

SEARCH ...

## WHICH INTERPRETATION IS TRUE?

Posted by Ritch | Apr 1, 2017 | The Scriptures



Christians believe the Bible to be God's written testimony to mankind. Because of this, we consider it to be our final authority on faith and life. And while each passage in the Bible is important to us, **they are not all equally clear.**

This is why it is possible for several different people to read the same passage of the Bible and each come away with different interpretations. But there are ways to test which interpretation is true.

We can apply some simple guidelines that already come naturally to us in many other areas of life.

### RECENT POSTS



DOES  
JAMES 2  
TEACH  
SALVATIO  
N BY  
WORKS?

May 30,  
2017 |  
Bible  
Questions



WHICH  
INTERPRE  
TATION IS  
TRUE?

Apr 1, 2017  
| The  
Scriptures



IS THE  
PRE-  
EXISTENC  
E TRUE?

Mar 29,  
2017 |  
Misc



WELCOME  
TO GOD  
LOVES  
MORMONS

Mar 14,  
2017 |  
Uncategoriz  
ed

Here are a few:



DO WE  
STILL  
NEED  
TEMPLES  
?

Mar 7,  
2017 |  
Salvation,  
Temple

## CLEAREST READING

Imagine a man is at work and gets a message from his wife. It says,

█ "Pls be home by 5".

While the man could infer that she means 5 am the next morning or 5 days from now, the most obvious meaning of her text is that she is asking him to be home by 5 pm that evening.

The most natural interpretation is the most likely one.

So when the Bible says "*Abram went down to Egypt*" (Genesis 12:10 <sup>Ⓛ</sup>) it most likely means "Abram went down to Egypt". Simply put, most of the passages in the Bible are not all that complicated.

## CONTEXT:

In order to understand a single line of text in an email, we must first identify who it is from when it was sent, and what the rest of the email says. These bits of critical information from the context of the email and help us to fully understand the meaning of each sentence.

When determining the meaning of verses in the Bible, we should ask questions like,

█ Who said it?  
To whom were they saying it?  
When did they say it  
Why?

Consider this Old Testament passage:

█ "*There is no god.*"


What should we do with a statement like that? Read the full verse, in context:

█ "The fool says in his heart, 'there is no god'." (Psalm 14:1 <sup>Ⓛ</sup>).

Sometimes we can find the meaning of a statement by simply "zooming out", and observing it in context.

## CLEAR PASSAGES INFORM THE UNCLEAR ONES:

Sometimes we encounter passages that are just difficult. Take for instance Jesus' teaching in Luke 14:26 . Here Jesus says,

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26 .

Is Jesus really commanding His disciples to hate people? Of course not. Jesus continually teaches His followers to "love one another", and to show kindness to others. He taught that loving one's neighbor is the second greatest commandment. He even commands us to love our enemies. These clear passages help us understand that in Luke 14 Jesus was saying that we must love Him far more than anyone else.

When we encounter situations like this, we can use the clear passages to inform the unclear ones.

The message of the Bible is not meant to be complicated. And the essential truths that it contains can be sufficiently understood by people of all ages and backgrounds.

God is capable of preserving His Word and providing ways to guard against wrong interpretations. By applying some intuitive and simple rules, we can have confidence in understanding what the Bible actually teaches.

### VERSE REFERENCES



**“God is capable of preserving His Word and providing ways to guard against wrong interpretations. By applying some intuitive and**

simple rules, we can have confidence in understanding what the Bible actually teaches.”

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---



### Ritch

Ritch was born and raised in the western suburbs of Chicago. He served as a U.S. Marine in the Iraq War before returning to Illinois where he met and married his wife (Laura) and served a local church as a pastor for 7 years. In September of 2013, the Sandfords moved to South Jordan, where they planted The Mission Church and created GodLovesMormons.com. They host a weekly Bible study for ex-Mormon Christians, and are actively involved in evangelism in their community.

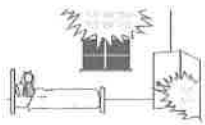
## RELATED POSTS

---



### HAS THE BIBLE BEEN CHANGED?

April 6, 2016



### CAN WE TRUST OUR FEELINGS TO DETERMINE TRUTH?

April 27, 2016