

# **Questions to answer for difficult passages**

## **TOP DOWN QUESTIONS**

1. What things about this passage make it difficult to understand?
2. What is at stake in getting this verse right?
3. What are the most vital issues to settle?
4. What are several possible interpretations of this passage?
5. Who is being directly addressed in this passage? How can knowing this help narrow down the best interpretation of the passage?
6. What is the paragraph (where this passage appears) about?
7. What is the chapter about?
8. How this passage relate to the overall purpose and message of Galatians?
9. Find connections between this verse and other verses “in the neighborhood”: paragraph, chapter, book of Galatians.

10. What passages in other letters of Paul are connected with this passage in Galatians? What can we deduce from these passages that will shed light on our “difficult” passage?
  
11. What foundation truth that we are given elsewhere in the New Testament cannot be violated by whatever interpretation we come up with?

## **BOTTOM UP QUESTIONS**

1. What words or phrases are difficult to understand?
  
2. What Greek words do these English words correspond to?
  
3. What do these Greek words mean?
  
4. Where else do these Greek words appear in the epistles of Paul?
  
5. What are the verbs in the passage? What are their tenses, voices, and moods? What adverbs modify the verbs, if any? What do we learn from this?
  
6. Prepositions are notoriously difficult to translate from the Greek into English. What prepositions have an impact on how this passage is interpreted?
  
7. Are there any phrases or clauses that are awkward or confusing? Could this be a translation issue, and if so, how can we resolve it?