

# Basic Rules for Interpretation of the Scriptures... or Any Document

1. A document, or passage should be taken at its face value, unless:
  - a. It is unclear on its face;
  - b. It's intent is more clearly understood in the larger context of the whole;
  - c. It's intent is more clearly understood in the context of the practices and customs existing at the time of its writing and unique to the parties addressed in the document or passage.
2. The context for any Scripture verse or passage is both the specific book in which it occurs and also the entire Bible.
3. When interpretation of a passage is in question, that interpretation that is most clearly consistent with the entire Bible should be sought.
4. A "fact value" interpretation should be accepted, except where the context clearly calls for a figurative, spiritualized, or allegorical interpretation.
5. Current thoughts, traditions, customs or practices should not be used to re-interpret the intended meaning at the time the passage was written.
6. The Bible must stand complete and with integrity as a whole, and not be seen merely as a collection of dissertations, unrelated, or fragmented parts.
7. When a passage explains itself, that is the explanation of the passage. Other meanings devised by man, based on inference is dangerous pretext. Remember - "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." II Peter 1:20.

## **Rules of Evidence**

1. An untampered document whose authorship is known is the best evidence.
2. A primary document, ie, Bible, statute, etc, always supersedes secondary documents, ie, expert opinions, anthologies, histories, etc.
3. An original (primary) document is of greater probative value than an eye witness.
4. An eye witness is more probative than an expert witness as to the essential facts.
5. An expert witness is to be believed only if consistent with other stronger evidence, ie, primary documents or eye witnesses.
6. Circumstantial evidence is admissible for consideration but ought not trump primary documentary evidence.

EXAMPLE:traditions, practices, customs, patterns

Circumstantial evidence is not direct evidence but requires the observer to draw an inference.

*Presented by...*

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P.O. Box 70879 • Richmond, Virginia 23255 • (800) SAVE USA • (804) 754-1822 • [www.saveus.org](http://www.saveus.org)