

Joshua Anderson – Grasping God’s Word – Assignment 10

1. Explain the difference between *reader response* and *authorial intent*.

The different of these two main line of thoughts shape how a text is interpreted, where they are different is the *reader response* claims that the reader determines the meaning as they interact with text and does not considered the authors influence, compared to *authorial intent* that stresses the author determines the text – so the reader only discovers the meaning that is already there.

2. Why is the issue of communication important to the discussion of *authorial intent*?

When we consider that the Author’s (both the physical author, as well as God who inspired the text - when discussing the bible) reason for writing is to communicate a message to the reader, we realize the text left without such authorial intent would leave no text at all.

So when we come to a text we must do our very best at putting aside the question of “what does this text mean to me?” and rather ask “what is the meaning of God intended in this text?”, as He breathed out the scriptures through the Holy Spirit with & in the earthly Authors - to communicate something to us as the reader.

3. Discuss several situations whereby a reader may intentionally change an author’s intended meaning.

When it comes to changing the meaning of a text it can be done in various ways, many ways which should be considered intentional, however due a mixture of naivety, ignorance, unawareness changes could be made seemingly unintentionally.

Once such example could be when we don’t like the meaning of text, when talking of the bible when a biblical truth doesn’t match our desires or views, we can twist the meaning to suit us better. Or it could be that our biblical truth doesn’t fit in with our preunderstanding of a belief, law or how we understand who God is in character or in essence - that a scripture “couldn’t possible mean that”.

Another example of one person changing a meaning of a text intentionally is when a text is not considered as communication, but rather as entertainment or pleasure etc. For example we may disregard the meaning of a song’s lyrics (text) because we like the tune and its catchy so we sing along to it anyway, although it may not align with who we are as a person we throw out the meaning altogether. Or maybe we intentionally change the meaning of a lyrics in a song to a mean something else that makes it suitable, changing a songs mean to for example “singing to Jesus in giving my whole life to Him”, instead of giving your heart on the whim of a one-night-stand that’s often sung of in songs!