words and terms of biblical times cannot be understood today. Bible dictionaries are thus essential references for you Bible study.
2. To find the Hebrew or Greek word from which your Bible translation is based on, learn how to use a concordance. For more information on Bible dictionaries and concordances, see the section “Tools for the Trade.”

Want to learn a better method of reading? Read [How to Read a Book](#) by Mortimer J. Adler.