

Week 9 Bible Study: Interpretation Skills Applied to Ephesians 4

This week we want to apply the 17 Interpretation Skills of Message & Meaning to Ephesians Chapter 4. We don't have time to demonstrate all 17 observation methods, but I want to highlight a few.

Message Skill #3 Remember that Context Rules.

Remember the key theme 1/3: **Believers unifying in God/Christ.**

Remember the key theme 2/3: **Believers unifying in doctrine/thinking.**

Remember the key theme 3/3: **Believers unifying in living/acting both positively and negatively.**

Remember the main Theme: Unity of the believers in their (1) understanding of their position in Christ, (2) unity in their doctrine/thinking about the world and the truth and (3) unity in their living out of the truth.

Message Skill #8 Write a Summary Paragraph based on overall intent.

Intent of Ephesians 4: God's desire in the 4th Chapter of the Book of Ephesians was to **exhort the believers to live a holy and godly life, a life that was worthy of his calling.** His desire was that the believers would do so... (1) by understand their great position in Christ, (2) by the renewing of their minds, centering on truth, (3) by turning away from worldly thinking/living (4) by the aid of appointed leaders/guides.

Message Skill #9 Write New Paragraph Summaries based on intent.

Paragraph 1: Verses 1-6: God's desire in Paragraph 1 was that the believers walk in a manner that is worthy of their incredible position in Christ. Furthermore, his intention was to use his servant Paul as a voice piece to show the people why and how.

Paragraph 2: Verses 7-16: God's desire in Paragraph 2 was that the believers would seek out and submit to the people he ordained to help them in their walk and growth. God's desire was that the whole church would grow in the knowledge of Christ, so that they will be able to withstand the schemes and mentality of the world.

Paragraph 3: Verses 17-19: God's desire in Paragraph 3 was that the believers cease walking the way that they used to, as unbelievers. The minds of the unbeliever are still darkened with sin and ignorance and he does not want the believers to continue to think and live that way.

Paragraph 4: Verses 20-24: God's desire in Paragraph 4 was for the believers to walk according to the new knowledge they have about Christ, according to the truth. He wanted them to continually put off their old way of living and put on their new way of life which is holy and pure, as he is.

Paragraph 5: Verses 25-32: God's desire in Paragraph 5 was that that the believers continually put off their old way of life and daily put on their new way of life. God's intent was to show them clear examples of the negative deeds of the flesh that are to cease and the many positive deeds of the Spirit that are to be pursued.

Meaning Skill #3 Review/Re-read the book, focusing on doctrinal truths.

Sample: ¹ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called → **Believers are to walk in a manner worthy of the calling of God.**

Meaning Skill #4 List doctrinal themes and issues in clear/concise statements.

Sample: ¹⁷ you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life → **Believers should not live the way that they used to live, or the way that the world currently lives. Believers are to put away that life style.**

Meaning Skill #6 Arrange doctrinal statements into theological categories.

God the Father

Sample: ⁶ one **God and Father** of all, who is over all and through all and in all. →

God is the Father and ruler of all and he is over all.

Sample: ²⁴ put on the new self, created after the likeness of **God** in true righteousness and holiness. →
God is truly & utterly righteous and holy.

The Holy Spirit

Sample: ³⁰ And do not grieve **the Holy Spirit** of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. → (1) The Holy Spirit has sealed the believer within the salvation of God until the day of redemption. (2) The Holy Spirit can be grieved (and pleased) by the actions of the believer.

Believers

Sample: ¹ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge **you** to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called → The believer is to live their life in a way that is worthy of their new calling/position in Christ.

Sample: ¹³ until **we all** attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ → (1) Believers are to strive for unity in the faith, specifically unity regarding their knowledge of the Son of God. (2) Believers are to ever-grow into mature follower of Christ by thinking & acting more and more like Christ.

Sample: ¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that **you** must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ²² to put off **your** old self, which belongs to **your** former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, → Believers should not live the way that the world lives. Believers are to put off or put away the old kind of life; the prior way thinking and acting they had before Christ.

Sample: ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of **your** minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. → (1) Believers are to regularly renew their mind by centering their thinking on the knowledge they have of Christ. (2) Believers are to regularly put on their new life by thinking and living in a way that is holy & pure, as God is holy & pure.

You can already see that by focusing on these truths, we are not only clearly identifying the **INTENTION** of the passage, but also the **IMPLICATION**...which leads to **APPLICATION**.