

APOSTOLIC HERMENEUTICS IN A POSTMODERN CONTEXT

By David K. Bernard

Urshan Graduate School of Theology Symposium

Wentzville, MO

February 11, 2021

As Oneness Pentecostals, we have a distinctive theology, and thus we should develop our thought in every major area. Hermeneutics is foundational to all theology, yet we haven't given it adequate attention. Some Trinitarians have criticized our initial efforts as modernist and insufficiently Pentecostal. This paper addresses their postmodern critique and contributes to the development of a distinctive Apostolic hermeneutic. Its purpose is to further the construction and articulation of a biblical hermeneutic suitable for Oneness theology and to demonstrate its general validity and applicability, thereby helping to establish Oneness Pentecostals in their faith and lead others to the same faith.

Review of Scholarship

In 1992, I included a chapter on hermeneutics in my book *God's Infallible Word*,¹ based on my teaching at Jackson College of Ministries from 1981 to 1986. Drawing from evangelical scholars such as Bernard Ramm and Berkeley Mickelsen, I presented ten general principles and ten practical applications of grammatical-historical exegesis.² My purpose was to help Oneness Pentecostals use basic hermeneutical principles and exegetical methods while avoiding excessive spiritualization and allegorical interpretation. Daniel Segraves made another early contribution to Oneness hermeneutics in 1998, with a similar orientation and purpose.³

¹ David K. Bernard, *God's Infallible Word* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame, 1992), 169–183.

² For a textbook I used Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970). I also consulted A. Berkeley Mickelsen, *Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963); J. Robertson McQuilkin, *Understanding and Applying the Bible* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983); Henry Virkler, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Process of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981); Gordon Fee and Douglas Stewart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982).

³ Daniel Segraves, *You Can Understand the Bible: Guidelines for Interpreting Scripture* (N.P., 1998).

In 2005, I wrote *Understanding God's Word* with two primary goals: “(1) to contribute to the development and enunciation of Apostolic hermeneutics and (2) to demonstrate how the careful study and application of hermeneutics supports the distinctives of the Apostolic message.”⁴ I attempted to base this approach on Scripture itself. While I retained the ten principles and ten methods of the previous book, I sought to develop a distinctively Oneness Pentecostal approach. Through teaching and interaction at Urshan Graduate School of Theology, especially with Professor David Norris, I formulated six principles of Apostolic interpretation, the most important of which is apostolic authority. Because of the dramatic postmodern shift in the late twentieth century, I interacted with philosophical hermeneutics, particularly Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur,⁵ and the subsequent theological hermeneutics.⁶ I consulted recent evangelical authors who responded to postmodern hermeneutics, especially Kevin Vanhoozer and Grant Osborne,⁷ and Trinitarian Pentecostal scholars who engaged postmodernism in numerous papers and articles. Based on my master's work, I also included a discussion of rhetorical criticism.⁸ I concluded that postmodernism made valuable contributions, but ultimately Pentecostal hermeneutics still needed to respect authorial intent and employ grammatical-historical exegesis. I developed my approach further in my doctoral thesis, published in 2016.⁹ This work again interacted with postmodern hermeneutics and consulted current theological hermeneutics, particularly Anthony Thiselton and Stanley Porter.¹⁰

⁴ David K. Bernard, *Understanding God's Word: An Apostolic Approach to Interpreting the Bible* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame, 2005), 11.

⁵ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. and ed. David Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976); Jean Grondin, *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994).

⁶ Roger Lundin, Clarence Walhout, and Anthony Thiselton, *The Promise of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

⁷ Kevin Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998); Grant Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991); Robert Stein, *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible: Playing by the Rules* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994).

⁸ My master's thesis was published as *Justification and the Holy Spirit* (Hazelwood, MO: WAP Academic, 2007).

⁹ David K. Bernard, *The Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ: Deification of Jesus in Early Christian Discourse*, JPentTSup 45 (Blandford Forum, UK: Deo, 2016).

¹⁰ Anthony Thiselton, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with Special Reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); Anthony Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); Stanley Porter and Jason Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpretive Theory* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011); Stanley Porter and Beth Stovell, eds., *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012).

In the meantime, Trinitarian Pentecostal hermeneutics developed rapidly. Rickie Moore, Chris Thomas, and other scholars in the Church of God (Cleveland) began writing articles about Pentecostal hermeneutics involving Spirit, Scripture, and community. In 2002, Amos Yong published a seminal, heavily theoretical work that advocated a “trialectic” approach based on Spirit, Word, and community (the church).¹¹ Using the Trinity as an analogy, he argued for the co-equality of these elements and a strong role for ecumenical tradition. In 2004, Kenneth Archer proposed a postmodern Pentecostal hermeneutic distinct from Evangelicalism in which the reader constructs meaning by Spirit, Scripture, and Pentecostal community.¹² While this proposal was a minority view, it has become increasingly influential. In his 2015 presidential address to the Society for Pentecostal Studies, he stated:¹³

A Pentecostal theological hermeneutic has emerged as a result of Pentecostals taking a linguistic and postmodern turn ... integrated around a holy triad—Holy Spirit, Holy Scripture and holy community. Such a Pentecostal hermeneutic resists general hermeneutics’ so-called objective and neutral approaches to biblical texts ... and affirms the importance of the particular theological traditional and ecclesial commitments that contribute to the interpretive process.

In recent years, Pentecostal scholars have produced important collections of the leading voices in hermeneutics.¹⁴ Most seem to approve the postmodern direction, at least in part, with significant dissents by Robert Menzies and John Poirer.¹⁵

¹¹ Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002). More recently he has written *The Hermeneutical Spirit: Theological Interpretation and Scriptural Imagination for the 21st Century* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017).

¹² Kenneth Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture and Community*, JPentTSup 28 (London: T&T Clark, 2004; repr. Cleveland, TN: CPT, 2009).

¹³ Kenneth Archer, “Pentecostal Hermeneutics and the Society for Pentecostal Studies: Reading and Hearing in One Spirit and One Accord,” *Pneuma* 37 (2015): 318.

¹⁴ Kevin Spawn and Archie Wright, eds., *Spirit and Scripture: Exploring a Pneumatic Hermeneutic* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012); Lee Roy Martin, ed., *Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Reader* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Kenneth Archer and L. William Oliverio Jr., eds., *Constructive Pneumatological Hermeneutics in Pentecostal Christianity* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

¹⁵ Robert Menzies, “Jumping off the Postmodern Bandwagon,” *Pneuma* 16, no. 1 (1994): 115–120; John Poirer, “Conceptual Possibilities and Nonpossibilities for the Nature of Meaning: A Response to Scott Ellington on ‘Hearing and Speaking,’” *Pneuma* 42 (2020): 220–232. See also their contributions in Archer and Oliverio, *Pneumatological Hermeneutics*.

In 2012, Bill Oliverio published a helpful taxonomy of Pentecostal hermeneutics.¹⁶ He identified four major categories with representative teachers: classical Pentecostal (Charles Parham, William Seymour, C. H. Mason, G. T. Haywood), Evangelical-Pentecostal (Gordon Fee, Roger Stronstad, Robert Menzies, David Bernard), contextual-Pentecostal (Amos Yong, Kenneth Archer, John Christopher Thomas, James Smith), and ecumenical-Pentecostal (Cecil M. Robeck Jr., Frank Macchia, Simon Chan, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen). The contextual-Pentecostal is heavily indebted to postmodernism, while the ecumenical-Pentecostal has a mediating role. He advocated a “hermeneutical realism” that takes the various perspectives into account.

Archer dismissed my book *Understanding God’s Word* in a scathing review.¹⁷ He described it as repeating a conservative, modernist, evangelical approach; “not helpful for understanding biblical hermeneutics”; “inadequate even for beginner exegetes”; and of no value in constructing a Pentecostal hermeneutic. He objected to my discussion of authorial intent, distinction between meaning and application, “rationalistic argument from a commonsense perspective,” discussion of truth, and use of logic. I agree in part with Archer that I overemphasized an evangelical approach and underemphasized the present role of the Spirit. I assumed my audience already valued the Spirit’s role in interpretation but needed to understand the importance of careful, contextual, grammatical-historical exegesis.¹⁸ Nevertheless, Archer missed my distinctively Pentecostal discussion of the Spirit’s guidance in understanding the text, the role of experience, the role of the believing community, the concept of fuller meaning, the contributions of postmodernism, and the new, six-point Apostolic approach. Oliverio cited Archer’s critique and identified me as an example of the Evangelical-Pentecostal hermeneutic in part because I seek “to found every theological statement biblically.” He noted about my discussion of Matt 28:19: “His argument is strong if one accepts his previous interpretations of other Scriptures along with his methodology.”¹⁹

In 2016, Craig Keener published a groundbreaking proposal for a distinctively Pentecostal hermeneutic.²⁰ It is nuanced, accepts postmodern insights, emphasizes the role of the

¹⁶ L. William Oliverio Jr., *Theological Hermeneutics in the Classical Pentecostal Tradition: A Typological Account* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

¹⁷ Kenneth Archer, Review of David K. Bernard, *Understanding God’s Word: An Apostolic Approach to Interpreting the Bible*, *Pneuma* 29, no. 1 (2007): 131–132.

¹⁸ Clark Pinnock expressed the same concern in “The Work of the Spirit in the Interpretation of Holy Scripture from the Perspective of a Charismatic Biblical Theologian,” in Martin, *Pentecostal Hermeneutics*, 238, 241.

¹⁹ Oliverio, *Theological Hermeneutics*, 165–167 & 166 n.142.

²⁰ Craig Keener, *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).

Holy Spirit, and yet retains Evangelical-Pentecostal concepts. He advocated a balance of Word and Spirit, a continuationist (non-cessationist) reading, and Spirit-led use of grammatical-historical exegesis. Oliverio observed, “It is the most significant and comprehensive text to have been written on pentecostal hermeneutics,” comparable to Thiselton for Christian hermeneutics generally and Vanhoozer for evangelicals. “It addresses both the contextuality of the original texts and that of contemporary interpreters, valuing multiple legitimate interpretations while also holding to the author and Spirit’s design of the text as grounding interpretive meaning.”²¹ I agree with Keener’s proposals, including his defense of authorial intent and grammatical-historical exegesis, with the addition of some important Apostolic distinctives.

The rest of this paper presents my current proposal for an Apostolic hermeneutic and compares it to Archer’s postmodern Pentecostal hermeneutic and Keener’s Spirit hermeneutic.

An Apostolic Hermeneutic

Second Timothy 3:15–17 provides the foundation for biblical hermeneutics. God has inspired Scripture and given it as our complete guide for our salvation, Christian life, and ministry. It is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (KJV). “You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work” (NLT). For Scripture to fulfill these purposes, we must accept its teaching as truth. Its meaning cannot simply be contingent upon readers, or it would not be able to correct us. We cannot adopt a wholly postmodern approach in which the reader constructs meaning without regard to divine inspiration, authorial intent, and grammatical-historical exegesis.

Based on this passage and other scriptural teachings, I have identified ten general principles of biblical hermeneutics.²² (1) Grammatical-historical interpretation (instead of allegorical interpretation). Applying this method exegetically involves a consideration of ten

²¹ L. William Oliverio Jr, “Reading Craig Keener: On *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost*,” *Pneuma* 39 (2017): 126–127.

²² Bernard, *Understanding God’s Word*, 31–72, 107–159.

factors: history, geography, culture, genre, setting, special literary forms (such as parables), literary context, word meanings, grammar and syntax, and harmony of Scripture. (2) Illumination by the Spirit. (3) Clarity of Scripture. (4) Adaptation to the human mind. (5) Progressive revelation. (6) Scripture as its own interpreter. (7) Unity of Scripture and centrality of Christ. (8) Multiple witnesses for truth. (9) One primary meaning, many applications. (10) Use of logic.

I have also identified six principles of Apostolic interpretation that distinguish Oneness Pentecostals from all other Christian groups, which I again derive from Scripture.²³ (1) *Apostolic authority*. The preaching, teaching, typical experiences, and prevailing practices of the apostolic church are authoritative and normative. Apostolic authority is based on the lordship of Jesus who commissioned apostles to establish the church, proclaim the gospel, and teach his commands (Matt 28:18–20). He prayed that all who would believe in him through the apostles’ message would be united with them (John 17:20–21). The early believers fulfilled his plan by continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and accepting their teachings as authoritative (Acts 2:42; Jude 3, 17). Apostolic authority explains why, in contrast to all other groups, Oneness Pentecostals teach that water baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit baptism with the initial sign of tongues are normative for conversion-initiation.²⁴ For most groups, the experience and message of the apostles is only the starting point for theological discussion, but for Oneness Pentecostals it is the ending point. For example, many theologians and historians have acknowledged that the early church baptized by invoking the name of Jesus Christ.²⁵ Yet, for theological, historical, and ecumenical reasons, most conclude that the church today should instead invoke the titles Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Likewise, many acknowledge that the reception of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament was a definite, miraculous experience with observable phenomena, yet today they do not expect any manifestations. In other words, they agree with Oneness Pentecostals on exegesis but disagree on hermeneutics. A contemporary example is Daniel Wallace of Dallas Theological Seminary. He noted that throughout Acts the apostles baptized in the name of Jesus alone instead of using the words of Matt 28:19, concluding it was probably due to “a lack of understanding.” Either “the apostolic band was

²³ Bernard, *Understanding God’s Word*, 73–106; David K. Bernard, “Oneness Theology: Restoring the Apostolic Faith,” in *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, ed. Wolfgang Vondey (London: Routledge, 2020).

²⁴ David K. Bernard, *Apostolic Identity in a Postmodern World* (Weldon Spring, MO: Word Aflame, 2019), 11–23.

²⁵ Bernard, *Glory of God*, 215–217. Notable examples are Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, Karl Barth, F. F. Bruce.

wholly consumed with Christ or ... the Trinitarian formula made little sense to them. In other words, their initial understanding ... may well have been rather fuzzy.”²⁶

(2) *Old Testament foundation and New Testament fulfillment.* The Old Testament is the foundation for the greater revelation of the New Testament. (3) *The centrality of the one God in Jesus Christ.* We should interpret the whole of Scripture in light of the revelation of the one God in Jesus Christ. (4) *Importance of spiritual illumination and experience, both individual and communal.* In order to appreciate Scripture’s significance and make proper application to our lives, we need the illumination of the Holy Spirit and experience in the realm of the Spirit in our lives and in our churches. (5) *Interpretation in light of the end time.* We interpret Scripture with the realization that we live under the new covenant, in the time of the great latter-day outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in the last age before the coming of the Lord. We apply Scripture in light of the urgency of His coming. (6) *Presumption of relevance and applicability.* We approach the Bible with the assumption that each passage is relevant and applicable.

Instead of reading the Bible through the lenses of philosophy, church tradition, and creeds, we read it with Old Testament foundational concepts in mind—in the way the apostles heard Jesus and the early church heard the apostles. Thus, when the New Testament proclaims Jesus as God in flesh, we understand him to be the one God of the Old Testament—without modifying the definition of God to allow for a plurality of persons. We interpret the whole of Scripture by the Incarnation and Atonement. Spiritual illumination must accompany exegesis, and spiritual experience must be part of the hermeneutical spiral. For example, experience in the Spirit and in the community is a vital part of understanding biblical teachings about spiritual gifts. Moreover, modern culture does not negate biblical teachings for daily life such as sexual morality and modesty of dress, although we apply them in a cultural context.

Grammatical-historical exegesis is the starting point for interpreting a passage of Scripture.²⁷ Exegesis literally means to bring meaning out of the text. The foremost question is one of intention: What did the original author intend to communicate to his or her original reader(s)?²⁸ Meaning relates both to the use of particular words and to the context in which they

²⁶ Daniel Wallace, “Greek Grammar and the Personality of the Holy Spirit,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 13, no. 1 (2003): 123.

²⁷ Bernard, *Glory of God*, 33–37.

²⁸ Gordon Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983), 21.

appear: “Interpretation entails literal meaning.... There is no such thing as ‘religious language’ in need of a special grammar, semantics or code book. We must also hold firm to a second premise, the distinction between the meaning of a sentence and its indefinite uses in a variety of contexts.”²⁹ Exegetical questions include those of *content* (textual, lexical, grammatical, and historical-cultural data) and *context* (historical and literary).³⁰ This method of interpretation is grammatical because it derives meaning from the grammatical context—the definition of words and their grammatical forms and relationships. It is historical because it derives meaning from the historical context, seeking to understand the words and expressions according to their meaning when they were written. In short, the grammatical-historical method follows the usual or normal implication of an expression, the ordinary and apparent meaning.

Craig Blomberg called this method “the historical-critical/grammatical view” and defined it as “studying the biblical text, or any other text, in its original historical context and seeking the meaning its author(s) most likely intended for its original audience(s) or addressees based on the grammar and syntax.”³¹ Seeking authorial intent is not an attempt to imagine internal mental processes but to discern the probable meaning of a text based on a study of the original author and the original audience in their historical, social, and cultural contexts. The interpreter focuses on the text in existence along with available information concerning the circumstances in which the text was produced. The proper use of this method does not exclude other approaches to the text, nor does it establish one, fixed, “objective” meaning. Other approaches can be legitimate and useful, but their foundation or starting point is the historical-critical/grammatical approach.³² In other words, the Bible’s origin and message are unique, but fundamentally its use of language is not. Since it is divinely inspired, some of its statements have fuller implications or fulfillments than the original human authors realized, and its teachings have applications in our culture and time that were unknown to the original readers; nevertheless, these implications, fulfillments, and applications must be rooted in the grammatical-historical meaning of the text.

²⁹ Hans Penner, “Interpretation,” in *Guide to the Study of Religion*, ed. Willi Braun and Russell McCutcheon (New York: Cassell, 2000), 69–70.

³⁰ Fee, *NT Exegesis*, 25.

³¹ Craig Blomberg, “The Historical-Critical/Grammatical View,” in Porter and Stovell, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 27, 31, 46. See also Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*; Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*; Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*; Hans Conzelmann and Andreas Lindemann, *Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the Principles and Methods of N.T. Exegesis*, trans. Siegfried Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988).

³² Blomberg, “Historical-Critical/Grammatical View,” 28, 47.

In the twentieth century, postmodern philosophers challenged the underpinnings of traditional hermeneutics. The prevailing modernist approach, based on the Enlightenment, championed unbiased reason and assumed a neutral observer could ascertain the intentions of an author and the fixed, objective meaning of a text by the straightforward use of historical-critical tools. In contrast, Heidegger, Gadamer, and Ricoeur held it to be impossible to have presuppositionless thought.³³ More than anyone else, Gadamer overthrew the Cartesian and Enlightenment approach to meaning and truth, emphasizing that everything involves hermeneutics, everything requires interpretation. Everyone approaches a text with prejudices or pre-judgment, everything is driven by tradition and interpretation, and neutral reason is a fallacy.³⁴ Since every interpreter brings a preunderstanding to a text, we must be sensitive to the distance between the original context and the contemporary context, or the “horizon of the text” and the “horizon of the reader.” We must seek to bring the two together, or fuse the horizons, for understanding, communication, and learning to take place.³⁵ Gadamer’s fusion of horizons is also called the hermeneutical circle. Every reader is situated in a historical tradition, which has interpretive power. Thus, interpretation begins with a preunderstanding based in the reader’s tradition, progresses as text and reader question each other and the reader fuses the horizons, and ultimately produces a revised understanding, which in turn can generate a further preunderstanding of the text.³⁶ The hermeneutical circle is more accurately a hermeneutical spiral, as understanding is progressively revised and as meaning develops in an iterative process.

Ricoeur spoke of “distanciation,” which creates distance between a discourse and its reader and enables the text to have a life of its own. It is followed by “appropriation,” which overcomes distanciation, enables the reader to apply the text, and functions essentially like Gadamer’s fusion of horizons. By this process the text can be objectified and the reader can achieve some distance not only from the text but from his or her own tradition. Ricoeur viewed Gadamer as insufficiently critical of tradition and thus provided a way to critique tradition from within.³⁷ He also explained, “The sense of the text is not behind the text, but in front of it. It is

³³ Merold Westphal, “The Philosophical/Theological View,” in Porter and Stovell, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 72.

³⁴ Thiselton, *Hermeneutics*, 218–219, 226.

³⁵ Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, 82–94, 199–211.

³⁶ Roger Lundin, “Interpreting Orphans: Hermeneutics in the Cartesian Tradition,” in Lundin, Walhout, and Thiselton, *Promise of Hermeneutics*, 57.

³⁷ Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, 120–128.

not something hidden, but something disclosed.”³⁸ The reader does not seek meaning in the hidden psychological processes of the author or in a timeless meaning of the text itself but in his or her interaction with the text.

Consequently, neither Gadamer nor Ricoeur looked to the author alone in fixing meaning but looked beyond. Within Gadamer’s fusion of horizons there is a fusing of the objective and subjective, which creates new horizons—new options for meaning and understanding.³⁹ Similarly, for Ricoeur there is a “surplus of meaning,” which leads to several potential ways of understanding a text even though not all interpretations are equally valid.⁴⁰ In postmodern hermeneutics, then, the reader is integrally involved in the formation of meaning. Meaning resides in the interaction of writer, reader, context, and society, and it is revealed by the impact the text makes on the reader. For this reason, it is important for interpreters to identify their own hermeneutical situation. “It is necessary to make our *own* situation transparent *so that* we can appreciate precisely the otherness and alterity of the text—that is, without allowing our unelucidated prejudices to dominate the text unwittingly and so conceal what is proper to it.”⁴¹

These developments in philosophical hermeneutics have influenced similar developments in theological hermeneutics, represented by scholars such as Thiselton and Vanhoozer. Theological hermeneutics encompasses various interpretive models and practices and applies these philosophical interests to biblical interpretation while remaining in the Christian tradition. The result is to approach the Bible as a theological document, to recognize the importance of preunderstanding, and to employ the hermeneutical circle or spiral.⁴² At the level of exegesis, theological hermeneutics recognizes that the intention of the biblical writer is still important and that critical historical inquiry is still needed.⁴³ It does not eliminate the original author and audience but recognizes that the meaning of a text goes beyond the author. Subsequent audiences are in different contexts and therefore construe the text differently. At the same time the original context provides necessary guidance; a text cannot simply mean anything. The situation of the original discourse serves as a guardrail. In this way a text places limits on its interpretation, but it also remains open to other meanings in contexts not anticipated by the author. We can speak of

³⁸ Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory*, 87–88.

³⁹ Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, 86.

⁴⁰ Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, 121–123.

⁴¹ Grondin, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, 97, emphasis in original.

⁴² Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, 245, 251.

⁴³ Thiselton, *Two Horizons*, 10, 15, 20, 99.

original meaning and present meaning in the traditional terms of exegesis and application, as long as we understand that application does not mean going “from theory to practice” but “from then to now.”⁴⁴ The following is one paradigm for the literary/postmodern exegesis of a text:⁴⁵

We begin by closely concentrating on the linguistic, stylistic, structural and thematic elements of the *final text* under investigation. From there, we widen out to connective *cotexts* within the larger narrative or book; then to suggestive *intertexts*, especially those ripe for fruitful “canonical conversation”; then to informative *contexts* in the surrounding rhetorical and cultural environments; and finally, to expansive horizons of different readers from diverse social locations and power positions, staking their distinctive claims to a dynamic *open text*. But no sooner do we fan out as far as we dare than we are drawn back in, with centripetal force, bringing our enhanced perspectives to bear on interpreting the focal text.

Contemporary hermeneutics does not eliminate grammatical-historical exegesis but provides guidance for its use and evaluation of its results: (1) Everyone has theological, cultural, and sociological perspectives, presuppositions, assumptions, and beliefs. We must identify them, examine their validity, discern how they affect the understanding of the text, allow the text to critique them, and subject them to modification and reinterpretation through iterative use of the hermeneutical spiral, applied to one text or a group of texts. (2) Meaning involves not only the author’s intent but also the intellectual and emotional impact upon the reader. (3) Instead of simply having a single, fixed, objective meaning, a text can have multiple layers of significance and many applications. A text’s significance can vary with the questions brought to the text and therefore with the readers who bring the questions. (4) A text develops a life of its own and can be appropriated for different purposes. (5) We should seek meaning through a humble, holistic approach in dialogue with the text and other interpreters of the past and present.

⁴⁴ Westphal, “Philosophical/Theological View,” 77–79, 85.

⁴⁵ F. Scott Spencer, “The Literary/Postmodern View,” in Porter and Stovell, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 68, emphasis in original.

Archer's Postmodern Pentecostal Hermeneutic

Archer advocates a distinctly Pentecostal hermeneutic that is not submerged in Evangelicalism, involving “the biblical text, Pentecostal community and the Holy Spirit.” Pentecostal preunderstanding has both cognitive and experiential dimensions, and “the Holy Spirit plays a vital part in elucidating the contemporary meaning of the Scripture.” “Meaning ... is negotiated in the present interaction of the community of Pentecostal readers (both laity and scholarly), the working of the Holy Spirit and the testimony of Scripture” and “may be renegotiated at a later time.” We should reject “the quest for a past determinate meaning of the author and embrace the reality that interpretation involves both the discovery of meaning and the creation of meaning. Thus, texts are by their very nature, indeterminate.” In short, “meaning is something we construct.” Readings are never neutral. Since both texts and readers are “ideologically biased,” then “the production of meaning is always ideologically biased.”⁴⁶

Archer emphasizes the Pentecostal community in constructing meanings, so it isn't clear if he expects non-Pentecostals to accept these meanings or to construct their own. Are different meanings equally valid for different groups? Must people convert to Pentecostalism before they can construct valid meanings? He correctly says, however, “The validation of the meaning must include a method that can be followed and be both logical and coherent to those outside the community.” Archer remarks that when early Trinitarian Pentecostals opposed Oneness proponents, they didn't reject their interpretive method but appealed to historic Christianity, while Oneness Pentecostals focused on Scripture. He cites this example to show the importance of the community when evaluating an interpretation, especially if it challenges established beliefs and practices. In conclusion, Archer acknowledges that his theoretical strategy needs to be tested by application to biblical passages.⁴⁷

Chris Green is helpful in this regard, as he embraces a similar hermeneutic. In his work on the Lord's Supper, Green adopts a sacramental interpretation of John 6. For him, it's not important to seek the meaning of the author or the speaker, even when it is Jesus; we can simply determine whether our preferred interpretation is possible:

⁴⁶ Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 6, 194–199, 208, 238.

⁴⁷ Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 254, 257–258, 266–267.

Given the hermeneutics that guides our reading, we do not need to decide whether the author(s) of the Gospel intended the passage to have sacramental significance; still less do we need to figure out if the “historical Jesus” could have or would have spoken of Communion in this way. We need only to point out that the text itself, when read narratively and theologically, *can* be heard to speak to the sacraments—and we know from the history of interpretation that it *has been* read in this way.

For him “the decisive hermeneutical question” is not whether John 6 refers to the Eucharist but “how does this passage teach us to respond rightly to the Lord of the Eucharist, to participate faithfully as his people at his Table?”⁴⁸

Green’s treatment of 1 Cor 11:2–16 is even more troublesome, particularly vv. 14–15, which he quotes as follows: “Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is degrading to him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering.” He finds this text to be “deeply problematic,” “hopelessly indecipherable,” and “seemingly unreadable.” He rejects the interpretation of his childhood church—“men were to keep their hair cut short, and women were not to cut their hair at all”—because it promotes patriarchy, androcentrism, and male superiority. He dismisses two extremes: rejecting “engagement with the contemporary world” in favor of “the apparent meaning of the text” and rejecting the text. He admits that most contemporary Christians choose the latter, “not explicitly, of course, but *de facto*.” He offers another option for such texts: “Establish a plausible ‘original meaning’ of a biblical passage, to determine the defining ethical and theological concern of its writer, and then extrapolate from the text how that concern, and the moral trajectory of its ‘redemptive spirit,’ might speak to a contemporary concern in a particular context.” Here, he says, perhaps we should simply accept the text as “unreadable” and a reminder of the limits of our understanding. While we should affirm maleness and femaleness, we should reject historic and majority interpretations that are misogynist and patriarchal. He concludes:

The Spirit in her wisdom has given us a perplexing, troubling text, one that surfaces deep-seated presuppositions about maleness and femaleness. We should receive this

⁴⁸ Chris E. W. Green, *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of the Lord’s Supper: Foretasting the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: CPT, 2012), 229, 231, emphasis in original.

trouble as a sanctifying gift. By the Spirit's grace, the indecipherability of this text reads our hearts.... The same Spirit who gives us this troubling text guides our readings.⁴⁹

He doesn't propose a definite reading, however.

Keener's Spirit Hermeneutic

Keener presents a rich Pentecostal hermeneutic that balances the leading of the Spirit with authorial intent and original context. "Observing the designed sense, or what we might call the sense projected by the ideal author or at least the ancient cultural sense, is a vital and foundational objective for interpreting Scripture." Therefore, Spirit hermeneutics "may be *more* than simply traditional exegesis" but not "*less* than traditional exegesis." The goal of "historical-grammatical exegesis" is to discover the "original meaning and intention" of a text so that we can understand how to reapply the message to us today. Since Scripture is divinely inspired, it has implications beyond the authors' understanding, but we shouldn't expect it to mean less than what it originally meant to them. Thus, exegesis starts with their vocabulary, style, language, and culture. Scripture has final authority only if the author's "original intended meaning," rather than the reader's perspectives, controls all other valid "meanings" or "applications." Of course, a text can have additional "implications" or "significance" in a new setting. What some scholars call "multiple meanings," however, may more accurately be "a meaning with multiple applications." Keener asserts that most Pentecostal scholars still seek authorial intention.⁵⁰

In subsequent dialogue, Keener affirms "grammatical historical" exegesis, including the importance of historical, literary, and cultural contexts. He notes that while postmodern Pentecostal theologians admit the importance of these contexts, they typically don't mention them in their theoretical proposals, which can lead students to mistakenly miss their role in Pentecostal hermeneutics. As an example, he cites Paul's teaching concerning gender: "If we ignore the cultural setting of his teaching, we are left with either the option of duplicating that teaching without taking into account the cultural differences (a common fundamentalist

⁴⁹ Chris E. W. Green, "Does (Not) Nature Itself Teach You? Pentecostal Reflections on a Troubled and Troubling Text," *Pneuma* 38 (2016): 456–475.

⁵⁰ Keener, *Spirit Hermeneutics*, 99, 116, 129, 133, 135, 138, 141, 150, 246, emphasis in original.

approach), or with rejecting the Spirit inspiration and thus authority of those parts of Scripture (a common liberal approach).”⁵¹ Keener’s proposal is far more comprehensive than we have described here, but for our purposes his response to postmodernism is clear.

John Poirer describes Keener and himself as “intentionalists” and supports Keener by saying the Spirit’s role is to uncover meaning, not to create new meaning. The Spirit speaks today in the same ways as in the first century; the church doesn’t have authority to invent new ways. Postmodern approaches are problematic because they use the word “meaning” for two different concepts—the author’s intention and the reader’s understanding—and then conflate them. It is a “grammatical illusion,” however, to think that “meaning is some *thing* that includes both writerly and readerly aspects.” In reality, “texts are constructed with a particular goal in mind—that of conveying the author’s intention.... Any program of interpretation that respects the true essence of texts will seek to uncover that intention.”⁵²

Evaluation of the Postmodern Pentecostal Hermeneutic

Since I agree substantially with Keener’s proposals, I will analyze the postmodern approach of Archer and Green in more detail. It is problematic for many reasons.

1. *This method undercuts the inspiration and authority of Scripture.* If all scriptural texts are biased and if readers create meaning, then in what way is Scripture divinely inspired, authoritative, and able to instruct and correct us?

2. *At the most basic level, this method is self-refuting.* Based on Archer’s own reader-response method, his intention in writing *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic* doesn’t matter. (We shouldn’t give greater deference to his intent than he gives to the biblical writers’ intent.) As we construct meaning from his text, we can conclude from his discussion of the Oneness-Trinitarian controversy that Oneness Pentecostalism is the most authentic expression of Christianity and the most appropriate community to consult. Thus, he has no ground to dismiss any hermeneutical method or exegetical result from this community. Since he disparages rules of logic, it wouldn’t be appropriate for him to construct a logical argument to refute this conclusion.

3. *This method frustrates any attempt to establish Pentecostal theology by hermeneutical principles that non-Pentecostals would accept.* The implication is that Pentecostalism is not

⁵¹ Craig Keener, “Refining *Spirit Hermeneutics*,” *Pneuma* 39 (2017): 213–217, 221.

⁵² Poirer, “Conceptual Possibilities and Nonpossibilities,” 221–226, 230 n.22, emphasis in original.

normative for Christianity but only one of many equally valid options. There is some psychological evidence that humans make decisions and commitments by nonrational processes and subsequently construct logical arguments to explain and defend them; nevertheless, such arguments can serve as verification. Even if Pentecostals don't always use general hermeneutical principles to arrive at certain beliefs and experiences, hermeneutics can serve as an important means of discernment, validation, and correction.

4. *This method relies excessively on the community and is inconsistent in defining the community.* What is the community, and who gets to create meaning? If the community is constituted by the established Christian traditions, then under this method there would have arisen no Protestant, Pentecostal, or Oneness movements. While Martin Luther's new understanding of justification was no doubt influenced by many factors over time, he did not merely construct the meaning of Romans 1:17 based on his preunderstanding and community. Instead, the Bible spoke to him with revelatory force contrary to his previous theology and experience. Moreover, as Keener stated, "If any circle of the church holds the exclusive right to claim to interpret Scripture for their circle (in reader response terms, the head of the interpretive community), the Reformation should not have happened."⁵³ Early Pentecostals such as Parham and Seymour sought the Holy Spirit baptism with tongues, which contradicted their community, tradition, and experience, because they found it in the Bible. Frank Ewart and Glenn Cook did likewise when they baptized each other in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in April 1914.

When Archer discusses the Oneness controversy, he appeals to historic Christianity as a safeguard, but doing so means his community begins with the fourth-century church, which was no longer Spirit-filled. Instead, he should prioritize the first century. Moreover, when Oneness Pentecostals assert that water baptism is part of Christian initiation, they agree with historic Christianity, including the fourth-century creeds. Shouldn't Trinitarian Pentecostals do the same?

Green's interpretation of John 6 emphasizes church tradition more than the scriptural text, much like Roman Catholicism. By privileging historical interpretations, he accepts the hermeneutics of ancient interpreters uncritically, thereby undercutting his own hermeneutic. Possibility becomes meaning, reminiscent of the doctrine of probabilism in Catholic circles.⁵⁴ As

⁵³ Keener, "Refining *Spirit Hermeneutics*," 233.

⁵⁴ It says we can hold a probable doctrine or choose a probable course of conduct. Some Jesuits extended it to say: If we can think of a plausible justification for an action, then we can act accordingly and ignore contrary reasons.

a contemporary example, Matt 28:19 has been read as both a Trinitarian and a Oneness text. Does Green's approach mean either option is equally valid? Does it mean that other common features of historic Christianity are also legitimate "meanings" of Scripture, such as veneration of statues, prayer to Mary, penance, purgatory, and papal infallibility? After all, they are embraced by Catholic charismatics who are part of the Spirit-filled community today.

In contrast, Green's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11 focuses on contemporary culture. The words he quoted are not difficult to understand or apply, but they are difficult for him because they conflict with his worldview and social concerns. Here, he rejects both historic Christianity and the Spirit-filled community in which he grew up. His interpretive community seems to be progressive theologians who are willing to reject a clear statement of Scripture because of an ideological commitment. Rather than "constructing" meaning, they deconstruct or destroy it. Can we similarly abandon the New Testament's teaching on sexual morality because progressive theologians deem it legalistic, homophobic, and transphobic?

5. *This method confuses primary meaning with application.* It deconstructs primary meaning, which undercuts the theological justification for all applications. Instead, it endorses many meanings, which can vary by community and over time and may contradict one another.

Conclusions

In dialogue with the foregoing proposals, I offer the following points for the construction of a fully Apostolic Pentecostal hermeneutic that is based on Scripture and that helps us understand, explicate, and propagate the saving truth of Scripture.

1. *We need a distinctively Pentecostal hermeneutic that emphasizes the immediacy of the text: "this is that" (Acts 2:16).*⁵⁵ It speaks to us today. Modernism, fundamentalism, and evangelicalism are inadequate for understanding God's Word clearly and fully in our day.

2. *Postmodernism offers valuable insights, but we cannot embrace deconstructionism and relativism.* Postmodern hermeneutics helps us see the importance of preunderstanding and social location and reveals the existence of multiple appropriations, applications, and layers of significance. It shows the need for a humble, holistic, multifaceted, collaborative approach.

⁵⁵ Yong, *Hermeneutical Spirit*, ch. 12.

3. *Authorial intent and grammatical-historical exegesis remain important*, based on our high view of the inspiration, authority, instructive purpose, and corrective role of Scripture. Since we privilege and identify with the original apostolic church, we value its authorial intent.

4. *A Pentecostal hermeneutic should be based on the Word, the Spirit, and the Spirit-filled community*. We can appreciate the constructive proposals of Yong, Thomas, Archer, and others in this regard. The Bible must remain our authority for salvation, Christian life, and ministry, but we need the work of the Holy Spirit to hear the Word afresh, to understand and apply the Word. Experience in the Spirit leads us to the Word, validates the Word, and brings the Word to life. The community, past and present, introduces us to both Word and Spirit and is the context in which we experience, recognize, and comprehend the work of both. Acts 15 provides a helpful paradigm for how the church can integrate the Word and the Spirit to address contemporary theological and cultural issues.

5. *Word and Spirit are equally important but fulfill different roles; we must maintain them in balance*. Fundamentalists privilege the Word, while charismatics privilege the Spirit (both according to their preunderstandings). Oneness Pentecostals accept the lordship of Jesus Christ, who is both the living Word incarnate and the indwelling Holy Spirit. The preaching of the Word leads to the reception of the Spirit and the formation of the community. Thereafter, the experience of the community in the Spirit leads us to accept and understand the Word more completely. The Spirit doesn't lead contrary to the written Word as given to the first-century apostles and prophets.⁵⁶ Both are part of the hermeneutical spiral.

6. *The community is formed by the Word and the Spirit and is subordinate to both*. The community shapes our preunderstanding, but it must be critiqued by Word and Spirit. Each believing community and each generation needs a fresh encounter with both Word and Spirit. Each must go back to the Bible, especially to the New Testament church, to establish truth in its respective context, develop its identity, and receive instruction, correction, and application. Each needs an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, individually and collectively, for regeneration, renewal, revival, guidance, power, spiritual gifts, spiritual fruit, and the pursuit of holiness.

7. *Experience is a vital part of the hermeneutical spiral but does not supersede the written Word*. The Word and the Spirit are mediated through experience, both individual and communal. We uphold the priority of the Word, as understood through the Spirit, over personal

⁵⁶ Pinnock, "Work of the Spirit," 241.

experience itself. In other words, we must ground our experience of the Spirit in the Word, just as we must ground our understanding of the Word in the Spirit. Reason and tradition are important aspects of experience, but we must not elevate them to independent sources of authority. Rather, they are tools to help us understand what the Word and Spirit are speaking to the community, as we see in Acts 15. We approach the study of important topics holistically, considering both declaration and experience, including praxis. For example, to understand the baptismal formula we consider Jesus' teaching in Matt 28:19, the apostles' practice in Acts, and allusions in the Epistles. To discern the role of women in ministry, we consider Old Testament examples, New Testament statements of principle, Paul's instructions for problems in certain cultural and local contexts, and Paul's recognition of female coworkers.⁵⁷

8. *A fully Apostolic hermeneutic incorporates additional distinctive elements, the most important of which is apostolic authority* (the normativity of apostolic proclamation and praxis). Other key Apostolic guidelines are Old Testament foundation and New Testament fulfillment, centrality of the one God in Jesus Christ (Incarnation and Atonement), importance of spiritual illumination and spiritual experience, interpretation in light of the eschaton, and presumption of relevance and applicability. From these points, the Acts narratives are important for theology.

9. *Rather than seeking multiple meanings, it is more appropriate to think of one primary meaning with manifold significance and multiple applications.* We acknowledge the fuller meaning of Scripture as intended by God, transcending the circumstances and thought of the original authors and speaking to our day. While we sometimes talk of different meanings in different contexts and situations, the concept of primary meaning is still valuable to maintain doctrinal integrity. The community alone isn't an adequate safeguard. Moreover, it is helpful to distinguish between exegesis or exposition and application. For instance, Paul told Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it" (Col 4:17, NKJV). While this statement has a specific historical context, when I was twenty-three, the Spirit drew my attention to this example and used it to confirm my own call to preach.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ See John Christopher Thomas, "Women, Pentecostalism, and the Bible: An Experiment in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," in Martin, *Pentecostal Hermeneutics*.

⁵⁸ Context and discernment remain important for all applications. A story tells of a man who sought God's will by randomly turning pages of the Bible and pointing to a verse. The verse said, "[Judas] went and hanged himself" (Matt 27:5). Thinking this couldn't be God's word to him, the man tried again and found, "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:37). Trying one more time, he read, "That thou doest, do quickly" (John 13:27). While this story is tongue-in-cheek, our hermeneutical theory must be able to exclude such applications or constructions of meaning.

10. *We must keep our focus on proclamation, evangelism, and discipleship.* The foregoing hermeneutical conversations have neglected a key role of the spoken and written Word: the proclamation of truth with the goal of conversion and transformation. To be effective, the Word must be made relevant to hearers, including non-Pentecostals and non-Christians. There must be some common ground of interpretation, a method by which anyone of any background could come to faith in Jesus. The community alone is not adequate for this purpose. Grammatical-historical interpretation, as informed by postmodern concerns and insights, can provide this ground. Based on common human understanding and experience, Pentecostals can appeal to postmodern hearers to consider the claims of Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit. As hearers experience the dual power of the Word and the Spirit, the community can lead them to life-changing truth by an Apostolic hermeneutic.

Bibliography

- Anderson, R. Dean, Jr. *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul*. Rev. ed. Leuven, Belg.: Peeters, 1999.
- Archer, Kenneth. *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture and Community*. Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 28. London: T&T Clark, 2004. Repr. Cleveland, TN: CPT, 2009.
- . “Pentecostal Hermeneutics and the Society for Pentecostal Studies: Reading and Hearing in One Spirit and One Accord.” *Pneuma* 37 (2015): 317–339.
- . “Pentecostal Story: The Hermeneutical Filter for the Making of Meaning.” *Pneuma* 26, no. 1 (2004): 36–59.
- . Review of David K. Bernard, *Understanding God’s Word: An Apostolic Approach to Interpreting the Bible*. *Pneuma* 29, no. 1 (2007): 131–132.
- . “Spirited Conversation about Hermeneutics: A Pentecostal Hermeneut’s Response to Craig Keener’s *Spirit Hermeneutics*.” *Pneuma* 39 (2017): 179–197.
- Archer, Kenneth, and L. William Oliverio Jr., eds. *Constructive Pneumatological Hermeneutics in Pentecostal Christianity*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Arrington, French. “The Use of the Bible by Pentecostals.” *Pneuma* 16, no. 1 (1994): 101–107.
- Bercot, David. *Common Sense: A New Approach to Understanding Scripture*. Tyler, TX: Scroll, 1992.
- Bernard, David K. *Apostolic Identity in a Postmodern World*. Weldon Spring, MO: Word Aflame, 2019.
- . *The Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ: Deification of Jesus in Early Christian Discourse*. Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 45. Blandford Forum, UK: Deo, 2016.
- . *God’s Infallible Word*. Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame, 1992.
- . *Justification and the Holy Spirit*. Hazelwood, MO: WAP Academic, 2007.
- . “Oneness Theology: Restoring the Apostolic Faith.” Pages 195–205 in *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*. Edited by Wolfgang Vondey. London: Routledge, 2020.
- . *Understanding God’s Word: An Apostolic Approach to Interpreting the Bible*. Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame, 2005.
- Bitzer, Lloyd. “The Rhetorical Situation.” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 1–14.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Oxford: Polity, 1988.
- Braun, Willi, and Russell McCutcheon, eds. *Guide to the Study of Religion*. New York: Cassell, 2000.
- Brinton, Alan. “Situation in the Theory of Rhetoric.” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 14 (1981): 234–248.
- Brock, Bernard, Robert Scott, and James Chesebro, eds. *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth-Century Perspective*. 3d ed. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990.
- Burke, Kenneth. *A Grammar of Motives*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1952.
- Byrd, Joseph. “Paul Ricoeur’s Hermeneutical Theory and Pentecostal Proclamation.” *Pneuma* 15, no. 2 (1993): 203–214.

- Cargal, Timothy. "Beyond the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: Pentecostals and Hermeneutics in a Postmodern Age." *Pneuma* 15, no. 2 (1993): 163–187.
- Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.
- Cartledge, Mark. "Text-Community-Spirit: The Challenges Posed by Pentecostal Theological Method to Evangelical Theology." Pages 130–142 in *Spirit and Scripture: Exploring a Pneumatic Hermeneutic*. Edited by Kevin Spawn and Archie Wright. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012.
- Conzelmann, Hans, and Andreas Lindemann. *Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the Principles and Methods of N.T. Exegesis*. Translated by Siegfried Schatzmann. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988.
- Dempster, Murray. "Paradigm Shifts and Hermeneutics: Confronting Issues Old and New." *Pneuma* 15, no. 2 (1993): 129–135.
- Ellington, Scott. "History, Story, and Testimony: Locating Truth in a Pentecostal Hermeneutic." *Pneuma* 23, no. 2 (2001): 245–263.
- Elliot, John. *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism?* Guides to Biblical Scholarship. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.
- Estrada, Rodolfo III. "Is a Contextualized Hermeneutic the Future of Pentecostal Readings? The Implications of a Pentecostal Hermeneutic for a Chicano/Latino Community." *Pneuma* 37 (2015): 341–355.
- Fee, Gordon. *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- . *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983.
- Fee, Gordon, and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.
- Fitzgerald, Timothy. "Bruce Lincoln's 'Theses on Method': Antithesis." *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 18 (2006): 392–423.
- Fuller, Daniel. *Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum? The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Translated and edited by David Linge. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.
- Green, Chris E. W. "Does (Not) Nature Itself Teach You? Pentecostal Reflections on a Troubled and Troubling Text." *Pneuma* 38 (2016): 456–475.
- . *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of the Lord's Supper: Foretasting the Kingdom*. Cleveland, TN: CPT, 2012.

- Grey, Jacqueline. "Biblical Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture with the Community." Pages 129–139 in *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*. Edited by Wolfgang Vondey. London: Routledge, 2020.
- . "The Spirit of and Spirit in Craig S. Keener's *Spirit Hermeneutics*." *Pneuma* 39 (2017): 168–178.
- Grondin, Jean. *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Translated by Jack Weinsheimer. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994.
- Harrington, Hannah, and Rebecca Patten. "Pentecostal Hermeneutics and Postmodern Literary Theory." *Pneuma* 16, no. 1 (1994): 109–114.
- Hens-Piazza, Gina. *The New Historicism*. Guides to Biblical Scholarship. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002.
- Israel, Richard, Daniel Albrecht, and Randal McNally. "Pentecostals and Hermeneutics: Texts, Rituals and Community." *Pneuma* 15, no. 2 (1993): 137–161.
- Jamieson, Kathleen Hall. "Generic Constraints and the Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 6 (1973): 162–70.
- Johns, Jackie, and Cheryl Bridges Johns. "Yielding to the Spirit: A Pentecostal Approach to Group Bible Study." Pages 33–56 in *Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Reader*. Edited by Lee Roy Martin. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Johnston, Robert K., ed. *The Use of the Bible in Theology: Evangelical Options*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1985.
- Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. "Authority, Revelation, and Interpretation in the Roman Catholic–Pentecostal Dialogue." *Pneuma* 21, no. 1 (1999): 89–114.
- Keener, Craig. "Refining *Spirit Hermeneutics*." *Pneuma* 39 (2017): 198–240.
- . *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016.
- Leithart, Peter. *Deep Exegesis: The Mystery of Reading Scripture*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009.
- Lewis, C. S. "Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism." In *Christian Reflections*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967.
- Lincoln, Bruce. *Authority: Construction and Corrosion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- . "Conflict." Pages 55–69 in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*. Edited by M. C. Taylor. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- . *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual and Classification*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- . *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11*. 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

- . *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology and Scholarship*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- . “Theses on Method.” *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 17 (2005): 8–10.
- Longenecker, Richard. *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Lundin, Roger, Clarence Walhout, and Anthony C. Thiselton. *The Promise of Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Martin, Lee Roy, ed. *Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Reader*. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- McCall, Bradford. “A Contemporary Reappropriation of Baconian Common Sense Realism in Renewal Hermeneutics.” *Pneuma* 32 (2010): 223–240.
- McCaulley, Esau. *Reading the Bible While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020.
- McQuilken, J. Robertson. *Understanding and Applying the Bible: An Introduction to Hermeneutics*. Chicago: Moody, 1983.
- Menzies, Robert. “Jumping off the Postmodern Bandwagon.” *Pneuma* 16, no. 1 (1994): 115–120.
- Mickelsen, A. Berkeley. *Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- Noel, Bradley. “Gordon Fee and the Challenge to Pentecostal Hermeneutics: Thirty Years Later.” *Pneuma* 26, no. 1 (2004): 60–80.
- Oliverio, L. William, Jr. “Reading Craig Keener: On *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost*.” *Pneuma* 39 (2017): 126–127.
- . *Theological Hermeneutics in the Classical Pentecostal Tradition: A Typological Account*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- . “Theological Hermeneutics: Understanding the World in the Encounter with God.” Pages 140–150 in *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*. Edited by Wolfgang Vondey. London: Routledge, 2020.
- Osborne, Grant. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991.
- Patte, Daniel. *Structural Exegesis for New Testament Critics*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1990.
- Penner, Hans. “Interpretation.” Pages 57–74 in *Guide to the Study of Religion*. Edited by Willi Braun and Russell McCutcheon. New York: Cassell, 2000.
- Petersen, Norman. *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978.
- Pinnock, Clark. “The Work of the Spirit in the Interpretation of Holy Scripture from the Perspective of a Charismatic Biblical Theologian.” Pages 233–248 in *Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Reader*. Edited by Lee Roy Martin. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

- Poirier, John. "Conceptual Possibilities and Nonpossibilities for the Nature of Meaning: A Response to Scott Ellington on 'Hearing and Speaking.'" *Pneuma* 42 (2020): 220–232.
- Porter, Stanley. "A Single Horizon Hermeneutics: A Proposal for Interpretive Identification." *McMaster Journal of Theology and Ministry* 13 (2011–2012): 45–66.
- Porter, Stanley, and Beth M. Stovell, eds. *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012.
- Porter, Stanley, and Jason C. Robinson. *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpretive Theory*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.
- Ramm, Bernard, et al. *Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics*. 3rd rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976.
- Robbins, Vernon. *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1996.
- . *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, vol. 1. Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity 1. Blandford Forum, UK: Deo, 2009.
- . "Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation." Pages 192–219 in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament*. Edited by David Aune. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Rohrbaugh, Richard, ed. *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.
- Schüssler Fiorenza, Elisabeth. *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation*. Boston: Beacon, 1992.
- Segraves, Daniel. *You Can Understand the Bible: Guidelines for Interpreting Scripture*. N.P., 1998.
- Sheppard, Gerald. "Biblical Interpretation after Gadamer." *Pneuma* 16, no. 1 (1994): 121–141.
- Smith, Jonathan Z. *Map Is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions*. Leiden: Brill, 1978.
- Spawn, Kevin, and Archie Wright, eds. *Spirit and Scripture: Exploring a Pneumatic Hermeneutic*. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012.
- Spencer, F. Scott. "The Literary/Postmodern View." Pages 48–69 in *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Beth M. Stovell. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012.
- Sproul, R. C. *Knowing Scripture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1977.
- Stein, Robert. *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible: Playing by the Rules*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.
- Stott, John R. W. *Culture and the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979.

- Stronstad, Roger. "Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Review of Gordon D. Fee, *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics*." *Pneuma* 15, no. 2 (1993): 215–222.
- . "Pentecostalism, Experiential Presuppositions and Hermeneutics." Paper presented at the twentieth annual meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, Dallas, 8–10 November 1990.
- Tate, W. Randolph. *Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.
- Thiselton, Anthony. "Communicative Action and Promise in Interdisciplinary, Biblical, and Theological Hermeneutics." Pages 133–239 in Roger Lundin, Clarence Walhout, and Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Promise of Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- . *Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- . *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with Special Reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.
- Thomas, John Christopher. "Women, Pentecostalism, and the Bible: An Experiment in Pentecostal Hermeneutics." Pages 81–108 in *Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Reader*. Edited by Lee Roy Martin. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin. *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.
- Vatz, Richard. "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 6 (1973): 154–161.
- Virkler, Henry. *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.
- Vorster, J. N. "Rhetorical Criticism." Chapter 13 in *Focusing on the Message: New Testament Hermeneutics, Exegesis and Methods*. Edited by A. B. du Toit. Pretoria, SA: Protea, 2009.
- . "Toward an Interactional Model for the Analysis of Letters." *Neotestamentica* 24, no. 1 (1990): 107–130.
- Wallace, Daniel. "Greek Grammar and the Personality of the Holy Spirit." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 13, no. 1 (2003): 97–125.
- Wallace, Ronald. *On the Interpretation and Use of the Bible: With Reflections on Experience*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Westphal, Merold. "The Philosophical/Theological View." Pages 70–88 in *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012.
- Wright, J. Stafford. *Interpreting the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1955.
- Yong, Amos. *The Hermeneutical Spirit: Theological Interpretation and Scriptural Imagination for the 21st Century*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017.
- . *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002.