

Week #1 Assignment

1. What is higher criticism? What is its role in understanding the Bible? Explain its negative characteristics.

My interpretation of higher criticism is looking at the bible from a worldly viewpoint. It is literally the investigation of the word deeply. As described in the Biblical criticism article, the application of who, what, when, where and how, helps unearth the deeper meaning behind the text. Higher criticism allows us to understand the Bible by applying critical means to enhance understanding. It's easy to read a scripture and understand it at face value. However, by asking the question: who wrote the scripture, and or said what we are reading, where were they writing the scripture, what was going on around them at the time, allows us to connections with the scripture and the circumstance. The negative characteristics is that with Higher criticism can lead one to try and rationalize and understand a scripture so much that if we can't understand it then we don't believe it to be true. This is negative because we serve a wise God and scripture states we should not lead unto our own understanding but acknowledge God. In other words, somethings, we are just not meant to understand, however we must believe.

2. Who is Jean Astruc? What was his role in the development of higher criticism?

Jean Astruc by trade was a professor of medicine. He is known as being the first person to utilize textual analysis. His theory was that the book of Genesis had to be composed of several different manuscripts, and that Moses may not have been the only writer. (MLA: "**Jean Astruc.**" *Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 23 Aug. 2017, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Astruc. Accessed 26 Aug. 2017.*)

3. Who is Julius Wellhausen? What was his role in the development of higher criticism.?

Julius was a bible scholar. "He is known as being one of the developers of the documentary hypothesis." (MLA "**Julius Wellhausen.**" *Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 16 Aug. 2017, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Wellhausen. Accessed 26 Aug. 2017.*) This deeper investigation allows us to understand the origins and compositions of the Pentateuch. (MLA: "**Documentary hypothesis.**" *Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 11 Aug. 2017, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_hypothesis. Accessed 26 Aug. 2017.*)

4. Explain the tenets of JEDP hypothesis. What positive value, if any does it offer when interpreting the Old Testament? If no positive value, explain.

The JEDP “believes that the Pentateuch represents conflation of four different sources” rather than Moses being the sole writer. The positive role that I feel the Pentateuch plays is that it does theorize that Moses developed the core of the Pentateuch. (MLA: <http://www.theopedia.com/jedp-theory>)

5. How does the documentary hypothesis explain the names of God? What scripture is associated with each of his names in the old testament?

The documentary hypothesis explains the names of God as below:

“Jawist (or Yahwist, from Yahweh) - describes God as Yahweh, starting in Gen 2:4, it includes much of Genesis and parts of Exodus and Numbers. It is dated around 850 B.C.

Elohism (from Elohim) - primarily describes God as El or Elohim. Starting with Gen 15, it covers material similar to "J". It is dated around 750 B.C. (J and E are said to be difficult to distinguish).” (MLA: <http://www.theopedia.com/jedp-theory>)

6. What should we look for to determine if Christian books are influenced by vies of higher critics?

In my opinion, we should pay attention to the authors approach to the scripture. If it is that of reverence or judgement. We also should pay attention to how the author dissects the text for understanding. I don't think all forms of higher criticism is negative, however as I stated earlier, but the word should not be dissected to the point that it loses its meaning to the reader.