The Interpretive Journey

OBSERVATION

**Step 1 – Consider the Meaning in Their Town**

*-What is the genre?*

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

*-Who is the author/recipient?*

*-What events caused the author to write this?*

LITERARY CONTEXT:

*-What does each paragraph mean?*

*-What words are repeated?*

*-What words are translated differently in different translations?*

*-What are the main theological truths stated?*

*-What are the main commands given?*

**Step 2 – Compare the Contexts**

INTERPRETATION

MAKE A LIST OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEIR CONTEXT AND OURS.

-Is it New or Old Testament?

*-Is it about Israel or the church?*

*-Is the Spirit of God dwelling in people yet?*

*-Has Christ provided atonement for sin yet?*

-What are some of the unique aspects of the situation that may or may not be present today?

*-What specific struggles with sin are people having?*

*-What events are unique to their context?*

*-What heart attitudes or emotions can be present today?*

**Step 3 – Name the Main Principle**

*-What is the theological principle driving the text? (in 1-2 sentences)*

(Should be: timeless, not culturally bound, Biblical, and relevant)

**Step 4 – Consult the Scriptures as a Whole**

-How does our theological principle fit with the rest of the Bible?

APPLICATION

*-Where else is our theological principle addressed in the Bible?*

*-Does it get altered later in the Biblical narrative?*

**Step 5 – Consider and Apply the Meaning in Our Town**

-How should Christians today live out the theological principle?

*-How do you apply it to your specific circumstances?*

*-What should you think/feel/believe/do because of this principle?*

*-How should this alter what you pray?*

*-What is the danger of not embracing this principle?*