

C. Realize the true meaning of inerrancy

Anyone who takes Christ's words as normative soon realizes that He teaches the absolute dependability and trustworthiness of every word that God has revealed. Yet it is easy to proceed to interpret inerrancy as assuming the existence of a language possessing such precision as no human language has ever had. God revealed His truth in human words. Inerrancy means that if these words are carefully and properly studied no error will be found; it does not mean that from them complete apprehension of all truth can be expected. Human language being what it is, most sentences have various possibilities of interpretation. If systematic theology is to advance as it should, the various possibilities should be recognized and carefully examined. Sometimes an interpretation that is not immediately obvious may prove to give insights into divine truth that were easily overlooked.

D. Approach every passage with three questions rather than two.

It is natural in dealing with a matter to approach a Biblical passage with two questions: (1) Does it teach that this is true? (2) Does it teach that this is not true? It would be far better if a third question were always kept in mind: (3) Is this a matter with which this particular passage actually does not deal? Such an approach might remove many proof texts from consideration, but could open up vistas of knowledge of supernatural facts that are often overlooked.

E. Consider the relation to temporary situations

Every part of God's Word is intended to give guidance to His people through the centuries. Yet many parts have special relevance for particular situations and are of importance at other times analogically rather than as direct teaching. In discussions of theology and particularly in discussions of morality and ethics