

Grey, Jacqueline, and Paul Lewis. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation: Participating in God's Story of Redemption*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 2024). 224 pp. \$34.68 paperback.

The dependency on objectivity in modern hermeneutics has contributed to impersonal readings of Scripture. The biblical text is primarily read as an instructional manual to mine propositions for personal improvement rather than a transformational encounter with the Divine. Such readings of the scripture push experience to the periphery of the interpretive process. In their book titled: *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, Jacqueline Grey and Paul Lewis advocate for a reading of scripture that frames the hermeneutical tasks of exegesis and application within an experiential context. Erecting a hermeneutical model whereby the scientific and artistic poles of the interpretive process are mutually informing serves as the central objective of the text. While the broad ecumenical appeal of the text is evident, positioning biblical interpretation within the context of experience, the authors provide an interpretive model congruent with the ethos of the modern Global Pentecostal movement.

The acronym PERSONAL is employed to illustrate the key activities to be pursued within a reading of scripture that sanctions the role of experience in the interpretive process. Prayer serves as a prelude to the reading of scripture. Dedicating the interpretative process in prayer positions the Spirit to parlay the knowledge generated from study into a transformational encounter with Christ. To avoid tethering the meaning of the biblical text uncritically to one's personal experience, the authors propose that the student Evaluate him/herself. Taking stock of the distance between the world of the text and the modern world ensures that students do not import his/her experience onto the text; experiences which may be foreign to the original audience. Having laid the foundation through prayer and evaluation, the students are prepared to directly engage the biblical text as they Read in context. Seek Meaning, Observe, and Note provide opportunities to examine the biblical text critically while the tasks Apply and Live and Share provide opportunities for constructing application. The acronym is a very practical expression of complex hermeneutical principles, suggesting the authors are well-informed in the discipline of hermeneutics while simultaneously displaying the unique ability to simplify what is often tedious and complex.

Chapters two through five, which serve as the first major division of the text, address the primary sources from which to excavate meaning from the biblical text. The historical development of the canon and the theological affirmations within the scriptures are appealed to in chapter two as the basis to assert that biblical text is both inspired and authoritative. Resisting the ahistorical impulses embedded within modern culture, the authors argue persuasively in chapter three for the role of tradition as an interpretative tool in the hermeneutical process. Chapter four appeals to the role of the Spirit, who provides the bridge between the meaning and the significance of the text. The final chapter of the first division acknowledges the role of the interpreter's preunderstanding as a means to engage the

appropriate exercise of human agency in the hermeneutical process. While some obvious deviations can be detected, those familiar with the Wesleyan quadrilateral will observe numerous similarities. The broadening of the sources of authority beyond what is acknowledged by traditional Evangelicalism secures a position for embodied and affective sensibilities in the hermeneutical process.

The second of the three sections outlines a framework for experiential readings of the scripture. The appeal in chapter six to the grand narrative of scripture shifts the experiential filter from personal experience to experiencing the redemptive grace of Christ narrated throughout the biblical text. Chapter seven provides instruction for relocating the telos of reading biblical narratives from an objective and descriptive schematic toward a more participatory and prescriptive mode of engaging the narratives of scripture. Chapter eight recounts from the Old and New Testaments the conventional nature of God with an emphasis on Christ as the fulfillment of Mosaic Law. Chapters nine through eleven provide instruction for reading three additional common genres of the biblical text experientially; Poetry (chapter nine), Prophecy (chapter ten), and Epistles (chapter eleven). The author's ability to engage in exegetical tasks through an experiential filter displays one of the strengths of the text.

The climax and final division of the text provides instructions for the integration of scripture reading with one's lived reality. Chapter twelve promotes the value of devotional reading utilizing the ancient scripture reading method of *Lectio Divinia*. The aim of chapter thirteen is to provide recommendations for integrating the intended meaning of the biblical text with the lived reality of the reader. Chapter fourteen challenges the reader to discern the work of the Spirit outside the reader's native culture. Chapter fifteen serves as a fitting conclusion by admonishing the readers to view the reading of scripture as a means of participating in the redemptive story of God.

Despite the exponential growth of modern Pentecostalism, the publication of introductory texts about biblical interpretation that are congruent with the ethos of Global Pentecostalism is limited. Thus, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* by Jacqueline Grey and Paul Lewis serves to fill a growing need by providing an option for pursuing biblical interpretation that is more congruent with the ethos shared by Spirit-Filled communities around the globe. The content presented displays the author's affinity towards the embodied and affective sensibilities of Pentecostal Spirituality, making it a terrific choice for undergraduate work for Professors who teach in an academic environment with an affinity towards Pentecostal/Charismatic worldview. Yet, the authors display the ability to simplify the often complex and technical language that accompanies the field of biblical interpretation ensuring the text will have broad ecumenical reach. Such an integration of devotional and critical readings of scriptures, which has been rarely accomplished since the rise of the modern university, can serve as a model for future publications in closing the gap between the academy and the church.

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