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?*