

Hermeneutics A

Virgil Warren, PhD

- A. Interpretation of texts often comes in terms of the assumed overall viewpoints, more than by the requirements of the text under discussion. Hence, we can't solve the problem itself because we are not dealing with the whole viewpoint that gives credence to the idea on this text.
- B. One approach to an unacceptable view is to show that each text used to support it can be handled in a way that fits with another view. When all the texts so used have been addressed in this way, no basis remains for the questionable idea. So, it is not a matter of *disproving*, but of showing that the other view cannot shoulder its positive burden of proof; so the view is at best a matter of opinion because it is a viewpoint based on inadequate evidence.

A couple of notes, though. The objections to each text should themselves fit together with an alternative viewpoint. Someone with another take on these several passages needs to shoulder his *own* positive burden of proof for that other view. Additionally, any proposed idea must fit with the text and context under consideration.

The total task calls for establishing the overall viewpoint that will in many cases in turn dictate the possible meanings for the texts in question. At the level of the whole (viewpoint) is where it is particularly important to have primary proof more than confirmatory evidence; otherwise, the interpretation process is rooted in the (1) interpreter's personality rather than in (2) the Big Picture or in (3) specific clear texts.

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