

Observation and Structure

Notes from class 4 (Oct 27, 2013)

Analysis of Observation

I Four elements in any Biblical passage:

- Terms
- The relations and interrelations between terms or structure
- The general literary form or forms of the passage
- The atmosphere

A. Observation of Terms

1. Definition of a term.

A term is a word as it is used in a given context. As a term, it has only one meaning, but as a word it might have several meanings.

Example: the word “trunk” in English—main stem of a tree, the main body of something, a box or chest, the back of a car, the nose of an elephant.

Spirit: can mean air, wind, breath, human spirit, Holy Spirit, thought or attitude, or simply the immaterial part of a human being.

2. Kinds of terms

a. Two kinds of terms: ordinary and special.

The ordinary term is a word whose meaning is immediately obvious and is not necessarily significant for understanding the passage. Example: an article.

Special terms: words that should be especially noted and recorded because they require more attention.

Crucial or technical terms which need to be defined and investigated.

Significant terms are words which aid in understanding the thought of the passage.

Other terms which are otherwise important.

James 1:19 ¶ Know this, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;

James 1:20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

b. Literal and figurative terms

Luke 22:18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

John 15:1 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

c. Identification of terms

Grammatical categories: noun, verb, modifier, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections, articles.

The inflection of term: the case of a noun, the tense of verbs

Exercise 1: identify terms in the following and identify each term as ordinary or special, literal or figurative.

Mark 10:13 ¶ Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought *them*.

Mark 10:14 But when Jesus saw *it*, He was greatly displeased and said to them, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Mark 10:15 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.”

Mark 10:16 And He took them up in His arms, laid *His* hands on them, and blessed them.

Exercise 2: James 1:2-18

James

Observation of Structure, the Relations and Interrelations between terms

1. Definition of Structure.

In one sense structure involves all of the relations and interrelations which bind terms into a literary unit.

In another sense structure denotes the framework or skeleton of a passage.

Elements of structure:

- Phrase
- Clause
- Sentence
- Paragraph
- Segment
- Subsection
- Section
- Division
- Book

The structure is the organization of the author's thought so that the reader can comprehend all the dynamics of the author's intended meaning.

2. Structure within a paragraph

a. Structures within a sentence James 1:2-4,

1. Relation of subject to verb. Identify the main verb and the subject. The subject may be unstated, or a noun, pronoun, infinitive, gerund, or a dependent clause.
2. What is the relation between the subject and the verb.
Active or passive
3. What are the sentences in the paragraph?
4. What are the main clauses in the sentences?
5. How do the subordinate clauses relate to the independent clauses?
6. How do the two sentences relate to each other?
7. Create a title for this paragraph. Short, concise.

b. Structure within the second paragraph, James 1:5-8

James 1:5 ¶ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

James 1:6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.

James 1:7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,

James 1:8 *being* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

1. How many sentences are there in this paragraph?
2. What is the first sentence?
List the clauses?
Identify the main verb, the main clause?
3. What are the terms in the first sentence? Which are ordinary, which are special? What are the nouns, verbs, relationship between them?
4. What is the relationship of this sentence to the previous sentence? Do you see any other terms that provide a connection?
5. What is the relation between the second sentence and the first?
6. Observe the terms in the second sentence? Which are the ordinary and special terms? Which are figurative and literal?
7. Now, do this for the third sentence, vss 7-8?
Identify terms
Relations between terms?
Clauses and phrases?