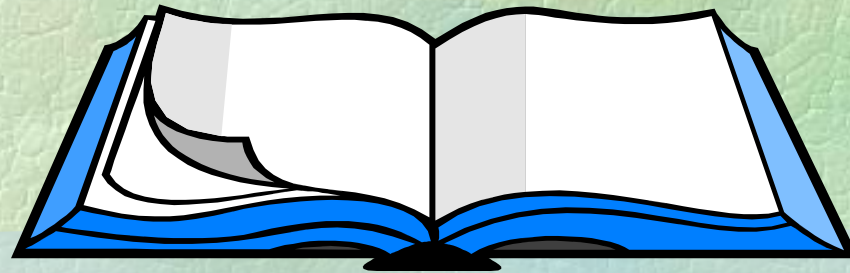


# How To Read The Bible



For All Its Worth!

# Goals For This Class

- To give a basic approach to understanding the biblical text
- To examine historical methods of interpretation
- To consider other methods of interpretation
- To promote unity of shared understanding
- To relate elders' views on interpretation

# Not Goals For This Class

- To ensure everybody believes what I do
- To ensure everybody believes the same thing
- To debate controversial passages of scripture
- To negate or endorse any particular interpretative approach
- To confuse, frustrate, or agitate truthseekers

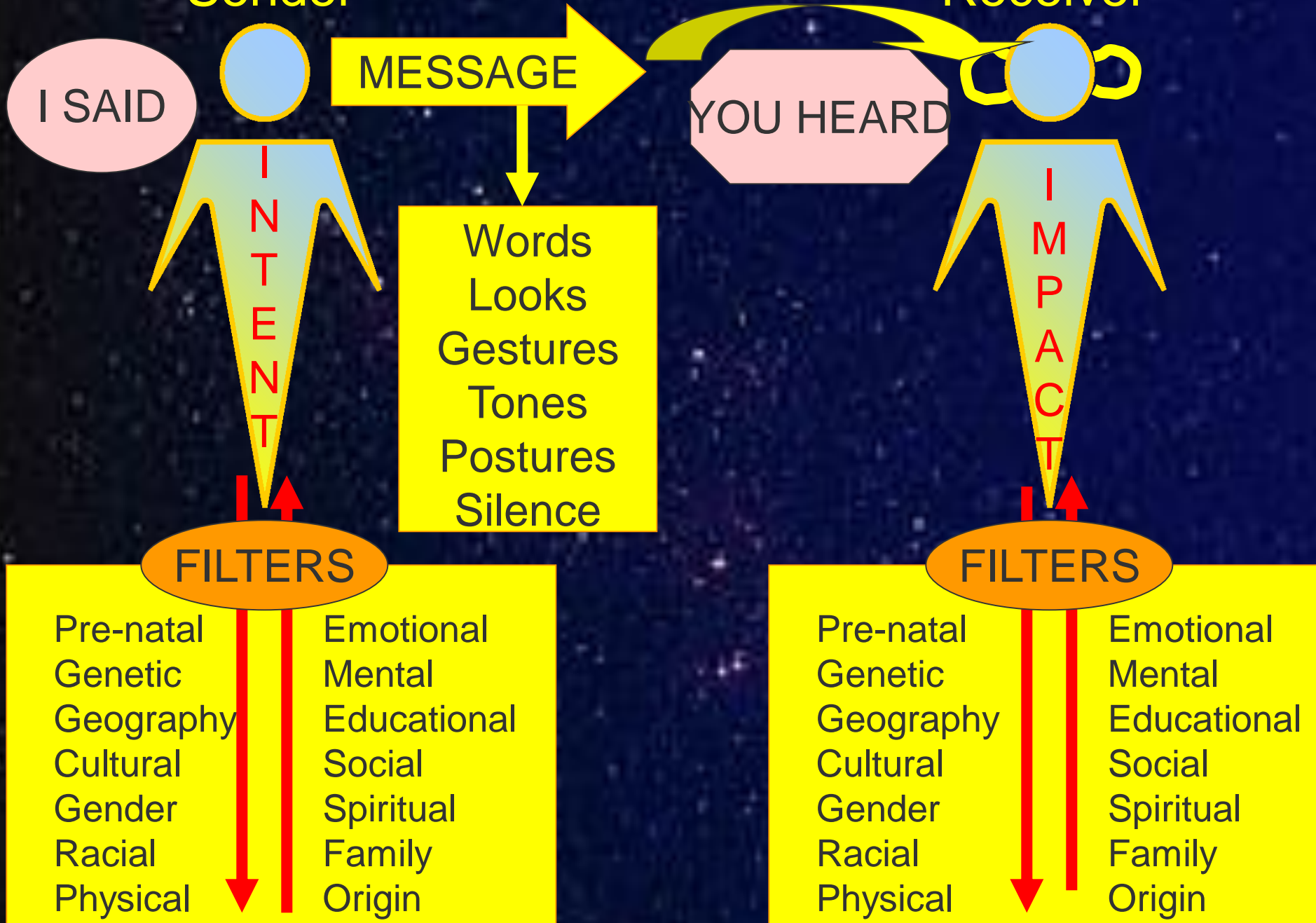
# Biblical Tools And Translations

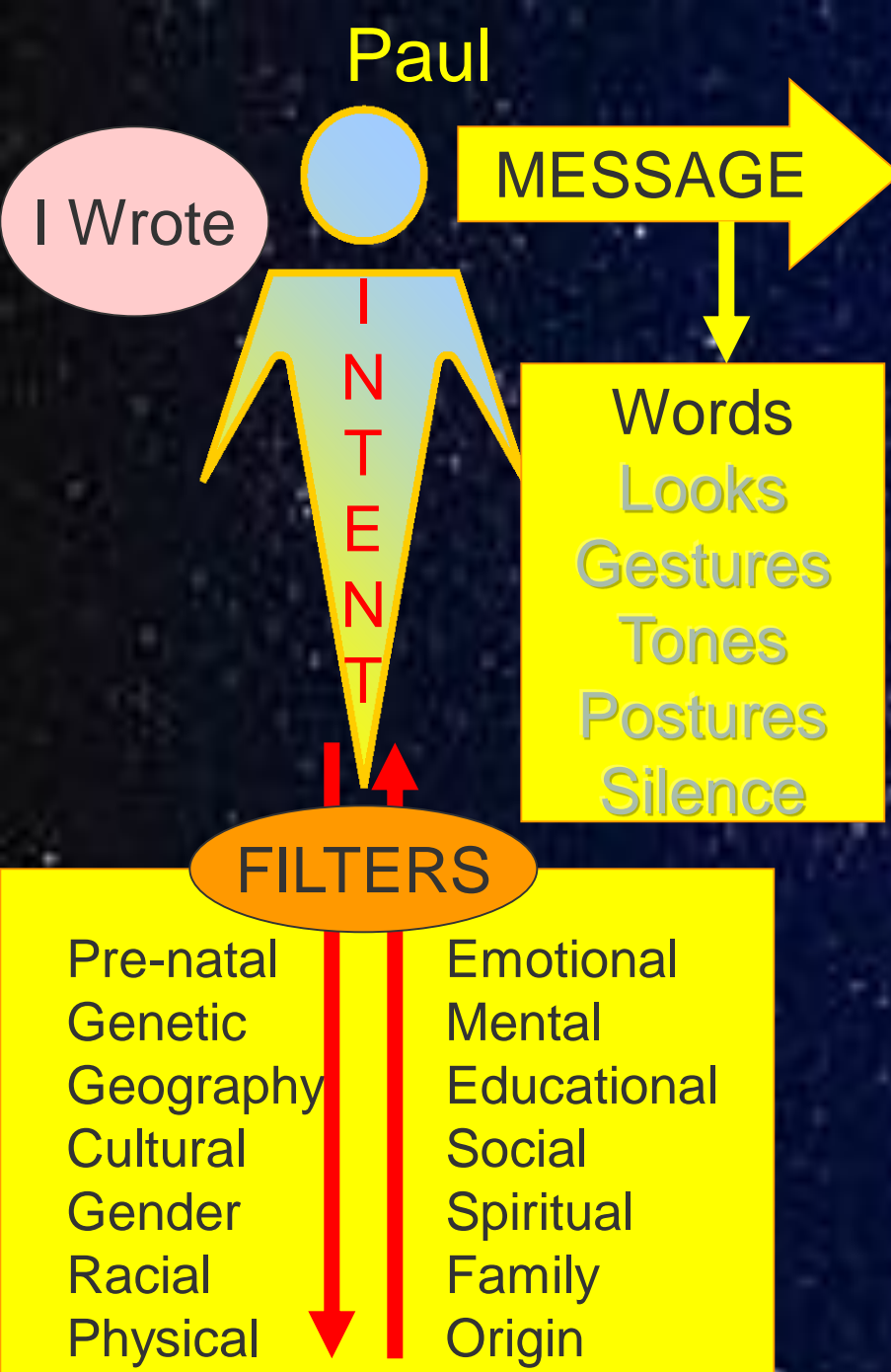
# Biblical Tools And Translations

Why Use Them?

Sender

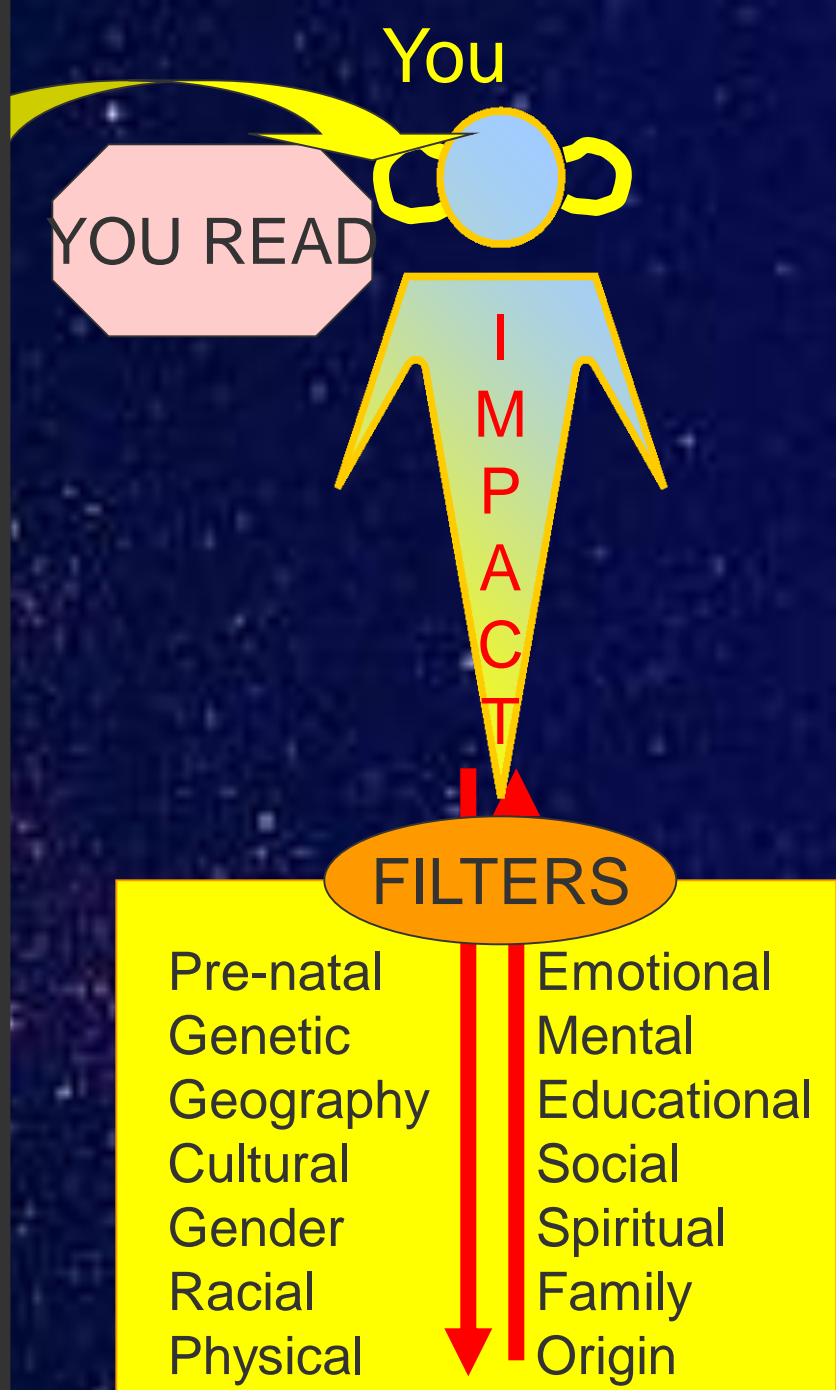
Receiver





Time – 2000 years

Language - Translations



# Basic Tools For Bible Study

- A Good Concordance
- A Good Bible Dictionary
- A Good Bible Handbook
- A Few Good Translations
- A Few Commentaries
- Palm Pilot
- Computer
  - Bible Software Packages
  - Internet Web Sites



# Concordance

- An alphabetical index of all the words in a text or corpus of texts, showing every contextual occurrence of a word
- Most Bibles have a concordance in the back
- Allows you to quickly find most passages containing a particular word
- Probably the most common tool used

# Example of Bible Dictionary Use

The governor ordered them not to eat any of the most sacred food until there was a priest ministering with the Urim and Thummim.

Ezra 2: 63 (NIV)

# The New Bible Dictionary:

The Urim and Thummim were kept in the high priest's breastplate (Ex. 28:30; Lev. 8:8), a pouch fastened to the ephod, and sometimes, with it, simply referred to as "the ephod." By the Urim and Thummim the priest could declare God's will to both leader (Num. 27:21) and people (Deut. 33:8-10).

# Example of Bible Handbook Use

(5)The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

(12)Even one of their own prophets has said, “Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons.”

Titus 1:5, 12 (NIV)

# Halley's Bible Handbook:

An island, also known as Candia, southeast of Greece, on the border between the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas, about 150 miles long, and 7 to 30 wide. The people were kin to the Philistines, thought to have been identical with the Cherethites (I Sam 30:14). Daring sailors and famous bowmen, with a very bad moral reputation.

# Translations



# QUESTION:

Which Translation Is Best ???

**ANSWER:**

**None Of Them!**



# Problems With Bible Translation

- All translations are interpretations
- No original manuscripts exist
- Thousands of handwritten copies of copies
- Later manuscripts differ significantly from earlier manuscripts
- No two copies are identical

# Two Choices A Translator Must Make

- Textual Choices

- which manuscript best represents original text?

- Linguistic Choices

- translate words or ideas?

# Important Points About Textual Criticism

- A science with careful controls
  - external evidence - character/quality of manuscripts
  - internal evidence - authors and copyists
- Not an exact science - human variance
- Late manuscripts (KJV) have more variance

# Example Of Textual Differences

- I Samuel 8:16:
  - KJV: “your goodliest young men and your asses”
  - NIV: “the best of your cattle and donkeys”
- “your young men” = bhrykm in Hebrew
- “your cattle” = bqrykm in Hebrew

# Aspects Of Linguistic Translation

- Original language - Hebrew/Aramaic/Greek
- Receptor language - English
- Historical distance - language differences over time
- Theories of translation - words vs ideas

# Basic Theories Of Translation

- Word for Word - literal translation
- Thought for Thought – dynamic equivalent
- Paraphrase – translate ideas

# English Bible Translation Comparison

Word for Word

Thought for Thought

Paraphrase



- CEV Contemporary English Version
- GW God's Word
- KJV King James Version
- LB The Living Bible
- NAB New American Bible
- NASB New American Standard Bible
- NIV New International Version
- NJB New Jerusalem Bible
- NKJV New King James Version
- NLT The New Living Translation
- NRSV New Revised Standard Version
- OIV Oxford's Inclusive Language Version
- REB Revised English Bible
- RSV Revised Standard Version
- TM The Message

# Word For Word Translations

- Interlinear
- New American Standard Bible
- King James Version
- New King James Version



# Thought For Thought Translations

- Revised Standard Version
- New Revised Standard Version
- New American Bible
- New International Version
- New International Reader's Version
- New Jerusalem Bible
- Revised English Bible
- Contemporary English Version
- New Living Translation
- God's Word

# Paraphrases

- The Living Bible
- The Message
- Oxford's Inclusive Language Version

# Word vs Thought Translation

- 1 John 3:17
  - KJV: “shutteth up his bowels”
  - NIV: “has no pity”
  
- Colossians 3:12
  - KJV: “put on bowels of mercies”
  - NIV: “clothe yourselves with compassion”

# Textual Appearance And Formatting

- Hebrew/Greek - no spacing or punctuation
- KJV/NASB - chapters/verses in block text
- NIV/NLT - paragraphs with headers

# John 21:15 in Greek

15 Οτε οὖν ἠρίστησαν λέγει τῷ  
Σίμωνι Πέτρῳ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Σίμων  
Ἰωάννον ἀγαπάς με πλέον τούτων;  
λέγει αὐτῷ, Ναί, κύριε, σύ οἶδας ὅτι  
φιλω σε. Λέγει αὐτῷ, Βόσκει τὰ  
ἄρνια μου.

## John 21:15 in KJV

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him “Feed my lambs.”

# John 21:15 in NLT

## *Jesus Challenges Peter*

15 After breakfast Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?

“Yes, Lord,” Peter replied, “you know I love you.”

“Then feed my lambs,” Jesus told him.

# Commentaries

1. A series of explanations or interpretations.
2. An expository treatise or series of annotations; an exegesis. Often used in the plural.
3. An apt explanation or illustration: *a scandal that is a sad commentary on national politics.*
4. A personal narrative; a memoir. Often used in the plural.



# Commentary Warning

- Based on the very definition of commentary we must be very careful when using them
- A commentary has been written to support every belief on every subject
- Don't use a commentary to determine what you believe
- Use a commentary to organize your thoughts after you have studied and know what you believe
- I personally choose not to use commentaries

# New Tools Available Today

- Palm Pilot
- Bible Software Packages
- Internet Web Sites

# Questions or Comments?



Next Week:

Hermeneutics: Traditional Approaches