

4. Skill in interpretation or understanding

It is commonly said in many educational circles today that ~~it does not matter~~ there is not great point in one learning facts, but ~~it~~ the important thing is that he learn to think. This is only a half truth. For any type of work it is necessary that a certain amount of basic material be thoroughly mastered. Yet it is even more important that one learn to interpret this material and new material that he acquires and to understand its real bearing. Four phases of this might be mentioned. First, of course, is the matter of interpreting the Scripture. There is a very great amount of poor interpretation of Scripture and many highly educated people are involved in it. To interpret verses correctly, not merely in relation to the exegesis of a few particular words, but in ~~the relation to the~~ the nearer and larger context and to the whole question of the Christian life is a very great importance, and this is a skill which should be constantly stressed during the seminary course.

It is also vital that one learn to correctly understand various religious problems and to deal with them as they occur. In every church there will be new problems arising. From time to time, new matters become vital in whatever area a person is working. He should be able to go to the Scripture and to understand the particular viewpoints and to reach the reasonable conclusion as to what attitude he should take on every problem that arises. This ~~is~~ is an ability which simply will not come of itself. While it is helpful to hear an able professor discussing problems and see how he does it, this is not enough. One must have practice himself in handling problems and reaching satis-