

Class Objectives – After this class you will be able to:

- Recognize selected highlights from the history of contemporary NT scholarship.

Key Terms:

- Donation of Constantine
- Tübingen School / Ferdinand Christian Baur
- Hegelian dialectic
- Hauptbriefe
- Walter Bauer
- Charles Harold Dodd
- Eschatology

Thinking Through Our Task — History and Methodology of New Testament Theology

I. History of NT Theology:

A. Why bother studying history?

B. Movements and trends

1. Renaissance

2. Enlightenment

C. Selected keys to understanding contemporary NT study

1. Quest for the Historical Jesus

2. F. C. Baur — Peter vs. Paul

B. Literary Critical Methodologies:

7. **Narrative Criticism and Analysis** — the study of narrative passages from an essentially literary viewpoint (analyzing such things as plot, characters, themes, etc.)
8. **Discourse Analysis** — the study of large scale grammatical and semantic features within the text, paying attention to how Greek textual markers and devices convey meaning
9. **Rhetorical Criticism** — the study of rhetorical features of the text with the goal of determining how the author sought to persuade his audience to respond to his text
10. **Reader Response Criticism** — the close reading of the biblical text with the intent of drawing out how the text affects the reader
11. **Structural Criticism** — the study of the deep structures within the biblical text with the intent of showing the meaning inherent in these structures (meaning comes not from the words themselves as much as from the forms of expression)
12. **Post-structuralist Criticism (Deconstruction)** — this method displays how a text challenges, due to its inherent indeterminacy, our contemporary power structures. Gaps in the text are exposed and it is shown how these gaps are usually filled in by socially determined rules of acceptable interpretation. However, the gaps themselves are proven to lend to more radical understandings.
13. **Feminist Criticism** — the reading of the biblical text with a view to how it both challenges and adopts patriarchal models of the place of women in society
14. **Queer Theory** — the reading of the biblical text with a view to how it both challenges and adopts bipolar models of sexuality in society
15. **Intertextual Interpretations** — intertextuality approaches a biblical text by displaying its inherent lack of boundaries, calling for a reading of that text in conjunction with other texts (both biblical and non-biblical). Reading the text in combination with other texts de-centers one's pre-understanding of the biblical text and its function in society.

II. Task of NT Theology:**A. Two working goals**

1. To inductively synthesize the major theological themes in each NT author within their historical backdrop.
2. To further appreciate the organic unity of NT Theology in the midst of the diversity of its expression.

III. Questions for Consideration:

1. Why is it worth studying the history of interpretation (i.e. why is it worth knowing something about the history of NT scholarship)? Illustrate your response with examples pertinent to the study of the New Testament.