

Come across an unusual word in Scripture? Not quite sure of the meaning? How it fits? Perhaps these steps will be of some help!

1. Determine the meaning of the word at the time the author wrote it. For instance, today we use the word “hope” to refer to a wish: When Paul wrote, the word meant something much different: a future certainty not yet realized. That’s why, in Romans 12:12, we are told to “rejoice in hope”. You rejoice in certainty, not in a possibility/wish.
2. Investigate how the same author used the word in other places:
 - In the rest of this book
 - In other Biblical books
3. Research how other biblical writers used the term.
4. Run a search on how extra-Biblical writers of the same era used the term.
5. Double-check to make sure that found meaning aligns with the surrounding context.
6. Possibly search it in the LXX (the Greek translation of the Bible) or Greek literature of the time.

As an example, the word, “world” in Scripture is used in several different ways:

- Romans 1:20: planet earth
- Mark 8:36: materialism
- Romans 12:2: secular society
- John 14:17: lost souls
- Romans 1:8: a limited geographical region
- Matthew 24:14: an unlimited geographical region
- Matthew 13:22: a secular mindset
- John 12:25: the earthly realm

These sites might be of help in your further studies:

[Lexicon at Blue Letter Bible](#)

[Lexicon at Bible Hub](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions at Blue Letter Bible](#)

[Got Questions Website](#)