

Week 1 Summary and Reflection

In both readings there are some things that they agree upon and some things that they don't. In Gordon Fee's book *How to Read the Bible*, he says that it is necessary to know the who, what, and why. Who is the audience, what was going on at the time to cause the writing, why was it necessary. He also stresses how geographical settings are important to understanding what was going on. He believes that context is important for accurate interpretation. He believes that every reader is an interpreter to some extent, but in order to fully comprehend we must be privy to both the original language and culture of that time, historical context is necessary for complete comprehension. He also stated that other tools that can be used to aid in the process of good exegesis are a good translation, a good Bible dictionary, and good commentaries. He states that good translators, therefore, take the problem of our language differences into consideration. He treats the Bible as sacred and feel that it should be dealt with as such. He basically says that we can not start with the here and now or we miss the original biblical intent of the text and misinterpret the message being conveyed. For him a system of hermeneutics and exegesis is necessary for full comprehension.

Then in Brettler's book *How to Read the Bible*, he speaks of viewing the Bible in a cryptic fashion. This caused inconsistencies in the Word of God, by changing the translation of one word, changed the complete meaning of the scripture. It also caused scriptures to contradict one another. This fashion was rejected by Jews and many Christians because God's word has to be uniformed and perfect. He speaks of how In a single sentence, Spinoza "deprivileges" the Bible. He renounces the traditional framework for biblical interpretation: The Bible is not cryptic. It no longer needs to be interpreted as a seamless whole. It is imperfect. In places it may be of historical interest only no longer relevant to contemporary believers. In most senses, it is a book like any other. Then he speaks of the historical-critical method. "Historical" refers to the view that the main context for interpretation is the place and time in which the text was composed. "Critical" simply means reading the text independently of religious norms or interpretive traditions as opposed to accepting them uncritically.

From this we can see how the two authors have two different views concerning the reading of the Bible. However, they do agree that historical context is necessary and it brings illumination and enrichment as to what was really taking place at the time. It brings the who, what, when and why to the forefront. He believes that the historical-critical method lets us appreciate the Bible as an interesting text that speaks in multiple voices on profound issues. Only with the help of the historical-critical method can these different voices be fully heard and appreciated.