

INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE TODAY

The Interpretive Model

As the community of MB Churches in Canada, “we accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God and the authoritative guide for faith and practice” (Article 2, *MB Confession of Faith*). When reading the Bible, we bridge the gap between what we understand the text meant in its original context and what we discern the text means today.

We recognize the foundational authority of the Scriptures, the role of the Spirit, and the identity of the community as the primary interpretive context. We emphasize both the meaning of the text and the living out of the text. To this end, the interpretive model that we use incorporates the three core elements of **Bible**, **Spirit**, and **Community**, and the three core relationships of Authority, Understanding, and Discernment.

The Interpretive Method

In practice, interpreting Scripture involves four stages that interact with each other on multiple levels:

Posture – How do we approach the Bible?

How do we adopt a posture that helps us be receptive to hear God speak through Scripture?
How do our own situations and experiences provide a lens for reading the Bible?
How does our culture and tradition shape our perspective and expectations regarding what the Bible says?

Interpret – What is the Bible’s meaning?

How does the genre of a biblical book guide our reading?
How do we engage in a close reading (grammatical/historical exegesis) of a biblical text?
How is a particular text understood within the larger biblical context?

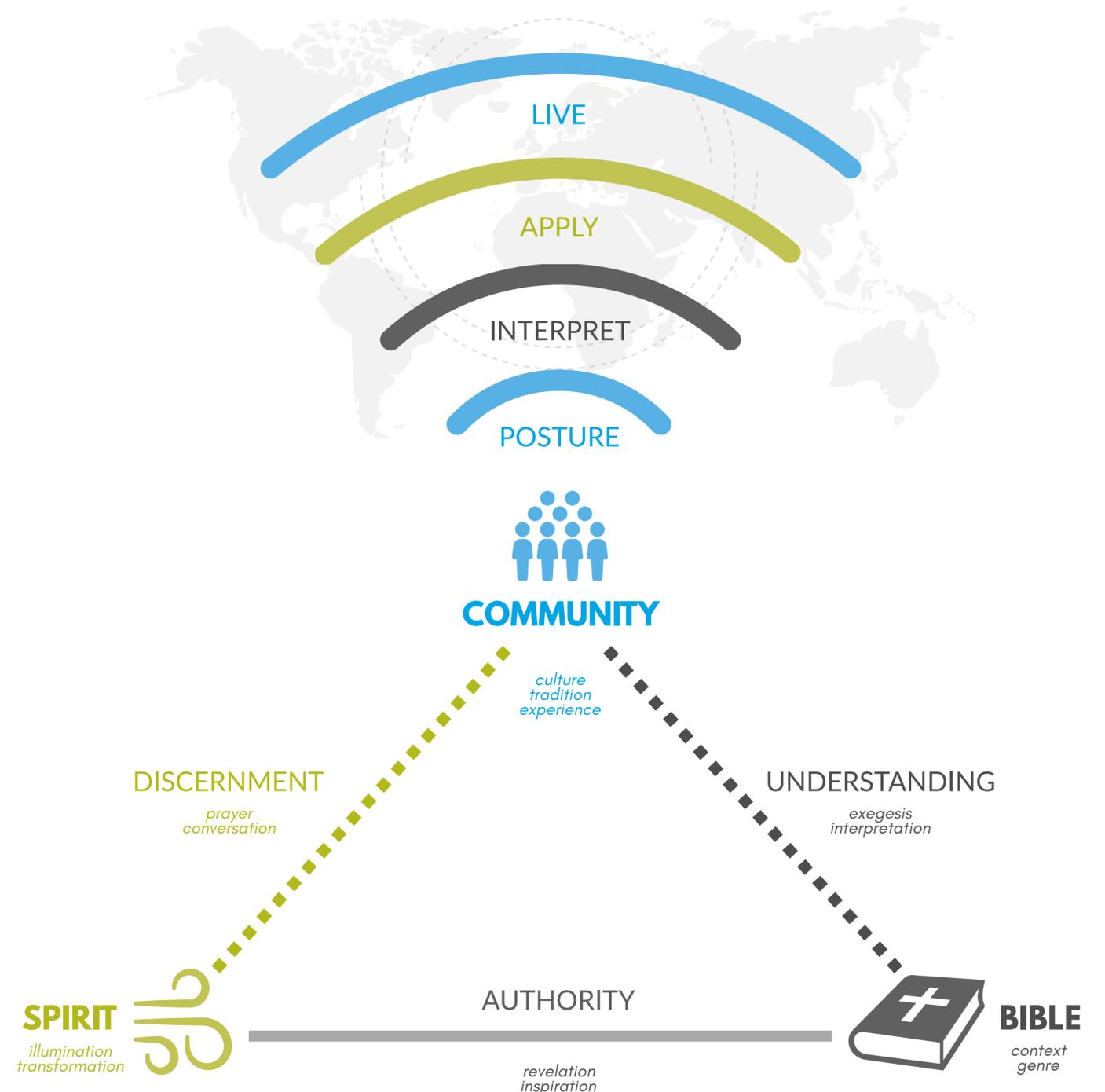
Apply – How does the Bible relate to us?

How does Jesus, as the Living Word, bring clarity to the significance of the biblical text?
How do we bridge the historical and cultural distance between ourselves and the world of the Bible?
How does the Spirit guide the community in its discernment and application of the Bible’s meaning?

Live – How do we then live?

How do we faithfully follow Jesus as his disciples and obey his commands?
How does the Spirit transform us—our character, perspective, and values—into the image of Christ?
How do we putting into practice what God is saying to us through Scripture?

FOLLOWING JESUS



We believe that the entire **Bible** was inspired by God through the **Holy Spirit**...who guides the **community** of faith in the interpretation of Scripture. (Article 2, *MB Confession of Faith*)