

NT 615 - 5-3-1 – *Kaiser & Silva, ch. 14*

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Questions:

1. What is the central issue when interpreting the cultural elements in the Bible?
2. Is all theology contextualization?
3. In ethnohermeneutics, what three horizons give a cross-cultural perspective in interpreting a text?
4. Was the cultural aspect of the biblical text meant to make it more difficult to interpret or to deceive us?
5. What are the three options in dealing with a cultural or historical side to a biblical text?

Answers:

1. At the center is the problem of distinguishing between that which is universal and of enduring authority and that which is cultural and therefore more related to illustrations of the principle being set forth for those times.
2. Yes, Stanley Gundry notes, “I wonder if we really recognize that all theology represents a contextualization, even our own theology?... Do we recognize that the versions of evangelical theology held by most people in this room are in fact North American, white, and male that they reflect and/or address those values and concerns?”
3. (1) first horizon: the culture of the Bible, (2) second horizon: the culture of the interpreter, and (3) third horizon: the culture of the receptor
4. No, they were meant to make the truth all the more accessible and part of each person in each succeeding era of history. It was intended to aid us in applying the text to our day as we saw vivid illustrations of how the principles in the text were applied in that day and culture.
5. (1) We may retain both the theology taught along with the cultural-historical expression of that principle. (2) We may retain the theology of a passage but replace the behavioral expression with some more recent but equally meaningful expression. (3) Some may even replace both the principle and the practice.

Terms:

1. Culture: designates the unique ways a given group of people view and do things in a particular period of time, including their values, manners, morals, expressions, and accomplishments.
2. Contextualization: the translation of the unchanging content of the gospel of the kingdom into verbal forms meaningful to the peoples in their separate cultures and within their particular existential situations
3. Condescension: to speak of the fact that the writers of Scriptures used one inexactitude or another in order to speak in such a way as to be understood by their hearers.

Summary:

With the cultural use in the bible, we must bridge the gap that recognizes a cross-cultural interpretation: the culture of the (1) Bible, (2) interpreter, and (3) receptor. The early church

fathers spoke of condescension, accommodation, or acculturation to address the cross-cultural interpretation and saw the cultural elements as making the principle more accessible and aiding an appropriate application to each context. Since all Scripture is profitable, we must apply each passage directly as stated or in an updated and meaningful principle or expression. When there is confusion, it is essential to remain humble before the Lord rather than try to be new and innovative.