

Suggested Exegesis Format Reggie Kidd, RTS/Orlando

- A. Table of Contents (do not start page numbering here)
- B. Introduction — Why the church, the world, &/or scholarly world need(s) to hear from this passage today
- C. Background Issues (in conversation with conservative and critical scholars)
— In addition to Carson et al, consult at least the NT introductions by Donald Guthrie (conservative), W. Kümmel (critical), H. Koester (critical), and L.T. Johnson (literary)
 1. Authorship
 2. Setting and Audience
 3. Date and Occasion
 4. Theological Questions
- D. Translation and Text Criticism
- E. Literary Context — Preliminary statement of the way the text fits into the flow of thought of its book
- F. Analysis — At this point you have to decide what kind of format works best with your passage: verse by verse? paragraph by paragraph? topic by topic? mixed? Signal your reader very clearly as to what approach you are taking. Include the following:
 1. Historical & Cultural
 2. Lexical
 3. Syntactical
 4. Literary — your passage's *contribution* to the flow of thought
 5. Theological
 6. Comparison of your analysis with that of other interpreters
- G. Conclusion — Summary of your findings and their impact on the church, world, &/or scholarly community; i.e., “So what?”
- H. Endnotes (if you are not using footnotes — and it is my preference that you employ the latter rather than the former).
- I. Bibliography

Common Problems in Exegesis Papers:

- Inattention to the writing itself — please try to write clearly, concisely, and cogently. Words and sentences are the tools of your trade — learn to wield them well.
- Not considering textual variants in Nestle-Aland.
- Not providing a translation (students occasionally simply print one of the standards).
- Not doing basic lexical work — I seldom see BAGD cited, much less Louw & Nida, *New Documents* volumes, or Spicq's theological dictionary.
- Not consulting theological & Bible dictionaries — TDNT, NIDNT, Anchor, ISBE.
- Over reliance on a handful (3-5) of commentaries.
- Not researching journal articles, monographs, dissertations.
- Simply not working through the syntax of the passage.

- Not dealing with Silva's treatment (*Explorations*) of the passage or issues relevant to the passage.
- Way, way too much attention to introductory matters, and not enough to the text!!!

Strong suggestions (hint, hint):

- Duh! Avoid all the above "Common Problems"!!!
- Pay attention to the relative length between A.-E., on the one hand, and F. , on the other — students tend to leave themselves too little time and space for F. "Analysis" (F.) should be at least two-thirds of the paper. It means you are going to have to summarize a lot of the introductory and background material you have worked so hard to include in your exegetical notebook. Welcome to the pastorate, where, when you go into the pulpit, you always feel you have to leave your best stuff on the desk in your study.
- You need to consult theological dictionaries, journals, dissertation abstracts, monographs — and more commentaries than the normal 3-5. The good exegesis papers always dig deeper. I can almost predict how good a paper is going to be by looking first at its bibliography — if it is full, and then if the sources listed are used in the paper, it tends to be a pretty strong paper. And I can guarantee you that I will indeed look first at your bibliography.
- Take apart the syntax of the passage. Significant uses of case, of participles & infinitives & subjunctives, of aspect — all these need to be addressed.
- If you don't write particularly well, get a coach.