

Reflections on the right use of scriptures with a view to the love of god

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Often the paradigm for biblical interpretation seen to be offered in the New Testament is that of the early church's treatment of the Old Testament. However, there is another paradigm, namely the handling of the tradition which formed the basis for much of the New Testament, the tradition of Jesus' acts and sayings. The preaching, teaching and worship of the early church was the context for the use of this tradition, but especially the preaching. Thus what Paul says about his methodology of preaching in I Corinthians 2 offers a distinctive New Testament paradigm for the right use of Scripture.

The paradigm offered by preaching includes a concern for history. Paul's determination to "know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (2:2) is his expression of allegiance to the tradition of the historical Jesus, contrary to the Corinthians who in their emphasis on spirituality lost interest in history. In a sense, Paul's and the early church's concern for the tradition of Jesus and their evaluation and balancing of its legitimate elements may be viewed as the beginnings of historical criticism. However, there must be more than history. His preaching was "not in plausible words," i. e., in words that as mere words were persuasive; "but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (2:4), i. e. in words pointing to the realities they represent and mediating the action of God.

To paraphrase a title of an essay by Simone Weil, later to be quoted, this article hopes to accomplish some "Reflections on the Right Use of Scripture with a View to the Love of God," with a concern for the interpreter's responsibility to historical criticism, but beyond criticism, to the realities pointed to by Scripture, especially to the love (loving) of God. It is called "Reflections" because it does not treat interpretation comprehensively, but contains the concerns of the author as one who is responsible for teaching students an approach to the Bible which does not leave them with criticism and theories, but leads them to the loving of God and the living with God. Hopefully, it also reflects some of the current concerns for "spiritual formation" in theological education (1) and spiritual life in the church generally.

Historical criticism has found its place in most biblical study, in spite of the anxieties first created for the church in seeing its sacred text in a historical way and thus exposing it to historical judgment. (It was not always realized that previously the Bible was subjected to non-historical judgment.) Though there are still some circles which may reject historical criticism, most recognize that it is imperative if we are committed to truth and if we

are committed to communicate with modern man who raises historical questions. Moreover, it has become an important tool in making value judgments on what is to be taken seriously of the Bible's varied ideas and materials. The explosion of historical biblical knowledge since the 18th century supplies the modern student of the Bible with invaluable resources.

However, what satisfies the mind does not always satisfy the heart. To know all about the times and literary origin of the biblical materials does not answer the ultimate concern of the Christian: "But what does the Bible have to say me? I want to know not only what it meant, but what it means." Here one is confronted with the place of the Spirit in interpretation who interprets the realities of Script for us in our time. Karl Barth in his commentary on Romans in the early part of this century asserted historical criticism's limitations: "The historical-critical method of Biblical investigation has its rightful place: it is concerned with the preparation of the intelligence - and this can never be superfluous. But, were I driven to choose between it and the venerable doctrine of Inspiration, I should without hesitation adopt the latter, which has a broader, deeper, more important justification. The doctrine of Inspiration is concerned with the labor of apprehending, without which no technical equipment, however complete, is of any use whatever. Fortunately, I am not compelled to choose between the two. Nevertheless, my whole energy of interpreting has been expended in an endeavour to see through and beyond history into the spirit of the Bible, which is the Eternal Spirit (2)".

This Barthian concern has been renewed in our time by such as James Smart who excellently shows the way for a valid historical criticism to function as the medium for the theological content of Scripture, Walter Wink who calls for a new paradigm for biblical study, incorporating historical criticism, but moving beyond it to the social and psychological dimensions of the relationship between the text and interpreter, and Jacques Ellul (3).

The renewed awareness of the limitations of historical criticism today may be partially credited to dissatisfaction with objectivity as a method for getting at historical materials (Does one really know an ancient document by knowing information about it, or does knowing involve some other type of encounter?). But there is also a crisis of the times which asks the biblical scholars (and pastors) for something more relevant than historical information. As Barth's commentary was an answer to the failure of the 19th century human optimism, the tragedies of the first world war and the failure of liberal theology, so the societal, national and international turmoil of the last ten years call for a biblical study with a passionate relationship to life.

It is my experience that historical criticism has a two-fold function. It aids in understanding and in preventing misunderstanding. It only aids, because it does not guarantee understanding nor does it assure the prevention of misunderstanding. It is very difficult to understand a document unless one takes seriously what its author intended. Historical study aids this. Taking history seriously also calls one to maintain some personal distance from the text so that one's own feelings and ideas are not read into it and in this way helps to prevent misunderstanding.

However, the problem of understanding is more complex than merely

trying to understand the intent of the author. All through the history of Biblical interpretation there has been a conscious or subconscious concern for the "real matter" of Scripture, that which the biblical material intends to tell us about or that which we should take seriously. The clear implication is that what the material intends or what we should take seriously is not to be equated with all of the material, literally and historically understood. Even those who speak of the verbal inspiration of all Scripture have their own understanding of the "real matter" about which Scripture speaks. This has been variously seen as a doctrinal system, the person of Christ, the Word of God, Salvation-History, certain eschatological views, man's religious experience, ethics, human existence, etc. . . . To decide what this "content" or "real matter" is portends many difficulties because one stands in one's own subjectivities, making certain assumptions affected by both one's position in contemporary culture and one's present understanding of the Scriptural material.

To say that one could settle this problem in a final way by an appeal to Scripture is to ignore the variety of approaches to "content" taken by Scripture itself. One has only to contrast Matthew, Paul, and Revelation in their approach to Jesus as "content". Matthew has large collections of the sayings of Jesus because of the importance he places on them in his understanding of content. Jesus is the true Scribe in the tradition of Moses and Ezra to whom the Father has revealed all things (Matt. 11:25-30). He gives a new Law from a new mount (the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5-7). He comes not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it, and his disciples' righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 5:17-20). The sayings of Jesus then become commandments which his disciples are to teach to all nations (Matt. 28:19). Clearly the words of Jesus are revelation, i.e., content, and the significance of narrative or story recedes, becoming supportive of Jesus' authority.

Paul, though alluding a number of times to Jesus' sayings, seldom quotes them. I do not feel that this is because of ignorance, but because of a different approach. He does not even quote them extensively in the ethical sections of his Epistles. Understanding the Law to have come to an end in Christ, he does not intend a new legalism based on Jesus' sayings. For Paul, the Gospel as an embodiment of the "story" of Jesus, which expressed the Christian self-understanding, is central. His ethics are essentially derivative from this as it is reflected and dramatized in the Baptismal rite (see Col. 3). The logical connective "therefore" in Romans 12:1 also well expresses the Pauline understanding of the relationship of the Gospel (Chapters 1-11) and Christian ethics (Chapters 12-16).

In the book of Revelation both the sayings and the "story" of the historical Jesus recede in importance. The author's content comes to him as a revelation "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day" (Rev. 1-10). The resurrected Christ declares to the churches what he did not say historically, declaring the things to come, after the pattern of John 16:12-15. In visions and auditions he tells them "what must soon take place" (Rev. 22:6), calls them to repentance, exhorts them to perseverance. It is with regard to these "revelations" that John pronounces awful judgment upon anyone who adds or detracts.

This is enough to illustrate the way the nature of the biblical materials prevents us from arriving at a neat solution. Having said that, I would yet like to comment on my understanding of the "content" of the biblical material, realizing that I am affected by my own presuppositions and limitations.

Contrary to Matthew, Paul realizes the problem posed by trying to make content propositional. In 1 Cor. 13:8-12 Paul points out that our present human knowledge is partial, childlike, and will eventually pass away when in the endtime knowledge becomes complete. That human knowledge has these limitations should not be too disturbing, because God knows us fully even though we know him only in part. Man's life depends more on God's knowledge of him than his of God. This is reinforced as an important element in Paul's thought by his allusions to it in Gal. 4:9 and I Cor. 8:3. Not only does Paul's statement limit the possibilities of propositional knowledge, but it really seems to be speaking about a different kind of knowledge related to his emphasis on the Spirit in I Cor. 2. It speaks of inter-personal relationship and knowledge where two people exist in real relationship without the relationship necessarily involving much objective knowledge by one of the other. This is why love endures. Knowledge about changes but relationship with endures. Biblically, love as human relationship is seen as the greatest gift of God, made possible and defined by His establishment of relationship with man. It then endures because it is the primary thing that God is doing. Paul does not deal with the problem of relationship in I Cor. 12 merely because there are divisions in the church, but because relationship is the primary creation of God's Spirit. Man cannot claim his Spirit unless he recognizes relationship. This same Spirit which leads man to become aware of his relationship with God (to say Abba, Father, and become aware of sonship—Rom. 8:15, Gal. 4:6-7) also creates new human relationship. The point then is that both on the level of man's response to man and man's response to God emphasis is not on information but on relationship. Paul here stands in real continuity with Jesus who confronted men with God, not a new theology or a new Law, and taught them to address him and pray to him as Abba (Aramaic for "dear Father," "Daddy").

If these conclusions are legitimate, then the content of Scripture is God himself and relationship with him, and only secondarily information about him. The information about is instrumental to the relationship and not final in itself. The relationship between the preaching of the Gospel and the experience of the Spirit in Paul points this up. The Gospel is the witness to what God has done, it is the occasion for the exercise of his power, and the result is the Spirit: the experience of being in relationship with him and knowing that he is our Father (4). The text then can become the occasion for the matter with which we are ultimately concerned, but we cannot say we have really understood if we know only the text. The text aids in understanding. Also, the text aids in avoiding misunderstanding by placing limits on those words and ideas which lead to relationship with God. So does Paul argue for preserving the integrity of his understanding of the Gospel in Gal. 1 to keep the Galatians from the wrong understanding of God which would veil from them the nature of God's relationship with them.

If we continue the analogy of interpersonal relationship, it becomes

apparent that one cannot know another unless the other chooses to reveal himself. Interpersonal knowledge is revelation, disclosure. Certainly one may come to know something about the other person in an objective way by observation, but this is only knowledge about rather than knowledge of and relationship with that person. Thus knowledge of the content of the biblical text (God) comes not by wresting it from God, but by adequate familiarity with the instrument of disclosure (the text), sharpening our attention, and then waiting. The subject of the text comes to us when we are attentive, waiting and open.

In a collection of essays by the contemporary French mystic Simone Weil, entitled *Waiting for God*, there is an essay entitled "Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God." Her essential theme is that prayer consists of waiting and attention before God until God penetrates us, not we him. The application of this to the subject at hand should be apparent. Let me quote a few portions: "The key to a Christian conception of studies is the realization that prayer consists of attention. It is the orientation of all the attention of which the soul is capable toward God. The quality of the attention counts for much in the quality of the prayer. Warmth of heart cannot make up for it..."

Most often attention is confused with a kind of muscular effort. If one says to one's pupils: "Now you must pay attention", one sees them contracting their brows, holding their breath, stiffening their muscles. If after two minutes they are asked what they have been paying attention to, they cannot reply. They have been concentrating on nothing. They have not been paying attention. They have been contracting their muscles ...

Will power, the kind that, if need be, makes us set our teeth and endure suffering, is the principal weapon of the apprentice engaged in manual work. But, contrary to the usual belief, it has practically no place in study. The intelligence can only be led by desire. For there to be desire, there must be pleasure and joy in the work. The intelligence only grows and bears fruit in joy. The joy of learning is as indispensable in study as breathing is in running. Where it is lacking there are no real students, but only poor caricatures of apprentices who, at the end of their apprenticeship, will not even have a trade.

It is the part played by joy in our studies that makes of them a preparation for spiritual life, for desire directed toward God is the only power capable of raising the soul. Or rather, it is God alone who comes down and possesses the soul, but desire alone draws God down. He only comes to those who ask him to come; and he cannot refuse to come to those who implore him long, often, and ardently...

Attention consists of suspending our thought, leaving it detached, empty, and ready to be penetrated by the object; it means holding in our minds, within reach of this thought, but on a lower level and not in contact with it, the diverse knowledge we have acquired which we are forced to make use of. Our thought should be in relation to all particular and already formulated thoughts, as a man on a mountain who, as he looks forward, sees also below him, without actually looking at them, a great many forests and plains. Above all our thought should be empty, waiting, not seeking anything, but ready to receive in its naked truth the object that is to penetrate it ...

In every school exercise there is a special way of waiting upon truth, setting our hearts upon it, yet not allowing ourselves to go out in search of it. There is a way of giving our attention to the data of a problem in geometry without trying to find the solution or to the words of a Latin or Greek text without trying to arrive at the meaning, a way of waiting, when we are writing, for the right word to come of itself at the end of our pen, while we merely reject all inadequate words (5)."

In terms of New Testament teaching about the God who in Jesus has promised to be with us, who allows us to call him *Abba* and knows us better than we know him, the idea of waiting for God is not completely appropriate. Yet even though we assume that God stands continuously in relationship with us, there is also a sense in which he comes, breaking through into our awareness and bringing us some measure of understanding of himself. We cannot know him better by our effort, by setting our teeth or contracting our muscles. We can only try to be adequately attentive. We cannot know him by all our historical critical knowledge, but our historical knowledge becomes that which we see at the periphery of our vision while standing upon a mountain waiting for God to break through into our consciousness (to use Weil's image). Or one could say that it provides the environment within which understanding is aided and misunderstanding avoided (to use the language employed previously).

Thus far the "real matter" or content of Scripture has been defined in terms of God and relationship with him ("with a view to the love of God"). There is another element to this content which might be called "life-style." In a very real sense this also transcends the text or historical knowledge about the text. It transcends the text because life and ethics in much of the New Testament are seen as a gift or fruit of the Spirit, derivative from God's relationship with man, which the text only facilitates (e.g., Gal. 5:15-26). It also transcends the text because it is a life-style which existed apart from the text and may again exist in people's lives: it has a reality in man or woman all of its own, and the text can only bear witness to it. It is the coming into being of the new man and the dying of the old man. Thus Paul can say that it is not theory or knowledge that is decisive, "For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matters, but a new creation." (Gal. 6:15). The reality itself is what matters.

Because then the new reality which comes into being in man or woman in relationship with God transcends knowledge about it and the text, it cannot be understood primarily as an ethical philosophy or a series of ethical rules. In the New Testament we do encounter a Christian self-understanding, particularly as expressed in Baptismal practise (e.g., Col. 3), which helps the Christian approach ethical problems. There are also ethical guidelines given in the ethical sections of the New Testament epistles (such as Eph. 5-6, Col. 3-4, I Pet. 2-3). However, one can only fully understand by being open to the life-style God creates by his Spirit (in relationship with himself) and by venturing into these possibilities of new being. This would mean opening oneself to the possibilities of relationship with God, and new creation in one's life. Yet one could not do this in mere passivity, waiting for the new life-style to happen as a gift without participation. Life-style

implies something that only happens in the process of living, venturing and trying. What the life-style is becomes apparent in the process of living it. This is even true of relationship with God which biblically is not seen as some Greek abstraction from life; God is to be known as one lives with him and is obedient to him. Thus the knowing of the "content" of the biblical material is closely related to acting and living. Acting and living become revelatory experiences. As with the knowledge of God, so in life-style the text and historical understanding of it become the aid to understanding and the avoiding of misunderstanding. The text in relation to life-style would be the self-understanding of man (woman) in Christ (from which the early church derived much of its approach to ethics) and the ethical guidance which the New Testament contains. Some ethical guidance may be used as is, while other may have to be evaluated as an inadequate expression of the life God calls us to today, as Jesus did in some of his treatment of Old Testament ethics (e.g. Matthew 5:21-47) (6). But the important thing is not to remain with the rightness or wrongness of ethical advice addressed to a context different from ours, but to move beyond the words to the life-process, to the reality to which they in some sense bear witness.

Biblical interpretation must then embody the considerations expressed above. It must accept its historical responsibilities, but must not use these as an end in itself: rather as an instrument in encountering what the text is about. What the text is about is ultimately only to be known through the experience, life and action of the persons who read the text and are responsive to God. Historical-critical-intellectual attempts at understanding the Bible must be brought into dialectical relationship with Christian experience, life and action.

For the "Right Use of Scripture With A View To The Love Of God" we need then to be concerned about such matters as our practice of relationship with God (devotional life) and, our personal formation in terms of our life-style as Christians and our life-style as ministers, and teachers. We must "be" as well as speak and think and interpret. Our very "being" as Christians is part of the price of admission into an understanding of Scripture. Fortunately there is a wealth of new literature dealing with the practise of relationship with God (7), besides the whole tradition of Christian mystical and devotional literature.

Such a method does involve a great deal of subjectivity, which yet remains in tension with the objectivity of the text. The subjectivity or experiential side of the interpretive process must not be merely individualistic. Paul is clear in I Cor. 12 that all of the gifts of the Spirit are only possessed by the whole church. Thus the real wealth and variety of experience of God and the Christian life-style exist only in the whole church. This means not only that one needs a Christian fellowship in which to interpret, but also that one must be aware of and open to the insights that come from fellowships other than one's own.

Anmerkungen

- 1) Spiritual Formation has been developing in the United States as a concern in theological education since the 1960s, with the initiation of the Lilly Endowment Project for the Deepening of the Spiritual Life of the Seminary Faculty directed by Charles Whiston, an Episcopal priest, and the founding at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, of what has now become the Institute of Formative Spirituality by Adrian Van Kaam, a Dutch Spiritan priest. By the 1970s this concern was taken up in various ways by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada and additional centers for spirituality were founded. A large body of new literature is being produced. This Fall the first course on Spiritual Formation was taught at Moravian Seminary.
- 2) Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, transl. by Edwyn Hoskyns, Oxford U. Press, N. Y., 1933, p. 1.
- 3) James Smart, *The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church*, Westminster, Phila., 1970.
Walter Wink, *The Bible In Human Transformation*, Fortress, Phila., 1973.
Ronald Ray, "Jacques Ellul's Innocent Notes on Hermeneutics," *Interpretation*, July 1979, Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., pp. 268ff.
- 4) Galatians 3-4 is significant here. Being a son of Abraham, and therefore of God, is not viewed as something that is merely declared in the Gospel as effected in Christ. God did send his Son that we (both male and female) might receive adoption and, in the language of Baptism, put on Christ. However, the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, fulfilled in Christ, is the Spirit (3,14) and God's act in Christ is completed in the sending of "the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father'" (4,6). Thus the Gospel, speaking of relationship, is fulfilled in the Spirit's actualization of relationship.
- 5) Simone Weil, *Waiting for God*, Capricorn Books, N. Y., 1951, pp. 105-113.
- 6) It is important to note that much New Testament advice is contextually addressed. Paul's advice on marriage in I Cor. 7 is given in the context of a world coming to an end and a presupposed period of Tribulation preceding that end. One may find at least three different attitudes to the state in the New Testament (Rom. 13, I Peter 2 and Rev. 13), determined by the issues and necessities of historical context. Revelation and Paul represent different attitudes towards the Christians participation in Roman society (e.g., examine the matter of meat offered to idols which posed this issue in I Cor. 8-10 and Rev. 2:14, 2:20. In the latter it is equated with practicing immorality, i.e., unfaithfulness to God through "intercourse" with the culture).
- 7) Tilden Edward, *Spiritual Friend: Reclaiming the Gift of Spiritual Direction*, Paulist Press, 1980.
William Johnston, *Silent Music: The Science of Meditation*, Harper and Row, 1974.

Adrian Van Kaam, In Search of Spiritual Identity, Dimension Press, 1975.
 Adrian Van Kaam, The Dynamics of Spiritual Self-Direction, Dimension Press, 1976.
 Adrian Van Kaam, The Transcendent Self: The Formative Spirituality of Middle, Early and Later Life, Dimension Press, 1979.
 Morton Kelsey, The Other Side of Silence: A Guide to Christian Meditation, Paulist Press, 1976.
 Kenneth Leech, Soul Friend, The Practise of Christian Spirituality, Harper and Row, 1980.
 Gerald May, Pilgrimage Home: The Conduct of Contemplative Practice in Groups, Paulist Press, 1979.
 Susan Muto, A Practical Guide to Spiritual Reading, Dimension Press, 1976.
 Henri Nouwen, Reaching Out: Three Movements of the Spiritual Life, Doubleday, 1975.
 The Classics of Western Spirituality, a series being published by Paulist Press.

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

ERWÄGUNGEN ÜBER DEN RECHTEN GEBRAUCH DER HEILIGEN SCHRIFT IM HINBLICK AUF DIE GOTTESLIEBE

Unter diesem etwas umständlich erscheinenden Titel, der in Anlehnung an einen Aufsatz von Simone Weil gebildet ist, setzt sich der Verfasser mit der Frage der rechten Schriftauslegung auseinander. Die in der alttestamentlichen und neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft heute übliche Methode nennt sich "historisch-kritische" Methode, denn sie will nach bestimmten Kriterien den historischen Sachverhalt einer Aussage untersuchen. Auch Freeman bejaht diese Methode und hält sie für notwendig, weil sie die ursprüngliche Intention eines Textes verstehen hilft und davor bewahren kann, die eigene Meinung eines Lesers in den Text hineinzulesen. Dennoch möchte Freeman mit diesem Aufsatz über diese bislang übliche Methode der Schriftauslegung hinausgehen und beruft sich dafür nicht nur auf Karl Barth und seine Römerbriefauslegung, sondern auf den Apostel Paulus selbst. Paulus gebe in 1. Kor 2, 2 ein Beispiel seiner Auslegung der Jesusüberlieferung, die "in Geist und Kraft" geschieht, "also in Worten, die auf die Wirklichkeit, die sie beschreiben, hindeuten und Gottes Handeln vermitteln", so erläutert Freeman. Man frage heute nach einer Auslegung, die mehr als nur historische Information oder die ursprüngliche Absicht des Textes liefern kann. Eben deshalb habe auch Paulus nicht einfach Jesus Worte zitiert. Das Evangelium als eine Verkörperung der Geschichte Jesu bedeutet für ihn ein neues Selbstverständnis des Menschen. Es gehe Paulus um Erkenntnis in einem neuen Sinn. Freeman sagt: "Paulus spricht von interpersonaler Beziehung, von Erkenntnis, die dort entsteht, wo zwei

Menschen in wahrer Gemeinschaft miteinander leben, ohne daß diese Beziehung notwendigerweise viel objektive Erkenntnis des einen über den andern beinhaltet." Im Hinblick auf die Bibel bedeutet das: Der Inhalt der Schrift ist Gott und die Gemeinschaft mit ihm, nicht eine Information über Gott. Wir haben also die heilige Schrift erst dann verstanden, wenn wir wirklich bis zu diesem ihren wahren Inhalt vorgestoßen sind. Verstehen ist also mehr als Zur-Kennntnis-Nehmen eines Textes. Der Text kann Mißverständnisse ausschließen, er kann auch hinweisen auf den wahren Inhalt, die Gemeinschaft mit Gott. Aber wir bleiben darauf angewiesen, daß Gott selbst sich uns erschließt. Das läßt sich durch keine Methode erzwingen, sondern bedeutet: warten, aufmerksam auf Gott sein, mit seinen Worten vertraut werden. Um das zu verdeutlichen, zitiert Freeman den Aufsatz von Simone Weil: Betrachtungen über den rechten Gebrauch des Schulunterrichts und des Studiums im Hinblick auf die Gottesliebe (abgedruckt in: Das Unglück und die Gottesliebe. München 1953. 2. Aufl. 1961, S. 95-109).

Simone Weil erläutert den Unterschied zwischen körperlicher Handarbeit und geistigem Studium. Das erstere erfordert eine Willensanstrengung, das zweite im Gegenteil ein Loslassen der eigenen Gedanken, die Kunst des Warten-Könnens und Bereitseins. Hierin sieht Freeman einen wichtigen Hinweis für das Theologiestudium. Denn auch hier gelte es, daß wir Gott nicht durch unsere Anstrengung oder historisch-kritische Methode herbeizwingen können, sondern daß wahre Auslegung der Schrift ein Ausschauhalten nach Gott und seiner Gemeinschaft ist.

Schließlich zieht Freeman die Linien vom Schriftverständnis bis in den täglichen "Lebensstil" aus. "Man kann nur ganz verstehen, wenn man sich dem Lebensstil öffnet, den Gottes Geist bewirkt, und wenn man sich auf das Wagnis der neuen Lebensmöglichkeit einläßt". Das historische Verstehen eines Textes muß also ergänzt werden durch christliche Lebenserfahrung und Daseinsgestaltung. Gerade mit diesem zuletzt geäußerten Gedanken wird klar, worauf Freeman hinaus will: das rechte Verstehen der heiligen Schrift ist ein die ganze Existenz des Menschen einschließender Prozeß. Der Lebensvollzug des Christen ist nichts anderes als ein Teil der Schriftauslegung.