

Issues of Interpretation

GB 216-2

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HERMENEUTICAL CRITICISMS:

By Mark Moore

1. **Textual Criticism** is an attempt to reconstruct the original autograph (in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic) by careful and scientific comparison of the copies, fragments and translations of the original documents. **Assumptions:** Older manuscripts and more “difficult” readings are more reliable. **Limitation(s):** There are too many variants and assumptions about “the best” readings to be certain (or even confident) about the original form of a passage.
2. **Historical Criticism** is an attempt to understand the author's intended meaning in light of his/her cultural and historical setting. Using textual, historical and archaeological data, one attempts to understand the original situation and purpose of the author and audience of the text. **Assumptions:** Historical criticism works within a rationalistic paradigm which often denies or ignores the miraculous. Moreover, it assumes the author’s intended meaning is attainable and the proper goal for interpretation. **Limitations:** Biblical authors (and cultures) are largely unavailable to modern scholars. Scholars import their own presuppositions into their interpretation(s), thus they have never reached a consensus about the meaning of the Bible. H.C. tends to concentrate on scholarship, to the neglect of faith and the edification.
3. **Source Criticism** is an attempt to discover the original source(s) or author(s) behind various biblical texts. This is especially applied to the first five books of both the OT (JEDP) and NT (Q etc.). **Assumption:** The books of the Bible were written or compiled much later than supposed authors lived, therefore, the traditional authors were not really responsible for writing the books. Instead, the books evolved over an extended period of time. **Limitations:** Rampant speculation, no consensus, and even after results are achieved, S.C. can only guess about the text’s origin, it falls short of actually contributing meaning to the text itself.
4. **Form Criticism** analyzes the genre and literary devices of piece of literature since meaning is not merely in the words of the text but also in its structure and style. These story forms have standard characters and functions in a given community. **Assumption:** The biblical stories were passed down orally and later used by an editor/redactor for theological purposes. By analyzing the style of a particular pericope, we can learn about its history, development, revisions and use in the church/community. **Limitations:** Often uses artificial categories that have more to do with context than literature. F. C. can easily ignore the historical issues pertinent to the text.
5. **Redaction Criticism** identifies where and how the text has been edited: changes in synoptic passages, anachronisms, aside comments, rough edges, etc. Based on these editorial changes, one can discover the needs and characteristics of the community “behind the text” for whom these changes were made. **Assumption:** Biblical texts were not “authored” but edited and redacted, sometimes over a long period of time. **Limitations:** Rampant speculation which has led to no consensus. R. C. really only works well in the Gospels.

6. **Rhetorical (or Literary) Criticism** is an analysis of the literary style and devices used in a particular pericope (e.g. inclusio, chiasm, parallelism, repetition, etc.), which help make the author's point. Like form criticism, it recognizes that in literature, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Yet it differs from form criticism in that it takes into account not only the finished form of the text but the author and audience as participants in the rhetorical process, that is, the art of persuasion. **Assumptions:** Aesthetics and communication theory takes precedence over theology. It is also often assumed that the text is the product of a community (or at least community values/needs) rather than an author. **Limitations:** It often ignores the historical meaning of the author by concentrating on the aesthetics of the text. Moreover, while it shows the logical structure of the text and how it functions, it falls short of interpreting the meaning of the text.
7. **Structuralism** like rhetorical criticism, dissects the text and its component parts. Only rhetorical criticism analyzes each pericope from a literary standpoint while structuralism looks at its underlying thought patterns and semiotic. **Assumption:** Authors/editors subconsciously embed thought patterns into their work which we are able to decipher and thus psychoanalyze the author's intentions. These linguistic codes are open to multiple interpretations by different readers and communities. **Limitations:** It is so esoteric and complex it is not of much practical value. Its assumptions about the psychology of language have not been proved -- it is not as scientific or reliable as its proponents would suggest. While it shows the "deep structures" of the text and how they function, it fails to interpret the surface meaning of the text.
8. **Social Scientific Criticism** through the use of psychology, anthropology and sociology, we are able to understand the social world of the biblical text and thereby interpret the original reason(s) behind such things as ritual, laws, customs, etc. **Assumption:** The paradigms drawn up by modern, western psychology, anthropology and sociology are adequate templates for the biblical world. **Limitations:** Social scientists disagree about methods and social paradigms, thus there are disparate interpretations of Biblical texts. Christianity is counter-cultural and miraculous; thus it seems ill-advised to try to explain its origins or meaning against the backdrop of ancient society at large. This is especially true since it was a multinational, multi-ethnic phenomenon.
9. **Canon Criticism** is primarily interested in the final form of the canon and how it addresses the "faith needs" of a community (as opposed to its development). Meaning is not just in a given text, but in its context, which is the entire Bible, both its content and canonical/theological shape. **Assumption:** Meaning and authority reside in the believing community that accepts the text as Scripture more than the author (either human or divine) or the historical events behind the text. **Limitations:** It often ignores the author's intended meaning in lieu of the community's use of the text. By focusing on the final form of the text, it ignores the original historical setting as well as its development through history. It has yet to contribute significantly to any practical understanding of the Bible in the church.

10. **Reader Response Criticism** explores the contribution that readers make to the meaning of a text. Truth is created as the reader reads, not as the writer writes. For some this means looking for clues within the text to discover the meaning *and response* the author expected from his/her readers. For others, this means that the reader is free to “play” with the text and import meaning which would be culturally appropriate to his/her contemporary society. **Assumption:** The reader is more important than the author in ascribing meaning to or eliciting meaning from the text. **Limitations:** The Bible becomes a catalyst for meaning with no inherent truth. This leads to unmitigated pluralism where creativity takes precedence over objectivity.
11. **Deconstruction** (A) Words are merely arbitrary linguistic symbols that refer to other arbitrary linguistic symbols; as a result, we can never really understand each other. (B) Language is used for oppression by the hegemonous elite. Therefore, the task of the interpreter is to deconstruct (demolish) this oppressive communication, unmask its oppressive intentions and recreate new, existential meanings by playing with the text. **Assumptions:** Language is incapable of clearly communicating an author’s intent. There is no absolute truth. **Limitations:** Contrary to deconstructionist claims, language *does* work. Deconstruction, therefore is unrealistic and unfair to both authors and texts.
12. **Liberation** uses the text as a tool for liberating oppressed and/or marginalized groups (e.g. feminist, gay, black, Asian, Latin American, etc.). Sometimes it “unmasks” the text, showing how the Bible itself has been used to oppress people. **Assumption:** Meaning resides in *my current* community and the Bible is merely a sociological tool for purposes of liberation. **Limitations:** It tends to be myopic, self-serving, and anachronistic. It tends to exalt oppressed individuals rather than the risen Christ.

A CHART OF THE HISTORY OF HERMENEUTICS

Period	Characteristics	Hermeneutical Developments	Primary Concerns	Positive Contributions	Deficiencies
Rabbinic	Hyper-Literal	--Oral Traditions --Talmud/Midrash --Hillel's Rules and <i>PaRDeS</i>	(1) Tradition & Authority (2) Practical application and codification (3) Hermeneutical integrity	* Dead Sea Scrolls * Massoretic preservation * Faith in inspiration and interpretation	(a) Traditions over text (b) Mysticism through letterism and numerology
Apostolic	Typological N.T. use of O.T.	--Typology --N.T. literature	(1) Cristocentric: demonstrating that Jesus fulfilled the O.T. (2) Differentiate from Judaism	* Correct Interpretation involved faith and mercy * Emphasized Jesus as the key * Canonical books	(a) Lack of exegesis (b) Confusion between typology and predictive prophecy
Patristic	Allegorical	--Canon --Christian Allegory through Alexandria --Hist/gramm through Antioch --Authoritative interpretation --Latin Vulgate and other translations	(1) Education and exhortation of Christians (2) Apologetic confrontation of heretics	* N.T. Canon * Doctrinal clarification * Historical Grammatical method * Confrontation of the intellectual movements of the day.	(a) Overemphasis of allegory (b) Overemphasis of authoritative herm (c) Heretical ideas and division.
Scholastic	Authoritative (w/ allegory)	--Catena --Marginal comments and annotations --Apostolic succession --Mysticism --Fourfold allegory	(1) Collection and tradition (2) The unity and organization of the church as it exploded in numbers	* There is an interpretive commitment to Christ's body. * Semi-effective way of confronting heresies.	(a) The bible is taken away from the people. (b) Precepts of men replace God's word (Mt 15:1-20) (c) No objective standard to determine the right interpretation.

Reformation	Historical/ Grammatical Confessional	-- <i>Sola Scriptura</i> --Translations in the vernacular	(1) Establishing the Bible as authority over the Catholic church (2) Wedding personal experience and the H.S. with exegesis	* The bible was again a source of joy and guidance to common people. * Exegesis was more practical and spiritual	(a) A great deal of confusion over theology and inspiration. (b) Eventual schisms (c) Systematic theology without enough exegesis
Enlightenment (17-18th cen)	Historical Critical	--Textual criticism --Historical, linguistic and archaeological research --Source, form and redaction criticism	(1) Using human intellect and reason in exegesis (2) Wedding science and biblical studies	* Common sense and scientific exegesis * Proliferation of historical and linguistic resources	(a) Denial of miraculous (b) Trust in human intellect over divine revelation
Modern (19-20th cen)	Existential Literary & Sociological	--Sociological & psychological analysis --History of Religions --Reader Response --Structuralism --Canon Criticism --Liberation Theology --Deconstruction	(1) Determine Israel's sociological role and development. (2) Search for the Historical Jesus. (1) Pluralism and dialogue between religious studies and other fields (2) Meeting the needs of the oppressed	* Other disciplines were combined with biblical studies * Practical devotion and benevolence were highlighted * Emphasis on contemporary and practical application *Sophistication in exegetical techniques *The Bible once again appears relevant and meaningful	(a) Liberal presuppositions went unchecked (b) Multiple interpretations make valid interpretation appear hopeless

HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

By Mark Moore

Introduction:

1. Why study the History of Interpretation:
 - a. To be able to recognize common errors and identify their sources.
 - b. To understand where we have been and where we are likely going.
 - c. To appreciate the great sacrifice saints of the past have made for the AIM of Scripture and to determine to stand fast in that tradition.
 - d. To realize that, in fact, progress has been made.
2. Seven main periods of Biblical Interpretation (Adopted from Farrar):
 - (1) Rabbinic (B.C. 457 [Ezra]-A.D. 498 [Rabbi Abina])Hyper-Literal
 - (2) Apostolic (1st. Century A.D.).....Typological & Christocentric
 - (3) Patristic (Clement of Rome, A.D. 95--Dark Ages, 1117)Allegorical
 - (4) Scholastic (Abelard, A.D. 1142--Reformation) Authoritative
 - (5) Reformation (16th cen.)..... Historical/Grammatical
 - (6) Enlightenment (17-19th cen.) Historical/Critical
 - (7) Contemporary (20th cen.)..... Existential, Literary & Sociological
3. Two causes for non-natural interpretation:
 - a. Growth of religious rites and practices. The Scriptures are forced to support these: Pharisees, Talmud, Papacy. (Music, ordained ministry, buildings).
 - b. Adoption of pagan philosophical systems: Philo, Aristotle/Plato, Papacy, Bultmann, Fundamental Evangelicalism(?). (Women, republicanism, patriotism).

I. Jewish Interpretation [Oral Traditions; Numerology; Contextualization]

	RABBINIC	HELLENISTIC	QUMRAN
Location	Palestine	Alexandria, Egypt	N.W. Dead Sea
Description	Practical and Pastoral, overliteral exegesis, Tradition	Allegorical & Mystical, Attempted to combine Platonic Philosophy with Biblical interpretation	Monastic, Messianic, and eschatological: Peshar--manipulating or applying texts to contemporary situations
Document	Midrash & Talmud	LXX = Septuagint	Dead Sea Scrolls
Leader	Hillel (and other Pharisees)	Philo	Essenes
Contribution	Halakah Hedge about the Law (Oral Law). Concentration on words and phrases to the neglect of context	Haggada Allegory (Corley pp. 28-30): Subjective, arbitrary & artificial	Bibliolatry. Atomistic and relativistic interpretation through Peshar

- A. The O.T. was the foundation for the nation of Israel
 1. Historical background

- a. It was central in the founding of the nation when it was read from Mt. Gerizim and Ebal (Josh. 8:30ff), c. B.C.E. 1400.
 - b. It was part of the religious reform during the days of Josiah (B.C.E. 640-609) as the nation "rediscovered" the Bible (2 Ki. 22:8ff)
 - c. Men stood in the rain to hear the law read at the return after the Babylonian captivity and the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 10:9ff; c. 538 B.C.E.).
2. As a result, the Bible became a legal document and the Scribes were also lawyers. Because of this, whoever controlled the interpretation of the Bible also controlled society. A great deal of power and wealth were at stake for whoever won the control of the Scriptures.
- a. That is why Oral Tradition became such a big deal. It was a means of:
 - (1) protecting the Bible from abuse and misinterpretation, and
 - (2) protecting the hegemony of religious leaders.
 - b. Primary Jewish Interpreters:
 - (1) Shammai, a native of Judea, and Hillel, a Jew from Babylonia (who gave us the seven basic rules of Jewish interpretation), were the most influential interpreters prior to Jesus day, a generation before he came on the scene.
 - (2) Scribes, traditionally stemming from Ezra, were the main teachers of the intertestamental period. In the N.T. they were primarily Pharisees.
 - c. Their famous slogan (Abot 1, 1), "Be deliberate in giving judgment, and raise up many disciples, and *make a hedge about the law.*"
 - (1) They added to the law many man-made regulations (Mt. 23:4). They honored this oral law above the scriptures. See quotes in Farrar, pp. 62-63.
 - (2) Such is the danger of worshiping study rather than studying for worship; of honoring knowledge above wisdom; of loving the power of education rather than loving the truth; of subjugating information to your theological system rather than being subject to the word of God.
 - (3) Jesus condemned such oral traditions in Mark 7:7-8, 13 (cf. Mt 23:2-3).
- B. How Oral tradition was codified and applied
- 1. Jews hesitated to preserve anything in writing that was not canonical, thus it was the Christians that primarily preserved Jewish apocrypha. Eventually, however, it became clear that this great body of material would either be recorded in writing or lost. The Jerusalem (A.D. 275-500) and later the Babylonian (not completed until the second half of the eighth century) Talmuds were produced. The Talmud is the combination of the Mishna and Gemara.
 - a. *Mishna* (490 A.D. is a topical arrangements of laws. Committed to writing by Rabbi Juda. Babylonian = 2,947 pp. It represented the influence of several Rabbis:
 - b. *Gamara*--a commentary on the Mishna.
 - c. *Midrashim* are running commentaries on the text (cf. Klein, pp. 128-129).
 - (1) Composed of *Halakha* = literally it means "to walk." They were legal decisions based on the Biblical text.
 - (2) Supposedly part of the Oral law given to Moses on Sinai (Qiddushin, f. 49, 1).
 - (3) "Rabbi Eliezer glorified himself because he could deliver 300 Halakhoth about Egyptian cucumbers" (Farrar, p. 85).
 - (4) There were many and furious disputes about these Halakha. Once, in the school of Tiberias the book of the law was actually torn apart in a heated dispute over whether one might use a bolt with a knob on the Sabbath. This is likely the background of Titus 3:9 (cf. Farrar, pp. 87-88).

- d. *Haggada*--Illustrative material such as fables, apologies, proverbs, quaint legends, moral applications, allegory, folk-lore, and romance.
 - e. *Pesher*--Like Midrash, Pesher is an exegetical commentary on the text. But instead of present, practical application it presents prophetic and apocalyptic fulfillment, based on extravagant and sometimes atomistic handling of the text, especially those involving dreams. Jesus' interpretation sometimes fits this category in so far as he applied much of the O.T. to himself.
- C. Jewish Hermeneutics
1. Summary--PaRDeS
 - a. Peshat--Literal, grammatico-historical meaning.
 - b. Remez--Hint, latent meanings (Halakha) = inferences.
 - c. Darush--Homilies, allegory (Haggada).
 - d. Sod--Mystery, Magical (Qabbala).
 - (1) Gematria (from Geometria)--Numerology (See Farrar, pp. 98-100 for examples).
 - (2) Notarikon--Shorthand or Acrostic, forming words with the first and last letters of a word (e.g. Ixthus). (For examples see Farrar, pp. 101-102).
 - (3) Temoorah or Atbash--Change/Inversion, obtaining new words by the inversion of letters within the word, or substituting letters in the same order from a different part of the alphabet. (E.g. Sheshach = Babel from Jer. 25:26 and 51:41. These are different in the MT & LXX).
 2. Numerology:
 - a. The literal meaning was supposed to be the basis for all other interpretive schemes. But often it gave way to extravagant numerical schemes and allegory.
 - b. Letterism, numerology, etc. (For examples see Farrar pp. 76-77 and Russell, "Countdown: Arithmetic and Anagram in Early Biblical Interpretation," *ExpT* 104/4 (1993): 109-113; J. B. Satinover, "Divine Authorship?: Computer Reveals Starling Word Patterns" *Bible Review* [Oct 1995] 28-45]; John Weldon, *Decoding the Bible*. [Harvest House, 1998]).
 - (1) The first letters of the first six verses of Deut 12 equal the numeric value of "Moses." Therefore, Deut 12:1-6 is the epitome of Moses' teaching.
 - (2) *HASATAN* ("The Satan") = 364. Therefore, Satan exercised authority over Israel except on the day of Atonement.
 - (3) Gen 49:10 says, "Shiloh shall come." "Shiloh = 358 = Messiah. Therefore Gen 49:10 really means "Messiah shall come."
 - (4) Num 12:1 says that Moses married a Cushite, which was against Mosaic law. But the numeric value of "Cushite" equals the numeric value of "beautiful woman." Therefore, we know that Moses married a beautiful woman, not a Cushite.
 - (5) The Nazarite vow of Num 6:5 is to be 30 days because the "shall be" of "He shall be holy" has the numeric value of 30.
 - c. It is said, in fact, that every part of a letter has meaning. Supported by Deut. 6:4, where losing a part of a letter would change "One God" into "Other God's" or Hallal = "Praise" into Challal = "Profane".
 - d. They advocated multiple meanings. R. Ishamael (c. A.D. 90-130) said, "Just as the rock is split into many splinters, so also may one biblical verse convey many teachings" (b. Sanhedrin 34a).
 3. Allegorical--See later discussion on Philo of Alexandria.

4. Talmud and the seven rules of Hillel
 - a. Light and heavy--What is true for the lesser must also be true of the greater. For example, whatever restrictions applied to other festival days also must apply to the Sabbath.
 - b. Equivalence--or Analogy of expression. According to this rule a difficult passage or phrase could be explained or compared to another passage using the same word or phrase. Essentially it is paying attention to verbal parallels.
 - c. Deduction from special to general--Taking the principle from one specific passage and applying (extrapolating) it to other more general passages that seem to talk about the same subject. Essentially it is paying attention to topical/theological parallels.
 - d. Same as #3 only built on two provisions or texts.
 - e. Inferences from the general to the special--Particular points are limited by the general truth that is expressed in the same passage or vice versa. For example, Exodus 22:9 commands that double restitution be paid if a man loses his neighbor's ox, ass, sheep, garment or anything else borrowed. The phrase "anything else" allows this command to be expanded to include all borrowed things.
 - f. Analogy from another passage--One Bible passage can be explained by applying another of similar content. It is similar to 2 & 3 above.
 - g. Inference from context--context determines definitions of a passage.

II. Apostolic Interpretation [Typology & N.T. use of the O.T.]

A. Jesus:

1. Similarities between Jesus and contemporary Rabbis.
 - a. Implicit belief in the Torah as the inspired word of God, verbal, plenary. He used Scripture for his argumentation (Mat. 12:1-8 and John 7:23, why he broke the Sabbath regulations); the Pharisees even congratulated him when he shut down the Sadducees on the issue of resurrection (Lk. 20:37-39).
 - b. Jesus' pedagogy was very rabbinic, especially his use of logic (from lesser to greater), his use of questions, and his parables.
2. Differences between Jesus and contemporary Rabbis:
 - a. He made a clear distinction between tradition and Scripture and was somewhat iconoclastic with the former (Mark 7:1-9).
 - b. Authority (Mt. 7:29; 28:18)
 - (1) He went beyond the Scripture--"But I say" (Matthew 5:21, 27, 33, 38, 43).
 - (a) "Sell your possession and give them to the poor" (Mt. 19:21);
 - (b) "Who is my neighbor?" (Lk. 10:29);
 - (c) "Second command like unto it" (Mt. 22:39).
 - (d) New command (Jn. 14:34).
 - (2) He deepened them and raised them to their full meaning (e.g. Jonah, Mt. 12:40; Noah, Mt. 24:36-37; On route to Emmaus, Lk. 24:32).
 - (3) The Logos of God (Jn 1:1-4)

B. Paul

1. Both view the Law as fulfilled by love (Gal. 5:14; Rom. 13:9). Although Paul abandoned the law as a Christian; Jesus lived under it as a Jew.
2. Paul is a theologian; Jesus is a bane to theologians. (We should note, however, that Paul is not a theologian from the Platonic or Stoic school but from Gamaliel. He moves intuitively and allusively rather than through syllogisms.)

3. Jesus' words come from Oral memory, Paul's were written.
 4. Rabbinic Techniques (cf. Bray, pp. 64-69)
 - a. Rabbinic Proofs (e.g. Gal. 3:16--Christ as Seed; 1 Cor. 10:1-4. Christ as Rock [the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan interpreted the rock as following the Jews around based on its giving water at three different places (Ex. 17; Num. 20; 21:16ff.)]).
 - b. Paul was similar to Philo in a number of ways. Both used "child" as singular in Genesis 17:16 (*De mut. nom.* 145). Both allegorize the name of Hagar (*Leg. alleg.* iii. 244). And both allegorize the rock of the wilderness (*Leg. alleg.* ii. 86; *Quod det. pot.* 118).
 - c. The book of Hebrews shows Rabbinic technique in its "microscopic" examination of Melchizedek (Heb. 7) and the Levitical priesthood, (Heb. 8-10).
 - d. Analogy (*gezerah shawah*) -- Peter (Acts 2:25, 34) pulls together Psa 16:8-11 & 110:1 because both use "at my right hand." And Paul (Acts 13:34-35) links Isa 55:3 & Psa 16:10 because both use *hosios*, which can mean either "divine decrees" or "holy one."
 5. The necessity of the H.S. to "unveil" the meaning of the text (cf. 1 Cor 2; 2 Cor 3:6, 14-18), or at least to properly apply it to the Christian's life.
 6. Verbal inspiration down to the letter and verb tense (Mt 22:32; Gal 3:16).
- C. Typology
1. Jesus is shown to be the fulfillment of Jewish history, especially Adam's fall (Romans 5:12), Abraham justified by faith (Gal 3:6), the Law through Moses because of transgression (Gal. 3:19), and the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:22; Romans 8:2).
 2. For example, Matthew, famous for his use of prophecy, almost invariably applies O.T. texts to Jesus typologically (cf. Mt. 2:15, 18, 23). (Consider also Hebrews).
 3. Jesus proclaims, in himself, the fulfillment of the coming of the Kingdom of God (Mt. 5:17; Luke 4:21; 24:26-27; John 5:39-47). This was repugnant to Jesus' contemporaries.
 - a. This was true not only for O.T. prophecies but also for types including people, objects and events (e.g. Isa 7:14 & Mt 1:24).
 - b. Jesus embodied the nation of Israel. Therefore what was said to or about the nation was applied to Jesus (e.g. Micah 5:2 & Mt 2:6; Hosea 11:1 & Mt 2:15; Jer. 31:15 & Mt 2:18). He claimed to be the nation, the temple, the Torah, the promised land, the water of life, and just about everything else the Jews hoped for in an eschatological kingdom.
- D. Summary of N.T. interpretation of the Old:
1. Illustrations of the difficulty in how the N.T. handles the O.T.
 - a. Inaccurate quotation: Eph 4:8 | Psa 68:18
 - b. Taking verses out of context: Mt 2:15 | Hosea 11:1; Mt 2:18 | Jer 31:15
 - c. Making stuff up!: Mt 2:23 | Nothing!
 - d. Multiple fulfillments: Mt 1:23 | Isa 7:14
 - e. Textual changes: Acts 15:16-18 | Amos 9:11-12
 2. Hermeneutical Difficulties
 - a. **Textual** difficulties
 - (1) O.T. at the time of Jesus was in several languages: Hebrew (now called the M.T.); Greek (LXX, by 72 Jewish scholars in 285 B.C.); Aramaic (Targums).
 - (2) Transmission of O.T. & N.T. and translation from Hebrew to Greek (LXX & NT) to English.
 - (3) There are between 160 and 600 O.T. citations in the N.T. depending on what

- is counted. (Citations, allusions, translations, and length all become variables in counting citations.) Furthermore, Paul used chains of quotations in arguments, 26 in Rom. 9-11 and several in Gal. 3:6-14 and Acts 13.
- (4) Apostolic hermeneutic allowed for a little looser handling of the text:
 - (a) Context was less important to him (Romans 15:3 of Psalm 69:9)
 - (b) Loose quotations, especially based on LXX
 - (c) Even changing wording at times (cf. Eph. 4:8 from Psalms 68:18), as he gives an inspired interpretation.
 - (d) He gives 93 direct quotations, 1/3 of all N.T. quotes.
- b. **Dual Authorship** -- Can God intend more in a passage than the author? There are four schools: (Darrell L. Bock, "Evangelicals and the Use of the O.T. in the New" *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July-Sept 1985, 209-223).
- (1) The full human intent school (Walter Kaiser)--That is to say that the original authors well understood the meaning of all their predictions (but perhaps not the full significance of them). He would reject *sensus plenior*, dual sense, and double fulfillment theories. Each prophecy has one meaning, although it may have several events that lead up to the final fulfillment of the prophecy.
Emphasis is placed on the O.T. author.
 - (2) The Divine intent-human words School (Lewis Johnson, James Packer, Elliott E. Johnson)--The human author did not always understand the full impact of the prophetic reference although God certainly intended it. It is expressed by the terms *Sensus Plenior* and *References Plenior*. "The key distinctive of this school is its defense of a distinction between the human author's intent and God's intent, while trying to maintain a connection between the meaning which both express in the words of the text." **Emphasis is placed on the N.T. interpreter.**
 - (3) The Historical Progress of Revelation and Jewish Hermeneutic School (Earle E. Ellis, Richard Longenecker, Walter Dunnett)--States that the Hermeneutical methods found in the N.T. reflect the apostolic/christocentric method which demonstrate the progress of revelation in Jesus Christ. This method is patterned after the contemporary methods of Jewish interpretation found in the Midrash, peshet, and Hillel's rules. Although this method would not align with the modern Historical-grammatical method, it was an acceptable way to view the text even rewording the text so that the interpretation fit better (as was done with the Qumran Peshet). Criticisms: (a) "The view seems too open to historical parallels from outside Christianity." (b) "This approach seems to lessen the concept of prophecy by setting its recognition largely in the fulfillment period, rather than at the time of the original revelation." Distinctive feature: Sensitivity to the cultural and historical methods of interpretation of the 1st century. **Emphasis is placed on Jewish Culture and their unique approach to hermeneutics.**
 - (4) Canonical approach and New Testament priority school (Bruce K. Waltke)--"Just as redemption itself has progressive history, so also older texts in the canon underwent a correlative progressive perception of meaning as they became part of a growing canonical literature" (Waltke, "A Canonical Process Approach to the Psalms," in *Tradition and Testament*, p. 7). Waltke also rejects the idea of *sensus plenior* but does not explicate the extent to which the original author understood the full impact of the prophetic utterance.

Distinctive: A desire to reread the O.T. in full light of the New, especially Christocentricly. **Emphasis is placed on the Church and their perception of Jesus.**

- c. Where does **meaning** reside? Word definitions (text), Context (author/O.T.), or Referent (N.T.)
3. Most of the difficulties of the N.T. handling of the O.T. can be accounted for by the following observations:
 - a. **Typology** - The O.T. didn't predict their current events as much as their current events mirrored O.T. history. Specifically, Jesus is seen everywhere in the O.T. -- history, symbols, events, major characters, etc.
 - b. **View of history** as story, not time (this is the foundation of *peshet*). Their story becomes our story. In other words, we concentrate on themes, not calendars. This is a way of beginning with our contemporary setting and then looking back for fulfillments.
 - c. **Corporate Solidarity** - The nation can be encapsulated in an individual.(E.g. Watch the evolution of Israel in: Isa 49:6; Lk 2:32; Acts 13:47).
 - d. **Eschatological Fulfillment** - we live in the last days, fulfilling the ultimate plan of God. Thus symbols and types are fulfilled in us. It is natural to interpret all the O.T. in light of its ultimate fulfillment in contemporary events.
 - e. Prophecy is not primarily for the purpose of apologetics but for practical **exhortation**. We're not after scientific precision as much as pragmatic application.
4. Interpretation of the O.T. by N.T. authors:
 - a. There is great respect for those who knew the Book: Paul reasoned in the synagogues (17:2-3); Paul emphasized to Agrippa the Scriptural soundness of his message (26:24-27); Apollos was "mighty in the Scriptures" (18:24, 28); and the Bereans (17:11).
 - b. With the Jews, O.T. was sufficient proof to make a point.
 - (1) Acts makes heavy use of O.T.
 - (a) All to Jewish audiences.
 - (b) All but 23:5 were prophetic in reference to Jesus. This is summarized by 8:35--"Philip preached Jesus."
 - (2) Jesus can be fully preached from the O.T. (cf. Acts 8:35-36).
 - c. Different authors tend to handle the O.T. in particular ways:
 - (1) Matthew - Typological
 - (2) Luke - Christocentric
 - (3) John - Allusions
 - (4) Paul - Theological synthesis
 - (5) Hebrews -Typological, Christocentric, Applications
 - (6) James -Practical Applications
 - (7) Revelation has many allusions to the O.T. especially Genesis, Psalms and Ezekiel.

III. Patristic Interpretation [Allegory; Authoritative Interpretation; Development of the Canon]

A. Introduction

1. There were two major hermeneutical tasks in the early church:
 - a. Education and exhortation of Christians. For this they borrowed from the Jewish exegetical methods of the day, specifically: Typology, Allegory, and Midrashic.
 - b. Confronting heresies led to:
 - (1) Church Councils

- (2) Authoritative interpretation
- (3) Development of the Canon and determining the unity of the two testaments.
We must recognize that the very act of selecting books for the canon is an interpretive act!
- (4) The idea of Apostolic Succession
- 2. With the good also came some bad and visa-versa
 - a. Knowledge and personal use of the Scripture sometimes led to numerology.
 - b. Apologetic use of the Scripture led to authoritative interpretation.
 - c. Cristo-centric hermeneutics sometimes led to allegory.
 - d. The rise of heresy led to the establishment of the canon and doctrinal tracts.
- B. Apostolic Fathers (c. A.D. 100-150)
 - 1. Challenges:
 - a. Epistle of Barnabas--teaching track designed to answer the question: "Can a person sin after he becomes a Christian and still be forgiven?" Quoted as Scripture by Clement and Origen in "Aleph" and the Table of Contents of "D".
 - (1) Credited early to Barnabas, the companion of Paul. This, however is rejected on the basis of date. There seems to be a reference in chpt. 16 to the rebuilding of the temple after its destruction of A.D. 70. This took place in Hadrian's reign c. A.D. 130-131. If this is correct then Barnabas would already be dead.
 - (2) Totally typological and apocalyptic, claiming visions that answer specific questions. It is anti-semitic, fanciful and erroneous.
 - (3) Because he believe the Jews had misread the law, he proposed a reinterpretation based on the allegorical rather than on the literal. For example, when Abraham circumcised 318 servants that was a reference to the Cross of Christ since the number may be expressed by TIH. T = Cross; IH = Iesus (Jesus), (see also Foster, Restoration Herald, Jan., 1959, p. 3).
 - (4) He denied the historicity of the O.T. claiming that only in the gospel and the anti-types can the O.T. be understood.
 - (5) He quotes more from the O.T. (as well as other non-canonical books) than any other church father, but allegorizes it. He also believed that he alone could correctly interpret it. See *Ep. Barn. c. 10* for his unusual explanation of clean and unclean animals.
 - (6) On a positive note, he was Christo-centric.
 - b. Shepherd of Hermas, c. 140, in "Aleph" and "D"; quoted by Irenaeus and Origen.
 - (1) Claims to be a revealed message to Hermas in Rome by two heavenly figures--an old woman and a shepherd.
 - (2) No O.T. quotes. Allegory like Pilgrim's Progress.
 - (3) Very nearly made it into the canon (was rejected by Muratorian) and is used by some groups today. Eusebius says it was read publicly in many churches.
 - c. Marcion (A.D. 80-160)--Totally rejects the O.T. and Judaism. Christianity is completely independent.
 - (1) He believed in two God's--one of the O.T. and a second of the N.T.
 - (2) He radically revised the N.T. He only accepted a revised Luke, Romans and Galatians. This was a strong force in the formation of the canon (c. 140).
 - (3) Jesus was a phantom-like being and thus he rewords Luke 24:39 to read, "A spirit, such as you see me having, does not have flesh and bones."
 - (4) He stressed well the gospel to all nations and the fact that it was

- misunderstood by many early disciples.
- (5) Aside from a few quirks, like eliminating texts that he disagreed with, Marcion was quite literal in his interpretation.
2. “Orthodoxy”:
- a. Justin Martyr--Early 2nd Century. (Typological and Cristocentric)
- (1) Taught at Ephesus and Rome; Tatian was one of his students. He was well acquainted with Greek philosophy. Was flogged and beheaded for not offering sacrifice.
 - (2) Much of his interpretation (typological) can be found in the Dialogue with Trypho, a Jewish Rabbi, which purports to record their two-day discussion.
 - (3) Justin's approach to the O.T. was both historical and Cristo-centric--the Jews did have a covenant relationship with God which can only be fully appreciated in light of the gospel.
 - (4) He was an admirer of Philo and to some extent, as a child of his day, was influenced by allegory.
- b. Irenaeus (c. A.D. 130-200)-- (Apologetics and Authoritative Interpretation)
- (1) c. 180 A.D. he composed a series of 5 books from Lyons directed against the Marcionites and Valentinians (2nd Century gnostics of Alexandria) in which he set forth a case for a single God of both the Old and New Testaments.
 - (2) He said that no prophecy can be fully understood until it comes to pass. Thus Jews could not understand the O.T. until they come to Jesus.
 - (3) Irenaeus is seen as the father of authoritative exegesis in the church. He was a bishop of the Catholic Church and saw the duty of the church mainly in propagating the truth about Jesus. The Gospel produced both the Scriptures and the church.
 - (4) An interesting side note is that he said that the four gospels symbolized the four beasts of Rev. 4:7--Lion, calf (bull), man, eagle. He criticized the gnostics for numerology, and yet tries to prove their gospels are false based on the four gospels being the only four as there is only four winds and four quarters of the earth and four cherubic forms (*Haer.* 11, 8).
- C. School of Alexandria – A Center for Allegory
1. Nature of Alexandria
 - a. Greatest population of Jews anywhere outside of Jerusalem. It was a melting pot for many cultures, especially for commerce.
 - b. Greater library than even Rome or Athens.
 - c. In the great school (only to be surpassed by Athens), one would meet students of Moses, Aristotle, Zoroaster, critics, atheists, Philonians, Neoplatonists, and Gnostics.
 - d. Four great intellectual movements of the day: Christianity, gnosticism, philosophy, syncretistic religion.
 - e. Ancient Greek scholars used the allegorical method to justify the immoral deeds of their gods (i.e. Theagenes, 6th cen. B.C.E.).
 2. Philo of Alexandria, Father of Allegory
 - a. He was a prominent and wealthy Jewish teacher.
 - (1) Member of the School of Alexandria from c. B.C.E. 20-50 C.E.
 - (2) He had little connection with the Judaism of Jerusalem and was not remembered by them until Azariah Dei Rossi of the Renaissance (16th cen).
 - (3) In C.E. 40 he went to visit Caligula on behalf of the Jews. Philo found him to

- be insane.
- (4) He had a great influence on early ch. fathers.
- b. He knew well and loved Greek Philosophy
 - (1) He desired to justify Platonism with the Bible, like Theagenes had done with Homer, partly because the Scriptures were being ridiculed (cf. Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* ii. 18.).
 - (2) From the Stoics he divided allegorization into two categories Physical (God, nature, world), and ethical (duties of man).
 - (3) He knew little Hebrew and believed the LXX to be an inspired translation.
 - (4) Logos = Wisdom of God. It was distinct but not separate from God.
 - c. Rules for Allegorization: (Texts which seem to support allegory: Deut. 1:31; Num. 23:19; Psalm 78:2; 1 Cor. 2:6; Matt. 10:27; Mark 4:34.)
 - (1) Repetitions, synonyms or extraneous words.
 - (2) Unusual or difficult statements, apparent contradiction, historical improbabilities or something unworthy of God.
 - (3) Paromonosia -- play on words
 - (4) Particles, adverbs, prepositions may indicate allegory
 - (5) Numbers or Etymology may indicate allegory
3. Clement of Alexandria
 - a. He was the first Christian to try to justify the allegorical method.
 - b. Primarily his philosophy was based on that of Philo.
 - c. Texts may be interpreted in the historical sense, doctrinal, prophetic, philosophic and mystical sense, or even several at the same time since Scriptures can have multiple meanings (Grant, p. 80).
 - d. The only governing principle is that personal gnosis we have of Christ.
 - e. He was not a precise scholar with a great mind, thus never produced a systematic work on interpretation.
 - f. His fame came from his prize pupil, Origen who would take over his work.
 4. Origen, first great Bible Scholar, born c. 185-254 A.D.
 - a. His father was martyred in 202 A.D. under Severus. Origen wanted to follow his father in martyrdom but was hindered when his mother hid his clothes. He took over the school of Alexandria at 18 when Clement fled. Between 203-232 he taught dialectics, physics, mathematics, geometry and astronomy and Greek philosophy and speculative theology.
 - b. He was most distinguished member of the Alexandrian School who sets forth the principles of allegorization in De Principiis, Book 4. iv.
 - (1) Scriptures taken literally develop faith [*pistis*], taken allegorically develop knowledge [*gnosis*].
 - (2) He expanded Clement's two fold meaning (body and soul) into a three-fold meaning of Scripture; thus the Bible is patterned after the human being:
 - (a) Body = literal historical
 - (b) Soul = ethical rules about a Christian's relation to others.
 - (c) Spiritual = Doctrinal--truths about the church and a Christian's relation to God.
 - c. How to know you are correct:
 - (1) Take Scripture as a whole, not piece-meal.
 - (2) Compare other scripture, interpreting the obscure in light of the plain.
 - (3) Look at the meaning of words.

- (4) Insist on Christo-centric interpretation.
 - (5) Be guided by the rule of faith.
 - (6) Check the teaching of other expositors.
 - (7) Work diligently and pray.
5. Evaluation of Allegory
- a. Negative:
 - (1) It leads to subjectivism. The bible is made to say whatever I want or need it to say.
 - (2) There is a greatest danger in diminishing redemptive history to timeless myth. Under the influence of Neo-Platonism the Bible became an intellectual source of speculative ideas rather than a product of historical development.
 - (3) Because everyone comes up with their own ideas, there can be no logical arbitration between competing religious sects about the meaning of Scriptures.
 - b. Argument for Allegory:
 - (1) It makes the Bible relevant to every generation.
 - (2) It defends the Scriptures against pagan attack.
 - (3) "Though we may question not only its assumptions but also its results, we must not forget what we owe to it. We are not indebted so much to the method itself as to the spirit of the men who employed it. The method alone is lifeless; the spirit of the interpreter makes his text live" (Grant, p. 88).
 - (4) The scriptures themselves contain allegory: 1 Cor. 10; Gal. 4.
 - (5) It is useful for Christian art (iconography) and literature (e.g. Dante, Milton, and Bunyan)!
- D. School of Antioch
- 1. Nature of the School of Antioch:
 - a. Antioch had long been a prominent Jewish as well as Christian community. Wherever Jewish influence was felt the interpretation tended to be more literal. Jerome, for instance, who first supported Origen's hermeneutic, became increasingly critical the more he was influenced by Jews.
 - b. Several men from the Antiochene school attacked Origen and his method (e.g. Diodorus, Theodore, Eustathius).
 - c. The School of Antioch did believe in Allegory (e.g. Gal. 4), however, they did not ignore the historic reality of the events as did the school of Alexandria. Neither school was "either/or" but varied as to the emphasis they gave to each.
 - d. Spiritual "insight" [Gk. *theoria*] was gained, not apart from the historical, but by ascertaining what the historical pictured or mirrored.
 - 2. Diodorus of Tarsus, *What is the difference between theory and allegory*. He is the true founder of the school. Two most famous students: Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom.
 - 3. Theodore of Mopsuestia (A.D. 350-428), *Concerning Allegory and History Against Origen*.
 - a. Entered the school with his good friend, John Chrysostom c. A.D. 369. Theodore became the famed exegete whereas John became the famed preacher and later the Archbishop of Constantinople.
 - b. The greatest interpreter of the Antiochene school. He would exclude from the canon purely historic books (Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah) and wisdom literature (Job, Song of Solomon), as well as the Catholic Epistles.
 - c. "The exegetical work of Theodore was ordered burned by the Second Council of

Constantinople in 553 A.D. Not only was he considered responsible for the Christological errors of his pupil Nestorius, but also he had denied the inspiration of some of the books which the Church had judged canonical" (Grant, p. 96). This is perhaps one of the primary reasons his exegetical method did not come to dominate until after the reformation.

- E. Authoritative Interpretation & Church Councils (c. A.D. 400-590), (Also Irenaeus & Tertullian)
1. Introduction:
 - a. Doctrinal disputes could not be effectively settled:
 - (1) Heretics were successfully using the Scriptures to argue their theological points.
 - (2) Orthodox interpreters could not agree on their hermeneutical methods.
 - b. Thus four things developed (cf. III. A. 1. b).
 - c. Scriptures were seen as property of the church. The (sometimes poor) translation of the Latin Vulgate by Jerome solidified that view. For all practical purposes, study of the original languages of the Bible ceased.
 2. Individuals:
 - a. Jerome, (A.D. 342-420)
 - (1) He studied at Rome, and loved literature and Philosophy. In 374 he left for Palestine and wound up studying Hebrew under a Rabbi while leading a monastic life in Bethlehem.
 - (2) His first commentary was completely allegorical, but he moved to the literal-historical method under the influence of the Antioch school.
 - (3) He was the Origin of the Western Church.
 - (4) "The great hermit of Bethlehem had less genius than Augustine, less purity and loftiness of character than Ambrose, less sovereign good sense and steadfastness than Chrysostom, less keenness of insight and consistency of courage than Theodore of Mopsuestia; but in learning and versatile talent he was superior to them all" (Farrar, p. 222-223).
 - (5) Translator of the Latin Vulgate (A.D. 382-400); chooses the Hebrew over the LXX--which was revered in his day.
 - (6) Rejected the apocryphal writings.
 - (7) However, his work was hasty and imprecise, often even contradictory. He was a better collector than an original thinker. He also often lapses into useless allegory.
 - b. Augustine (Platonic philosophy)
 - (1) Converted through the allegorical preaching of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan out of the literalist interpretations of the Manichaeans.
 - (2) Although allegory saved him (esp. 2 Cor. 3:6, "The letter kills, but the spirit makes alive"), he sought a rule by which he might determine what to take allegorically and what to take literally.
 - (3) 397 wrote *De doctrina christiana* ("On Christian Teacher") on the relation of scripture to orthodox theology and the exegetical method:
 - (a) Does the interpretation align with scripture, especially Jesus' 2 greatest commandments.
 - (b) Does it align with the orthodox interpretation.
 - (c) If more than one orthodox interpretation, which best fits the context.
 - (4) As an expositor, however, he was ill equipped having no knowledge of

- Hebrew and little of Greek.
- (5) Being the father of Scholasticism he was progenitor to the medieval mystics; "His ecclesiastical tendencies helped to strengthen the hierarchy of Catholicism" (Farrar, 235); and his doctrine of grace and sufficiency of the Scriptures gave impetus to the reformation.
- c. Vincent, 434 composed *Commonitorium*, the definitive statement of early church interpretation.
- (1) Interpretation must align with what has been believed everywhere, always, by everyone.
 - (2) The Catholic exegete is to interpret "according to the traditions of the universal Church and according to the rules of Catholic dogma."
 - (3) This rule of Catholic dogma is to be found in the councils, decrees and masters. The ultimate authority of the Pope would not be established until late in the middle ages.
3. Authoritative Interpretation by the Church
- a. The main idea is that the Church is the final arbiter in Bible interpretation, not the individual.
- (1) Ultimately there must be one final voice that is "inspired" by God. For the Catholic church this has been the pope, through Apostolic succession.
 - (2) Even so, the idea of authoritative interpretation is not so much one inspired individual pitted against all others. Rather, it is the idea of an exegetical tradition passed down through the orthodox body of Christ. In essence, it is a question of whether the body of Christ, through its primary teachers, should have the final say, or whether autonomous individuals have the final say.
 - (3) Another critical assumption is that the words of "interpreters" would be better understood than the Scriptures themselves. It seems clear that Protestants rely on interpreters just as readily as do Catholics. That seems to be the impetus behind our voracious writing and vociferous preaching.
 - (4) Protestants have asserted that the Bible produced the church and is therefore subject to it. Catholics have asserted that the Church produced the Bible and is therefore its arbiter. Both are misleading.
 - (5) The four main sources of "authority" in Bible interpretation are: The Text, the Holy Spirit, Tradition, and Philosophy. All are helpful in some ways but contain serious obstacles.
- b. Criticism of Authoritative Interpretation
- (1) The Bible is taken away from individuals. In some historical periods it was even illegal for anyone other than clergy to read the Bible and vernacular translations were banned. This often leads to an unhealthy and unscriptural reliance on clerical leaders and potentially fosters a laziness and apathy in "parishioners".
 - (a) However, this probably has more to do with the political status of the interpreters than the ideology of Authoritative Interpretation.
 - (b) Furthermore, it is inaccurate to speak of the Bible as belonging to individuals. Even Philemon (v. 2) was written to a community, read and interpreted by them.
 - (c) Moreover, the Bible has never been taken away from individuals but interpreted for them. Texts have always been part of liturgy and teaching.

- (2) Both assumptions of Authoritative Interpretation, an inspired interpreter as well as Apostolic succession, are suspect.
 - (3) False teachings go unchallenged.
 - (a) This is only true if an interpreter abandons the traditions of the church fathers.
 - (b) While this sometimes happens, it is more likely that an individual will come up with some heresy than the church leaders working in concert with others and respecting historical/orthodox interpretations.
 - (4) This has a tendency to degenerate into oral traditions that supplant the word of God (cf. Mt 15:1-20).
 - c. Dangers of Individual Interpretation:
 - (1) The body of Christ is embarrassingly divided along the lines of charismatic teachers who cannot be held in check. To the watching world, this creates confusion and criticism.
 - (2) Novel and naive readings have a tendency to capture people's attention without the informed balance of tradition and historical exposition.
 - (3) Originally these documents were communal. Perhaps that is the best model for interpreting them still.
 - (4) The rise of individual interpretation grew out of rationalistic humanism. Its basic presuppositions and commitments are anti-Christian and have had many ruinous consequences even down to this day.
- F. Summary (See Zuck pp. 56-57).

- 1. In the Long Run, the Literal-Historical method was adopted by the Christian Church.
- 2. The BIGGIES of the early church:
 - a. Origin--Allegory
 - b. Irenaeus--Authoritative Interpretation
 - c. Theodore of Mopsuestia--Hermeneutical principles
 - d. Chrysostom--The Homilist
 - e. Jerome--The commentator
 - f. Augustine--The theologian and apologist
 - g. Julius Africanus--Textual criticism

IV. Middle Ages (c. A.D. 490-1500), [Scholasticism, with Allegory & Authoritative interpretation]

- A. Dark Ages (7-12th cen)--Characterized by collection & tradition
 - 1. "Woe to our days for the study of letters has perished from us" Gregory of Tours.
 - 2. Part of the reason the laity were kept from interpreting the Bible is that society was governed by it. Thus, misinterpretation would not have merely resulted in heresy, but anarchy as well.
- B. Scholastic Epoch (12-16th)--Renewal
 - 1. Scripture study in schools which later developed into universities of the 12th century, combined the Bible with Philosophy. The works of the Greek philosophers, especially Aristotle, surfaced and were studied vigorously, at first with the opposition of the pope.
 - 2. Jewish authorities like Ibn Ezra (1167), Rashi (1170) or Maimonides (1204) were consulted for Hebrew linguistics and historical details of the O.T.
- C. Exegesis was scarce (it was overshadowed by homiletics), [cf. Bray, p. 129-132].
 - 1. Interpretation was gleaned primarily from *catena*, a chain of interpretations pieced together from the commentaries of the fathers. Most Catenas were from Latin fathers such as Ambrose or Hilary, but especially from Augustine, and Jerome.
 - 2. Interpretive *glosses*, comments and annotations written in the margins or in between

- lines, were developed during this period and flourished in the 12 and 13th centuries.
3. Primarily allegorical. Origen's three-fold interpretation was expanded to four (sometimes seven) meanings sought in each text: historical, allegorical, anagogical, and moral.
 - a. The following poem from the middle ages shows this method: "The **Letter** shows us what God and our fathers did; the **Allegory** shows us where our faith is hid; the **Moral** meaning gives us rules of daily life; the **Anagogy** shows us where we end our strife."
 - b. In relation to Jerusalem:
 - (1) Literal: The ancient Jewish city
 - (2) Allegorical: The Christian Church
 - (3) Moral: The faithful soul
 - (4) Anagogical: The heavenly city
 4. Platonic thought (the idea that the spiritual is more real than the material), had come into the church from its earliest fathers, providing a world view in which God's word was not expressed in the scriptures but hidden in it. That is, the spiritual reality behind the printed text was what one sought, not what was embedded on the surface.
 5. Thomas Aquinas, the most important theologian and philosopher of the Catholic church was Aristotelian (materialist) in his philosophy rather than Platonic. He sought a rational basis for interpreting scripture. He sets forth his method in Summa Theologica, i.1.10; Quodl, vii, a. 14-16.
- E. Results of Aquinas' work.
1. Rejection of Patristic method of theology divorced from exegesis.
 2. The marriage of theology and philosophy, which had been rejected by the patristics.
 3. Interpretations came now from the senses, not from "special grace" and could therefore not be claimed to have come from God.
 4. Even so, Aquinas still employed the fourfold sense of Scripture. He had a streak of mysticism which he never shook.
- F. Defects of Scholastic exegesis: (From Farrar, pp. 283-300)
1. Philosophic speculation and intellectual acrobatics led to vain speculation and silly argumentation (cf. 2 Tim. 2:23). For examples see Farrar p. 291-293.
 2. Superstitious, even idolatrous beliefs about the Scriptures (e.g. dictation theory).
 3. Scholasticism was tied to Popes, sacraments, and monks. Therefore, it inherited all the defects of Authoritative interpretation.
 4. Lack of proper tools:
 - a. Monks were out of touch with society.
 - b. They were ignorant of the social mores and literature of the ancient world.
 - c. They neglected the original languages and lacked the best manuscripts.
 5. Abuse of the dialectic method.
 - a. Systematizing everything into artificial categories (Aristotelian).
 - b. Submitting the text to Western Logic--treating theology like geometry.
 - c. They made Scriptures complex and their comments verbose.
 - d. "They weave, as Bacon said, interminable webs, 'marvellous for the tenacity of the thread and workmanship, but for any useful purpose trivial and inane'" (Farrar, p. 289).
 - e. Their religious terminology became nonsensical jargon.
- V. **Reformation (1500-1650) [Historical Grammatical]**
- A. Rationalism-- Until this period, truth was something revealed by God. It was "up there to be received." Now it was something earthly that intelligent men could discern. It was "out there to

be captured.” Rationalism is thus the link between Reformation and Renaissance:

1. Lorenzo De Valla, secretary to the King of Naples
 - a. 1440 wrote *De Falso credita et ementita Const antini donatione*, proving that the legal basis for the "donation of Constantine" was forgery.
 - b. Later he also denied the authenticity of the letter of Christ to Abgar and the works attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, criticized the Latin style of the Vulgate, the writings of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas and questioned the authenticity of the Apostle's Creed. When brought before the weakened church he simply had to affirm his beliefs and was not punished further.
 - c. His supreme contribution was a demand to ascertain what the apostles actually wrote and determine what it actually meant. He may rightly claim to be one of the fathers of textual criticism.
 2. Reginald Pecock, bishop of St. Asaph
 - a. In *Rule of Christian Religion*, he claimed that the ecumenical decrees of the church were subject to error and had to be substantiated with Scripture. For this he was tried before an ecclesiastical court and threatened with death unless he recanted, which he did.
 - b. He was an intellectual rabble rouser at Oxford.
 3. Erasmus
 - a. Produced the first edited Greek N.T.
 - b. In response to the statement, "We had better be without God's laws than the Pope's," he said, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause the boy that driveth the plough to know more of Scripture than thou dost."
 - c. Especially important was his destruction of the belief in human infallibility of Popes, councils, church fathers and ecclesiastical systems.
 - d. He did more for the reformation than anyone except perhaps Luther. Erasmus did, for a time, support Luther, but later pulled away for the following reasons:
 - (1) He was offended by some of Luther's opinions, his crudeness and his methods.
 - (2) He wanted to avoid conflict.
 4. Spinoza a rationalist and humanist.
 - a. He was quite critical of Christian philosophy. He believed that Philosophy and theology/scriptures did not belong together.
 - b. Being a Jew, he subverted the Scriptures by claiming that Jews attribute everything to God anyway--financial transactions, ideas, desires. Thus every time the Scriptures made a statement that seemed irrational, Spinoza attributed it to Hebrew idiom.
 - c. His views are propagated in *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*.
 - d. Theology and reason must not co-exist. Theology is for controlling the behavior of stupid masses; reason for controlling the intellectual philosopher.
- B. Reformation – The foundational principle was each individual's right to interpret the Bible.
1. Pivotal People
 - a. Martin Luther
 - (1) Born in 1483 to a lower-middle class miner's family.
 - (2) While studying for law, he encountered a personal crisis and on July 2, 1505 in a stormy night he knelt before the statue of St. Anne and promised to enter a monastery. This angered his father. He entered the strict order of Augustinian Eremites.

- (3) As a monk he had, at first, relied on the allegorical method and thus knew its weaknesses well.
 - (a) Up to age 26 he had not read the Bible through.
 - (b) He learned no Greek or Hebrew in his early training.
 - (c) He lectured on the Bible at Wittenberg from 1518-1521. The book of Galatians is his only complete commentary.
 - (d) During the next 4 years (1518-1521) he studied the original languages. He was thrilled to learn that *poenitentia* (Lat.) was equivalent to *metanoia* (Gk.), and this, a far cry from *penance*. It was during this period that he developed his principles of the reformation.
- (4) Dissatisfaction with the catholic church:
 - (a) Especially over indulgences. Tetzel said, "As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs."
 - (b) 95 theses nailed to the door of the Castle church at Wittenberg in 1517.
 - (c) He maintained that the seven sacraments of the Catholic church should be reduced to two: Baptism and the Lord's supper.
 - (d) Priesthood should be reduced to all believers.
 - (e) He was condemned at the Diet of Worms, he said, "Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason--I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other--my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen." = *Sola Scriptura*
- (5) View of the Bible:
 - (a) Authoritative--above the church councils.
 - (b) Inspired--although he argued against the canonicity of Heb., James, Jude, Rev. Liberals try to claim that he did not affirm verbal, plenary inspiration (cf. Inspiration and Interpretation, ed. John F. Walvoord, 1957, pp. 95ff.), but this view would have been foreign to Luther. For a full discussion on his view of particular Bible books see Farrar, pp. 335-337. He does not believe in verbal inspiration; nor does he believe inspiration has ceased (See Farrar, pp. 339-340).
 - (c) Each individual has the right and ability to read and understand the Bible for himself.
 - (d) Single meaning of Scripture vs. 4-fold meaning. Of Allegory he says:
 - i) "Origen's allegories are not worth so much dirt."
 - ii) "Allegories are empty speculations, and as it were the scum of Holy Scripture."
 - iii) "Allegory is a sort of beautiful harlot, who proves herself specially seductive to idle men."
 - (e) The Holy Spirit works in the believer's heart to give understanding. There was a subjective element in Luther's hermeneutics.
 - (f) The Bible is clear enough to be read by the common man and adequately interpreted.
 - i) This caused him to translate the Scriptures into German.
 - ii) The issue of private interpretation was behind his arrest and response to ecclesiastical authorities at the Diet of Worms

b. John Calvin

- (1) He regarded interpretation as objective. He was the first to refuse to implement allegory at all.
- (2) He was a prolific writer, commenting on most of the Scriptures.
- (3) He rejected authoritative interpretation, claiming that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Eph. 2:20). Grant argues this point both exegetically and historically, p. 134.
- (4) He believed that without faith and the "lens" of the Holy Spirit, that a person could not accept the Bible as true. Thus there was a high degree of subjectivity in his interpretation, even while he was trying to exclude it. He and Luther both emphasized the role of the Spirit.
- (5) There is some debate about Calvin's view of Inspiration. Some have construed his statements about the authors as "clerks" and "penmen" to suggest mechanical dictation. On the other hand, he admits contradiction and error in the text.

A Comparison Between Luther and Calvin's Hermeneutic

Both	Luther	Calvin
The Bible is above the church		
High view of Inspiration, confused view of inerrancy		
Individual Interpretation		He considered his the only right one!
Eschewed Allegory	Yet used it some.	1 st not to use allegory at all
The Holy Spirit is necessary to understand the Bible		
	Kept as much Catholicism as possible	Rid his church of all Catholicism
	Preacher/Teacher	Prolific Writer

C. Post-Reformation movements

MOVEMENT	EMPHASIS
Scholasticism	Theology
Reformation	Exegesis
Humanism	Philosophy

1. Major dangers of this period:
 - a. Confessionalism--enforced by violence.
 - b. Exorbitant systems--Voluminous and tedious books written. These, like the oral law of the Pharisees, build a "hedge about the law."

- c. Bitter contentiousness between protestant movements; Farrar says, "There never was an epoch in which men were so much occupied in discovering each other's errors, or in which they called each other by so many opprobrious names" (p. 363).
 - d. A mechanical view of inspiration which restricted the work of the H.S. to the objective and cognitive and excluded Him from the subjective and experiential.
2. Pietism
- a. Reaction to all the post-reformation fighting involving Scriptural interpretation.
 - b. Essentially the text was to be used for personal edification and sanctification. The historical-critical scholarship was devalued.
 - c. Founded by Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705), a faithful Lutheran. He kindled a passion for holiness beyond orthodoxy.
 - d. Major movements: Moravians, Wesleyans, Puritans and Quakers.

VI. Enlightenment (1800's on) [Existentialism, Higher Criticism]

- A. Precursors to 19th century Liberalism
- 1. Free thinking humanism spawned both the renaissance in Italy and the reformation in Germany. Individual interpretation disregarded the traditions and authority of the church.
 - 2. Radical deists and humanists that attacked the foundation of the Scriptures not merely the authority of the church. *The miracles were denied through skeptical rationalism.*
 - 3. Historical-grammatical hermeneutics won the day. *The Scriptures were subject to human reason*, including historical criticism.
 - 4. Eventually, liberalism allowed for the Bible to CONTAIN the Word of God without being the word of God.
- B. Individuals who radically altered religious scholarship and traditional belief in the Scriptures:
- 1. Schleiermacher--Father of Modern Theology & **Existential Hermeneutics**
 - a. Popularized interpretation of the Bible like any other book. He was the first modernist, trying to mediate the radical rationalism of the Tubingen school.
 - b. But he still rejected the authority of scripture, bodily resurrection and the deity of Jesus.
 - c. He objected to the cold, objective method of historical analysis alone. He insisted that it must be augmented by intuition and imagination. Thus, hermeneutics became as much art as science.
 - d. He wed the rationalism of the renaissance with the subjectivism of the reformation, but in the end the rationalism won out (cf. Grant, p. 154-155), destroying the text; thus subjectivism was apprehended in order to develop faith.
 - e. Dangers of subjective interpretation:
 - (1) Thinking that we can completely or even adequately bridge the gaps between author and audience.
 - (2) Imposing personal will/perception on the text.
 - (3) Replacing "Me" as subject for "God" as subject of the text.
 - 2. Julius Wellhausen--**O.T. Source Criticism**
 - a. O.T. Scholar--He is to O.T. studies what Darwin is to the field of biology. Although his findings have been largely discredited, his method is still widely used.
 - b. He denied the authorship of the Pentateuch, claiming that it was the product of a number of authors after the Babylonian captivity.
 - c. Famous for the JEDP theory (cf. Grant, p. 162)
 - (1) J--850 B.C. in Southern Judah
 - (2) E--750 B.C. in Northern Kingdom
 - (3) P--"Priestly" 570 B.C.

- (4) D--"Deuteronomy" was supposedly the document found in the reign of Josiah 621 B.C.
- (5) R^{je}--the combination of J & E c. 650 B.C.
- (6) R^d--Redaction of JE & D; considerable material was added at this time.
- (7) R^p--Combined JED & P for JEDP, 398 B.C.
- d. Demolition of the theory:
 - (1) Archaeology--e.g. the reality of the tabernacle and the presence of writing at the time of Abraham.
 - (2) Scientific linguistic scholarship.
 - (3) The application of his method has revealed innumerable other potential sources.
- 3. F. C. Baur--**N.T. Source Criticism**
 - a. Most important N.T. critic of 19th cen. He was professor of historical theology at Tubingen from 1826 till death in 1860.
 - b. Strongly influenced by Hegel's philosophy of dialectical development of dogma by which he reinterpreted Christianity:
 - (1) Thesis--Judaism
 - (2) Antithesis--Paul and followers
 - (3) Synthesis--Gospels and Epistles
- 4. Rudolf Bultmann, Father of **Form Criticism** & Demythologization
 - a. Sought to discover the human condition under which the historical understanding is possible.
 - b. "Bultmann's method of interpretation ... is away from language ... back to an understanding which is prior to, and more authentic than, language." (Ferguson, p. 171).
 - c. Interpretation is that of Mythology. When you strip the veneer of story and mythology, then you find the true meaning of the human experience.
 - d. Man replaces God as subject: "If the object of interpretation is designated as the inquiry about God and the manifestations of God, this means, in fact, that it is the inquiry into the reality of human existence" (R. Bultmann, *The Problem of Hermeneutics*, p. 259).
 - e. All interpretation is sifted and measured through the grid of human experience.
- 5. Albert Schweitzer – **The Quest for the Historical Jesus**
 - a. 1893 entered the university of Strasbourg
 - b. Eventually came to question all their liberal theology, especially concerning the synoptic problem.
 - c. Called on to lead protestantism back to orthodoxy while he was led to medical missions in Africa.
 - d. The gospels are not objective history but the telling of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God for the development of a faith community. Conclusions:
 - (1) We know little of the life and deeds of Jesus.
 - (2) We have no alternate construction to substitute for the character of Jesus presented in the gospels.
 - e. Schweitzer demonstrated that the skepticism of the 19th century went beyond the facts of "assured results" of biblical criticism.
- C. Critique:
 - 1. There is always a pre-understanding. Care must be taken not to allow that to interfere with receiving the message from the text.

2. There is much to learn from the positive contributions of liberal scholars: Interpreter must have empathy and rapport with the author (Schleiermacher), must listen to the text (Ebeling) and have a living relation to the message (Bultmann). Interpretation is more than explanation but is a quest for the understanding of new modes of being (Gadamer and Ricoeur).
3. We should be suspect of any hermeneutic that denies the Bible as God's self-disclosure through history, especially in the person of Jesus.
4. Liberalism has lost sight of the historic narrative. Conservatism has lost sight of its present, meaningful value to today's society, but especially to the individual.

VII. Concluding Considerations

A. There are three perspectives:

1. Author Oriented
 - a. Called: literal-grammatical or historical-contextual or historical critical.
 - b. Seeks to understand the A.I.M. to the original audience.
 - c. Advocates: Hirsch, Kaiser
2. Reader Oriented
 - a. Meaning for the reader can exceed the intent of the author.
 - b. Popular with Liberation and feminist hermeneutics.
 - c. Advocate: Gadamer
3. Text Oriented
 - a. This seeks not to uncover the author's intention so much as the author's results (i.e. the document).
 - b. This view has been supported by such recent fields as linguistics, structuralism, and narrative and literary approaches.
 - c. Advocate: Ricoeur

B. Great Forces

1. Historical-Critical Method: Great progress in the research of the Graeco-Roman world. But beyond this, it seeks to explain the Bible by a purely rationalistic base, without God, prophecy or miracles.
2. History of Religions: Comparing Judaism and Christianity to the archaeological data of the religions that surrounded them. While some exaggerate the dependence of Judaism and Christianity on other religions, this has promoted two positive things:
 - a. A sensitivity to the cultural and religious contexts of Judaism and Christianity.
 - b. It has shown the very early development of certain cultural phenomenon. This has strained much of source-criticism theory.
3. Higher Criticism:
 - a. Source-Criticism: Determining the written or oral sources behind the Bible book (F.C. Baur [N.T.], Julius Wellhausen [O.T.]).
 - b. Form-Criticism: Interpreting the N.T. in relation to its environment (i.e. the Christian community and oral tradition).
 - (1) Emphasis is on the Sitz im Leben--life situation.
 - (2) Its importance is easily exaggerated.
 - (3) Not only critical but also a theological method.
 - (4) value:
 - (e) is in recognizing the faith community which preceded the writings.
 - (f) recognizing that our 20th century cultural and Christian community needs are different from those in the first century.
 - c. Redaction Criticism--An attempt to identify the peculiar theological emphases of a

Bible book or author/editor.

4. Existentialism--due to the ravages of WWI, the optimism of liberalism was destroyed. People began to look for more personal inspiration and meaning in religion (e.g. Barth, Bultmann & Schleiermacher).
 5. Edited Greek texts
 - a. Westcott and Hort
 - b. Nestle, based on Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf (8th ed.), and B. Weiss.
 - c. Aland, Black, Metzger and Wikgren (1966) is a newer edited Greek text.
- C. Five major Schools of thought:
1. Literal (Philological)--Looking for meaning in the text. Extremes = letterism
 2. Allegorical/mystical--Looking for meaning beyond the text.
 3. Rationalistic--Subjecting the text to human intellect.
 4. Authoritative--Looking to the Church for meaning.
 5. Existential--Looking to my own feelings for meaning.

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The Allegory of 153 Fish, Jn 21:11
(Compiled by Mark Moore)

The number 153 has had a number of allegorical interpretations attached to it, none of which appear valid:

- (1) There were supposedly 153 varieties of fish in the Sea of Galilee. Thus, this is a veiled reference to Mt 13:47-48, showing that all kinds of people will be saved. This estimate comes from Oppian via Jerome. However, Jerome is somewhat "loose" in his counting of Oppian's categories. Besides that, Oppian wrote c. 176-180 and therefore can not adequately account for John's usage of 153.
- (2) The total represents the sum of all the numbers from 1-17. $17 = 10$ commandments plus the 7 gifts of the Spirit. Or, according to R. Grant, "'One Hundred Fifty-Three Large Fish' (John 21:11)," *Harvard Theological Review* 42 (1949): 273-75, there are seven Apostles present at the catch and ten who received the Holy Spirit (John 20:24). Thus, 153 functions here as 144,000 does in Revelation 7:4 to represent all God's redeemed.
- (3) Peter's name in Hebrew, Simon Iona, numerically is 153.
- (4) $153 = 100$ (Gentiles) + 50 (Jews) + 3 (Trinity).
- (5) The Hebrew word for Mt. Pisgah has a numerical value of 153. This shows how Jn 21 is Jesus farewell address to the leaders of the New Israel, just like Moses' (cf. Num 11:16-25; 27:17). (O. T. Owens, "One Hundred and Fifty Three Fishes," *ExpT* 100 (1988): 52-54.)
- (6) The Hebrew for "The Children of God" has a numerical value of 153. Hence, Jn 21 is a reference to the new "children of God." (J. A. Romeo, "Gematria and John 21:11--The Children of God," *JBL* 97/2 (1978): 263-64.)
- (7) The 153 fish in the net, plus the one that Jesus had cooked = 154 fish. This matches the numeric value of of the Greek word "day," which was one of the titles for Jesus in the early church. (K. Cardwell, "The Fish on the Fire: Jn 21:9" *ExpT* 102 (1990): 12-14.)
- (8) 153 is gematriacal Atbash. If you reverse the numerical value of the Hebrew Alphabet, then take the numbers 70, 3, and 80, you get the Greek letters "I," "X," and "Th." These are the first three letters of the Greek word "fish" which was, of course, a significant symbol in early Christianity. This word was an accrostic for early Christians which signified: "Jesus Christ, God, Son, Savior." (Cf. N. J. McEleney, "153 Great Fishes [John 21:11]--Gematriacal Atbash," *Biblica* 58 [1977]: 411-17).

HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS IN INTERPRETATION:

By Mark Moore

I. What the Holy Spirit Does:

1. He inspired and produced the Bible, especially including its prophecies (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20-21). Therefore, He speaks and guides through the Scriptures (Psa 119:105; Heb 4:12).
2. Through indwelling, he creates an affinity between us and God so that we understand his mind, heart and thus the major themes of the Bible (1 Cor 2:10-16; Gal 5:18-23).
3. Helps apply the text in relevant ways to our present situation both personally and to the church body (1 John 2:27; 1 Thess 4:9).
4. Helps us during evangelistic opportunities to recall texts that we have studied (Mt 10:19).
5. Makes us wise, transforming our minds (Eph 1:17; Col 1:9), and actions (Rom 8:13), so that we are able to live out the Word. Thus we understand it existentially as well as cognitively.
6. Convicts us of sin so that we can read the text more honestly (Jn 16:8).
7. Develops and appetite in us for the Word of God.
8. Gives us gifts whereby we implement and minister the Word of God to others (teaching & preaching), (1 Cor 12:7-11, 28-30).
9. May speak through the shared thinking and wisdom of the Elders or even the church body at large (1 Cor 14:24-33; 1 Tim 4:14).

II. What the Holy Spirit Does not do:

1. Eliminate the need for Bible study, research tools, or common sense by granting an individual a supernatural experience.
2. Clear up the meaning of every passage.
3. Make your interpretation infallible.
4. Give us information that is hidden in the text that no one else in the church (or in church history), has been able to find.
5. Contradict himself by speaking in opposition to other passages.

III. What the Holy Spirit Might Do . . . (But don't count on it pal!):

1. Grant sudden flashes of insight into the meaning of a verse.
2. Speak to us verbally or through dreams and visions. (He may but I wouldn't count on it for Sunday's sermon).
3. Work merely through subjective feelings.
4. Grant new revelation for the church.

PROBLEM PASSAGES

By Mark Moore

- I. Textually Problematic
 - A. Examples
 - 1. Matt. 18:15
 - 2. Mark 16:9-20
 - 3. John 7:53--8:11
 - 4. Acts 8:37; 28:29
 - 5. 1 John 5:8
 - B. What to do
 - 1. Don't destroy the faith while trying to inform.
 - 2. Don't ignore the problem.
 - 3. Don't use this as an excuse for choosing what to or not to believe.
 - 4. Exalt the text as a whole. Treat questionable passages with devotional dignity.
- II. Hermeneutically Problematic
 - A. Examples (see also Mt 5:17-20; 24; Rev 17:8ff).
 - 1. 1 Cor 11:5 And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head--it is just as though her head were shaved.
 - 2. 1 Cor 15:29 Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them?
 - 3. 1 Tim 2:15 But women will be saved through childbearing--if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.
 - 4. 1 Peter 3:19 through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison
 - 5. Rev 13:18 This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.
 - B. What to do
 - 1. Stay grounded in solid exegetical method. At least get at what the text affirms.
 - 2. Use good resource books: (a) Commentary, (b) Bible Difficulties, (c) Hard Sayings.
 - 3. Be fair and balanced in presentation.
 - 4. Come to a decision; hold it tentatively
- III. Canonically Difficult--Parallel Passages
 - A. Examples
 - 1. Time--John 19:14 | Mk 15:25
 - 2. Names--Mt 9:9 | Mk 2:14
 - 3. Emphasis--Acts 9:7 | 22:9; or Jn 5:31 | 8:14; or Prov 26:4-5
 - 4. Compression of Narrative--Mat 8:5-8 | Lk 7:2-7
 - 5. Differing Details--Mt 27:5-6 | Acts 1:18
 - 6. Theological--Mt 7:1-2 | John 7:24
 - B. What to do
 - 1. Allow the clear to guide the meaning of the unclear.
 - 2. Seek harmonization; allow for ambiguity. Beware of parallelomania.
 - 3. Admit ignorance and distance; Allow for further (or lost) information.
- IV. Cultural Context
 - A. Examples
 - 1. Social Issues: Homosexuality; Women's roles, Racism
 - 2. Cultural Biases: Wealth, Divorce, Individualism
 - 3. Ecclesiastical Applications: Leadership structures, civil disobedience
 - B. What to do
 - 1. Allow the Word to shape our culture. Be bold with the word; gentle with people.
 - 2. Allow the community to share in exegetical concerns through discussion and questions.
 - 3. Allow people time to come to the same convictions you have.

Principles for Dealing with Problem Passages

By Mark Moore

1. Determine whether or not you believe the Bible to be the inerrant word of God. If it is, then a solution to the proposed problem must exist! 2 Tim 3:16-17
2. Truth does not contradict itself. Therefore, we should seek to harmonize apparent contradictions.
3. The author gets the benefit of the doubt. If a possible solution exists, then the burden of proof is with the one who asserts a discrepancy.
4. It is fair to assume that further evidence, or even lost evidence, could clarify a supposed discrepancy, based on experience in the field of archaeology. It is also fair to assume that some things are too "high" for us (Isaiah 55:8-9).
5. Understand:
 - a. Genre of the passage
 - b. Purpose of the book
 - c. Situational context
6. Evaluate:
 - a. Integrity of the text
 - b. Word meanings
 - c. Clear Parallels
7. Good commentaries and "Difficulties" books can help clarify nearly all supposed discrepancies.

CULTURAL VS. UNIVERSAL

By Mark Scott & Mark Moore

NOTE: Place C or U for cultural or universal in the space provided.

1. _____ Greet with a kiss (Rom. 16:16).
2. _____ Lifting holy hands (I Tim. 2:8).
3. _____ Not wearing braided hair (I Pet. 3:3; 1 Tim. 2:9).
4. _____ Drink wine (I Tim. 5:23).
5. _____ Foot washing (John 13:14; 1 Tim. 5:10).
6. _____ Men's hair length (1 Cor. 11:14).
7. _____ Women wearing veils (1 Cor. 11:14).
8. _____ Women speaking/teaching in church (I Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:12).
9. _____ Casting lots to elect leaders (Acts 1:26).
10. _____ Anointing with oil when ill (James 5:14).
11. _____ Wives submit to your husbands ... (Eph. 5:22ff, Col. 3:18).
12. _____ One cup for communion? (Luke 22:17).
13. _____ Don't eat meat that has been sacrificed to idols (Acts 15:29).
14. _____ Don't eat blood (Acts 15:29).
15. _____ Be baptized (Acts 2:38).
16. _____ Fixed hours of prayer (Acts 3:1).
17. _____ The first day of the week beginning on Saturday night (Acts 20:7).
18. _____ Work with your hands (1 Thess. 4:11).
19. _____ Preaching two by two (Luke 10:1).
20. _____ Preachers sewing tents for a living (Acts 18:2f).
21. _____ Paid clergy (1 Tim. 5:17-18).
22. _____ Fasting/laying on of hands as part of ordination (Acts 13:3).
23. _____ Do not seek marriage (I Cor. 7:26).
24. _____ Religious vows (Acts 18:18).
25. _____ Meet in homes for church (Col. 4:15).
26. _____ Give to those who beg from you (Mt. 5:42).
27. _____ Owe no man anything (Rom. 13:8).

Cultural vs. Universal

Some passages from the Bible are deeply embedded in their own cultural context and should not be unilaterally applied to every culture or every time. For example, Jesus' Jewish disciples kept particular hours of prayer, ate Kosher food, and wore typically Palestinian garb. These are not things American Christians today should feel obligated to imitate. On the other hand, there are passages that clearly are universal -- loving your neighbor or placing faith in Jesus. So far so good. The problem is, what do we do with passages "in the middle" such as head coverings, foot washings, gender roles, or being fruitful and multiplying? How do we determine whether a particular passage is universal or cultural? The following are principles, not laws, that may help you make that decision. However, they can not promise scientific precision. Therefore, in this issue, common sense, freedom of opinion, and Christian graciousness must prevail. (These are given in somewhat of an order of importance.)

1. Are there any clues in the text that a passage should be applied universally? Does the author limit or extend the action/command to given situations, persons, or times?
2. Do parallel texts, teaching the same principle, use the same action?
3. Is the principle taught directly tied to the form of the action?
4. Is the action part of conversion or is it sacramental?
5. How did the early church fathers interpret this action?
6. Is this action part of other religious or social customs of the day? In other words, was there a precedent for such an action that might be distinct in our day?
7. If the same action was followed in our culture, would it send the intended Biblical message?
8. What does common sense tell us about the meaning of this action in our own day? What would be the cost(s) or benefit(s) of imitating such an action? Is it even possible to carry out the same action today?
9. Avoid dogmatism and hold your conclusions tentatively yet with freedom and conviction.

HERMENEUTICAL CONSTRUCTS

By Mark Moore

Whether right or wrong, we understand a Bible passage not merely by what the text says to us, but by what we bring to the text--our presuppositions and attitudes (i.e. our hermeneutical construct). In other words, different people get differing meanings from the Bible, not because each Bible passage contains many meanings, but because we approach the Bible in different ways.

Hermeneutics, the study of interpretation, is a rapidly changing field. It used to be dominated by Theologians. Recently Psychologists, Sociologists, and students of Literature have joined in the discussion of Hermeneutics. Thus we have several fields which add their own voice in the discussion of what counts as meaning and how do we obtain it.

The following is a discussion of a number of hermeneutical constructs along with an evaluation of their positive and negative contributions to Biblical Hermeneutics.

Hermeneutical Constructs

By Mark Moore

MAJOR BRANCH

PHILOSOPHICAL

MAJOR LIMBS

Existentialism (1)

Rationalism

Literary Analysis (2)

Post-Structuralism (3)

SOCIOLOGICAL

Liberation Theologies (4-5)

Evangelicalism

THEOLOGICAL

Calvinism

Restorationism (6)

Catholicism

Millennialism (7-9)

MINOR LIMBS

Pietism
Spiritual Exegesis
Schleiermacher
Bultmann

Form Criticism
Source Criticism
Redaction Criticism

Rhetorical Criticism
Structuralism
Narrative Criticism

Semiotics
Reader Response
Deconstruction
Meta-Critique

Latin American
Black
Feminism
Homosexual

Moral Majority
Gothardites
Dobsonites

1-5 points

Christian/Disciples
Pentecostals
Jews for Jesus
Mennonites

Chameleons

Premillennialism
Dispensationalists
Amillennialists
Postmillennialists

NOTE: The numbers in () indicated the lectures which will cover the bold-faced "Minor Limbs."

Hermeneutical Shifts

Preliminary Comments:

- You can't step into the same stream twice. Hermeneutics is forever changed. (Moreover, the stream is moving more quickly than ever.)
- The locus of meaning shifted from God (or church authority), to mankind, to me. Hermeneutically this shift took us from the Author to the text to the reader.
- There is good and bad in each shift.
- Causes of the shifts:
 - (1) Political/sociological events.
 - (2) Philosophic/secular leanings.
 - (3) Personal crisis or mystical experiences by key individuals.
 - (4) Church needs and/or corruptions.

I. Rationalism

- A. The renaissance spelled change. God/church was replaced as the source of truth with human intellect. This involved a change in our perception of the fall's effects on the human mind.
- B. Rationalism produced:
 1. Text Criticism
 2. Form, Source, Redaction Criticism
- C. Meanwhile, rationalism also spawned the industrial revolution and a great optimism in the goodness of humankind.
- D. This was broken by WWI followed by the great depression and finally WWII. Higher criticism gave way to existentialism.

II. Existentialism

- A. Rationalism and Romanticism were wed through the renaissance. Their consummation birthed existentialism which moved beyond rationalism.
- B. Existentialism, which began with Schleiermacher (1768-1834), flourished in the West due to rampant individualism. To truly understand the author, one must feel what the author feels, not just think what the author thinks. It's kind of like when a man claims to understand how a woman feels when she has a baby.

III. Pluralism

- A. This is the inevitable result of existentialism. There is no longer one correct meaning. In fact, there was a loss of absolute truth.
- B. This aligns with the sociological impact of mass communication and the further cultural criticism of Vietnam and Watergate.
- C. Furthermore, the speech-act theory helped us to see that language is not intended to merely have meaning but to cause something to happen.

IV. New Hermeneutic

- A. This stands on the shoulders of pluralism. Not only is there not one single meaning, but now I affect the meaning because meaning resides in the present -- it must be relevant to me.
- B. The hermeneutical circle is the process of how my presuppositions change the way I read the text but the text then changes me. I therefore have altered presuppositions so that my next reading of the text is different . . . and on the circle goes. Gadamer calls this the merging of the two horizons -- one of the text and one of my own situation.
- C. "The objectivity of the text and the subjectivity of the reader merge in the act of reading, and new horizons of possibility (or futurity) are created." Grand Osborne.

V. Postmodernism

- A. Meaning is created, not inherent.
- B. Literary -- The text takes on a life of its own apart from the author who is dead and who

- therefore cannot control its meaning.
- C. From this point, other disciplines begin to interact with hermeneutics, such as literature, sociology, history, psychology, politics, etc.
 - D. Reader Response comes along -- the reader creates meaning through an existential encounter with the text.
 - E. Liberation Theology (Latin, feminist, homosexual, black, etc.) -- a community of readers gives meaning to the text rather than an individual or a school of thought. Furthermore, this meaning is pragmatic for overt political/social purposes.
- VI. Deconstruction
- A. Asserts that language can have no inherent meaning and each person should therefore make up their own.
 - B. There is no meaning in language, rather, language is a tool for creating personal meaning after one deconstructs oppressive ideologies and institutions.

Art and Hermeneutics:

Some have been mystified by modern art. Both visual art and music have followed the same hermeneutical tract as language. For example, art of the Middle Ages was symbolic, there were images and codes hidden in the painting. Renaissance was primarily “representational.” That is, it sought to recreate reality. This gave way to the impressionists of the 18th and 19th centuries who painted quickly trying to capture a moment or an emotion. Modern Art, on the other hand is a catalyst through which an individual creates her own meaning. Thus it is most concerned with (1) composition and color, (2) lacks an overt picture or idea, (3) often deconstructs the elements of a reality, and (4) often is used to promote a political agenda. (The same is true for atonal music, [cf. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, p. 46 for an example of historical grammatical method in the interpretation of Mahler’s symphony by Kaplan]).

HERMENEUTICAL CONSTRUCTS: PHILOSOPHICAL

- I. Introduction
 - A. Hermeneutical Construct
 - 1. See overhead of Moore's Hermeneutical Circle
 - 2. Meaning is not just derived by the text but by:
 - a. What we bring to the text.
 - b. Our Hermeneutical Construct.
 - B. The Presuppositional Tree
 - 1. All have Truth and Error
 - 2. The value of each position is in the level of emphasis that we give to it.
 - 3. Failure of these "New" systems as a whole: (Most don't last but a few years, but leave residual waste products)
 - a. Locus of meaning--They misplace the main source of meaning from the text to: Author, Audience (Ancient World) or Reader (Modern Culture), when the text is all we actually have to work with.
 - b. Arrogance--I am more important than the Biblical text (either my mind or feelings)
 - c. Myopia/Existential--Today is more important than yesterday. In other words, real meaning is found in my existence rather than in God's revelation.
 - C. Primary Reasons for adopting alternate constructs:
 - 1. Detached objectivity is a myth. We have come to recognize that presuppositions have played a major role in hermeneutics. This has led some to despair at any objective hermeneutical construct. Instead of denying or fighting presuppositions, they enthrone them.
 - 2. Many have become discontent with the results (or "status quo") of traditional hermeneutics (e.g. Dead orthodoxy, inSECTicides, etc.).
 - 3. Some are looking for an opportunity to produce (and cash in) on creative insights.
 - 4. Growing interdisciplinary dialogue: Sociology, Literature, Psychology (also political science, economics, anthropology).

HERMENEUTICAL CONSTRUCTS: PHILOSOPHICAL

#1: LITERARY ANALYSIS

- I. Introduction and Overview
 - A. This is the most recent and challenging approach to hermeneutics. It arose out of disenchantment with both existentialism and higher criticism.
 - B. Meaning is derived not merely from what the text says, but by how it is structured.
 - 1. There are some standard literary functions--Villain, plot, flashback, narrator.
 - 2. Examples: Matthew, Parables, Revelation; Lk/Acts
 - C. The locus of meaning is deeply imbedded into the text, quite apart from the author, audience, or reader.
 - D. A.I.M. is viewed as unimportant and perhaps even naive.
- II. Literary Criticism -- Analyzing the writings of the Bible, especially narrative in the same way as other literary works (e.g. Shakespeare, Cervantes, etc.).
 - A. It is essentially the same as studying genre.
 - B. It tends to look at a piece of literature as a whole rather than dissecting it into little pieces as historical criticism does.
 - C. Many of its findings discredit the myopic and faithless conclusions of historical criticism.
- III. Narrative Criticism -- most literary criticism has been done on narrative.

- A. In narrative, we look for the following literary devices:
 - 1. Structure
 - a. Beginning, Middle, End
 - b. Doublets, a common Hebrew device (cf. Gen 1-2)
 - c. Chiasm
 - 2. Functions
 - a. Order
 - b. Duration/Speed
 - c. Frequency/Repetition
 - 3. Elements
 - a. Character (Judges)
 - b. Plot (Exodus)
 - c. Tone--How you should feel (Acts, Rev.)
 - d. Atmosphere/Setting (Jonah)
 - e. Narration (e.g. Omniscience -- as when John expresses what was in Jesus' mind, Jn 6:15, 64; 16:19; 18:4; 19:28).
 - 4. Devices
 - a. Flash back/forward (Mk 6:17-18; 14:1-11; cf. Jn 12:1)
 - b. Editorial Comment (Jn 2:21; 6:6, 71; 7:39; 8:27; 12:33; 13:11; 18:32; 21:19, 23; Mk 7:18).
 - c. Slow (or fast) motion
 - d. Contrast/Comparison (Peter & Paul in Acts)
 - e. Diary or Editorial Comments
- B. Hermeneutical contributions:
 - 1. Liberal and Conservative theologians can dialogue about the function of a text on common ground since Narrative Criticism deals only with the finished product and not with its historicity.
 - 2. N.C. has significantly challenged source criticism. Doublets no longer indicate a redactor but merely a rhetorical device.
 - 3. Meaning is derived based on function as well as what the text says. Furthermore, true meaning is gleaned by reading a whole book and even comparing it to others of the same "class" (i.e. comic, epic, tragedy, etc.)
- IV. Rhetorical Criticism -- understanding the author's use of rhetoric and style and how these devices are used to make an argument. It is like literary criticism only it looks at embedded thought structure rather than literary structure.
- V. Canonical Criticism
 - A. It accepts the Bible in its present "shape," basically ignoring the critical issues surrounding it. Essentially it says, "This is what we have to work with; let's work with it rather than arguing how it got this way."
 - B. There are two schools of thought:
 - 1. J. A. Sanders suggests that we look at the shape of the canon and try to identify the hermeneutical presuppositions of the redactors who originally produced it.
 - 2. Brevard Childs suggests that we use the present shape of the canon to shape our own theology and preaching since it is the context within which we must work. (Consider how Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon functioned within the Jewish community).
- VI. Structuralism -- The analysis of "deep structures": Universal human truths exist at the level of *structure* but are camouflaged at the level of observable fact unless one knows how to decode those facts. (It was so named by Lévi Strauss in his synthesis of Carl Marx, Sigmund Freud, geology, and Saussure's linguistics).
 - A. Philosophic underpinnings:

1. It takes an organic view of reality rather than atomistic. That is, it describes individual entities in terms of their relationships rather than as separate identities.
 2. Every object is both present and absent. We only see part of the object since it is connected to the whole in incorporates that to which it is related. Also, the whole is always present in its component parts.
 3. Knowledge of the world is not *immediate* as the empiricists of Britain suggested (Lock, Berkeley, Hume), but *mediated* as the rationalists of the continent argued (Descartes, Spinoza, Kant). We don't see individual objects but artifacts mediated by relationships.
 4. Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud were both examples of rationalists looking for an underlying structure to reality. For Marx it was economic, for Freud it was psychological. Yet both are still tied to historical realities and thus, not yet structuralist which is ahistorical.
- B. Theoretical Matrix:
1. Concepts of words:
 - a. Words do not name things, but concepts.
 - b. Their precision is not in naming what is, but differentiating what something is not.
 - c. Different languages produce different words, therefore different relationships and thinking patterns.
 - d. The *signified* is the concept, the *signifier* is the sound-image. The relationship between the two is an arbitrary social construct.
 2. *Langue* is the rules that govern language (diachronic), whereas *parole* is the rules that govern the specific uses of language. This is roughly compared to the rules of a chess game. There are specific moves one can make (*parole*) but that is only within an arbitrary system of rules that govern the game and distinguish between a pawn and a queen.
 3. *Semiotics*: the relationship between signs (not just linguistics but its social settings – the world is text). The relationships between words create an intricate web of structure. These "deep structures" are elements of literature which are trans-cultural/universal. We must look below the surface structures of plot, theme, motif, or in poetry, meter rhyme, parallelism.
 - a. There are codes imbedded in the structure of the text which give trans-cultural meaning to the piece.
 - b. They are ahistorical since they identify themes and meaning which bridge time and culture. It uses the findings of sociologists who have discovered both similarities in a variety of "exotic" cultures as well as the social *function* of idiosyncratic behaviors once thought bizarre and meaningless.
 - c. Consciously we perceive things, subconsciously we perceive relationships. So if we can detect the purpose or pattern of an author's use of patterns, words, or ideas, we can know more than the author. This is especially true in the genre of Myth (see *Psychology Today*, May 1972) which uses several key themes repeatedly to try to address the problems humans face (generally political, economic, and biological).
 - d. We are free to create *parole* any way we like. But *langue* is fixed. All we can really do is come up with unique contributions.
- C. This was a radical new way of looking at the world
1. The mind is not a receptacle for sensory data but a mechanism driven by the structures of language. In fact, there are no "facts" per se, no absolutes, only a plurality of patterns.
 2. It overthrew realism. There is no "real world" out there, only a linguistic world that is arbitrary. What we have is not "data" but "signs."
 3. It demotes human individualism. We don't think and speak autonomously. We are driven by an intricate and preordained web of structure.
- D. This is complex even for the specialists because of its diversity, peculiar vocabulary, and its

esoteric guesswork.

VII. Evaluation of Literary Theories:

A. Positive contributions

1. Greater attention to the piece as a whole.
2. Greater attention to literary devices and their contribution to meaning: Metaphor, paradox, irony, parable.
3. Keen understanding of narrative structure and function beyond atomized evaluation.
4. Understanding the use of literary ambiguity and indirectness.
 - a. The function of these devices are to seize an audience and propel the discussion outside of the time and place of the communication.
 - b. Thus, we are not supposed to clear up all these issues. By doing so we may ameliorate a piece's effectiveness.
5. The use of imagination.
6. The understanding and evaluation of how literature functions as a social tool, how it reflects society at large, and even humanity through social patterns. It show how the world as text functions, not just language.

B. Negative contributions:

1. It isolates/insulates the text from both the author and the reader.
2. One may be tempted to view the text as fiction or ahistorical.
3. L.T. goes a long way to showing how a text functions and/or is organized but stops short of giving it meaning. It explains, analyzes and sometimes even interprets the piece, but fails to give it meaning.
4. It fails to give enough consideration of the importance of surface structures.
5. It yields divergent results and thus lacks as the scientific system it claims to be.
6. One may be tempted to depreciate the religious value of a text for its aesthetic, social, or political value.
7. Employing anachronistic modern analysis on ancient texts.

HERMENEUTICAL CONSTRUCTS: PHILOSOPHICAL #2: POST-STRUCTURALISM

I. Introductory Issues:

1. Moving the locus of meaning from the Author/Text to Reader/Audience.
2. Subjectivity is no longer to be avoided--it is to be encouraged and welcomed.
3. The text is autonomous from the author.
4. Look at the text as art rather than "work."

II. Reader Response -- Meaning is not imbedded in the text; rather it is created in the process of reading the text.

A. Two Schools

1. Meaning resides in the original community of readers.
2. Meaning resides in each contemporary community of readers (totally subjective). "The goal is not to discover what the text is saying but first to experience what it does and then to persuade others regarding the validity of your perspective on the text" (Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, p. 379).

B. Major Concerns

1. Understanding that speakers direct their addresses to specific audiences.
 - a. Jesus' sermons are governed/determined by his audiences.
 - b. Paul's letters are conditioned by the recipients.
2. Community of Readers
 - a. The nature of the community will determine how the text is read and therefore:

- b. The nature of the community will set parameters of meaning. That is, true meaning is found in the community of readers, not merely in the text.
 - 3. Speeches and Written communication are not merely propositional.
 - a. They don't just describe events, they cause things to happen.
 - b. Because they have "performative" or "exercitive" force, they involve the readers.
 - c. Example: "Jesus is Lord" is no mere statement of fact. It involves the reader; it demands his obedience to the directives of Jesus.
- C. What Texts Do
 - 1. Types of Texts
 - a. Exercitive--Like when a king gives a *command* which is to be carried out.
 - b. Verdictive--Like a judge when he gives a sentence – a *pronouncement* of value.
 - c. Behabitive--Like a counselor who tells you how to live in order "survive" – a *prescription* for life.
 - 2. Promises verses Assertions
 - a. Promises shape world to the word (prophetic).
 - b. Assertions shape the word to the world (practical).
 - 3. Although the categories may change, we must admit that the Bible is not merely propositional. It seeks to change our attitude and behavior, through promises, threats, requests, etc.
- D. Hermeneutical Implications and Evaluations
 - 1. We should attempt to reproduce the response of the 1st audience.
 - a. Although no two readers respond the same, we can use our informed imagination as well as semiotic (e.g. sign) clues to reproduce the original response. For example: "Hey buddy!," "Imagine that!," "Have you not read?" "Truly I say," or "Amen."
 - b. We must consider reading communities not just individuals. Ancient Documents were read aloud the whole groups.
 - c. Therefore, a later passage, according to R.R. must not influence our reading of an earlier one. However, this is not true in the gospels, and other historical works, whose readers had already heard the stories.
 - 2. This method is often too subjective, and therefore yields divergent results.
 - a. Existential--the meaning of the text is what I experience through reading the text.
 - b. Therefore, multiple meanings are positive and inevitable. This is **new!**
 - c. Objectivity is stifling and to be avoided.
 - 3. This method does call attention to the influence of our own presuppositions.

III. Postmodernism

- A. Description (not definition)
 - 1. That which comes after Modernism; it remains to be seen where this takes us. Diogenes Allen, *Christian Belief in a Postmodern World*, (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1989), 2, writes, "A massive intellectual revolution is taking place that is perhaps as great as that which marked off the modern world from the Middle Ages. The foundations of the modern world are collapsing, and we are entering a postmodern world."
 - 2. A massive philosophical shift
 - a. Premodern -- Truth is revealed by God and is therefore absolute.
 - b. Modern -- Truth is discovered by men and is therefore relative
 - c. Postmodern -- there is no such thing as truth, therefore we create it.
 - i. Truth is the ever changing perspective of reality from within our own environment *of which we are a part!*
 - ii. It is the MTV view of life.
 - 3. Walter Truett Anderson, *Reality Isn't What it Used to Be* (NY: Harper and Row, 1990),

- 75, describes it as three umpires. A premodern says, "There's balls and there's strikes, and I call 'em the way they are." The modern says, "I call 'em the way I see 'em." But the Postmodern says, "They ain't nothin' until I call 'em."
4. A rejection of all "meta-narratives" -- that is, any philosophy or "story" that claims to encompass all of life or be, in any way, absolute.
 5. An abandonment of Modernism and a recognition of its failure:
 - a. Dated from 1789 (Bastille) to 1989 (fall of the Berlin wall), by Thomas Oden.
 - b. Philosophical underpinnings:
 - i. Empiricism (and with it, reductive naturalism) -- The five senses and science can discover all we need to know for successful living.
 - ii. Rationalism (and with it, Modern chauvinism) -- the human mind is the best source of knowledge and capable of producing a great humanity.
 - iii. Idealism -- The more we learn the better we become; soon we will create our own utopia.
 - iv. Materialistic Hedonism -- we buy pleasure and we buy it in bulk! "It's expensive but you're worth it!"
 - v. Autonomous individualism -- "I did it my way."
 - c. Characteristics (in media, academia and liberal clergy) [by Thomas Oden]:
 - i. Technological Messianism
 - ii. Enlightenment idealism
 - iii. Quantifying empiricism
 - iv. Smug fantasy of inevitable historical progress
 - d. The inheritance of modernism
 - i. AIDS
 - ii. Broken families
 - iii. Schismatic religion
 - iv. Nihilistic hedonism
 - v. Empty academia -- educated idiots
 - vi. Isolation and emptiness
 - vii. WWII and other genocide atrocities
 6. Postmodernism is affecting every major field:
 - a. Art, history, architecture, literature, political science, economics, philosophy, and theology. Cf. Kathryn Ludwigson, "Postmodernism: A Declaration of Bankruptcy," in D. Dockery, *The Challenge of Postmodernism*, (Bridgepoint: 1995), pp. 283-287
 - b. Cultural manifestations: Apathy; vacuous, cynical humor; Beavis and Butthead, David Letterman, channel surfing, the internet, the fluid identity of Madonna.
 7. It stresses story, symbols, and multiculturalism. It is open to creativity.
- B. Contributions:
1. Negative:
 - a. Loss of absolute truth.
 - i. Biblical interpretation will be up for grabs and the bible manipulated as a tool for social agendas.
 - ii. There is no basis for morality (or law).
 - b. Christianity commits the unpardonable sin: intolerance
 - c. Unmitigated pluralism and relativism. These two are not new, they were important to modernism. But what is new is that there is no way to arbitrate between opinions. Postmodernism makes genuine dialogue impossible since everyone's view is equally valid.
 - d. Religion will become a smorgasbord of individual an equally valid, even if contradictory, ideas -- Mall religion.

2. Positive:
 - a. "The church is one of the few institutions that is truly prepared for the postmodern world since it is global, multicultural, and multigenerational" Thomas Oden, *Two Worlds, Notes on the Death of Modernity in America and Russia*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1992), 54.
 - b. This opens the way for a (re)new(ed) spirituality and a return to spiritual disciplines and an openness to the spirit of God in our midst.
 - c. We can look again to the wisdom of the ancients as a valid and valuable source of guidance. This also connects the modern church to the ancient and regains continuity to the church universal.
 - d. We can move from a creed based orthodoxy to a spirituality based orthodoxy defined by (a) the spiritual disciplines, (b) compassion for the world, and (c) allegiance to the community of believers, both present and past.
 - e. Christianity is again on a level playing field instead of pushed to the side as irrelevant.
- C. How shall we reach a postmodern world?
 1. We must admit:
 - a. Some degree of uncertainty.
 - b. Interpretation is perspectival and value laden.
 - c. Power, politics and stratification in interpretation.
 2. We must begin with a defense of truth.
 - a. It is prior to human perception.
 - b. Language is a valid medium for communicating truth.
 - c. General coherence of logic.
 - d. History, while imperfect, is to a great extent valid.
 3. Preaching must shift from proposition to storytelling, visuals and testimony.
 4. Evangelism will take longer and must be done relationally through authentic community. This kind of evangelism can most effectively be done by the laity. We also need to be more concerned with pre-evangelism and "sowing seeds" [cf. Tim Downs, *Finding Common Ground* (Moody, 1999).].
 5. Evangelicals have been so accustomed to confronting individuals that we don't know how to confront our culture at large. We had better learn!

IV. Deconstruction -- First introduced by Derrida in 1966 at a symposium at John Hopkins University. He applied Nietzsche's philosophic skepticism about objective meaning to the literary world. This is the single most significant challenge to hermeneutics of this century.

A. Definitions

1. The subversive free-play of language in written texts in order to create new meaning for one's own existence. Interrogating the text to unmask this pseudo-objectivity and the political or sexual oppression behind it. It is not merely a dismantling of the text, but of the whole history of Western philosophy.
 - a. The connection between the signifier and the signified is an arbitrary linguistic symbol (Ferdinand de Saussure, 1857-1913).
 - b. Linguistic meanings rest on oppositions and exclusions (e.g. differentiation) which retain a trace of their opposition (e.g. Freedom excludes slavery; yet in a society that is totally free, there would be no concept of, hence no word for, slavery. Hence, the use of the word freedom betrays that we are enslaved).
 - c. Not only is the symbol arbitrary and socially constructed, so are the denotations and connotations of words. In fact, even the meaning nonverbal objects (clothes, furniture, animals, etc.), are socially determined. Hence the postmodern slogan, "The

- world is a text." [Intertextuality refers to the interplay between society and language that creates even more texts.]
- d. Language is a product of culture; we can't get away from it or out of it. We are imprisoned by language. "One semiotic process leads on to another, and none is grounded in 'reality' or in the external world" (Thiselton, p. 83-4). It is like trying to define a word in the dictionary by another word we don't understand. Thus, Derrida took the "difference" of Saussure and turned it into "defer-ment."
 - e. The way out of the prison is to undermine its walls (i.e. deconstruct it); and that can be done since language is intrinsically unstable, clumsy, slippery, and full of gaps and self-contradictions due to differentiation.
 - f. The author of a text is excluded from its meaning since (s)he is merely a prisoner to the same linguistic code and is inaccessible anyway. Hence, away with A.I.M. This leaves the field wide open for the reader to "play" with the text and to create new meanings.
2. Relation to Postmodernism
 - a. Postmodernism is a new pluralistic way of thinking in which truth is existentially determined and situationally relative.
 - b. The center for the premodern mind was God, for the modern it was man, and for the postmodern there is no center, only pluralistic possibilities of perspectives. The premodern and modern mind may disagree on how to obtain truth, but they agree there is truth out there to be found. For the postmodern mind, truth is created from within.
 - c. It seems odd that a linguistic theory would result in societal revolution, but that is, indeed the purpose of deconstruction since "the world is the text." Key targets for demolition are "metanarratives." "Deconstructionism in literary theory is often perceived as the strongest philosophical context of post-modernism, and Derrida as one of its most forceful exponents in this dual area" (Thiselton, p. 103).
 - d. Beginnings of postmodernism illustrate the deconstruction of societal institutions which were perceived as oppressive:
 - i. 1968--When students shut down the universities in protest of Vietnam.
 - ii. 1972--The Pruitt-Igo housing development project in St. Louis was blown up (Veith, p. 39).
 - iii. 1989--The fall of the Berlin Wall
 - e. The issue is no longer truth but power. "Johnny Rotten and the Sex Pistols, 'If nothing [is] true, everything [is] possible'" (Veith, p. 57).
 3. Relation to the Social Construction of Reality
 - a. Anderson (p. x-xi) asserts that the social construction of reality (via Berger), is the distinguishing feature between modern and postmodern thought. This social construction of reality is essentially the implementation in sociology of the principles of literary deconstruction.
 - b. Both Derrida and Berger see language as the medium through which reality is created. Moreover, language is used by social institutions to perpetuate their hegemonous powers (Allen, 1993, p. 122).
 - c. Thiselton (p. 82) describes it this way: "Bourgeois cultures utilize this confused 'mystification' whereby they and the masses remain subject to the illusion that we encounter 'nature' or 'objectivity' in the systems of culture. The task of the semiotician is to unmask this pseudo-objectivity; to 'decipher' a meaning-network which 'conceals' or 'naturalizes' what amount to no more than conventions."
 4. Massive Shifts of Deconstruction
 - a. This is a shift in the way we think. Intellectual movements of the past have been

worked out through metaphysics or science. Deconstruction was spawned through literary criticism (Veith, p. 51) and later art.

- i. "A massive intellectual revolution is taking place that is perhaps as great as that which marked off the modern world from the Middle Ages. The foundations of the modern world are collapsing, and we are entering a postmodern world" (Allen, 2)
 - ii. Richard Rorty argues that literature has displaced philosophy as the central discipline of contemporary culture, just as philosophy displaced theology several centuries ago.
 - iii. "The modern world view was grounded in Newtonian physics but this gave way to new ideas developed by Einstein's theory of relativity" (Zustiak, p. 143).
 - b. The turning away from the author/subject was promoted by the three giant "masters of suspicion":
 - i. **Nietzsche** contributed a suspicion that all society was oppressive and undermined the grounds of knowing.
 - ii. **Marx** reduced that oppression to economic systems.
 - iii. **Freud** added sexual repression and put the psyche in question.
 - iv. All three of these argued that meaning was not a construct of the author but subliminal or social forces that imposed themselves onto the author's psyche. Thus meaning is socially and psychologically constructed, not individually created by the author. Only by recognizing these forces will we be able to liberate individuals who are oppressed by linguistic constructs.
- B. Implications and Consequences (especially for Evangelical Churches)
1. Hermeneutics--The locus of meaning has shifted from the author (rationalism), to the text (structuralism), to the reader (reader-response and deconstruction). The text becomes a catalyst and interpretation is artistic. It is interesting that the death of the author in deconstruction mirrors the death of God in Nietzsche's philosophy. Both serve as a unifying and authoritative principle through which meaning is generated and sustained. These must be overthrown if the individual is to be liberated.
 2. Homiletics--We are shifting from thesis to story and metaphor; from the epistles to the gospels.
 3. Ministry: In whatever ways clergy encounter their flocks or potential converts, they may find the old methods no longer work like the text book suggested.
 - a. Youth--Generation X is the first to be weaned on deconstruction.
 - b. Music--Great growth in a culture intoxicated by experience.
 - c. Evangelism--Apologetics are largely irrelevant.
 - d. Missions--will become more socialistic in nature.
 4. Counseling and Therapy--Clients are encouraged to define their lives in whatever ways make sense and allow them to survive (Lundin, p. 200). What actually happened is not so important as what the client perceives is truth.
 5. Higher Education and Rewriting History--We have moved from a universalist perspective to a particularist perspective (Wolterstorff). In the context of pluralism, all discussions of Truth are practically muted. This is especially true when history can be rewritten from a particularist perspective. This has even found its way into Biblical studies through the Jesus Seminar.
 6. Ethics and Law--It is assumed that each individual has the personal right to determine private behavior without public censure.
 7. The Arts, Architecture & Entertainment--Comparisons: Jay Leno vs. David Letterman; *Star Trek* vs. *The Next Generation*.
- C. Criticism of Deconstruction

1. Positive Contributions
 - a. Deconstruction helps us understand that language is metaphorical, that signs can be polyvalent and that interpretation always takes place within a cultural, historical, and philosophical framework.
 - b. The old (stale) rationalistic attacks on Christianity have largely lost their force.
 - c. There is an existential reality in Christianity that is winsome and our "story" is powerful!
 - d. In a sense, it is "the word" that creates reality for the Christian--Creation, Logos, Scripture.
 - e. Texts are used as vehicles through which we grow. Deconstruction blows away the illusion, that once we have read a text, that we are done with it or have mastered it. Thus texts are no longer dormant but they become catalysts.
 - f. Deconstruction is therapeutic in that people are encouraged to define their lives in ways which help them survive. Our words must be used for healing and sometimes even for the deconstruction of oppressive systems.
2. Faulty Methodology
 - a. "Inter-subjectivity" is the correct idea that there is a significant level of agreement as to the meaning of these arbitrary linguistic signs. Hence, communication is able to take place since we can "put ourselves in another's shoes." More than that, language actually transforms us -- it moves and motivates us to change. If interpretation was merely projection of our own interests and beliefs, how could it transform us?
 - b. Language does work . . . that's why we use it! "Stubbornly maintaining that readers and writers are shackled and blinded by their own world view so that messages cannot be conveyed and world views cannot be transformed runs counter to experience and reason" (Clendenen, p. 133). Furthermore, we would not want our own words treated as Derrida suggests. E. D. Hirsch is the foremost advocate of the "Author's Intended Meaning" in his magisterial work "Validity in Interpretation."
 - c. "The doctrine that all texts are pluralistic in meaning, and that this plurality is irreducible and infinite, is at best a very particular version of semiotics, and at worst a particular philosophy of language which masquerades as semiotics" (Thiselton, p. 100). What makes us unwilling to use language like this?
 - i. **Love** -- if you love the author you want to know what s/he means.
 - ii. **Authority** -- Policemen can tell you what a stop sign means and the penalty for misinterpretation is expensive. Thus we try to comply with his/her understanding.
 - iii. **Genre** -- Songs and poetry are more open to existential and allegorical interpretation than newspapers and contracts.
 - iv. Like textual criticism, **the more words** we have the more possibilities there are for error. Yet as the context increases, so does the clarity. Language has rough edges but it still has edges.
 - d. It is inappropriate to exclude the author from the meaning of the text. Semiotic signs only have meaning in *parole* (language in actual use). It is the use of signs that give them meaning and it is the author that used the signs to signify something specific in his/her thought or world.
 - e. Deconstruction ultimately deconstructs itself. As an example, "There are no absolutes" is a self-contradictory statement.
 - f. "Rather than generating dialogue, a postmodern view of truth ultimately makes genuine dialogue impossible. Religious diversity does not require that one view all competing truth-claims as equally true. As Alan Bloom reminds us, 'openness' does not necessarily require relativism in truth" (Phillips, p. 262).

- g. The deconstructionists cry for justice and fairness is a plea for ethical behavior which they have "obliterated" through pluralism.
- h. The fruits of pluralism and moral relativism are sour. It often leads to nihilism, chaos, rage, and rebellion. Furthermore, Christianity, as it stands, is an enemy of deconstruction, for "anyone who holds to view of truth, goodness, or meaning as in some important respects connected to reality is *ipso facto* an enemy of pluralism, a dogmatist, and an oppressor" (Allen, 1993, p. 123).

V. Summary of the Major Issues of Philosophical Constructs:

- A. Preunderstanding--Total objectivity is impossible.
- B. Historical Distance--we simply must hurdle some "distance" bridges.
- C. Narrative/Genre Complexity--We must understand what "type" of writing or rhetoric we are working with.
- D. Philosophy--We must have some shared perspective with the author if we are going to understand the philosophic "context" of his writing.

The Psychology of Interpretation

I. Cognitive/psychological anatomy of interpretation

- A. **Selection** – as a means of survival, our brains filter out stimulus that would overwhelm us. Thus we see, hear, feel, think, and experience much more than we are cognizant of. We only deal with the fraction of stimulus that our minds deem important. That's why after we buy a new car we start seeing them all over the place.
- B. **Categorization** – We do not merely collect data, our brains arrange it into patterns (theory, schema, paradigm).
 - 1. Method of arrangements:
 - a. Assimilation – appending new data to an old paradigm where they fit.
 - b. Accommodation – altering the paradigm to fit new data.
 - i. Piaget speaks of shifts within the individual.
 - ii. Kuhn speaks of shifts within society.
 - 2. Hypothesizing: Sense data is selected and categorized. We often imagine that we are Baconian or Newtonian (studying from particular to general) with no personal involvement. Most of the time, however, we have a paradigm established already with personal interests and presuppositions at play.
 - a. This process is often determined by personal or relational needs. We often deem as true that which would moderate our relationships or satisfy personal needs.
 - b. Proofs are not merely logical or scientific but based on metaphors and analogies.
 - c. Gestalt psychology demonstrates how we intuitively fill in the gaps making more out of the data than is there. There is a difference between our perception of the object and the object itself.

II. Psychological filters of interpretation

- A. **Unconscious** emotional states, needs, pains, dreams.

1. Reaction formation – “A person may distort reality in attempting to reduce anxiety.” When a person (over) reacts to biblical statements (either positively or negatively) it *may* indicate a subconscious protective reaction.
 2. Text & Transference – reacting to the text as if it were representative of another authority figure from the person’s past. The Bible may be received as an unquestioned authority by a compliant person. By another it may be rejected reflexively. In short, our image of an authority figure, parents, or even God can be transferred to the bible.
- B. **Cognitive style** – persons who are field dependent analyze data differently than those who are field independent. Christian psychologists have defined this phenomenon in similar terms by *Spirit*-oriented persons who are more global and intuitive in their cognitive processes and those who are *word*-oriented who tend to be more logical/analytical.
- C. **Perceptual expectations** – What people see in a situation or text is in many ways influenced by the memory of similar situations or texts. (See Figures).
- D. **Creativity** – which is really quite rare (as few as 1% even among the very intelligent), requires at least three things:
1. The ability to visualize.
 2. Conditioned freedom (most people even by the fourth grade have been conditioned to conform – teachers are among the worst culprits for squelching creativity)
 3. A high tolerance for ambiguity. The culture of “church,” because it is heavy on authority and dogmatism tends to not foster creativity. The church has tended to frown on deviants and prize group cohesion. Persons of low self-esteem also tend to conform more easily to group decisions, at least publicly even if they differ privately.
- E. **Culture** – Western societies tend to value logic, word-oriented dialogue. Eastern societies (and churches) tend to value visual, multi-dimensional, affective dialogue. Often this is reflected in the texts chosen in various churches (Pauline vs. O.T.).
- III. Social filters for Interpretation:
- A. **Suffering** – If a person has suffered or sacrificed to be in a group, s/he is more likely to hold tenaciously to the views of that group.
- B. **Authority** figures within the group most often put pressure on members to adopt their beliefs. This is not less true in “autonomous” groups (e.g. Churches of Christ) than it is in hierarchical groups (e.g. Catholic Church). Members tend to adopt the same belief system as their leaders and charismatic teachers.
- C. **Social conditions (*Zeitgeist*)** out of which a group is formed tend to shape belief systems as much as biblical texts. In other words, most groups work inward toward the Bible rather than outward from it. This is seen in leadership structure, eschatological orientations, liberation theologians, etc. Our biblical hermeneutics has windows wide open to the outside world. Much of what we see in a text comes from the light of our cultural perceptions. This begins with inevitably culturally bound translations.

Conclusions:

1. We must be responsibly interdependent, not independent nor dependent. This requires healthy relationships with parents, peers, and those for whom we are responsible.
2. The Bible has been and continues to be a terribly influential book. This means (1) that it does still speak to our modern situation, (2) we must manage this influence wisely and responsibly, (3) we have the responsibility to be involved in therapeutic ministry.
3. As much as possible, by recognizing cognitive, psychological, and social patterns of thinking, we should eliminate personal bias (filters) when listening or reading others' words. Theological cross-fertilization helps in this process. This should (optimally) should be from other theological, cultural, and ideological camps because we often see more clearly through other people's eyes.

HERMENEUTICAL CONSTRUCTS: SOCIOLOGICAL #3-4: LIBERATION THEOLOGY

Three basic categories of Sociological Hermeneutics:

1. Research illuminating the social history of the Biblical World (Anthropology).
2. Application of Modern theories of human behavior applied to Bible texts (Psychology).
3. Liberation theologies (Politics). Below we will deal with this third category.

I. Social Science Criticism

- A. Definition: This is akin to historical background only instead of focusing on individual items it looks at social systems. In other words, instead of explaining who Herod was historically, it looks at the Patron/Client system in which he operated. Or instead of explaining the elements of a banquet, it describes the shame/honor system attached to it.
- B. Major elements involved in Palestinian sociology:
 1. **Shame/Honor:** All social contracts operate within the framework of shame/honor. While we barter with money, they bartered with honor; while we would rather lose honor to gain money, they would rather spend all their money to gain honor.
 - a. There was an unstated belief that there was a certain amount of honor in the world and if you gained some there was less to be had for others. This limited supply made the game extremely competitive.
 - b. Two ways to get honor:
 - i. It may be *ascribed* due to a person's family, wealth, title, or ethnicity. This is like inheriting wealth.
 - ii. It may be *acquired* through noble deeds or generosity. Or it can be won through the game of challenge/riposte.
 - c. Rules for the game: (a) claim, (b) challenge, (c) riposte, (d) public verdict.
 2. The **Patron/Client** system is integrally related to shame/honor. There was a clearly established hierarchy of power. Upward mobility was unthinkable.
 - a. The patron was responsible for protecting and providing for his clients whether they were family members, servants, share-croppers or citizens.
 - b. Conversely, the clients who received such protection and provisions were obligated to give honor to the patron and protect it when threatened.
 3. **Group Orientation rather than individualism.** This is extremely difficult for us to grasp given our own cultural assumptions. Individualism grants self-worth through accomplishments and self-esteem. Group orientation does so through one's value to the group. It is on nearly every page of Scripture.
 - a. Individuals defined themselves through the in-group's perception of them. This would include genealogy, gender, and geography.

3. Feminist: Androcentric, Patriarchal, bigot, misogynist.
4. Homosexual: Homophobics, right-wing, bigot.

III. Liberation Theology

A. History

1. Began in 1968 with Gustavo Gutierrez's outline which later became a book entitled, *The Theology of Liberation*.
2. It's primary influence is in Latin America, Catholic, Marxist communities.

B. Major principles:

1. Recognition of human suffering and love as the highest principle.
2. Concientizacion--Making people aware of the problem and feeling bad about it. This involves:
 - a. Social Critique
 - b. Suspicion (especially of the institutions of power)
 - c. Anger and often militancy
3. Exploitation of Biblical texts on liberation.
4. The use of promise, eschatological language, and Praxis (= theory based social action) to transform social structures in order to alleviate human suffering.

III. Black Hermeneutics

A. Three branches of black hermeneutics:

Geographic Location	Social Struggle	Spawning Force
North America	Civil Rights & the Historic Memory of slavery	Prejudice
South Africa	Colonial Apartheid	Pain
Black Africa	Contextualization of the Bible to South Africa	Joy and Faith

B. Hermeneutical Principles (Like Latin American Liberation Theology)

1. Use the text for social action.
2. Unmask Biblical Texts used for domination (but these systems also use texts for their own purposes).
3. Reject Western Hermeneutics as biased (but these systems have their own bias).
4. "The very pluralism of 'academic' interpretations seems to postpone social critique in endless revision of ideas" (Thistleton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*, p. 420). OUCH!

C. Exegesis

1. Thick with stories and songs as witness to the black experience.
2. "If Christ is to be existentially relevant . . . the Christological importance of Jesus must be found in his blackness. If he is not black, as we are, then the resurrection has little significance for our times . . . Our being with him is dependent on his being with us in the oppressed black condition, revealing to us what is necessary for our liberation" (*A Black Theology of Liberation*, p. 213).

II. Feminist Hermeneutics

A. Ranges of Feminist Hermeneutics (from Pollard, 1992; cf. Scholer, 1991)

1. Liberationist (Liberal)--Any part of the Bible that appears to be androcentric is

dismissed as non-canonical. It is the position most closely aligned with Liberation Theology. It is the most common view today, pioneered by Letty Russell and currently promoted by Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza and Rosemary Radford Reuther.

2. Rejectionist (New Age/Cults)--The Bible is to be rejected as patriarchal and androcentric. Many reject Christianity as a whole and adopt witchcraft and goddess traditions. Its roots began in 1895 with Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *The Woman's Bible*.
 3. Loyalist (Evangelical)--The Bible is the Word of God and fully inspired. If it appears to be oppressive to women, the problem must lie in our interpretation.
 4. Traditionist (Like Black Hermeneutics)--The Bible text is not of supreme importance, but it is the tradition that it promotes. "The strategy is to emphasize the importance of women in religious history."
 - a. Liberating Tradition--Looking for biblical texts which promote and liberate women.
 - b. Remnant and Retrieval--Looking for biblical texts which unwittingly give glimpses of women's contributions. These are texts which somehow survived the androcentric "coverup." By retrieving and highlighting these we can get a glimpse of how important women really were. For example 1 Cor 11:5-6; Rom 16:1-6; Luke 8:2-3; etc.
 - c. Tales of Terror--By recounting terrible horror stories of abuse against women (e.g. Genesis 34; Judges 19-20; 21:19-23; Ezekiel 16; 23), we can ensure that it will never happen again. (Cf. Cheryl Exum, "The Ethics of Biblical Violence Against Women," in *The Bible in Ethics* (Sheffield, 1995).
 5. Sublimationist (Catholic)--This approach is somewhat mystic and is most appealing to Catholic feminists. It highlights the ideal woman (most often Mary) as a paradigm for Christian women. (This is similar to 4a)
- B. Hermeneutical Issues--"Feminist hermeneutics brings together almost every major issue in hermeneutical theory" (Thistleton, p. 430):
1. Hermeneutical Steps
 - a. Hermeneutics of Suspicion (Social Critique)--"Reading of the biblical text in the light of the oppressive structures of patriarchal society" (Scholer, p. 307).
 - (1) Leadership hierarchy
 - (2) Bible Translations
 - (3) What is accepted as logical and reasonable scholarship
 - b. Remembering and Proclaiming--those texts which are supportive of women.
 - c. Social Action--Changing home, church, and society to support and respect women. F.H. is socio-pragmatic in that it looks for answers to my own present situation. It lacks to broader vision of socio-critical theories that look for transcendent truths that apply more broadly to all people.
 2. The locus of authority is not in the text itself but in women's experiences.
 3. What counts as cultural vs. universal (cf. Lev 19:19 or Acts 15:28-29).
 4. Unmasking Texts used for domination [see I.B.2.a.(4)]
- C. Specific Issues
1. Canon Criticism--Biblical times were patriarchal, misogynist and abusive to women, essentially treating them as property. Therefore we must:
 - a. Reject all or part of the Bible.
 - b. Understand the meaning of the text without accepting its cultural biases.
 2. The name of God must be gender neutral since (S)He is neither male nor female.
 - a. There are a number of passages that speak of God's feminine attributes (Is 46:3-4; 49:15-16; 66:13; Deut 32:11; Ps 17:8; Hos 13:8).
 - b. The idea of attributing female titles to God was common in the cultic practices

surrounding Israel. Biblical writers were not unaware of this, or unable to speak of God as feminine, but unwilling to. God himself chose a masculine designation.

3. Highest Ideal = Love (Mt 7:12; 22:37-40; Rom 13:9-10)
4. New Order for Male/Female (Mt 9:17; Gal 3:28; Acts 2:17-18; Mt 20:25-27)
5. Critical Texts: 1 Cor 11:2-16; 14:34-35; Eph 5:24; 1 Tim 2:9-15

D. Evaluation

1. Positive:
 - a. F.H. has called attention to the patriarchal society which birthed the Bible as well as translations which have perpetuated androcentrism.
 - b. F.H. has called attention to our own cultural biases and how they affect our interpretation of the Bible.
 - c. F.H. has highlighted the significant and often over-looked role that women have played in sacred history and the continued contribution they can make to the church today.
 - d. F.H. has sensitized the church to the way women have been abused and victimized both in and out of the church. If experience is a necessary concomitant to interpretation then some feminist observations are imperative to Hermeneutics.
2. Negative:
 - a. Subjective selectivity as to what counts as Scripture. Scriptures are manipulated for my own means.
 - b. Misapprehension of equality--value vs. function.
 - c. Moral Deficiency: Frequent promotion of extra-marital and premarital sex, homosexuality, divorce, and abortion.
 - d. Gynocentrism and a fixation on gender roles (and sometimes even female anatomy) rather than on more significant theological issues such as atonement, discipleship, etc.
 - e. Uncritical acceptance of pluralism at all levels.

III. Homosexual Hermeneutic

A. Broad Philosophic Principles

1. Highest Ideal = Love (Mt 7:12; 22:37-40; Rom 13:9-10). Same as Feminist Hermeneutic.
2. Denial of the infallibility of Scriptures. "What we have traditionally confessed as Disciples is not that each passage is scientifically accurate but that through the whole shines an inspired vision of the nature and purpose of God and of God's dealings with humanity" [Michael Kinnamon in his address to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), July 27, 1991.]
3. Hyper-Existential--"Anything that feels this right can't be wrong." Meaning is not merely in the text but in what we bring to the text.
4. Normally H.H. does not deny that Paul spoke against homosexuality, but relegates it to his culturally determined bigotry which love, expressed as unquestioning acceptance, must supersede.
5. H.H. clings to liberating paradigms in the biblical stories of oppression and exodus, exile and homecoming, death and resurrection. There is much talk and comparison to the liberation of slaves and women (Black and Feminist hermeneutics) as preliminary steps to Gay Liberation.

B. Specific Hermeneutical Arguments

1. Sodom and Gomorah's sin was not homosexuality but inhospitality (cf. Gen 19 & Eze 16:49). Only 10 of the 943 uses of *yada* [to know] = "sex" and all of these refer to heterosexual activity. **[The context of Genesis 19 is clear. These men wanted to**

- sodomize the visitors. Yes this is considered inhospitable!]**
2. The Mosaic law prohibited homosexuality because of its specific social need for procreation. Also, prescientific Israel believed that life was in the male semen. Hence, intentional "spilling" through coitus interruptus (Gen 38:1-11), homosexuality, or masturbation was equivalent to murder. Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13 specifically prohibit cultic fertility [homosexual?] practices, not loving same-sex relations. Because of overpopulation, that law is no longer valid. It is as obsolete as the laws of mixing two types of fabrics or not eating shell-fish. **[These sexual laws are found in Leviticus in the context of other sexual deviations such as bestiality and incest. According to this argument, these practices must now be acceptable as well. Furthermore, it hardly seems reasonable for Israel to object to homosexuality because it is connected with cultic fertility practices.]**
 3. Jesus never condemned homosexuality. In fact, he promoted acceptance and love of all people. **[Nor did he condemn child pornography, euthanasia, or racism. That does not mean these are acceptable.]**
 4. Paul's prohibitions are not against homosexuality in general but male prostitution (*arsenokoitai*, 1 Cor 6:9; 1 Tim 1:10) or pederasty (*malakos*, 1 Cor 6:9; also interpreted by the early church as masturbation), in particular. Besides, Romans 1-3 is a "sting" operation, not a witch hunt for homosexuals. One is not an idolater because he is a homosexual, but is a homosexual because he is an idolater. Hence, idolatry, not homosexuality is condemned. **[This particularist linguistic argument does not bear up against careful scrutiny. Yes, Romans 1-3 is a "sting" operation, but it only works if homosexuality is, in fact, a sin.]**
 5. The Bible is not against natural, loving homosexual relationships but sexual perversion. In other words, perversion, not inversion is wrong. **[Romans 1, in particular, identifies the inversion as the perversion.]**
 6. Like slavery, we can come to different conclusions than the biblical authors and still believe in the word of God. We should be more bound by the spirit of the law than the letter of it. Experience tells us that homosexuality is often positive and unalterable. **[With the issue of slavery we are going beyond what the Bible says, yet applying its moral standards. With homosexuality, we are contradicting what the Bible says.]**
 7. The Bible, if read carefully, shows the vestiges of homosexual lovers. Most notable was David and Jonathan, "I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; greatly beloved were you to me; your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." (2 Sam 1:26). **[This is not finding vestiges of homosexuality in the Bible but cramming contemporary verbiage and ideology into Biblical texts to support our own predetermined views. It is eisegesis not exegesis.]**
- IV. Evaluation--NOTE: Each of these positions have "ranges" of emphasis. Some are more radical than others.
- A. Positive
 1. It seeks to make the Bible relevant to modern (wo)man.
 2. The Bible again becomes "Good News" to the poor and oppressed.
 3. The Bible is not merely a source of speculative ideas. It is active and powerful and the personal, political and community levels.
 4. Each individual and community is called to an existential experience with the text. In other words, we live what they lived.
 - B. Negative
 1. One-sided theology of poverty and oppression.
 2. Selective use of Scriptures.
 3. Arrogance--I'm more important than the biblical text.

4. Myopia--Today is more important than yesterday or tomorrow (eternity). My race is more important than the human race.
5. Marxism--It has never effectively helped the majority of people in any social group.

HERMENEUTICAL CONSTRUCTS: THEOLOGICAL
#5: RESTORATIONISM

- I. Introduction
 - A. Definition: An attempt to restore in the modern church the theology and practice of the N.T. Church.
 - B. Groups which attempt restoration at some level:

Religious Group	Emphasis	Verification
Christian Church/ Churches of Christ	Doctrine	Mind
Pentecostals	Miraculous Gifts	Experience
Mennonites	Simplicity/Purity of lifestyle	Practice (Pragmatic)
Jews for Jesus	Jewish Culture	Practice (Historic)

- II. Pentecostal Hermeneutics
 - A. Steps (Stronstad, p. 28-29)
 - 1. Charismatic experiential presupposition--We begin with what I know is true through what I have experienced.
 - 2. Pneumatic
 - a. The Bible was inspired through the H.S.
 - b. Christians interpret the Bible through the help of the H.S.
 - 3. Genre--Understand what type of writing you are dealing with. Luke/Acts is considered normative Christianity.
 - 4. Exegesis--following the Historical Critical.
 - 5. Verification--through existential experience.
 - B. Evaluation
 - 1. Luke/Acts is not completely normative Christianity.
 - 2. Pentecostal experience, if not equivalent to Lk/Acts will be a hindrance, not a help.
 - 3. Pentecostal experiences will only help interpret passages about similar experience (e.g. tongues, prophecy, etc.). These do not comprise a large percent of the texts even in Lk/Acts.
 - 4. We can manipulate human experiences. They would look like, but not be equivalent to truly Pentecostal experiences. We may be open to the gifts but that does not mean that we will be given the gifts. Thus we must work within our experience, without "creating" experiences for the sake of better interpretation.
- III. Christian Church/Church of Christ Hermeneutics
 - A. What constitutes "Doctrine":
 - 1. Direct Commands
 - 2. Necessary Inference
 - 3. Approved Apostolic Example
 - B. Evaluation
 - 1. It is over-simplistic
 - 2. It deals with only isolated portions of the Bible
 - 3. It often lacks relevant practical application

4. Example is not Doctrine (Moore, *Example is not Doctrine*)
 - a. We may misunderstand the purpose of the Action.
 - b. May be a singular incident, not a custom.
 - c. We may be ignorant of the details.
 - d. This philosophy comes from legalism.
 - e. The Lord Jesus is not interested in making us guess as to his will.
 - f. It is often an argument from silence.
 - g. The logic falls by its own rule.
 - h. It leads to inconsistent theology.

IV. Catholic Hermeneutics

- A. This is the largest body of professed Christians in the world. For years the Catholic church rejected the historical critical methodology of the Protestant reformation, but within this last century, Catholics and Protestants have dialogued at the scholarly level especially through historical grammatical methods and liberation theology.
- B. Two cardinal rules of Catholic hermeneutics (pardon the pun):
 1. The primary authority is the church rather than the Bible, after all, the church is older and produced the bible.
 - a. This works especially well if one adopts the idea of apostolic succession.
 - b. The Catholic church correctly recognizes other authorities along side of the Bible including the church (universal) and tradition (e.g. apocrypha).
 2. Adaptation is the name of the game for the Catholic church. They tend to accommodate themselves to whatever culture they enter. Thus, in America, the Catholic church often has two faces: Evangelicalism (often of a Pentecostal variety), and liberal humanism which supports a number of social causes including the right to life. Here Catholic Scholars are virtually indistinct from Protestant scholars who apply the historical/critical tools.
- C. Catholic Use of the Bible
 1. Liturgical -- The Biblical imagery is used in corporate worship, primarily being read without being interpreted. Scholarship plays little role here. Rather, the Bible is part of the worship experience of Mass.
 2. Sacramental -- The Scriptures play a role in the sacraments, affording them almost mystical power.
 3. Devotional -- The word speaks to the Christian personally and sometimes mystically.
 4. Ecclesiastical -- The Scriptures, studied academically, help shape the doctrine and practice of the church.

POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MODERN HERMENEUTICS

1. (Schleiermacher) Emotional affinity with the author. We must see with his eyes and hear with his ears. Therefore, both mind and emotion; science and art (creative imagination) are needed in hermeneutics.
2. (Kierkegaard) Experiential, personal interaction with the text. We must make a 2,000 year old text relevant for today. The text is not something that we dissect, but we allow it to work on us, since it is a product of the *Sitz Im Leben* of a community.
3. (Literary Criticism) - Meaning is not merely in the words of the text but in the way it is structured. Thus, greater attention must be given to the piece as a whole, as well as its comparison to other works of the same class.

4. (Reader Response) - Texts are not merely propositional but functional--they do something. Thus, meaning is not merely in the words of the text, but the reader's response.
5. We must be diligently aware of how our own presuppositions affect our interpretations.
6. (Liberation Hermeneutics) - The Bible must effect changes at the societal level, not merely the individual level. Therefore, we exegete our culture as well as the text. Action is more valuable than talk. Thus, the Gospel once more becomes good news to the poor.
7. (Feminist Hermeneutics) - We must become aware of the cultural and philosophical setting of the Bible and determine what for us is universal vs. cultural.
8. (Restorationism) - We should pattern the church, our theology, and our lives on the early church.

NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MODERN HERMENEUTICS

1. Misplacement of the locus of authority.
2. Subjectivism/Existentialism.
3. Uncritical acceptance of Pluralism.
4. Over-emphasis on politics and physical/financial benevolence to the exclusion of spiritual discipleship and morality.
5. Denigration of the text (inspiration, historicity, canonicity).

LITERARY FORMS IN THE N.T.

(Synthesis of Bailey and Broek's *Literary Forms in the N.T.*, Westminster, 1992)

<u>Form</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Value for Interpretation</u>
Aphorism	A brief saying or witticism. Like a proverb only it stems from an individual's wisdom rather than cultural observation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Aphorisms are often tied to and should be applied to specific situations. (2) When grouped, aphorisms often form a formal argument. (3) Because they are mnemonic, aphorisms can be arranged for literary emphasis beyond chronological precision of actual events.
Argumentation	Rhetorical form of persuasion. It contains (1) <i>Proem</i> --Intro, acknowledging the situation. (2) <i>Proposition</i> --the main point. (3) <i>Proof</i> --Evidence. (4) <i>Epilogue</i> --Summary and exhortation to agree. (5) (Sometimes) <i>Refutation</i> --Anticipation and refutation of counter arguments.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) It follows the Roman Form of Rhetoric. (2) It helps to determine the parameters of context.
Commissioning Story	These are similar to those found in Hebrew Scriptures. They are mostly in Luke's writings. They contain an intro, <u>confrontation</u> , reaction, <u>commission</u> , protest, <u>reassurance</u> , and conclusion.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Stress is placed on God's sovereignty not the human response. (2) Their function is commissioning, not conversion (e.g. Saul, Acts 9:1-9).
Diatribes	A lengthy address, often the speaker confronts or debates an imaginary audience.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Understand that the antagonistic audience may be hypothetical. (2) Helps determine the parameters of context.
Midrash	Citation of parallel passages (or chains of quotes based on key word(s) or ideas) in light of contemporary circumstances. Assumes the Bible is relevant to every generation even down to its words and letters.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Follows the hermeneutics of the Rabbis and Qumran, especially (a) "light to heavy" (b) typology & allegory, (c) fulfilled prophecy used as evidence. (2) Pay attention to the language of the quoted source. And look for possible elaboration or changes (contextualization) from the original quote.
Miracle Story	A story describing a problem, a miraculous resolution and the proof it provided. Several types: Exorcism, conflict/controversy, petition/healing, provision, rescue, epiphany.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Identify the characters and how each contributes to the story. Pay attention to the interplay between words and deeds. (2) Watch for the main movements (problem, resolution, proof). (3) Compare and contrast stories of a similar category.
Lists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Ethical Exhortations (<i>Topoi</i>, esp. Stoics & Cynics) (b) Vice & Virtue (c) Qualifications (d) Household codes (Husband/wives; master/slaves; parents/children) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Lists are exemplary not exact or exhaustive. (2) Pay attention to the impact of verbal cadence, alliteration or rhyme. (3) Each item may not be of equal value. Look for emphasis, arrangement and clusters. (4) Consider the particular historical situation(s) of the church addressed.

<u>Form</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Value for Interpretation</u>
Liturgy	(a) Acclamations (e.g. "Maranatha") (b) Doxologies & prayers--Praise to God (c) Poetry (e.g. 1 Cor 13:1-3) & Hymns (Phil 2:6-11) (d) Creeds, often signaled by <i>homologeō</i> or <i>oti</i> , especially about the nature and work of Jesus (Rom 1:3-4; 1 Cor 15:3-5).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Remember, these works were read aloud in churches. (2) Pay attention to the "Christianized" emphasis of standard Jewish liturgy. It highlights the peculiar emphases of the church. (3) Often these "liturgies" represent a "crescendo" in a document. (4) Be attune to emotional/existential impact and the call for audience participation such as responsive "echoes" or congregational quotations or "Amen." (5) Watch for how Jesus is related to God. (6) Allow for poetic hyperbole. (7) Pay attention to Parallelism as one would in the Psalms.
Pronouncement Story or Apophthegm	A brief story about Jesus that culminates in a short, striking statement (or action) which demonstrates his ability to respond well when challenged (e.g. Mk 2:15-17; 12:13-17). Also called "conflict/controversy" story. They are similar to the <i>chreia</i> stories in Greco-Roman rhetoric.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Pay attention to the arguments and flow of the whole story and how they affect and relate to the final saying. (2) Emphasis is placed on how Jesus' wit and wisdom undoes his opponents. That is the purpose of the <i>Chreia</i> story. (3) The episode or even is recorded for the saying, not visa-versa.
Sermon	The book of Hebrews is an expanded sermon, similar to some in Acts (e.g. 13:16b-41). They use (1) "exempla," theological or scriptural examples or proofs (2) a conclusion based on this evidence, and (3) an exhortation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Watch for imperatives, they are to be obeyed. (2) Use as a model for our sermons. (3) Watch for "cycles" of exposition and exhortation--these form smaller units.
Speech	They are mostly defence and evangelistic in nature. Some fit well the Greco-Roman historical speeches. One fifth of Acts is in its 24 speeches.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Synopsis and sometimes "recreation" of the speaker's words, while respecting his character and appropriate to the situational context (Thucydides). (2) The function to convey the significance of the historical events under consideration. Pay attention to how the speech interacts with the "action." Speeches are not independent of the plot, but subject to it. (3) May add interest, provide "commentary" on the event, give insight into the speaker, and sometimes foreshadow coming events. (4) Much emphasis on evidence and logical proofs.

A Critique of the Social Construction of Reality

1. The Social Construction of Reality does not take into account numinous experiences.
2. The social Construction of Reality often ignores historic events, particularly those that may involve Divine activity.
3. The order of the world, logic, the multiplicity of religious experiences and the global inclination to religion are very strong arguments for the existence of God which is discounted in the theory of the Social Construct of Reality.
4. There is no necessary reason to accept an etic (outsider's) description of social behavior as more objective or accurate than an emic (insider's) description. While the one may stand from outside the group and make observations, thus being less entangled with the philosophy of the group. It is no less biased. It can notice some things that an emic can not, but the same can be said *visa versa*.
5. The Social Construction of Reality is very deterministic. That is, social forces, and they alone, impact the decisions we make and the characters that we have. This ignores the powerful *imago dei* of logic and volition.
6. This theory is reductionistic. It does not take into account the multiple forces that may be at work in individual and corporate life.
7. It is circular in its argumentation. It asserts that all reality is socially constructed, it is merely a creation of various individuals. If that is true then the theory itself is socially constructed and has no greater explanatory power than any other theory. Therefore, it is easily chalked up to conditioning and not actual truth that corresponds to reality. Finally, this is not a theory that one can actually live by. If we act as if everything is socially conditioned, there is no right and there is no wrong. All of our political preferences from abortion to animal rights to capital punishment are merely personal or group preferences that are in and of themselves indefensible. Thus, it does not really matter how anyone chooses to live. While some espouse that view, it is impossible to actually live like that.

P. S. In an Evolutionary framework, one would need to explain how all of this got started. Why do we live as social creatures? How did we inherit this gregarious bent? There is, of course, no way to explain that within the parameters of the Social Construction of Reality. It is something that must be imposed from the outside.

Biblical and Doctrinal Terms

These are brief, basic beginning definitions. They focus on the central idea of the term.

GENERAL:

~ Doctrine - Teaching.

Theology - Study of the knowledge of God.

+ Systematic theology - Study of Bible doctrine and Christian interpretation organized under topics.

+ Biblical theology - The study of the Bible's doctrinal teaching, or the study of doctrine as it was unfolded in the historical development in the Bible revelation.

Historical theology - Study of Christian interpretation of doctrines arranged historically through church history.

+ Textual criticism - Attempt to identify the exact form of the original text by comparing the copies, fragments, and translations of the original documents.

+ Historical Criticism - Attempt to understand the author's intended meaning in light of his or her cultural and historical setting. Assumption: Works within a rationalistic paradigm which often denies or ignores the miraculous.

* JEDP Theory - The documentary hypothesis of the O.T. The belief that several sources are behind Pentateuch.

* Demythologization - The reinterpretation of the supposed "myth" terminology in the Bible in existential terms.

+ Source criticism - Method which attempts to identify the sources underlying the current form of the text. Especially applied to first five books of the O.T. (JEDP) and the Gospels (Q etc.) in the N.T. Assumption: The books of the Bible were written or compiled much later than supposed authors lived, therefore the traditional authors were not really responsible for writing the books. Instead, the books evolved over an extended period of time.

Q - Abbreviation from the German word (Quelle, source). The alleged source which the Gospel writers Matthew and Luke used to supplement the material in Mark.

- + Form criticism - Method which seeks to identify various kinds of material which were behind the written text of Bible books. These story forms have standard characters and functions in a given community. Assumption: The biblical stories were passed down orally and later used by an editor/redactor for theological purposes. By analyzing the style of a particular pericope, we can learn about its history, development, revisions and use in the church/community.
- + Redaction criticism - Method which seeks to identify the author's editorial work which he adds to his sources. Based on these editorial changes one can discover the needs and characteristics of the community "behind the text" for whom these changes were made. Assumption: Biblical texts were not "authored" but edited and redacted, sometimes over a long period of time.
- + Rhetorical (or Literary) criticism - Attempt to analyze the literary style and devices used in a particular pericope (e.g. inclusio, chiasm, parallelism, repetition, etc.). Like form criticism, it recognizes that in literature, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Yet it differs from form criticism in that it takes into account not only the finished form of the text but the author and audience as participants in the rhetorical process, that is, the art of theology. Assumption: Aesthetics and communication theory take precedence over theology. It is often assumed that the text is the product of a community rather than an author.
- + Structuralism - Attempt to dissect the text and its parts. In contrast to rhetorical criticism it analyzes thought patterns under the literary features. Assumption: Authors/editors subconsciously embed thought patterns into their work which we are able to decipher and thus psychoanalyze the author's intentions. These linguistic codes are open to multiple interpretations by different readers and communities.
- + Social Science criticism - Attempt to understand the social world of the text through the use of psychology, anthropology, and sociology and thereby interpret the original reason(s) behind such things as rituals, laws, customs, etc. Assumption: The paradigms drawn up by modern, western psychology, anthropology, and sociology are adequate templates for the biblical world.
- + Reader response criticism - Explores the contribution that readers make to the meaning of the text. Truth is created as the reader reads, not as the writer writes. Emphasis is on how the reader responds to the text when he or she reads it. Perhaps the reader is in total control of the interpretation to play with the text as he or she sees fit. Assumption: The reader is more important than the author in ascribing meaning or eliciting meaning from the text.
- + Deconstruction - Words are merely arbitrary linguistic symbols that refer to other arbitrary linguistic symbols and as a result, we can never really understand each other. The task of the interpreter is to deconstruct the communication, unmask its oppressive intentions and recreate new, existential meanings by playing with the text. Assumption: Language is

incapable of clearly communicating an author's intent. Also, a commitment to no absolute truth.

Dogma - A decree, doctrine, or teaching that has been handed down.

* Eisegesis - To import into the text the interpreter's meaning as opposed to the author's intended meaning; opposite of exegesis.

* Exegesis - To draw out the author's meaning of the text by using the principles of interpretation.

Exposition - Taking the author's intended meaning learned through exegesis and restating that truth in words understandable to people today.

* Hermeneutics - The science of interpretation, consisting of applying various principles and rules.

* New hermeneutic - An interpretive approach which draws upon existential philosophy to understand the Bible in terms of its effect upon a person rather than its objective meaning.

* Hermeneutical circle - The interplay between all the variables (author, text, and interpreter) in the interpretation process.

* Hermeneutical distance - The admission of the years, miles, and cultures that separate the modern interpreter from the ancient text.

* Understanding distance - The ability to interpret correctly in spite of hermeneutical distance.

* Genre - A certain category of literature, such as parable, miracle story, etc.

* Analogy of Scripture - Interpretation of one passage of Scripture in light of other passages of Scripture.

Apologetics - A defense of historical and supernatural Christianity.

Evidences - The positive presentation of the facts supporting the truth of Christianity.

Fact - An event which has occurred in time and space.

Truth - A statement which correctly describes things as they are.

* Epistemology - The study of the sources, nature, and tests of knowledge.

Logic - The principles of correct thinking.

GOD:

Names for God:

Elohim - Plural for Eloah, translated God. Common Hebrew word for deity, generic in nature.

Yahweh - Specifically denotes the one true God, translated LORD. The Great I Am.

Adonai - A Jewish substitution for the name, Yahweh. Literally "my Lord."

El Shaddai - God Almighty; a name which emphasizes God's power.

Sabaoth - Lord of Hosts.

+ Theism - Belief in a personal God; the study of the existence and attributes of a personal God.

Monotheism - Belief in one God.

Atheism - Denial of the existence of God.

Agnosticism - View that you can't have certain knowledge, especially about the existence of God.

Naturalism - The belief that the system of nature is the whole of reality.

Pantheism - God and the world are the same; everything in nature is divine.

Polytheism - Belief in many gods.

Deism - Belief in a God who created but has no continuing involvement with the world and events within it.

Creation - God brought into existence matter, the universe, plants, animals and man.

Creation ex nihilo - Creation out of nothing, without the use of preexisting materials.

Naturalistic evolution - The theory that the universe, plants, animals and man have originated from matter alone by natural forces.

Theistic evolution - God used evolution as His method of creation.

* Liberalism - A subjective, naturalistic reinterpretation of Christianity which stresses practical values of the Christian experience. Also called modernism.

- + Neo Orthodoxy - A system of theology that is based on existential thought.
- + Liberation theology - A reinterpretation of Christianity based on Marxist socialism. Uses the text as a tool for liberating oppressed or marginalized groups. Assumption: Meaning resides in my current community and the Bible is merely a sociological tool for purposes of liberation.
- + Existentialism - The belief that truth is subjective and relative to each person. It stresses man's anxiety and personal freedom.
- + Postmodernism - An incredulity to meta-narrative. An aversion to any all-encompassing truth claim. All truth claims are equal. An existential reaction to the Enlightenment. Objectivity does not exist.

Glory - Brightness, greatness, or splendor, which is one of the qualities of God.

Hallelujah - Praise the LORD (Yahweh).

Hosanna - Greek form of a Hebrew salutation, meaning, "Save now, we beseech thee."

+ Theophany - A visible appearance or manifestation of God, particularly in the Old Testament.

Idol - Anything less than God which is given the worship due only to Him.

Satan - The evil spiritual being, also called the Devil (deceiver).

REVELATION:

Authority - The right to command belief and action.

Revelation - Communication from God to man of His nature and will.

~ General revelation - The disclosure of the truth of God in the physical universe and in man.

~ Special revelation - The disclosure of the truth of God and His will for men through
God-directed spokesmen - the prophets, the apostles and supremely through His
Son.

~ Inspiration - God guided the writers of Scripture by the Holy Spirit to write the truth He wanted written, without error and without omission of necessary truth.

~ Canon - A list of books considered to be inspired.

+ Canon criticism - Attempt to find the "faith needs" of the community by considering how the final form the canon came to be. Assumption: Meaning and authority reside in the believing community that accepts the text as Scripture more than the author or the historical events behind the text.

Autographs - The originals of the Bible books as written by the Biblical authors.

~ Torah - Hebrew word for law. Specifically refers to the revelation of God to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

~ Pentateuch - The first five books of the O.T.

Talmud - From the Hebrew word meaning study or instruction; It is a comprehensive term for the Mishna and the Gemara.

Mishnah - From the Hebrew word meaning to repeat or learn. A collection of legal material developed from the traditions of the Jews.

Gemara - From a Hebrew word meaning "to study." The term specifically refers to a commentary on the Mishnah.

Midrash - From the Hebrew word meaning "investigation." Collections of legal and procedural rabbinic material.

Targum - Translation or interpretation.

Halakah - From a Hebrew word meaning to go or walk. It refers to rabbinic (legal material) rules for daily conduct handed down by the rabbis.

Haggadah - Rabbinic (non-legal) material which seeks to illustrate the Torah.

Verbal inspiration - The words and sentences of the Bible as written by the original writers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit expressing God's truth.

Mechanical dictation - The view that every word of Scripture was dictated word-by-word by the Holy Spirit to the Biblical authors.

Inerrancy of the Bible - The Bible is without error in the author's intended meaning in the original Scriptures.

Infallibility of the Bible - Usually a synonym of inerrancy. Some have advocated that infallibility refers to matters of faith, salvation, and morals and inerrancy refers to matters of history and science.

Prophecy - Divine message delivered by a Holy Spirit - inspired spokesman.

Predictive prophecy - An inspired spokesman reveals historical events before they happen.
Miracle - An event in the external world worked by the direct power of God intended as a sign.

~ Sovereignty of God - God is in control of the universe. God's will prevails.

+ LXX - The abbreviation for the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the O.T.

Bibliolatry - The worship of the text of Scripture.

+ Apocrypha - Unauthorized books not recognized with the authority of Scripture.

CHRIST AND SALVATION:

~ Messiah - The anointed one; the prophet, priest and King predicted by the OT prophets, who would come to Israel and redeem God's people. (Messiah-Aramaic; Christ-Greek.)

Savior - One who saves people from their sins and gives them true wholeness.

Lord - Divine master; word used to translate God's personal name in LXX.

Son of God - The one characterized by divine nature.

Son of Man - The coming ruler prophesied by Daniel; Jesus' favorite title for Himself.

Deity of Jesus - Jesus was God in flesh. He was fully God even though He was in human flesh.

~ Incarnation - God in flesh.

~ Ascension of Christ - Jesus' bodily departure from earth to heaven forty days after his resurrection.

Crucifixion - Execution by nailing a person to cross and leaving there until dead.

~ Logos - Greek term for God; a name for Christ.

Arianism - An unbiblical view of the person of Christ according to which he is the highest of created beings.

SALVATION:

~ Redemption - God purchased the freedom of sinners from punishment through the death of Christ.

- ~ Reconciliation - Having been an enemy of God because of sin, man comes into the favor and friendship of God.
 - ~ Salvation - Man is released from his sins and lost condition and granted a new life of spiritual wholeness and forgiveness.
 - ~ Atonement - The payment price which is the basis for the forgiveness and covering of man's sins.
 - ~ Justification - The state of having been declared free from the guilt of sin.
 - ~ Righteousness - The state of being right. A gift from Christ and a calling of the Christian life.
 - ~ Sanctification - The act of dedicating oneself totally to do the will of God. The process of bringing one's thoughts and actions into conformity to the will of God.
 - ~ Grace - Undeserved favor.
 - ~ Conversion - The action of turning to Christ. Renouncing of sin and accepting Christ in faith.
 - ~ Faith - Trust based on sufficient evidence; acceptance of testimony.
 - ~ Repentance - Acknowledgment of one's sins and resolve to change desires and actions.
 - ~ Baptism - Immersion; burial in water in the name of Christ for remission of sins.
- Legalism - An approach which makes conformity to human opinions and regulations as essential to salvation.
- Fall - When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden man fell from fellowship and favor with God and brought about a world in which man makes a choice to live without God.
- Election - The doctrine of how God calls men to salvation.
- Flesh - Human nature; sinful nature.
- Soul - Life, self, or the person himself or herself.
- Spirit - The living part of man's nature.
- Body - The physical part of man's nature; can stand for man's total being.
- Assurance of salvation - Confidence of the believer that he or she is truly saved.

~ Covenant - An agreement between two parties in which the conditions of the agreement are set by the one offering the agreement and are accepted by the other party.

~ Testament - A covenant in which God dictates the conditions of His favor based on the death of Christ.

Calvinism:

Total Depravity - All men have inherited the guilt of Adam's sin and it has affected each human being so that he or she can not believe in or truly know God without the direct enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

Unconditional election - When God calls one to salvation, the individual meets no conditions. The process is totally of God without human effort.

Limited Atonement - Since God is sovereign and everything He wills comes to pass, the death of Christ was only for the elect, those chosen by God to be saved.

Irresistible Grace - When God calls one to salvation by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, the individual cannot resist.

Perseverance of the saints - "Once saved, always saved." When a person has been called to salvation by God, he will never lose his saved position with God.

* Predestination - The eternal destiny of every person has been determined by the sovereign choice of God before the world was formed. Taught by Calvinism.

* Arminianism - Holds that salvation is conditional and can be lost.

Baptismal regeneration - The view that the act of baptism saves the person by removing the guilt of original sin.

Universalism - The unbiblical view that all men will be saved.

Covenant theology - Views the relationship between God and man as a type of agreement. Stresses continuity in God's dealings with man.

* Dispensationalism - View that God deals with His people on a different basis in each period of history. Involves a literal interpretation of Scripture, distinction between Israel and the church and a premillennial view of the end time.

CHURCH:

Church - Followers of Christ, bound to one another as a family, and a body under the lordship of Christ, whose purpose is to win the lost, strengthen the believers and to help the needy.

Kerugma - The Greek word for message.

~ Kingdom of God - The rule of God in the hearts and lives of men.

Fellowship - A relationship between a believer and God which involves sharing common concerns, interests, and values.

~ Priesthood of all believers - A reference to the idea that each person has direct access to God and a contribution to the church.

Lord's Supper - A memorial set up by Jesus for believers to commemorate, celebrate, participate in the death of Christ.

~ Eucharist - A term meaning thanksgiving, often associated with the Lord's Supper.

Apostle - One sent on a mission; a disciple specially chosen by Christ to be one of His inspired spokesmen.

Evangelist - One who spreads the good news about Christ.

Prophet - A person who delivered messages which he received by direct inspiration from God.

Elder - A man who is one of the spiritual overseers in a local church, also called bishop and pastor.

Teacher - The one who gives instruction.

Deacon - A man who performs a ministry in the local church.

Disciple - A learner and follower of Christ; sometimes it means just the 12 apostles.

Preaching - Declaration of the truth of Scripture to an audience; to herald the message of the king.

Ordination - The setting apart of someone for a special aspect of Christian service.

Tongues - Miraculously speaking unlearned foreign languages.

~ Charismatic - In the Biblical sense, pertaining to the gifts of God. In common use today, refers to the use of miraculous or sign-gifts as evidence of baptism of Holy Spirit.

Glossalalia - The practice of speaking in tongues.

Apostolic succession - The view that authority in the church has been passed through the laying on of hands from the apostles to present day church leaders.

Asceticism - The abstaining from things such as foods and marriage to show one's spirituality.

Judaism - The religion and culture of the Jewish people, especially during the intertestamental period.

Judaizers - People who attempted to impose the standards and laws of Judaism upon Christianity.

Cult - An interpretation based on an individual's views which differs radically from established religion.

Occult - The world of Satan and his forces.

END TIME:

* Eschatology - The study of the end times.

Second coming - The return of Christ to earth to receive His own.

Advent - The coming of Christ.

Final Judgment - The eternal destinies of both lost and saved will be declared as all men and women appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Day of the Lord - The day designated as the day of Christ's return and judgment.

Heaven - Eternal destiny of the saved in the presence of God.

Hell - Eternal destiny of punishment for the unsaved, excluded from the presence and favor of God.

Hades - Greek word used in the LXX for the Hebrew Sheol, i.e. the place of the dead.

* Millennium - Thousand year rule of Christ.

* PreMillennial view - Christ's coming will be before the millennial reign. Christ will rule on a literal throne in literal Jerusalem for a literal 1000 years.

* PostMillennial view - Christ's coming will be after a thousand year period of progress in which Christ reigns.

* A-Millennial view - The millennial is a figurative expression to be equated with the church age which will come to a conclusion with the Second Coming of Christ. No literal 1000 year rule.

Rapture - Non-biblical term used to refer to the rising of Christians, dead and alive, to meet the Lord at His Second Coming.

Secret Rapture - The view that at the Second Coming the saved will be secretly taken from the earth by Christ.

Annihilation - The idea that at least some humans will permanently cease to exist at death or some point thereafter.

Apostasy - A falling away by abandoning Christian faith and practice.

AntiChrist - One who is an opponent of Christ; always plural in the New Testament.

Armageddon - The battle between the forces of God and the forces of evil.

NOTES:

* Crucial for understanding in hermeneutics and may not be defined elsewhere in your degree program.

+ Crucial for understanding in at least scholarly reading.

~ Crucial for understanding in ministry at the local church level.

Other terms not designated by a symbol are usually defined in other courses in the OCC curriculum.

Primary Contemporary Issues in Hermeneutics

1. **Postmodernism** – The personal construction of meaning within a specific community of believers which will be open to ancient wisdom. The issue of Biblical interpretation will not be what the text *says*, but what the text can *do* for our group.
2. **Homosexuality** – Gay lifestyles will increasingly be touted as acceptable and normal through media, education, and the internet. This will increase the occurrences of homosexual experimentation and behavior. As it becomes more main-stream, the church will face it not only as a moral issue but a social and exegetical issue as well.
3. **Publication of the DSS** – Textual criticism of the N.T. that has long been a liberal tool of attack against the inspiration of the Bible will now be expanded to the O.T. As this document is disseminated at the popular level, more individuals (including popular media personalities), will raise the issue of textual discrepancies in the Hebrew Bible.
4. **The Rise of Terrorism and Islam** – On the one hand, society is frightened by any fundamentalist group that believes in an inspired word from God. On the other hand, we are going out of our way to be fair-minded to Moslems and understand their views. At the same time, there is nothing in Islam that resembles the kind of historical/grammatical Bible study of Christianity.
5. **Universal vs. Cultural** – This issue will be especially debated in women’s roles and sexual/reproductive ethics. Because of the social construction of reality, all ethical metanarratives (including the Bible), will be automatically suspect.
6. **Intercultural Dialogue** – As the globe shrinks, especially through technology and missions, we will discover at unprecedented intervals, just how divergent Biblical interpretation has been cross-culturally. Under this banner we will continue to proliferate special interest groups under the guise of **Liberation Theology** especially as it pertains to racial issues. This will, ultimately, cast serious doubt on the hegemony of the “Author’s Intended Meaning.”
7. **Electronic Resources** – will continue to narrow the gap between the scholar and the layman who now has easy access to language tools and research that was formerly esoteric property of the intellectual elite.
8. The debate over meaning has moved from the department of Philosophy to the **Literature Department**. Rather than talking about philosophic presuppositions and epistemology, we are arguing over redaction and genre. Such discussions have given rise to **Structuralism** and the supposed deeply imbedded structures that suggest “mythical” origins of the text. More recently, the **Sociology Department** as well as the **Psychology Department** has also thrown their hat into the ring, discussing how groups and individuals think and react to one another and their environment.
9. **Millennialism** – Eschatology is huge, hence the popularity of the “Left Behind” series. This not only affects our exegesis but also our approach to politics, ecology, and missions.
10. **The Return of Allegory** – It is back and as popular than ever. This, of course, takes us full circle to #1 above.

STUDY GUIDE: II TEST #1

(You will need a Scantron)

1. Be prepared to identify/match some of the major individuals in the history of hermeneutics.
2. Identify/match the seven key periods of hermeneutics with their characteristics, developments, primary concerns, positive contributions, and deficiencies.
3. Explain and evaluate the following hermeneutical constructs: numerology, typology, canon, authoritative, allegory, rationalism, form/source/redaction criticism.
4. List a number of ways which the Holy Spirit does help us in interpretation. List a number of things the Holy Spirit does not do to help in interpretation. And, of course, what he might do but you had better not count on it.
5. Briefly explain the four ways in which a text might be problematic. Under each explanation, tell some things we can do to help solve the problem.
6. List a number of principles for dealing with problem passages.
7. What kinds of textual and hermeneutical difficulties arise in how the N.T. handles the O.T.? How does Jewish hermeneutic affect the N.T.'s interpretation of the O.T.?
8. What principles help guide our decision about whether something is cultural or universal?
9. Define the terms given in the notebook.

INTRO TO INTERP: STUDY GUIDE FOR TEST #2

1. List the six major hermeneutical shifts of the modern era and explain what caused each shift.
2. Match statements with hermeneutical constructs.
3. True/False and Multiple choice over class handouts on hermeneutical constructs.
4. What other fields have begun to interact with hermeneutics?
5. Be prepared to identify and explain: Existential hermeneutics, rhetorical criticism, narrative criticism, reader response, liberation theology, black hermeneutic, feminist hermeneutics, homosexual hermeneutic, restoration hermeneutic, and Catholic hermeneutics. Give at least two positive and two negative evaluations for each.
6. What are the philosophical underpinnings of modernism that postmodernism objects to?
7. Why is Pentecostal hermeneutics similar to Christian church hermeneutics?
8. What are some of the main reasons for adopting new hermeneutical constructs?
9. List and explain at least five positive and at least three negative contributions of modern hermeneutics.
10. What are the four branches of liberation theologies/hermeneutics and who are their "enemies?"
11. What are the (3-4) favorite texts of liberation theologians?
12. Define: Speech-Act theory, semiotic, the social construction of reality, metanarrative, Social Critique, Demythologization, intertextuality, androcentric, misogynist, hermeneutical construct, chiasm, praxis, unmasking a text, concientizacion.
13. Put together a logical response that shows the faulty thinking and methodology of deconstruction.
14. List at least four groups which would claim a Restorationist hermeneutic.
15. List the three rules for determining what constitutes "doctrine" in the Christian Church/Churches of Christ.
16. How would Catholic hermeneutics be similar to and different from the Christian Church's?
17. What are some of the "trajectories" (i.e. implications) of postmodern hermeneutics? How can we effectively communicate the gospel to a postmodern world?
18. Identify and evaluate the central ideas of liberation theology.
19. Give a reasonable critique of homosexual hermeneutic.

INTRO TO INTERP: STUDY GUIDE FOR TEST #3

1. True/False and Multiple choice over class handouts and discussion on millennial positions.
2. Match/explain the exegesis of a particular passage with various millennial positions.
3. What things might affect/determine our millennial position?
4. Briefly define the three millennial positions.
5. Using your Bible, draw a chronology of end time events from Rev 19:11-20:10. Then tell how each major position would explain each of the major parts of the picture.
6. Explain the differences between historic premillennialism and dispensational premillennialism.
7. What are the major hermeneutical issues involved in the millennial debate?
8. What is the first and second resurrection according to the three main millennial positions?
9. Defend your own millennial position (pick one if you don't have one). Be sure you also point out its weaknesses.