

4. In the light of your work thus far, re-examine your tentative outline and adjust it as necessary. How does the context help in solving the exegetical problems in the text? State your solutions to the problems.

D. Consult secondary sources.

Secondary sources refers to any sort of commentary on your texts. E.g., dictionaries or Bible encyclopedias, monographs on particular topics, journal articles, commentaries *per se*.

1. Read widely. Remember *provincialism is the plague!* Don't be afraid to read those who disagree with you. *Be challenged, It will strengthen you*
2. Revise your views as necessary. Don't be afraid to admit that you have erred. On the other hand, don't be intimidated!

E. Write the paper.

1. Be concerned for style. It is not everything, but it counts a lot. Those with problems in this area would do well to read William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, The Elements of Style (New York: MacMillan, 1979; 3rd ed.) or William Zinsser, On Writing Well (New York: Harper, 1980; 2nd ed.).
2. Be concise and to the point. Most students need to practice tightening up their writing style. Wordiness is a great sin in these matters!
 - a. If you are treating a "problem text," lay out the problem in a few good paragraphs. It is usually helpful to present the major scholarly opinions on the problem.
 - b. Place the text in context. Give a *brief* statement of historical background and then trace the argument of the document leading up to the text.
 - c. Present an overview of the passage and then discuss the crucial points in greater detail. This becomes the "guts" of your paper. Here is where you must defend your particular understanding of the text.
 - d. Summarize and conclude.
3. Quote secondary sources judiciously.
 - a. Know when to quote
 1. when its necessary or important to use the very words of the author
 2. when you want a clear and convincing presentation of the argument
 3. when you desire psychological impact
 4. when the author says it better than you can