

Six Areas of Work in Exegesis

Description	Purpose	Major Resources	Result
<p>1. <u>Initial Interpretation</u> Writing out a few sentences telling what strikes you about the text.</p>	<p>To become aware of a focus of meaning in the text or the key problem you want to solve.</p>	<p>The English text read several times in context.</p>	<p>Some thesis to test or some problem to guide your study.</p>
<p>2. <u>Text Criticism</u> Determining from many manuscripts the original text and translating it into good English.</p>	<p>To determine what was on the original author's page and to put it into the language you best understand.</p>	<p>Manuscripts, versions, Early Christian literature quoting the Bible, all as found in the best Greek NT edition's apparatus. Lexicons.</p>	<p>The (most probable) exact words as they were first written.</p>
<p>3. <u>Literary Criticism</u> Isolating the written sources and oral forms and traditions available to the author and tracing the author's redaction of these materials. Determining the degree of literary unity (integrity) and the genre of the author's text, giving due weight to every aspect of the writer's style in word-choice, syntax, imagery, argument and literary context.</p>	<p>To determine what statement the author is making to the original readers.</p>	<p>The text as written. Its written sources if any. Studies of oral tradition. The writer's style throughout this book and in any other books via concordance and grammars. At last resort, monographs and commentaries.</p>	<p>What the way of writing tells about the author's meaning.</p>
<p>4. <u>Historical Criticism</u> Reconstructing the historical events and the underlying social structures implied by the text. Distinctions will need to be made between the time of the origin of the tradition, the time of transmission, and the time of composition of the text.</p>	<p>To determine what events and social structures make up the wider context of the text.</p>	<p><i>The text as "seen through."</i> Histories and other texts written in the period. Archeology. Modern commentaries and histories of the ancient world.</p>	<p>What the text tells about its own time and the time about which it writes.</p>
<p>5. <u>Summary</u> Presenting briefly the author's statement (3) in the context of the author's situation (4) (or an earlier stage of the tradition in its situation).</p>	<p>To bring together the findings of all the criticism above showing how literary statement and historical/social situation are integral to each other.</p>	<p>Your own work above.</p>	<p>What the text meant in its time. What it did then.</p>
<p>6. <u>Reinterpretation</u> Determining an analogous situation today and what would be a corresponding statement in this situation.</p>	<p>To address the text to our situation.</p>	<p>Newspapers. Life. Studies and reflection on modern experience and society.</p>	<p>What the text means today. What it can do.</p>