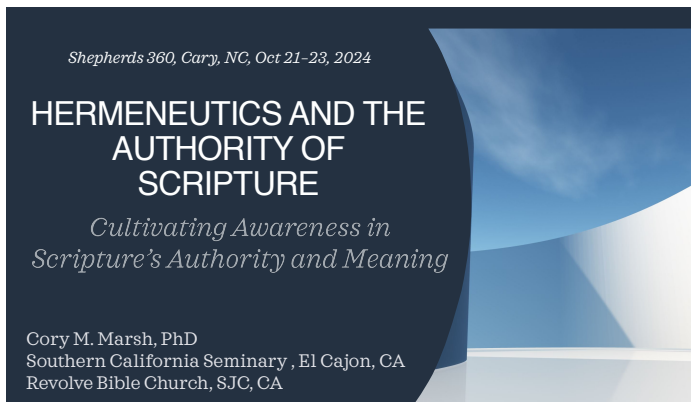


***Hermeneutics and the Authority of Scripture:
Cultivating Awareness in Scripture's Authority and Meaning***
Shepherds 360 Church Leaders Conference, Cary, NC, Oct 21–24, 2024

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A Quadrilateral of Authorities
What is the relationship between them?

- Reason
 - Revelation compliments and trumps reason
- Tradition
 - A helpful but fallible guide
- Personal Experience
 - Interpret through the Bible, not the converse
- Scripture
 - “sola” not “solo”

A Quadrilateral of Authorities: What is the relationship between them?

We can say that reason, tradition, and experience can all be seen as windows into the Scripture or avenues out of the Scripture by which we may express the truth of Scripture, but in no case and on no occasion should reason, tradition, or experience be seen as a higher authority than Scripture by which Scripture could be trumped *on some issue that Scripture directly addresses* and about which it makes claims on God's people.

- Ben Witherington III

(Is there a Doctor in the House? An Insider's Story and Advice on Becoming a Bible Scholar, 100)

A Quadrilateral of Authorities
What is the relationship between them?

Two Critical Principles:

- If Scripture is the ultimate authority by which we know and obey God, then *understanding Scripture correctly* is our most crucial endeavor.
- A Christian's relationship with God is directly proportionate with their relationship to God's Word.

- “Hermeneutics” comes from the Greek verb ἑρμηνεύω (*hermeneuō*) meaning “to interpret or translate” (Luke 24:27; John 9:7).

- In Greek mythology, Hermes was a son of Zeus and the god of interpretation. Transmitted messages from the gods to humans. Discovered language and writing, and was considered the god of literature and eloquence. (cf. Acts 14:12).

- The discipline referred to as “biblical hermeneutics” can be defined as “the theory and practice of sound biblical interpretation.”

- More specifically: “The science and art of interpreting the Bible.”

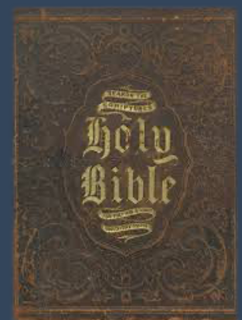
Biblical Hermeneutics

Herman ... Who?



The Goal of Biblical Hermeneutics

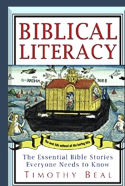
- “To ascertain what God has said in sacred Scripture; to determine the meaning of the word of God” - Bernard Ramm.
- To grow in our awareness of God through His Word by becoming proficient in understanding the Bible's meaning.
- Ultimately, to become “biblically literate” so we can understand God and submit to His will for our lives.



Meaning and Authorial Intent

- Three models for understanding meaning:
 - Reader-Response Criticism:

“Reading the Bible is not about getting it right. *It's about making meaning from it.* It's up to you. There's no right way to read and interpret the Bible”—Timothy Beal.



Meaning and Authorial Intent

- Three models for understanding meaning:
 - Semantic Autonomy:

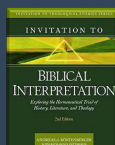
“The condition of being written down is central to the hermeneutic phenomenon because the detachment of a written text from the writer or author as well as from any particular addressee or reader gives it an existence of its own”—Hans Gadamer.



Meaning and Authorial Intent

- Three models for understanding meaning:
 - Authorial Intent:

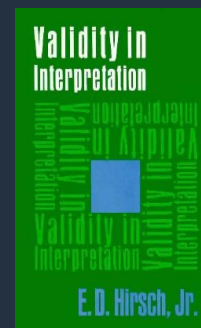
“The rules of proper communication demand that we seek to understand the meaning the person communicating *intended to convey*. The text is not autonomous or a law unto itself, as if it existed apart from the author who willed and wrote it into being. It is an authorially shaped and designed product that requires careful and respectful interpretation”—Andreas J. Köstenberger.



Meaning and Authorial Intent

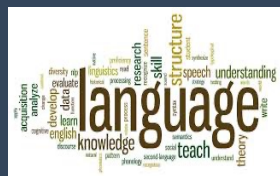
- Authorial Intent:

“All forms of written interpretation and all interpretive goals that transcend private experience require that some *author's meaning* be both determinate and reproducible”—E. D. Hirsch.



Meaning and Authorial Intent

What is the purpose of language?



Do human beings expect to be understood?



Therefore, authorial intent is the meaning of “meaning.”

Meaning and Authorial Intent

Ethics of Authorial Intent

- If *authorial intent* is the “meaning of meaning,” then there is an ethical dimension to how and why we read Scripture—the Author/author's intention must be respected.
- What can we learn from the “golden rule” regarding interpretation of texts (Matt 7:12)?
 - “The ‘gold rule’ of interpretation requires that we extend the same courtesy to any text or author that we would want others to extend to our statements and writings” (Köstenberger, *IBI*, 50).

Intro to the Hermeneutical Triad: *history, literature, theology*

Andreas J. Köstenberger:

"Since Christianity is a historical religion, and all texts are historically and culturally embedded, [we must] ground our interpretation of Scripture in a careful study of the relevant historical setting. Since Scripture is a text of literature, the bulk of interpretative work entails coming to grips with the various literary and linguistic aspects of the biblical material. Finally, since Scripture is not merely a work of literature but inspired and authoritative revelation from God the...end of interpretation is theology."



Intro to the Hermeneutical Triad: *history, literature, theology*

