

"Classical Hermeneutics and Its Relation to
Imparting the Word to People of the Black
Experience in America"

A Controversial Issue Presented in
a Paper to be Defended in a Public
Disputation for the degree of

Master of Religious Education

Elected by

William Mason

December 10, 1969

New York Theological Seminary

PREFACE

The purpose of this paper is liberation - liberation into new areas of inquiry and endeavor. Any presentation in an academic community must be geared to liberation. Scholarship should be more than intellectual gymnastics. If the scholar is one who is concerned with the real and the true, then he must open new windows to the worlds of truth and reality and so spark the imagination and the creativity of his listeners to the point where the idea is so stimulating that people will want to do something about it.

This paper is dedicated to the black mother in America, unschooled, for the most part, but not unlearned; well-versed in Christian nurture; and to the black preacher in America, unschooled for the most part but not unlearned; well-versed in the essence of God's revelation; and finally to the faculty of New York Theological Seminary, who more than any other group of people have redeemed a black brother's faith in the American dream and the unlimited possibilities of God's action in man's world.

-b.m.

Hermeneutics and Its Relation to Imparting the Word to People of the Black Experience in America

Next to that of the "historical Jesus", the most consistently discussed problem in Protestant theology in past years has been the problem of hermeneutics.

Rene Marle in the Preface of an Introduction to Hermeneutics

Hermes was the divine messenger who announced, made known, and understood the thought of the gods. (He was also the god of cunning and trickery, and of theft;...). To Hermes was attributed the invention of those things which serve to communicate, especially language and writing.

Page 12, Introduction to Hermeneutics

The Task

The length of this paper demands that we speak directly and succinctly to the subject before us. And if we are not able to achieve this task in twelve or so doubled-space pages, then we pledge ourselves to writing another paper at some future date.

What we must attempt to do here is to take a brief look at the area of hermeneutics and relate it to imparting the Word of God to people of the black experience in America. In the process, there are a few basic assumptions: (1) Hermeneutics, the area of study which deals with the "principles of interpretation and of thinking thru the problem of how to understand the phenomenon of the past" has significance to imparting the Word of God to people of the black experience in America. (2) The black experience in America has significance for the study of hermeneutics, and (3) Imparting the Word to black people in America is the cornerstone of their Christian education.

The Classical Background

What is hermeneutics? The word comes from a Greek word "hermeneuein" meaning "translation" or "interpretation". The word is derived from the name of the Greek god, Hermes. Sometimes we use the word synonymously with the word "exegesis" which has to do with the meaning of a particular text. But hermeneutics has come to apply more to the study of laws and principles of interpretation in general. Some of the rules that have been

2.

common to interpreters are: (1) the methods of investigation used in the study of biblical literature are not different from those applied to other kinds of literature. (2) the biblical books are historically conditioned, a fact that calls for knowledge of historical background on the part of the interpreter. (3) due consideration must be given to the literary form of a document. (4) the goal sought is the meaning intended by the original author. (5) an author should be interpreted in terms of consistency of meaning. (6) words used by an author should be interpreted in terms of their meaning for that period of history. (7) matters of authorship, date of writing, and to whom the document was written, all have their bearing on the interpretation of a document. (1)

Hermeneutics concerns itself with the doctrine of interpretation; not the method as such, but methodology.

In recent years there has emerged a renewed interest in hermeneutics. Philosophers of history such as R.G. Collingwood (1889)-(1943) and Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), have greatly influenced biblical interpretation. The conclusion of Collingwood is that "the historian has access to the past only by way of its present existence in himself and his contemporaries". (2) Dilthey saw a new approach to history by which the inner reality of men's lives where history is made would be disclosed. In connection with this line of thinking, many questions have been raised: Are not all historical events embedded within a complex historical setting? Is an historical event purely objective? What is the relation between the subject under investigation and the interpreter? Can the past really be transported into the present? What is the relationship of meaning to a historical event? The question seems to be how to relate biblical proclamation to each succeeding age and how to close the gap between ancient mythological world-view and that of the modern world. (3) This is a problem of communication and it is asking how do we creatively and honestly bridge the gap between the ancient

3.

and the modern.

For the biblical historian, the study of hermeneutics presupposes a source, the Word of God as recorded in the Old Testament and the New Testament; and the Word of God presupposes revelation. The basic source is God as revealed in Scriptures.

For the early Christian church, the Bible was the Greek version of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint. Legend has it that it was translated by seventy-two Hebrew scholars whose results were completely in agreement. The translation, like the original Hebrew text, was regarded as verbally inspired by God. It was not until the second century that the Greek New Testament came to possess status equivalent to that of the Septuagint. However, the ideas of the Old Testament, though expressed in Greek, were not entirely in harmony with those of the New Testament or of early theology.

The experience of the children of Israel in the distant past, in nomadic or agricultural cultures, was different from the experience of Christians in the crowded, half-hellenized cities of the Roman Empire. The Christian, striving to express meaning of his faith, might have abandoned the Old Testament...had it not possessed a boundless veneration for the mysterious wisdom of the past, as well as methods of reinterpreting that wisdom and of making it comprehensible for his own times. (4)

In this achievement by the early church, the hermeneutical task of bridging the gap between ancient and the more modern has been accomplished.

We had two historical situations, one ancient and one modern, and the revelation of God was inherent in both. However, it remained the task of the more modern situation to bring forth men who could properly interpret the revelation of God that preceded them.

What were the roots and character of the methods of interpretation that run thru ancient and the more modern historical situation? Some of the methods of interpretation were traditional in the Judaism out of which Christianity arose; others were gifts of the Hellenistic schools; and others were standards of interpretation developed within the church itself.

4.

The reinterpretation of cardinal events of religious history can be traced within the Old Testament. "Along with a progressive revelation went a progressive interpretation, especially in the writings of the prophets. (4) In turn, the prophets were reinterpreted in the works of the apocalyptic writers of Judaism. The Bible of the earliest church was not the Old Testament as we view it in the light of historical research, but the Old Testament explained by apocalyptic interpretation." (5) The early Christians did not understand the Bible from the texts alone, but from the mass of legends and legal decisions which had gathered about it in the previous two or three centuries. Under the heading "Haggada" was classified all the nonlegal interpretations of Scriptures. (6) Under the heading "Halakah" were interpretations by which the Scriptures could be made to govern every detail of Jewish civil and religious life. (7) Both types of exegesis are found in the early church. Both are based on the literal meaning of a text, usually taken out of context, but never contradicted. For in Jewish eyes the whole Bible was verbally inspired by God. There could be no question of contradiction or error. However, Jews who lived outside Palestine had a tendency to make the Bible say what their neighbors said. They relied on Greek philosophy and wanted to enjoy a synthesis between philosophy and religion. In Hellenistic Alexandria, the modernist of ancient Judaism, Philo, and other intellectual leaders of the day, interpreted the Old Testament allegorically. The allegorical method probably owes its existence to Greek philosophy. It has very little rational justification, but it was highly popular in antiquity and was the first line of defense for the Old Testament within Christianity and Judaism.

Within the framework of such a short paper, why have we taken time to devote the foregoing paragraph to a look at the influence of Judaism and Greek thinking on interpretation? Simply because such information points to a problem that confronts us in all ages, namely, what do the times demand

5.

by way of interpretation? How are men viewing the Bible? What are the thoughts about revelation? Are there unique psychological and historical problems for those who have the responsibility for interpretation? No hermeneutical task can be separated from these basic questions.

Although we cannot catalogue the history of interpretation in such short space of time we can raise this question: In the light of their views about revelation, the Bible and the historical situation, how do you account for the biblical interpretations of Jesus, the early church fathers, the school of Alexandria, the literal, grammatical school of Antioch, Jerome and Augustine, the exegetes of the Middle Ages who were highly influenced by Gregory and Bede, the development of allegory, a more historical exegesis, tension between history and allegory, the Age of Scholasticism; the Reformation interpreters such as Martin Luther and John Calvin; and finally, the modern period which gave rise to biblical criticism (1650-1800), literary and historical achievements (1800-1925), and the biblical exegesis of the mid-century (1925-1950)? To answer this compound question would take many pages in many books. But this is precisely why we ask such a question.

It points out the complexity of the material with which we are dealing.

If we had to address ourselves to one of the above periods for a clearer view of hermeneutics it would be the modern period, 1650 to the present. J.D. Smart in his Interpretation of Scriptures states, "The great and abiding achievement of historical scholarship has been to discover and establish the human character of Scriptures."⁽⁸⁾ In this statement there is no mention of the scholar dealing with supra-historical aspects of history nor the divine character of the Scriptures. This is not what the historical scholar was after. The modern approach was a historical-critical one, assuming that hermeneutical principles remain constant in both profane or biblical texts. A statement from a paper by Erich Dinkler points up the problem:

At the beginning of our century it was commonly agreed that both the biblical and non-biblical texts are basically sources, that therefore in his studies and interpretation the student of the Bible must dismiss the fact that the Bible is canonical literature of the church. A student of the Bible must use the historical-critical approach, so as to make use of the philological, historical and psychological material. There is no such thing as a theological exegesis. There is exclusively a historical-critical exegesis....The goal is the reconstruction of the age out of which the texts came and to understand them in the same way and horizon as they were understood by the authors and readers of the past.... It is without any interest in what these texts may mean for us today, whether and where they may have significance for our present situation.... In other words: the question of actual truth contained in Biblical texts was dismissed and purposely subdued by the historical-critical exegesis. (9)

This very succinct summary of the historical-critical approach raises basic and serious assumptions:

1. These exegetes and historians did not have their own interest in the deeper truth contained in the facts; they were neutral observers of the material they studied.
2. They were entirely right demanding one method, the historical-critical, for all kinds of sources, whether religious or profane, whether Christian or non-Christian.
3. The historical exegete dismisses hypothetically the nature of our text as canon of the Church.
4. There is a two-fold meaning of the Bible: the one is historical-critical without theological meaning, the other is theologically important without basis in the historical situation and its facts.

There is a need to speak briefly to each of these assumptions.

Number One: The final goal of the Old Testament scholar was to write a history of Israelite and Jewish religion. In New Testament research the supreme achievement was to describe the variety of religious phenomena in the primitive church within the context of the religious beliefs and practices of the surrounding world. The biblical scholar counted himself a historian of religion and not a theologian. Karl Barth, the most prominent anti-historical-critical method figure, who disregarded all historical conditioning of the Bible as written by human beings, believed that the records of Scripture are more than merely records of Israelite, Jewish and Christian religions enabling us to reconstruct the religious life of these people during certain decisive periods in their history and that in the records

there is a deposit of a unique and final revelation of God thru which alone God can rightly be known and served today. If Barth's position is true, then the biblical scholar can no longer limit himself to historical description but has also to do the work of a theologian, interpreting the contents of the documents that he investigates. (10)

In other words, the very nature of the material would rule out complete individual objectivity. In addition to this, we are reminded by Dr. W.A. Irwin, a former president of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, that "All history writing is filtered through the prejudices and purposes of the historian.... Every scholar has presuppositions or a bias." (11)

Number Two: All that is true for interpretation of historical sources in general is also true for the interpretation of biblical texts and therefore required. We do not have the privilege of using or demanding a special theological or Christian method; nor does there exist a "Christian" method. The method a Christian scholar is using is the one historical method which was handed down to us since the Greeks established it, only here and there more defined. The biblical exegete is nothing else than a historian specialized in his historical field, which is defined by the books of our Bible....To dismiss these principles- as Karl Barth did...and quite a few modern allegorists and typologists, too - would be irresponsible towards the demands of sincerity. (12)

Number Three: "...the canon is the church's way of pointing to the sacred writings in which it has heard the voice of God and marking them off from all other writings, religious and secular alike, as the ones that are uniquely the means of God's self-revelation... A writing, therefore, would have to establish its own canonicity by the nature of its content, and its recognition by the congregation was an act of witness in which it embraced the writing as necessary to its life as the people of God...." (13)

Number Four: The exegetes of the "religionsgeschichtliche school"...often claimed that only one who is working without theological interest, who is interpreting the biblical texts as if he were an atheist, can lay bare the facts in a historical and critical manner....We must say here the very question and intention of the text is not taken up by the older method. The historian's question: how did it happen, what are the facts? was not corrected by the question the texts themselves were raising. Namely the question: how do you decide with regard to Jesus Christ, the proclaimed Son of God? How do you understand your own life before God and in midst of this world after having encountered the risen Christ, the living Lord of the Gospel? (14)

Historical and theological interpretation must be inseparable, each dependent upon the other. The dependence of the theological upon the historical is easiest to recognize." However, "the discernment of the theological significance of a text may throw

important new light upon the historical and literary problem. An illustration of this may be found in the exegesis of Isaiah 40 to 66. Until recently Old Testament scholars had little or no appreciation of the intense eschatological expectation of Second Isaiah...this was formerly dismissed as merely a poetic way of announcing the return of a number of Jewish exiles from Babylon to Jerusalem. But now we see how eagerly he awaited God's coming.... (15)

There are two problems that confront the biblical scholar: (1) the blind-alley situation into which the historical-critical exegesis leads *him* ~~us~~, and (2) the biblical scholar reading into the sources his theological confessionalism or denominational dogmatism and thus forcing answers to support his presupposed viewpoint. We must recognize "...the true scholar must be ready to correct or even reject his preliminary knowledge.... No hermeneutical principle can transform a poor historian into a good one as long as he is not open to self-corrections. Eisegesis instead of exegesis is not a specific theological or Christian disease." (16)

II

What bearing has the hermeneutical task as presented by the modernist had on Christian educators in general? Before we examine this relationship we should understand that hermeneutics is a word that may ~~be~~ dwell on its way to replacing the word "revelation" as a key concern in contemporary theology. With this in mind we can say that Christian educators have taken quite seriously the theological renaissance that was heralded in by the "rediscovery" of the doctrine of revelation and of the centrality of the Bible to the life of faith. The publication of Karl Balth's Commentary on Romans in 1918 may be singled out as a major event in this rediscovery. There has been much debate as to what occasioned this approach: perhaps a world at war, when a "liberal theology had almost run its course and was unable to meet the needs of disillusioned men." (17) But the factors are certainly more complexed. What is significant here is that once again Christians were reminded of the uniqueness of their faith "as being called forth by a sovereign God...." (18)

9.

The idea of revelation had declined in the wake of higher criticism of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Christianity, as a religion among religions, could be understood by the tools of human reason. This was the era that gave rise to modern religious education.

However, when the word "revelation" reappeared in the theological vocabulary, it had a different meaning. The doctrine of revelation is inextricably linked with the understanding of the Bible and its interpretation, and it has assumed a dominant role in the system of major theologians such as Barth, Tillich, and Bultmann. Much of the theological activity up thru the mid-twentieth century can be interpreted from the point of view of the concept of revelation.

In 1940, Harrison Elliott raised the question, "Can Religious Education Be Christian?" What he was asking is this: "If the church seeks to transmit a predetermined body of content, can this rightly be called education? Does not the word "education" by definition imply change, openness to new truth, growth?" (19) Lewis J. Sherril answered for many Christian educators in his book, The Gift of Power when he said that the fact of revelation is determinative not only for Christian education but for all the work of the church.

James Barr succinctly summarizes the feelings of Christian educators in the 1950's and 1960's in this passage:

No single principle is more powerful in the handling of the Bible today than the belief that history is the channel of divine revelation. Thus the formula "revelation through history" is taken to represent the center of biblical thinking, and interpretation of any biblical passage must be related to this historical revelation. (20)

Revelation is the main link between the Old Testament and the New Testament and it clearly marks biblical faith off from other religions. Revelation is dynamic, not static, and it is the activity of God who discloses himself to his people thru historical events. Biblical history is a revelatory medium as well as an area of analytical investigation and

10.

accumulation of knowledge about Judeo-Christian tradition. Biblical scholars and theologians lent themselves to this medium and opposing views were sharply differentiated. A polarization occurred: fundamentalism at one end, liberalism at the other. The rise of fundamentalism in 1908 with the series The Fundamentals, was a rejection of liberalism. Fundamentalism was a "Bible-centered" movement preserving much of the emphasis of the earlier Sunday School movement in England. (21)

What difference did the view of the Bible and of revelation make in the educator's task? Sara Little puts it this way:

For one thing, the educator has provided for him a structure for the biblical subject matter to be taught - a story of drama...linking the Testaments together and providing a framework for interpretation of particular parts. He has a perspective - that of moving thru facts and events to message, meaning, gospel, kerygma, to that which is of "ultimate significance. He has an objective - though a better word is hope-that in the movement thru and behind the words of the Bible, the student might be confronted by the Word, and supported by the community of God's people in his response to that Word, might join with them in their enterprise of 'faith-seeking understanding' and their mission of witness to the world in word and deed. (22)

The Christian educator must help his students appropriate the word of God and internalize it. "When, biblically, men were led to perceive that God was at work for their salvation, revelation was completed by the perception of the meaning of God's activity in their experience." (23) This statement is significant because what is really being said here is that long before God's people had the canonized word formalized they had to deal with a kind of "hermeneutics of experience", that is, an interpretation of God's word as passed on by oral tradition and as it was being formed within their living experience. The meaning of biblical revelation is translated into experience and learned there as experience is interpreted.

When we think of the reception of God's word, we also think of the hermeneutical question. Heinrich Ott, successor to Karl Barth, states that the nature of theology as a whole is hermeneutical and, indeed, that theology is really hermeneutic. (24) What he means by 'hermeneutic' has more to do

11.

with the act of understanding and interpreting the Bible than a technique or theory. Ott uses the philosophical categories of Heidegger where language is viewed as "the house of being", as the response to being's unveiling itself thru man's thinking.

Gerhard Ebeling and Ernst Fuchs, continuing Bultmann's concern for the problem of communication, place an equal emphasis on the function of words, of the "word-event". They are proponents of what is called the "new hermeneutic". In the new hermeneutic the accent falls upon the reality communicated in existential understanding. The word of God functioning hermeneutically...is identical with the true intention of the text. Theological hermeneutic is therefore identical with the word event, the happening of faith.⁽²⁵⁾ In the light of this deep concern about hermeneutics, it would appear that the Christian educator needs to be well on his way to investigating the relationship of hermeneutics to imparting the word.

III

We have finally arrived at a point where it now seems feasible to deal with the main issue of this paper: the relationship that hermeneutics has to imparting the word to people of the black experience in America. At the beginning of this paper we listed three basic assumptions. But there are also some hidden assumptions.

First, black people in America have been singled out for this discussion because they have suffered in a manner that has no parallel in history and they have suffered at the hands of people who were and still are in the process of their Christian education. Thus, for the black man, Christian education may very well be a moot question if it is exclusively identified with the Christian education of white people in America. Secondly, we are defining imparting the word as Christian education. Although "it is not the whole purpose of Christian education to teach the content and meaning of the Bible" (26), revelation and interpretation must be at the center of the Christian's

educational activity.

For the black Christian, revelation and interpretation has been at the center of his educational activity. But this did not begin as an educational endeavor rooted in intellectualism. The black man in slavery was in no position to deal with the intellectual aspects of hermeneutics, specifically, or of protestantism, in general. The Methodist and Baptist traditions which relied less on intellectualism, was more appealing to the black man. Does this imply that the early black church in America had no hermeneutical problem? Not at all. Biblical history is more than an area of analytical investigation. It is also a relevatory medium and as such it must deal with continuing patterns of human response to the revelation of God. Both the scholar and the unschooled believer are open to this response. There was and still is a black hermeneutic and it has great significance to the study of hermeneutics.

This leads us into assumption two: the black experience in America has significance for the study of hermeneutics. The black man was not ready to deal with the intellectual aspects of Christianity at the expense of having his dehumanizing condition justified by the white church. Neither was he able to deal with his existential condition in the light of the word that was imparted. The white man presented a liberating message to a people who he was systematically oppressing and dehumanizing. Certainly the black man was able to see that the white man's interpretation of the word did not lend itself to the black plight. Therefore, the black church, out of intellectual honesty and Christian imperative, presented a message that called for "Racial unity for freedom and equality". (27) Does the existential condition determine a people's hermeneutical and theological perspective? Not exclusively, If it did, we would be placing the existential condition above a God who acts in and thru history, and people who are responding positively to the word of God cannot do that. Their theology

13.

must be interwoven into their existential condition and their God must be big enough to reign supreme over all. This was the very theme of the Negro spirituals and black preaching: A God who was able. Thus, the black man, as well as the Israelite, had a hermeneutic and a theology rooted securely in their historical situation. What we are now saying is that classical hermeneutics as presented by the historical-critical school, does not speak to the condition of the black man in America as does the new hermeneutic. Man needs to respond to the word of God wherever it touches him and by doing so, he must try to understand what it is saying to his human condition. A formal style of hermeneutics is meaningless to an oppressed people unless that style allows for imparting the word in a manner where racial unity, equality and freedom cries out from each text. This is why Barth might well be considered a theologian for the black man. His approach came at a time when men were disillusioned by the emptiness of liberalism and the actuality of a world at war. Reason and objectivism had failed man as it had failed the black man who was untimely snatched from his beloved shores of Africa. For Barth revelation came down like a shooting star amidst God's people. For the black man, revelation also came that dramatically. The white man had transmitted to the black man a God who wanted the black man to stay in his place while on earth, but who would be delivered from all pain and sorrow "in the sweet by-and-by". Robbed of their father-figures, black people heard clearly those texts that dealt with the fatherhood of God. Oppressed by the plantation master, the black man heard and understood more sharply than other believers the higher cost of following the Master of the gospel stories. Although presented with the eschatological hope, they soon perceived the New Testament message that no man knows the hour of the Lord's coming, therefore, the believer had to gird himself for battle and righteous living in this world. The black condition cried out for a new hermeneutic, one in which the voice of God

could be heard speaking to the the oppressed and calling them to liberating actions. Could it be that the new hermeneutic of Ebeling and Fuchs is an extension of the black hermeneutic? For these men it is the sacred and profane "word" that give meaning to man's existence and makes it possible for man to grasp "the only one reality, and that is the reality of God manifest thru Christ in the reality of the world." (28) The black man, more than any other man, has been forcibly touched by the sacred and the profane word. The profane word dehumanized the black man; the sacred word restored his humanity thru his faith. According to Ebeling, our true humanity is realized only in faith. (29) This understanding was lost by the white racist Christian in America. It was rediscovered by the burdened black man who led us to the understanding that the hermeneutical problem is more than a reflection on theoretical principles or practical rules for interpreting a text. The new hermeneutic concerns all manifestations of reality and involves a total understanding of human existence and faith.

The third and final assumption is that imparting the word, and more specifically, preaching, has been the cornerstone of the Christian education of black people. There was a time when hermeneutics related more directly to the art of preaching, and it still does but not in the old-style, restricted manner. However, it is in preaching, the proclamation of God's word, the kerygma, that the hermeneutical perspective reaches its highest possibility because effective preaching ought to bring into focus the sacred and the profane word, and by so doing, men ought to be moved towards ~~a~~ greater liberation, meaning, and fulfillment. This is what preaching did for the black man, and it was not preaching based on a keen exegeting of Scripture. I refer you to Benjamin's May's, The Negro's God, for a close look at black preaching and praying. In the various passages cited you will see the black preacher dealing with the hermeneutical task in a manner that affirms his existence. It is significant that the same Germany that

15.

gave rise to many of the modern hermeneutical giants of the historical-critical school also gave rise to Nazism.

What does history say about imparting the word as the cornerstone of Christian education? Christian education patterns must reflect what God's people are hearing from his word. It has reflected this thru history. In the biblical period the Israelites could not possibly have interpreted God's word in the Post-exilic period as they had done in the Pre-exilic. The patristic, medieaval, reformation and modern periods of the seventeenth century thru the present each spoke to the hermeneutical task in its own way and gave direction to the mode of Christian education.

The black man, in his peculiar "Sitz in Leben", had to hear a God who could speak above the hyprocisy and shallowness of the white Christian master. May's speaks to this point when he says:

Unlike that of many people, the Negro's incredulity, frustration, agnosticism, and atheism do not develop as the results of the findings of modern science for from the observation that nature is cruel and indifferent; but primarily because in the social situation, he finds himself hampered and restricted. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Negro group has produced great preachers but few theologians. The Negro is not interested in fine theological or philosophical discussions about God. He is interested in a God who is able to help him bridge the chasm that exists between the actual and the ideal. (30)

Is this, in fact, the task of the Christian educator, black or white: helping God's children bridge the gap between the actual and the ideal; between the word and the deed?

It is the black preacher and the black mother, steeped in the true meaning of Christian nurture, who have been God's leading hermeneutical agents in America. What they have ^{said} ~~sayed~~ has been in the style of symbolic and poetic modes of thought. The validity of this style as a medium for God's revelation has been the work of form and literary critics. The black hermeneutical agent caught a glimpse of the new hermeneutic before it was academically formalized and in so doing, gave validity to the assumptions of this paper.

Notes

1. Hendricks, Christian Word Book, p. 137
2. Smart, The Interpretation of Scripture, p. 42
3. op. cit., p. 138
4. Interpreter's Bible, Vol. I, p. 106
5. ibid, p. 106
6. ibid, p. 106
7. ibid, p. 106
8. Smart, Interpretation of Scriptures, p. 15
9. Dinkler, "Principles of Biblical Interpretation", a paper delivered at the Young Theologians Conference, Yale Univ., Fall 1954, p. 1
10. op. cit., pp. 19, 20
11. op. cit., p. 20
12. Dinkler, "Principles of Biblical Interpretation", p. 4
13. op. cit., pp. 191, 192
14. Dinkler, "Principles of Biblical Interpretation", p. 5
15. Smart, Interpretation of Scriptures, p. 34
16. op. cit., p. 6
17. Little, "Revelation, the Bible and Christian Education" in An Introduction to Christian Education, p. 42
18. ibid., p. 42
19. ibid., p. 43
20. ibid., p. 44
21. ibid., p. 44
22. ibid., p. 45
23. ibid., p. 45
24. ibid., p. 48
25. ibid., p. 48
26. Cully, Imparting the Word, p. 3
27. Washington, Black Religion, p. 31
28. Marle, Introduction to Hermeneutics, p. 70
29. ibid., p. 71
30. Mays, The Negro's God, p. 245

Bibliography

- Baillie, John, The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought, N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1956
- Barret, C.K., The New Testament Background: Selected Documents, N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1956
- Cleage, Albert, The Black Messiah, N.Y.: Sheed and Ward, 1968
- Cone, James H., Black Theology and Black Power, N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1969
- Cully, Iris V., Imparting the Word, Phila.: The Westminster Press, 1963
- Dinkler, Erich, "Principles of Biblical Interpretation", A paper delivered at the Young Theologians' Conference, Yale Univ., Fall 1954
- Grant, R.M., McNeill, J.T., and Terrien, S., "History of the Interpretation of the Bible", The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. I, pp. 106-141
- Grimes, Hoard, "Theological Foundations for Christian Education", An Introduction to Christian Education, Marvin Taylor, ed., N.Y.: Abingdon Press, 1966, pp. 32-43
- Kaiser, O. and Kummel, W., Exegetical Method: A Student's Handbook, N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1963
- Kennedy, William Bean, "Christian Education Through History", An Introduction to Christian Education, Marvin Taylor, ed., N.Y.: Abingdon Press, 1966, pp. 21-31
- Little, Sara, "Revelation, the Bible and Christian Education", An Introduction to Christian Education, Marvin Taylor, ed., N.Y.: Abingdon Press, 1966, pp. 42-49
- Marle, Rene, Introduction to Hermeneutics, N.Y.: Herder and Herder, 1967
- Mays, Benjamin, The Negro's God, N.Y.: Atheneum, 1968
- Robinson, James M. and Cobb, John B. eds., The New Hermeneutic, Vol II of New Frontiers in Theology, N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1964
- Smart, James D., The Interpretation of Scripture, Phila.: Westminster Press, 1961
- Washington, Joseph R., Black Religion, Boston: Beacon Press, 1964
- The Politics of God, Boston: Beacon Press, 1967
- Hendricks, Sherrell, et. al., The Christian Word Book, Nashville: Graded Press, 1968