

## Formational Hermeneutics

- What is formational hermeneutics?
- Concepts in hermeneutics
- Overview of the hermeneutical process
- What is spiritual reading?
- Informational and formational reading

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## Formational Hermeneutics

- Interpretation of Scripture for the purpose of transformation.
  - Exegesis and devotional reading often divorced.
  - Try to reintegrate them.
  - Consider the role of Scripture in personal and ministry formation.
- Focus on hermeneutical issues that relate to formation.

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## Formational Hermeneutics

- What role does Scripture play in your ministry setting?
- What are the opportunities and challenges of using the Bible formatonally in your context?

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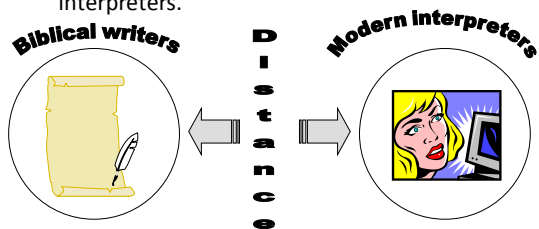
## Formational Hermeneutics

- How does Scripture form us?
  - The “big picture” of salvation history.
  - Interpretive framework for understanding ourselves.
  - Standard for Christian conduct, moral formation.
  - Foundational in ministerial education.
  - Principles for leadership and ministry.
  - A primary conduit for our relationship with God.
  - Shapes the way we think and feel.
  - Along with Spirit, forms us into image of Christ.
  - A means (or occasion) of grace.

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## Concepts in Hermeneutics

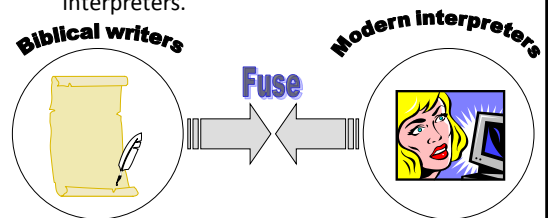
- Two horizons - difference in perspective between biblical writers and modern interpreters.



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## Concepts in Hermeneutics

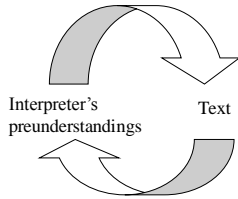
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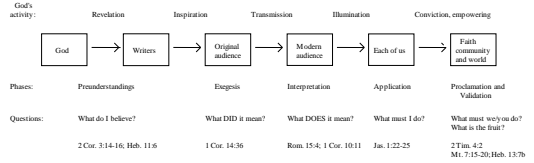
## Concepts in Hermeneutics

- Hermeneutical circle: Movement in which the interpreter's preunderstandings are reshaped by the text.



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## Overview of Hermeneutical Process

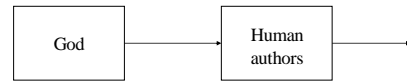


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First, God's activity in the process...

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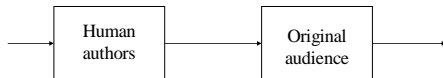
## Revelation



God's self-disclosure in creation, word, deed, incarnation.

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## Inspiration



The divine supervision of the writing of Scripture through the Holy Spirit's influence on the human authors.

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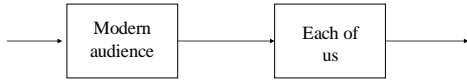
## Transmission



The collecting and copying of texts, the formation of the canon, the making of translations.

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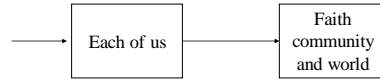
## Illumination



The work of the Holy Spirit which enables us to understand and apply God's revelation.

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## Conviction and Empowering



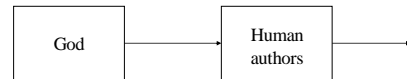
The Holy Spirit convicts the world of the truth of God's revelation and empowers believers for witness.

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Next, our corresponding activity in interpreting God's revelation in Scripture...

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## Preunderstandings

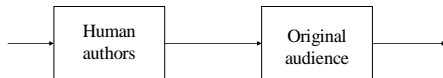


The set of assumptions, questions, and methods we bring to the biblical text.

Ask: What do I believe?

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## Exegesis



The careful study of Scripture to determine the meaning in its original historical context.

Ask: What did it mean?

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## Interpretation

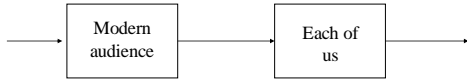


Moving from "then and there" to "here and now" (the modern context).

Ask: What does it mean?

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## Application

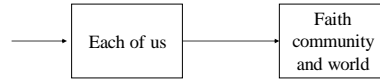


Personal response to the text; obedience.

Ask: What must I do?

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## Proclamation and Validation

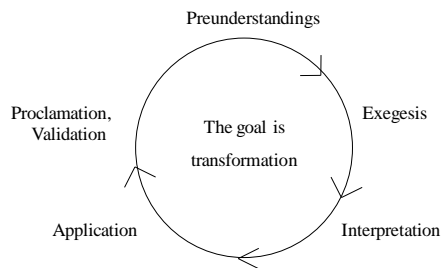


Witnessing in word and deed; sharing, living out, and testing interpretations.

Ask: What must we/you do? What is the fruit?

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## Hermeneutical Circle Again



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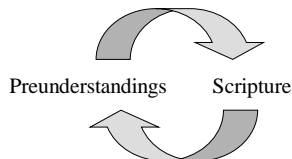
## What is Spiritual Reading?

- Devotional approach to Scripture in which the reader goes to the Bible for the purpose of being changed by it.
- Instead of our knowledge *about* God, it deals with our knowledge *of* God and our relationship *with* God.
- For the purpose of growing in our relationship with God.

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## What is Spiritual Reading?

- It's one form of the hermeneutical circle...



- But it's more than being open to the text; it's reading the Bible in order to grow in Christlikeness.

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## What is Spiritual Reading?

- Henry Nouwen: Spiritual reading is "letting the word descend from the mind into the heart."

Mind



Heart

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## Formational and Informational

- What is the difference between formational reading and informational reading?

<u>Informational</u>	<u>Formational</u>
Read a lot quickly	Read a little slowly
Analytical approach	Receptive approach
Functional; doing	Relational; being
Distance from the text	Personal involvement
Master the text	Text masters us

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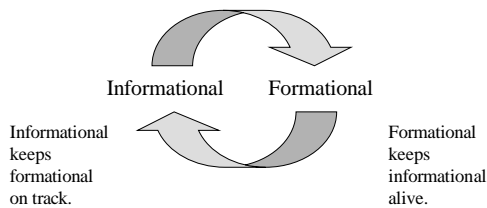
## Formational and Informational

- Does our own reading show these distinctions?
  - What do we read informationally?
  - What do we read formatively?
  - Which is easier or more difficult?
- What do you think of his categories?
- My caveats with Mulholland:
  - Too sharp a dichotomy.
  - Whatever we read forms us. See Rom. 12:1-2.

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## Formational and Informational

- How are informational and formational reading related to each other?



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## Formational and Informational

- Casey: study is the foundation of spiritual reading.
  - Study a book before reading it devotionally.
  - Be familiar with biblical theology.
  - Set the text in salvation history.
  - Study sets controls on spiritual meanings.
  - Lack of study may be a deterrent to long-term devotional reading.

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## Formational and Informational

- This split is relatively recent.
  - Developments in Western culture.
  - Most people would have heard the word.
  - People who did read would read slowly.

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Codex  
Sinaiticus,  
4th  
century.



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ΕΝΑΡΧΗ ΗΝ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ  
ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΗΝ  
ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ ΚΑΙ  
ΘΕΟΣ ΗΝ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ  
ΤΟΣΗΝ ΕΝΑΡΧΗ  
ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ ΠΑ  
ΤΕΡΑ ΔΙΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕ  
ΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ ΑΥΤΗ  
ΕΓΕΝΕ ΤΟ ΟΥΛΕΝ

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## Formational and Informational

- People would read aloud.
  - People would read uncritically.
  - People would read communally.
  - Goldingay (37): a real speech-act!
- Try to recover a more integrated experience.

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