

### **3. Influences on Interpretation**

Anyone who reads the Scriptures even casually does not come to it in a vacuum. Every reader brings things with them that affect their reading and interpretation of the Biblical text. Most do it subconsciously. It is almost automatic. Interpreters of the Word of God must be conscious of those influences. Some of those influences can be benign, or even of benefit. Others can cause erroneous, or even heretical, interpretations. What are those influences? How can they affect the reading of the Scripture?

#### **a. Personal**

The reader's family situation and upbringing can have an effect on their understanding of the Scriptures. This is more than just whether a person was brought up in a Christian household or not. A person's relationship to their father, or even mother, could have a serious effect on how they view God as Father. Someone with a kind and generous father may have an easier time seeing God that way. Someone with an abusive father may have trouble seeing God as anything but cruel. Someone who never knew their father, or their father was absent, may have even greater trouble understanding the fatherhood of God in relationship to the Christian. Broader family problems may have similar impacts.

A person who carries tremendous guilt in their lives could skew in many different directions as they approach the Scriptures. Someone who has led an incredibly sinful life could have trouble believing that God is a God of mercy. Another may find comfort and hope in reading of God's great forgiveness.

The exegete's level or kind of education will certainly have an effect on their interpretation of Scripture. This does not mean that a person with more education will find interpreting the Scriptures easier than a person with little education. In fact, it can be quite the opposite. Often, education fills the mind with concepts and ideas that are anti biblical in the areas of philosophy, history, political sciences, anthropology/sociology, and science. On the other side, someone with a lower level of education may have trouble with language, cultural differences, or theological concepts. Each one comes with their own challenges and benefits.

Geography and culture have a large effect on understanding. A person living in the Middle East today will have an easier time with the geography and climate of the Scriptures. Some cultures are closer to the way things were in Biblical times. Some cultures do not have sheep or wheat, so these concepts require more explanation. In other cases, how our culture and legal systems may be so different from the world of the Bible that further study is required to get the deeper meaning. The human authors of the Scriptures make assumptions about the knowledge and background of their readers that simply do not apply today. This requires work. This kind of work will be discussed further on in this study.

#### **b. Theological Background**

Every reading of the Bible has some sort of theological foundation, even if it is no theological basis at all. However, most people have some sort of religious context to their lives that will

either impede or assist in their understanding of the Word of God. For a person who theological background is some sort of Christian, they must be careful of theological bias. This is related to the concept of eisegesis. Eisegesis is when the interpreter “reads into the text” their own person perspective on the text, rather than letting the text speak for itself.

An example of this is the dispensational doctrine of the rapture and their interpretation of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

*13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*

*15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

Randy White of DispensationalPublishing.com admits:

*Recently I studied again the rapture passage, [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#). As I studied it, I became more and more convinced that the timing of the rapture can be argued from this passage alone. It cannot be proven from this passage alone, for such would take an explicit declaration within the text itself, which the text does not contain. However, a strong argument can be given from this passage alone.<sup>46</sup>*

R.C. Sproul

*It seems that Paul’s goal here was to comfort the Thessalonians, who were saddened that their dead loved ones were apparently going to miss the triumphal return of Christ, the great conclusion to the ministry of Jesus at the end of time. Paul assured them that the dead in Christ will not miss His return at all. In fact, they will be there first. The dead will rise first, and then those who are still alive and are Christ’s will be caught up together with this whole assembly to come to the earth again in triumph.<sup>47</sup>*

R.C. Sproul also gives this warning.

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<sup>46</sup> <https://dispensationalpublishing.com/pretrib-argument-from-1-thessalonians/>

<sup>47</sup> <https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/what-is-the-rapture>

*I once spoke with one of the leading representatives of this school of thought, a man who teaches the “pretribulation” rapture. I said to him, “I do not know a single verse anywhere in the Bible that teaches a pretribulation rapture. Can you tell me where to find that?” I’ll never forget what he said to me: “No, I can’t. But that’s what I was taught from the time I was a little child.” I told him, “Let’s get our theology from the Bible rather than from Sunday school lessons we heard years and years ago.”<sup>48</sup>*

### **c. BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE**

The amount of knowledge a person possesses about the Bible as a whole has a profound influence of his or her understanding of particular parts. Case in point

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<sup>48</sup> <https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/what-is-the-rapture>

## 4. Basic Rules of Interpretation

### Exegesis, Eisegesis, and Hermeneutics

It is important that before considering the rules of interpretation to use correct terminology in order to understand the task at hand. Fee and Stuart provide the following definition of ‘exegesis.’

*“The first task of the interpreter is called exegesis. Exegesis is the careful, systematic study of Scriptures to discover the original, intended meaning. This is basically a historical task. It is an attempt to hear the Word as the original recipients were to have heard it, to find out what was the original intent of the words of the Bible.”<sup>49</sup>*

Exegesis is the front end of the interpreter’s task. It will be repeated many times throughout this book that a passage cannot mean for the contemporary reader something that would be out of line with the original audience. Contemporary relevance is connected to the original meaning and original intent. Authorial intent is essential in discovering meaning. The reader needs to know what the author said and try to determine why the author said it. This flows into the next term ‘hermeneutics.’ Fee and Stuart offer a definition of that as well.

*“Although the word ‘hermeneutics’ ordinarily covers the whole field of interpretation, including exegesis, it is also used in the narrow sense of seeking the contemporary relevance of the ancient text.”<sup>50</sup>*

The interpreter must avoid eisegesis. Barry Cooper on Ligonier.org offers this definition of eisegesis.

*Eisegesis literally means “to lead into”, as in “leading our own ideas into the text”. The opposite is “exegesis”, which means “to draw out”. So eisegesis is when we “read something into” a biblical text that may not actually be there.<sup>51</sup>*

In the prior section, both personal and theological background were discussed as factors to consider during the interpretive task. Both can cause the interpreter to do eisegesis rather than exegesis. The variety of interpretations of 1 Thessalonians 4 demonstrates eisegesis. The practice of proof-texting can lead to eisegesis. This is when someone has a doctrine or Biblical concept in mind, and they look through the Scriptures to find “proof” that the Bible supports their position. Everyone proof texts to some degree. The problem is that it can cause the reader to ignore context and other factors in order to make a verse say what they want it to say. Taking a verse out of its context is dangerous. Sometimes it will create the opposite meaning of what the verse might say when the context is understood. This is eisegesis.

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<sup>49</sup> Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart. How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth. Zondervan. 2003. p 23.

<sup>50</sup> Fee and Stuart. p 29.

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.ligonier.org/podcasts/simply-put/exegesis-and-eisegesis>

*Philippians 4:11-13*

*11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

## **Grammatico-Historical vs Redemptive-History Methodology**

The method that this book will adopt is referred to as the Grammatico-Historical method of interpretation. The Grammatico-Historical method is defined as a method of interpretation of Scripture considering the grammatical aspects of a given texts such as words, phrases, context, and genre; as well as historical aspects such as authorship, date written, culture, and audience.<sup>52</sup> Louis Berkhof in his work Principles of Biblical Interpretation expounds on this hermeneutic well. This method will be further expounded throughout the book as it is applied to the interpretation of specific Bible genres.

However, there is another method that is adopted by some in Reformed circles called the Redemptive Historical method (RH). William Denison, a proponent of the redemptive-historical hermeneutic, defines it as follows.

*Simply, the redemptive-historical hermeneutic is interpreting revelation in the manner in which it was revealed. Specifically, God is creator, author, and interpreter of his revelation in the process of redeeming his people. Hence, the redemptive-historical hermeneutic is the most Biblical hermeneutic or method of preaching because it enters into the exact same unfolding pattern in which God himself records his infallible Word and interprets his works. —<sup>53</sup>*

While the Redemptive-Historical model does have some things to contribute to the understanding of Scripture, including seeing the Scripture as one continuous story of redemption, there are some problems with it. One great criticism of the RH hermeneutic is its failure to see Scripture, particularly the Old Testament, in any exemplary way. Dr. Al Baker addresses the issue.

*Here is the major problem with redemptive-historical preaching. It is a general failure to apply specifically and directly the passage preached. In fact Schilder and Howerda taught that the preacher is to leave the application of the sermon to the Holy Spirit, that to suggest specific steps of application is unbiblical.<sup>3</sup> I am sure there are some exceptions to the norm, but the redemptive-historical preachers I have heard are pretty light on application. The result is anemic application. Instead of preaching for a verdict, making clear a specific course of action which is demanded, drawn from the text itself, the congregation is left with something akin to going to Starbucks and being asked by the Barista, 'Would you like the latte with decaf or regular coffee?' In*

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<sup>52</sup> Definition is the authors.

<sup>53</sup> <https://kerux.com/doc/2101A2.asp>

*other words, the issue for the redemptive-historical preacher is more about new information about Jesus, making Jesus the hero of every text, than getting one's life straight.*<sup>54</sup>

Interpreting the Bible, especially the Old Testament, in a Grammatico-Historical (GH) way, does not mean that the interpreter does not understand Biblical Theology or a text's place in Redemptive History. RH interpreters often coopt Biblical Theology as only leading to a RH interpretive method. GH interpretation values the study of Biblical Theology as a discipline and interpretive tool. In fact, it is critical for a proper understanding of the Scriptures. It is part of Historical in Grammatico-Historical.

Grammatico-Historical interpretation looks for Christ and God's redemptive plan in interpreting the text. GH interpreters look for types, signs, prophecies, etc. The difference is that the GH interpreter also understands that a passage may tell us more about the character of the Father, the fallenness of man, or provide examples for us to emulate or avoid. The apostle Paul writes about the Old Testament examples for us.

*1 Corinthians 10:6-13 (NKJV)*

*<sup>6</sup> Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. <sup>7</sup> And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." <sup>8</sup> Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; <sup>9</sup> nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; <sup>10</sup> nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup> Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.*

*<sup>12</sup> Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. <sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

The apostle Paul certainly understood the Old Testament accounts as lessons for the New Testament people of God. Some of their actions served to warn us of the consequences of our sinful actions. Others are examples of covenant faithfulness. These cannot be ignored. However, RH hermeneutic has one thing to keep in mind. Every sermon needs to lead to the gospel and/or Christ's redemptive. Even passages that are highly exemplary show the reader their need for a savior. A proper application of any Scripture should not be simply moralistic. Again, Dr. Al Baker writes on this matter.

*Without sanctified restraint any preacher can take any text and make application to any of his favorite topics. And because the application in moralistic preaching is not always derived from the text, the body of the sermon lacks authority and unction. It comes across as a self-help manual,*

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<sup>54</sup> <https://banneroftruth.org/us/resources/articles/2018/redemptive-historical-preaching-and-the-decline-of-the-preaching-of-repentance/>

*often denying the God-centered reality the preacher should be urging us to follow. This further undermines the need for Christ's penal atonement in preaching. Moralistic preaching leads to preachers simply telling their congregants to 'clean up your life, be kind to your neighbor, and do good to the poor.' It robs Christ of the glory due to him in his person and work.<sup>55</sup>*

## THE ANALOGY OF FAITH

One very important hermeneutical principle is called the "Analogy of Faith." The Westminster Confession of Faith describes this.

*WCF 1.9. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.*

*WCF 1.10. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture. (Matt. 22:29, 31, Eph. 2:20, Acts 28:25)*

The term "analogy of faith" comes from Romans 12:6

*Romans 12:6*

*<sup>6</sup> Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;\**

“””

\* (kata ten analogian tes pisteos)

*Some commentators mistakenly interpreted "faith" objectively here, in the sense of doctrine, and looked upon analogian as the designation of an external standard. Correctly interpreted, however, the whole expression simply means, according to the measure of your subjective faith. Hence the term, as derived from this passage, is based on a misunderstanding.<sup>56</sup> – Louis Berkhof.*

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<sup>55</sup> Baker. "Redemptive-Historical Preaching"

<sup>56</sup> Berkhof, Louis. Principles of Biblical Interpretation. Monergism PDF edition. 146-157

Early Church Fathers used the term to mean the general principles of faith, but it eventually became to used of the creeds of the church and church tradition. This is why the writers of the Westminster Confession of Faith included sections 9 and 10 in chapter 1. The Analogy of Faith as rightly applied by Reformed interpreters of Scripture involves two important points.

First, that Scripture interprets Scripture. This means that we can use clearer parts of Scripture to help us to interpret less clear parts of Scripture.

Second, Scripture cannot contradict itself.

*“If the Scripture be what they claim to be, the word of God, they are the work of one mind, and that mind divine. From this it follows that the Scripture cannot contradict itself.” – Charles Hodge<sup>57</sup>*

Louis Berkhof has four principles for applying the Analogy of Faith

*When employing the analogy of faith in the interpretation of the Bible, the interpreter should bear the following rules in mind.*

*(1) A doctrine that is clearly supported by the analogy of faith cannot be contradicted by a contrary and obscure passage. Think of 1 John 3:6, and the general teaching of the Bible that believers also sin.*

*1 John 3:6*

*<sup>6</sup> Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.*

Whenever this verse is compared to the rest of Scripture, it is clear that John is not making an absolute statement, but a comparative statement.

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<sup>57</sup> Hodge. Systematic Theology. 170.



*(2) A passage that is neither supported nor contradicted by the analogy of faith may serve as the positive foundation for a doctrine, provided it is clear in its teaching. Yet the doctrine so established will not have the same force as one that is founded on the analogy of faith.*

*(3) When a doctrine is supported by an obscure passage of Scripture only, and finds no support in the analogy of faith, it can only be accepted with great reserve. Possibly, not to say probably, the passage requires a different interpretation than the one put upon it. Cf. Rev. 20:1–4.*

#### *Revelation 20:1-3*

*<sup>1</sup> Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; <sup>3</sup> and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.*

*(4) In cases where the analogy of Scripture leads to the establishment of two doctrines that appear contradictory, both doctrines should be accepted as Scriptural in the confident belief that they resolve themselves into a higher unity. Think of the doctrines of predestination and free will, of total depravity and human responsibility.<sup>58</sup>*

#### **AN EXAMPLE: Romans 4 and James 2**

##### *Romans 4:1-4*

*<sup>1</sup> What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup> For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” <sup>4</sup> Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.*

##### *James 2:14-26*

*<sup>14</sup> What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? <sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? <sup>17</sup> Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

*... <sup>23</sup> And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God. <sup>24</sup> You see then that a man is*

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<sup>58</sup> Berkhof. Biblical Interpretation. 147-148.

*justified by works, and not by faith only.*

*...<sup>26</sup> For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

These two passages appear to contradict one another. Paul in Galatians clearly states that man is justified not by faith, but by works. James says that faith without works is dead, and that man is justified by faith and works. The first thing to keep in mind is the Scripture cannot contradict itself, so there must be a way to handle both passages together. Let's look at some other passages that discuss faith and works.

*Galatians 2:15-16*

*<sup>15</sup> We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, <sup>16</sup> knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.*

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*Romans 3:27-28*

*<sup>27</sup> Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. <sup>28</sup> Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.*

These two passages clearly teach that justification (the declaration of God's righteousness before God) does not come by keeping the Law. When Paul speaks about works, he has in mind the efforts of those who are trying to be justified by keeping the Law (moral, civil, and ceremonial). Paul's point is that no one can be justified by the Law because no one can perfectly keep the Law. It is only through Christ's keeping and fulfilling of the Law for us (including his substitutionary death for us) that we can be declared righteous by FAITH and not Law keeping. When James writes on the idea of faith and works, he has a different aspect in mind.

*James 1:22-25*

*<sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup> For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup> But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.*

James is concerned for those who claim to be in Christ but have not evidence. When someone come to faith in Christ, a work of the Holy Spirit takes the sinner from death to life. Anyone who is in Christ should show signs of life in the Spirit. James says if someone claims to have faith but does not love God's law, how can they say their faith is genuine. Genuine faith produces fruit in keeping with repentance (Matthew 3:8) The Apostle John makes a similar point when talking about the believer's relationship to sin.

*1 John 2:1-6*

*<sup>1</sup> My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. <sup>3</sup> And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. <sup>4</sup> Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, <sup>5</sup> but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: <sup>6</sup> whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.*

All believers in Jesus Christ continue to sin until they are perfected in the sight of God. John wants his audience to understand that while they may still sin, that can not long be the pattern of their life. One verse helps to put all of these ideas together.

*Ephesians 2:8-10*

*<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Paul tells the Ephesian believers that they are saved by faith in the work of Christ not their own works, while at the same time saying that the believer is save UNTO good works. God saved sinners to give Him glory through their obedience. The believer does not earn salvation through their works, but their works serve the purpose of evidence of faith and the glory of God.

This is how we use the unity of Scripture and the clearer passages to help us with the less clear passage.

## **LEARNING TO LOOK**

Pneumonic devices are a popular way to aid in memorization. The LOOK methods will guide the interpreter with basic steps in the interpretative process. These are general principles for using the Grammatical-Historical method. The genre specific points follow in later chapters.

### **Language**

Language deals with the Grammatical aspects of the passage. Here the exegete is looking at the genre of the passage. Prose is read differently than poetry or prophecy. A letter has its own challenges that the Gospels do not, and vice versa. As each genre is examined in the later half of this book, the challenges of each genre will be addressed along with keys for understanding and applying them.

At this point, the exegete will find it useful to read the passage from multiple translations. Four or five solid English translations will help the readers to get at the original languages before ever looking at the Greek or Hebrew text. Multiple translations will reveal words that may be difficult to translate, have multiple meanings, or have a broader meaning than one English word can capture. This is not meant to replace the use of original languages, but only direct their study in the original languages

The interpreter should outline the passage to understand its logical flow. Look for changes in topic and tone. Look for transitional statements. Look at how the author structures his writing. As you look for the main point of the section, identify the subpoints. What subpoints does he make to prove his main point?

Look for repeated words, phrases or themes within the passage, but also from the larger context of the book. Repetition, especially in Hebrew literature, is a form of emphasis. If a word is repeated, it may be meant to focus the reader's/listener's attention on the concept. It could also be a play on words, or the same word used in different ways. When considering large portions of scripture or whole books, repetition of themes is key for identifying the author's purpose for writing the particular Biblical book.

### **Occasion**

Occasion means looking at the historical and cultural features of the passage. The exegete should notice places where the cultural, geography and historical landscape are different from the modern day. They should notice historical, geographic and cultural features that may directly affect meaning.

It is important to recognize the intended primary audience. To whom was the author writing? What was their situation? Was the intended audience in the same situation as those in the account? This could be the case in historical books. How would they have received this book? Primary and Secondary Audience -The text cannot mean for us what it could not mean for them

### **Outside**

Once initial observations have been made, it is time to look outside of the text for help in understanding and interpreting the text. The exegete may consult lexicons and grammars, Bible software, commentaries, histories, encyclopedias and dictionaries. Lexicons, grammars, and software will help to sort out any linguistic issues. Good commentaries will help with language, context, and cultural issues; as well as interpretations and applications that the commentator has made. Commentaries are not meant to do the work for the exegete. Commentaries are tools. Commentators can be wrong. Commentators can disagree. Older commentators may not have some cultural or historical information that more recent ones have. Commentators are also a product of their times and training. Their works will be reflective of what is happening in their word as they are writing. Their theological stance will be evident in their commentary as well. The exegete should evaluate what the commentator says against their own training and reading of the Scripture. Good tools are great. Not every tool is a good tool.

This is also the stage where the interpreter should look for other portions of the Scriptures that may add additional insight to the passage. The Analogy of Faith enters at this point. Cross references, footnotes and Bible software are tools that help in this endeavor. Sometimes commentators will point the exegete to other related passages. A look at the immediate context of the passage at hand is wise. What immediately precedes or follows the passage can be key in understanding the relevance of a given passage.

### **Keys**

At this point, the exegete should be able to identify the keys of the passage. This is really a summation of everything that the exegete has learnt up to this point. Who are the key people? What do they have to do with advancing the narrative or making the author's point? Are there key details that the author uses to communicate their message? What are the key ideas and key themes? How did the author communicate them?

The exegete is ready to begin translating the key points, ideas, and themes to the modern Christian's context. The details may not be the same, but the essence of the passage has something to say to be people of all times and places. The movement from interpretation to application begins.