### The Process of Interpretation and Application of Scripture

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<td>o Who is the author?</td>
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<td>o What was the author’s spiritual background and experience?</td>
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<td>o To whom was the author writing?</td>
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**History and Culture**
- What are the general historical circumstances?
- What are the general cultural norms and circumstances?
- What is the spiritual condition of the audience?

**Purpose**
- Does the author explicitly or implicitly state his purpose (intent) in writing?
- What explicit statements or phrases are repeated or emphasized?
- What does the author instruct or encourage the readers to do?
- Which issues does the author emphasize? Which issues does the author omit?

**Immediate Context**
- What are the major blocks of material? How do they fit into a coherent whole?
- How does the passage fit into the flow of the author’s argument?
- What is the perspective that the author intends to communicate (noumenological – the way things really are; or phenomenological – the way things appear to be)?
- Is the passage stating descriptive or prescriptive truth?
- What constitutes the teaching focus of the passage and what represents incidental detail only?
- Who is the person or category of persons for whom the particular passage is intended?

**Language and Syntax**
- What is the general literary form?
- What is the development of the author’s theme? How does the passage fit into the context?
- What are the natural divisions of the text (paragraphs and sentences)?
- What are the connecting words within the paragraphs and sentences? How do these words aid in understanding the author’s progression of thought?
- What do the individual words mean?
- What is the range of meaning that the word possessed in its time and culture?
- What is single meaning intended by the author in its given context?
- How does the syntax contribute to the understanding of the passage?

**Literary Form**
- Are there explicit references that indicate the author’s intent regarding the method he was using?
- If not, are there clues in the passage that indicate its literary form?

**Types of Literary Forms**
- Apply rules of interpretation that apply to specific literary forms:
  - Similes
  - Metaphors
  - Proverbs
  - Parables
  - Allegories
  - Prophecy
  - Apocalyptic Literature
  - Types

**Theology**
- What is your own view of the nature of God’s relationship to human beings?
- What are the implications of this theological view for this passage?
- What was the extent of theological knowledge available to the people of that time?
- What previous theological knowledge had been given (the Analogy of Scripture)?
- What meaning did the passage possess for its original recipients in light of their theological knowledge?
- What additional theological knowledge is available to us now about this topic because of later revelation (the Analogy of Faith)?
- What other (perhaps clearer) passages and teachings do you need to consider in your interpretation of this passage?

**Interpretation Comparison**
- How does your interpretation compare with that of other interpreters?
- What modifications, corrections or expansions need to be made to your interpretation as a result?

**Principles**
- Based on the analyses, what are the principles that the passage was intended to teach?
- Based on the analyses, what principles (descriptive truths) illustrated within the passage remain relevant for the contemporary believer?

**Transmission**
- What is the principle behind the command?
- Based on the reason given for the principle, is the principle trans-cultural or culture-bound?
- If the principle is trans-cultural, does the same behavioral application in our culture express the principle as adequately and accurately as the biblical one?
- If the behavioral expression of a principle should be changed, what is the cultural equivalent that will express the God-given principle behind the original command?

**Summary Paraphrase**
- Paraphrase the results of your analysis into nontechnical, easily understood words that clearly convey the author’s intended meaning to the English reader.

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