



God's System for Spiritual Growth: Principles from the Doctrine of the Grace Apparatus for Perception, Stages 1-2

The Grace Apparatus for Perception

- 1) *Grace* refers to the policy of God which supplies to the believer all that is necessary to comprehend His divine plan and purpose.
- 2) *Apparatus* refers to the process by which a systematized activity is carried out. God's plan is organized. He has a system by which the human mind can attain cognizance of His thinking. This system contains a *grace apparatus* that leads to *perception* of divine thought.
- 3) This grace apparatus enables perception to occur in four stages:
 1. **Stage 1:** the pastor studies the Word under the ministry of the Holy Spirit and is able to arrive at a clear understanding of a passage by utilizing the ICE procedure. This is called *interpretation* which must utilize the science of *hermeneutics*. This term is taken from the Greek word, **ἐρμηνεύω, hermēneuō**. The origin of this word comes from the Classical Greek **Ἑρμῆς, Hermēs**, or Hermes, the Greek god of speech, science, invention, eloquence, writing, and art. His Roman name is Mercury. The verb **hermēneuō** means "to translate."
 2. This word occurs in several forms in the New Testament: (1) **ἐρμηνεία, hermēneia**: a translation, an interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:26); (2) **ἐρμηνεύω, hermēneuō**: to translate, to interpret (Hebrews 7:2); (3) **διερμηνεύω, diermēneuō**: to explain (Luke 24:27); (4) **διερμηνευτής, diermēneutēs**: the explainer (1 Corinthians 14:28); and (5) **μεθερμηνεύω, methermēneuō**: to explain or interpret in the passive voice (Matthew 1:23).
 3. The science of hermeneutics is defined by:

Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics*. (3d rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), 11:

As a theological discipline hermeneutics is the science of the correct interpretation of the Bible. It is a special application of the general science of linguistics and meaning. It seeks to formulate those particular rules which pertain to the special factors connected with the Bible. It stands in the same relationship to exegesis that a rule-book stands to a game.

The rule-book (hermeneutics) is written in terms of reflection, analysis, and experience. The game (exegesis) is played by concrete actualization of the rules. The rules (hermeneutics) are not the game, and the game (exegesis) is meaningless without the rules.

4. Some of the principles of hermeneutics to which this church subscribes include: (1) application of the ICE approach to Scriptural analysis: isagogics, categories, and exegesis; (2) guided by the presupposition that biblical revelation is progressive and is to be understood as literal unless the context indicates otherwise; (3) that this progressive revelation illuminates several periods of history called dispensations in which believers are instructed regarding God's will and purpose for their spiritual lives; (4) that properly interpreted the Scripture is at harmony with itself in all parts; and (5) that the original manuscripts of Scripture are inerrant in transcription and infallible in content.



5. From these and other techniques the pastor takes the Word of God, called **Λόγος, Logos**, and after having interpreted its content, communicates its truths to the believers of his congregation.
6. **Stage 2:** The Holy Spirit teaches the believer's human spirit the content of what is communicated by the pastor. He is referred to by our Lord in John 14:26 as the "Comforter" (KJV), "Helper" (NASB), or "Counselor" (NIV). The Greek word is **Παράκλητος, Paraklētos**, one who goes along side in order to communicate. What is communicated is truth from which comes encouragement, orientation to grace, objectivity, and discernment.
7. As **Paraklētos** the Holy Spirit teaches the positive volition believer. The word for "teach" is the future active indicative of the verb **διδάσκω, didaskō**, the act of instructing and refers to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

NOTE: The future tense indicates that this ministry is yet future and will follow the dispensation of the Incarnation. This statement by our Lord is therefore a prophecy pertaining to the future dispensation of the church, an example of progressive revelation.