

Describe the five steps of the Interpretive Journey

Step 1: Grasping the text in their town

In one or two sentences distil the meaning of the text for the biblical audience.

This is done with a careful reading of the text for key words & phrases, grammatic structure & nuances, as well as being informed by the literary context (style and how its places in the greater text) and the historical context (related to the writer, audience, geography, social customs & economic/religious/political understanding of the time).

Step 2: Measuring the width of the river to cross

Look for and identify the significant differences between our situation and the situation of biblical audience, to measure the width of the river that separates us from moving straight from meaning in their context to meaning in ours.

This is done with by comparing the differences in culture, language, situation, time, and often covenant.

Step 3: Crossing the principlizing bridge

In one or two sentences develop the theological principle/s that we use to cross over the river of difference between our situation and the situation of the biblical audience.

This is done by identifying any similarities between our situation and the situation of the biblical audience. Then reviewing the differences in light of the similarities return to the meaning for the biblical audience to identify the universal theological principle/s of the text.

Step 4: Consulting the biblical map

Survey the rest of the bible to see how your developed theological principle/s of the passage fit with the rest of the bibles teaching, to fine-tune and/or prove your principle/s.

This is done by reflecting between the passage and the teachings of the rest of bible; looking for consistency, insight or qualification of the theological principle/s developed in light of the rest of the bible (keeping in mind what the New Testament through the work & power of Christ adds or clarifies of God's intent) adjusting our principle/s as necessary.

Step 5: Grasping the text in your town

Identify how should individual Christians today live out the theological principle/s in our different situations & life circumstances.

This is done by considering the applications of the principle as it intersects across age, responsibilities, ability, gender, opportunity, and culture we operate in etc etc....

What are the guidelines for developing theological principles?

We must always remember the theological principle/s if part of the meaning.

The principle/s should be reflected in the text, timeless and not tied to a specific situation, not be culturally bound, correspond to the teachings of the rest of the bible and should be relevant to both the biblical (their town) and the contemporary (our town) audience.

What are the differences that determine the width of the river to cross?

The width of the river can be like a narrow creek or extremely wide river differing greatly from passage to passage even within the same body of text (e.g. the book of romans).

By comparing the differences in culture, language, situation, time, and often covenant we can gauge just how big a bridge is required to cross the river, if any, to discover what God meant for all peoples, everywhere, at all times.

Thank you Joshua for completing this assignment. Well done.

As discussed last night, the use of an example can help illustrate with width and depth of the river we're trying to cross. Do you have a particular example that immediately comes to mind to help illustrate a case of something experienced or given to the biblical audience or situation, and what the prescriptive parallels might be for the follower of Christ today.

Perhaps, as you mention the book of Romans, you could cite an example from there.

Again, thank you for an excellent assignment.

John 24/03/2025