

The Holy Spirit--The Divine Exegete

How Are We Able To Hear Him?

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For many Christians nothing seems to be more esoteric than the work of the Holy Spirit in the understanding and communication of divine truth. While we give lip service to the Spirit, a common attitude is to take for granted his work in communicating truth. To give special attention to this matter threatens to untie a lot of our preconceptions and settled opinions which we hold toward him.

Now while we do not at this point suggest that we can discover all the answers and uncover all the nuances of his work, we do believe that there is much yet to learn about how the Spirit communicates and interprets truth to us. This paper seeks to take a fresh look at the more significant passages dealing with our question, considers recent contributions from the areas of literary theory and linguistics, and then deals with practical issues of subjectivity and control.

The Problem

Last year we wrote that when it comes to scholarly methods of interpreting the Bible, the Holy Spirit may as well be dead.¹ We reiterate these words again. For while we believe that the Holy Spirit is alive and active and we invite his participation, our method of interpretation has no concrete role for him. A cursory examination of several texts on hermeneutics, recent and aged, confirms this. This is true for two reasons. First, the grammatical-historical hermeneutic defined as discovering the intention of the human author worcovering torical hermeneutic treats the Bible just like any other book. Its divine authorship makes no difference in how we are to interpret it. By limiting our investigation of intention to that known by the human author, we believe that we have exhausted the meaning of the text. Second, the work of the Holy Spirit is usually confined to convincing us of the truth of what Scripture says and applying it to our lives. He does not help us to understand the meaning of the text (which even an unbeliever can do through the grammatical-historical hermeneutic), and he certainly does not lead us in finding deeper, spiritual or essential meaning that he placed there, unknown to the human author and not explicitly cited in the New Testament.

Let's consider more closely these two reasons why we have no concrete role for the Holy Spirit in biblical interpretation. We treat the Scripture as any other book because, in a sense, it is like any other book. It is great literature, probably the greatest literature with its manifold literary genre. A grammatical-historical approach commends the historically-based nature of our faith. God acted in our history and spoke our language. There must be common ground with the unbeliever to convince him of the truth. And if God is the God of everything, then he must make sense in our world. The incarnation is the ultimate demonstration of God accommodating himself to us.

We also find ourselves emotionally attached to the grammatical-historical method because it won out after a thousand-year struggle with methods that abused the text and detracted from its credibility. It fits our western scientific and modern world view embracing rational and empirical evidence. We find comfort in an approach that promises to explain Scripture's mystery, paradox, enigma, and just plain problems!

On the other hand, with the divine Author guiding people to write Scripture, it is unlike any other book. Can we ignore the implications of its supernaturality? Do human methods of interpretation reach the heart of God and his intention? To fail to acknowledge the Spirit as the Bible's source and interpreter will leave us perpetuating a different kind of imbalance that preceded the grammatical-historical method during the Middle Ages.

If we do acknowledge the Spirit's presence in the interpretation process, we usually limit him to the end of the method, applying the truth received from Scripture, rather than communicating truth directly to us throughout the process. We think that only apostles are promised special power to understand meaning. We reason that if the Bible is human history in human language, we shouldn't need the Spirit's help to understand meaning. Also, any new communication regarding meaning seems to challenge normativity and orthodoxy, opening the door for sects and heresy. We fear the subjectivity of his helping us to understand Scripture, including those very passages which touch upon his role in interpretation! We know all too well that some will claim a special revelation and insist that it is normative for all the church. Fearing the abuse of prophecy by date setting and novel, autonomous interpretations, we eschew it altogether and bury the greatest gift.

The Holy Spirit As Primary Exegete:

The Scriptural--Theological Imperative

Three Crucial Questions

What we believe the role of the Holy Spirit to be in interpretation depends largely on how we interpret several key Scripture passages. But how we interpret these passages is greatly influenced by the faith tradition we have known. Evangelical biblical interpretation is dominated by the heritage of the Reformation. In response to the Roman Catholic Church, the Reformation emphasized the perspicuity of Scripture, that the Bible is clear and plain in its meaning and can be understood by the everyday believer apart from the church (in contrast to mysterious, spiritual meanings which only church leaders could understand). In itself this is very good. However, along with it came a quashing of the place of the Holy Spirit in interpretation. He was denied a place in understanding/interpreting in order to keep in check the disagreeable sects who were claiming the leading of the Spirit.² The seduction of rationalism flowing from the Enlightenment has had a similar effect in more recent evangelical interpretation.³

Therefore the Spirit is confined to illumination, an illumination which only makes the reader willing to receive the message. There is a tendency toward considering his more spectacular gifts, such as prophecy, to have ceased. Yet we believe that if we take a careful look at the pertinent passages, we will see that the Holy Spirit helps us to understand truth, not just receive it, and that he has an ongoing ministry in revealing truth to us.

In this section we seek to answer three questions as we consider Scripture's witness to the Spirit's role as Exegete.

Our first question is: Does the Spirit aid us only in receiving the Word, to convict us to receive it? Or does he actually assist us in understanding it, giving us insight into it? The first alternative concerns our response, or the significance of a passage to us; the second concerns our understanding of the meaning.⁴ If the Spirit helps us only in receiving the truth, then an unbeliever can understand the meaning of Scripture as well as the believer; his only problem is that he will not yield his will to or welcome the interpretation.⁵ The second option permits the possibility of discovering a deeper, essential meaning due to the divine Author.

The second question is related to the first. Does the Holy Spirit continue to speak to us directly, or does he speak only mediately, through Scripture? The former concerns additional revelation; the latter limits the role of the Spirit to Scripture. Those who support the first option of immediate communication obviously believe that the Spirit also speaks mediately through Scripture. It is probable that the first option is the more popular, the second option the more scholarly.⁶

The third question flows from the second one. If the Spirit continues to speak today, does he still reveal new truth? Were the promises of the Spirit leading into new truth for the apostles only, or are they also for us today?

Our examination of some key texts to answer these questions will impact our understanding of the gifts of the Spirit for today, especially the gift of prophecy.

Paul: The Spirit Enables Understanding and Speaks Beyond the Text

1. 1 Corinthians 2:12-14. This is probably the most crucial passage for us to consider in understanding the place of the Spirit in interpretation. Here Paul deals with the relationship of the Holy Spirit to believers in general and to his own ministry in particular. He describes all believers as having the Spirit within (vv. 10-12), speaks of the ministry of himself and others (v. 13), and returns to all believers again (vv. 14-16).⁷ Verses 12-14 are crucial.

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. (13) This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truth in spiritual words. (14) The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

It is clear that both verses 12 and 14 refer to the Spirit's aid in understanding or interpreting the meaning.⁸ While the first half of v. 14 refers to significance, it does not seem possible to restrict the Spirit's

role only to helping people accept the message as true because the second half talks about understanding. So the first crucial question is answered thus: this passage supports the role of the Spirit in helping us to understand the spiritual message, not just receive it. He helps us first to understand and then to receive-- opening both our minds and our hearts, as Jesus did on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24). We gain the answer to the second crucial question from verse 13. Paul says that his and others' speaking is "not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words" (or, as the margin of the NIV reads: "interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual men").

The last words of the verse are especially difficult to understand. Different translations and commentators render them differently. We view them as expanding Paul's claim in the middle of the verse that he speaks words taught by the Spirit (v. 13b). He is saying (in v. 13c) that the things of the Spirit (the "things freely given us by God," v. 12) have to be explained or expressed by means of, or with, the words taught by the Spirit.⁹ Thus Paul in the very last words of the verse is simply saying that his interpreting or expressing the things of the Spirit has to be "in language appropriate to the message, not with human wisdom."¹⁰ A spiritual message has to be communicated by spiritual (although human) words from the Spirit. In other words, Paul adapts or accommodates his words to the subject.¹¹ Since the subject matter comes from the Spirit, his words to express it have to come from the Spirit.¹² This has significant implications for how we interpret Scripture. For any message, whether directly from the Spirit, or indirectly, such as through the written Word, must be expressed (and interpreted) by words taught by the Spirit.¹³ We will expand below how we do interpretation .

But to what does Paul refer? This is a crucial point. Many appeal to this verse to define the doctrine of illumination, that it is the Spirit's role to clarify the written text, that he does not reveal additional truth beyond it.¹⁴ Yet it is hard to substantiate this, as we are about to show. Others¹⁵ see inspiration of Scripture here and revelation in general. They affirm (as do we) a closed Canon, and ongoing revelation seems to threaten this. Yet this fear arises from the failure to distinguish what is normative (authoritative for all for all time, such as the Canon), and what isn't. Revelation from God is always authoritative but not necessarily normative.

It is crucial to note that Paul is dealing with his preaching ministry. The context does not deal with the written Word, but with the preaching¹⁶ of the gospel, the spoken word (1:17-22; 2:1-7, 13), and the message of wisdom which has been revealed by the Spirit (v. 10).¹⁷ It seems that this message may come by way of apostles, prophets, or any gifted person in the assembly, whether later inscripturated or not. So the passage deals with oral revelation (v. 10) and interpretation (vv. 11-16, although v. 13 is probably revelation again) through any gifted person, not just an apostle.¹⁸ This seems confirmed by 14:26 ("each one has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation") where again both ideas of revelation and interpretation by all believers are brought together in one verse. Although by extension of application we may find the significance of the verse to include the written text (for Paul also communicated the written Word by the same spiritual means), it is not the primary meaning.

In summary, we can affirm the following from verses 12-14 , if not more.¹⁹ (1) Paul and others received revelation from the Spirit directly. (2) Paul expressed this revelation in forms given by the Spirit. (3) Paul expects his readers to understand revelation by the Holy Spirit.

So with regard to the second crucial question, this passage (and others²⁰) supports the idea that the Spirit has an ongoing role of directly revealing (vv. 10, 13) and interpreting (vv. 11-16) truth to us, apart from the written text.²¹ This is in accord with the gift of prophecy exercised at Corinth, which gift Paul encourages, especially over tongues (11:1-16; 12:10; 13:8-9; 14:1-5--which point is also supported by the passages from John's writings discussed below).

2. 2 Corinthians 3-4. When we turn to 2 Corinthians we find that the minds of the Jews are veiled or made dull (3:14) and a veil covers their hearts (3:15). Only in Christ is the veil removed (3:12-18). In chapter four Paul asserts that the god of this world has blinded the mind of the unbeliever or natural person (4:4): he cannot see the light of the gospel. In contrast, the believer has had the light shine in his heart (4:6). This change has come about by the Spirit of the new covenant who conveys life (3:6) and freedom (3:17). The new covenant was inaugurated by Jesus just before His death, so all of us in the Body of Christ have this veil removed. This passage reinforces our view that the Spirit empowers believers to understand the meaning of Scripture, and not just convince them of its significance.²² The Spirit affects both mind and heart ; the two cannot be separated. The whole person is affected.

John: The Holy Spirit Teaches New Truth

As we consider the passages from John's writings, we see three views possible regarding their impact on interpretation or illumination. (1) They support the ongoing ministry of the Spirit to illumine and teach new truth to all Christians in the Church; (2) they support only such a ministry of the Spirit to the apostles, the writers of Scripture;²³ (3) they support both ideas. We believe that the last alternative is best.

1. John 14-17. As Jesus' last discourse to his apostles in the upper room before his crucifixion, it appears at first that this passage is addressed initially to the apostles alone. Yet clearly some of the discourse is also intended to be an ongoing promise to you and us in the Church. For example, in 17:20ff., Jesus prays also for those who will believe through the apostles' message, that all may be one as he is in the Father. This prayer for oneness gives future focus to his entire discourse (cf. 14:11, 20; 15:4-10; etc.). It may properly be argued that all of 17:20-26 includes future believers, such as us today. It is more certain that Jesus' expression that he "will continue to make known" the Father to them (v. 26) supports an ongoing witness of the Spirit in light of the context. There is also the Spirit's ongoing ministry of convicting the world (16:7-11).

What about the rest of the discourse? John 14:26 reads:

"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

The verse seems to refer only to the apostles, for Jesus had been with them (14:26). Only they could be reminded of previous teaching. Yet several teachings here (14:1-7; 15:1-17) parallel teaching elsewhere, including the work of the Spirit in leading believers into the Truth (1 Thess. 1:5; 2:13; Eph. 3:14-19).²⁴ The same verse (14:26) also promises that the Spirit will teach you all things. This goes beyond reminding and parallels the promise of 1 John 2:27 (see below) which refers to ongoing ministry. So while John 14:26 assures us today that the subsequent revelation through the apostles is historically and theologically trustworthy,²⁵ it does more. In light of the larger context of John's and Paul's writings, we may conclude that Jesus had us in mind in his words of John 14.

John 15:26-27 seems to parallel the apostles' witness with the future witness of the Spirit, which may go beyond that of the apostles':

"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me; (27) but you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."

While the witness of the Spirit may now include primarily the written word, the sense in John's writings speaks of his internal witness (cf. 1 Jn. 5:7-11).²⁶

In 16:13-14 Jesus says that the Spirit of truth will come:

"He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you."

This passage is basically parallel to that of chapter 14. The words describe the Spirit in the role of an exegete by "taking from what is mine and making it known" to you. This work then sets forth a model of what the human exegete does. It is without question that new truth is in view here, at least for the apostles. The promise of his guiding into all truth is not retrospective only (re. what Jesus has already said) but also prospective (leading them into new truth that expands or develops what they already know).²⁷ In part, it has come to pass. We know that Jesus communicated new or additional truth between his resurrection and ascension (e.g., see Acts 1:3-5). When we consider the Epistles, it is clear that new revelation is also communicated through the apostles, such as Paul (e.g., Gal. 1; 1 Cor. 1-2; etc.). In addition, as we have shown elsewhere, the New Testament quotation of the Old Testament conveys new truth not formerly revealed.²⁸ Finally, the gifts of prophecy (on occasion), tongues, revelation, messages of knowledge, etc., imply the revealing of new truth. The important question then becomes how normative this truth is for the whole Body.

2. 1 John 2:27. When we read John's first epistle, we are especially convinced that he teaches that the Spirit continues to reveal Truth to all believers. In 1 John 2:20, John affirms that his readers have the anointing of the Holy Spirit and all of them know the Truth.²⁹ Then he asserts even more in verse 27:

"As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit--just as it has taught you, remain in him."

Note that John says that all have this anointing (which is the Holy Spirit, and perhaps also the Word); that he continues to teach (present tense) about all things (parallel to Jn. 14:26;--not just reminds about former truth); and that the new teaching will be in accord with what he has already taught (past tense);

it cannot contradict former truth). Some assert that this promise is limited to remaining in Christ,³⁰ but clearly it concerns "all things" and the "truth" (vv. 20-21). And the words cannot be limited to subjective interpretation.³¹

In summary, while it is difficult to understand precisely what 1 John 2:27 means, it is clear what it does not mean. The promise is not limited to the apostles (note you); it is not limited to abiding (note all things); it is not limited to the past (note the present teaches); and it is not limited to Scripture or mediated revelation (his--the Spirit's--anointing teaches you).

None of these passages from Paul and John can be limited to illuminating the biblical text, for most of the New Testament was unwritten at the time of 1 and 2 Corinthians (AD. 55 and 57). If John's writing is the latest (near the end of the First Century), then much of the writing of the text has already been completed; but the promises in John 14 and 16 and especially 1 John seem to suggest that truth and teaching was yet to be revealed! In other words, according to the logic of some interpreters, we should have had 1 Corinthians written near the end of the first century (to refer to the biblical text or Canon) and John and 1 John written in the early fifties (to promise future teaching in the form of the Canon)! But this is contrary to the way it was, of course.

Should some interpreters suggest that with the closing of the Canon we can limit the interpretation of these passages to the written, biblical text, this would only prove our view of what they mean or teach. Since there is no mention in these passages of the written message, we would have to ascribe such an interpretation to the work of the Spirit to continue to illumine interpreters of his Church with additional insight or truth beyond the biblical text. So the Spirit speaks beyond Scripture.

Clearly the Holy Spirit is key to interpretation or hermeneutics. In practically every passage discussed above, where interpretation or revelation is dealt with, the Holy Spirit is the source and empowerer.

The Holy Spirit As Primary Exegete:

The Literary Imperative

From the standpoint of recent discussion of the meaning of meaning we have an additional imperative to give special place to the Holy Spirit in interpretation. We are concerned here with the idea of meaning in literature in general, and with the idea of meaning in Scripture which because of its dual authorship leads to a consideration of dual intention and deeper meaning. In Scripture, the divine Author may have intended meaning beyond what the human author knew, and only an approach to interpretation in which the Spirit is central is able to discover the total (including the additional, essential, or deeper) meaning.

Now the existence of deeper meaning is a debated issue. Some, such as Kaiser, argue that the human and divine intention are one and the same; there cannot be additional or deeper meaning intended by the Spirit of which the human author is unaware. Yet for several reasons the existence of deeper meaning arising from a divine intent that exceeded the human author's cannot be denied.

First, there is the phenomena of Scripture itself: later Scriptural writers and interpreters find meaning that goes beyond what the earlier author meant or intended. Jesus is perhaps the clearest example of this, and he encourages his disciples to follow him. This is the most strategic reason for evangelicals, for it involves the authority of Scripture. We have written at great length on this elsewhere,³² and a broad spectrum of interpreters past and present³³ acknowledge the deeper meaning of Scripture. Recently it has been extensively defended again.³⁴ So we will not expand on this reason in this study.

Second, the dual authorship of Scripture puts Scripture in a category by itself, allowing for a surface as well as a deeper meaning or intention. No other champion of single authorial intention than E. D. Hirsch himself has to admit that Scripture allows for dual intention. While other literature can have only one intention, he stipulates that it is important to "decide which author is the one being interpreted when we confront texts that have been spoken and respoken."³⁵ In an extended note (no. 37) Hirsch makes it clear that he is thinking of Scripture here. He rejects *sensus plenior* but then adds: ". . . and if the meaning is conceived of as going beyond even that, then we must have recourse to a divine Author speaking through the human one."³⁶ So while there is no sense beyond the author's, Scripture has two simultaneous authors, and the sense of the divine Author can be beyond that of the human author.³⁷

The third support for deeper meaning known to the Holy Spirit arises from

what some, including Hirsch, call intrinsic genre. Hirsch pointed out in his major work that the total meaning of a text included the contribution of the whole, the intrinsic genre. The meaning or sense of the whole context contributes to the meaning of the particular and cannot be avoided.³⁸ Now with regard to Scripture, which has a dual authorship, the only author to know the whole context, the whole context of the Canon yet to be written or already written, is the Holy Spirit. No human author could even conceive of the whole Canon, let alone intend the sense of the whole. Not even the last writer of Scripture was aware of the entire Canon. The meaning the Holy Spirit intended in this greater context contributes to the interpretation of any particular text or book. This immediately marks the view of those who identify the human intention as co-equal with the divine intention, thereby limiting the divine intention to the human intention,³⁹ as inadequate.

Now if these matters--Scripture's own practice, the dual authorship of Scripture, and the concept of intrinsic genre--support the existence of deeper meaning in Scripture derived from the Holy Spirit, then we are compelled to face the implications for interpretation. The interpreter's craft must be a Spirit-driven one. The only one fully capable of grasping the total meaning, including the deeper meaning he put into it, is the Spirit alone. We cannot escape the implications of supernaturalism that arise from the dual authorship of Scripture. The additional meaning the Holy Spirit intended demands that the Spirit be foremost in the interpretation process of getting meaning.

Equally compelling reasons for finding deeper meaning arise from linguistics, philosophy, and literary theory, including the concerns expressed in postmodernism. Studies in the meaning of meaning suggest that meaning cannot be limited to the intention of the original author. None other than Hirsch, a chief proponent of literal meaning, has found it necessary to modify his original position so that now meaning cannot be limited "to what was within an original event" but may "embrace many different future fulfillments."⁴⁰ For him different applications may be considered within the boundaries of meaning rather than significance, which was his earlier view.⁴¹ Even the provisional nature of language, he argues, suggests that meaning can tolerate a small revision in mental content and remain the same.⁴² Hirsch admits that all of these concessions constitute a great change for him.⁴³

M. Erickson and others have similarly criticized literal meaning. Erickson would erase the distinction between meaning and significance and have meaning encompass the original signification and the later significance (application). He would change "intention" to "affirmation" or "assertion" so that "affirmed meaning" would include both original and future persons and situations.⁴⁴ He faults literal meaning as limiting meaning to the referential and cognitive aspects, whereas communication also includes the affective and volitional which pertain to attitudes and changes in behavior. This takes on added importance when one considers that Scripture originally was heard not read; that is, one person read to the community (cf. Rev. 1:3).⁴⁵ Erickson also believes that God has more knowledge about the fulfillment of prophecy than the human prophet could know.⁴⁶ Other studies have sought to show that meaning is multidimensional involving the original signification, the canonical level of meaning allowing for a divine meaning, and the application.⁴⁷ Finally, Poythress has written that since God could foresee all applications of Scripture, all legitimate applications enter into his meaning at the outset of dual-authored Scripture.⁴⁸

In addition, we have argued that the concept of world view supports a deeper or essential meaning. If world view determines hermeneutics, and if the biblical world view affirms both an existential and an essential reality, we may find two levels of meaning when such a world view is applied to meaning or hermeneutics.⁴⁹ We expand on this below.

Finally, philosophical linguistics and literary theory contribute to our case for a deeper meaning in Scripture, which we link to the work of the Holy Spirit. In a recent work Glenn Galloway evaluates the efficacy of building evangelical theology on a dyadic approach to language rather than a triadic approach. Galloway begins by affirming that defining the linguistic sign is all-important to one's theory of meaning. He shows that the universality, authority, and inspiration of Scripture are all affected by one's linguistic approach.⁵⁰ He finds that the propositional approach to doing theology, especially as represented by Carl Henry, and to a lesser extent by Millard Erickson and Clark Pinnock, is lacking. It reflects the dyadic approach of the linguistics of Ferdinand Saussure whereby one assumes that she can go directly and rather mechanically from the idea or object or concept to the word or sign. A dyadic approach attempts to bridge the gap between the object and the sign by positing an identity: "the sign of the thing or object makes available the objective reality of the thing signified."⁵¹ In a triadic approach, as based in C. S. Peirce's analysis of semiotics and elaborated by Umberto Eco, there is the intermediate step of the interpretant in the mind of the writer who takes the idea received from God and interprets it as a sign. The interpretant mediates between the thought and the sign (word).

While this is stated with regard to linguistic theory in general, it has significant relevance to biblical inspiration and interpretation. In a triadic approach to the process of inspiration one goes from the object or idea to the conception of this in the mind of the writer; then from a range of words he formulates the sign or word to match the idea as he conceives it. The Holy Spirit is the guide, the exegete, to this proper conception to take place in the mind of the human author. The same process would apply to interpretation by subsequent readers. While this brings in a level of subjectivity, there are protections against too great a subjectivity.

Galloway observes that the propositionalist approach to doing theology, as predicated on a dyadic approach, a dualistic theory of knowledge, places too great an emphasis on the cognitive to the detriment of the experiential, communal dimensions of existence.⁵² This approach assumes an objectivity to propositions which makes them the first-order of truth. In actuality, propositions are only our best attempts at certainty. A triadic approach allows one to recognize that propositions are not infallible, but they are indubitable, second-order faith statements. They "provide the framework for continued reflection and are thereby considered true," but are subject to revision or rejection on the basis of future Christian interpretation and experience in the pursuit of truth.⁵³

Drawing on concerns expressed in postmodern philosophical linguistics and literary theory Galloway suggests that the "full meaning of Scripture depends as much on the process of illumination as it does on the inspiration process."⁵⁴ We need to give greater place to the Holy Spirit in interpretation so that his work begun in inspiration is completed. Biblical authority need not rest alone on the human author's intention, but also on God's, so that "the biblical texts are free to speak God's 'intention' beyond what could possibly have been intended by any human writer."⁵⁵

Facilitating the Hearing of the Spirit

The Spirit Bestows the Gift of Prophecy

We have answered the three major questions that we raised at the beginning. The Spirit helps us to understand the meaning of Scripture; he speaks to us directly, Spirit to spirit, as well as indirectly in the text; and he leads us into new truth. We have shown that Scripture and literary, linguistic, and philosophical theory supports the existence within Scripture of deeper meaning arising from the Holy Spirit. So our final question is: How are we able to hear the Spirit more clearly? How may we facilitate the hearing of his voice? We suggest two things: we can reconsider the function and place of the gift of prophecy; and we can make the Spirit central in our hermeneutics.

The ongoing ministry of the Spirit to speak directly does affect our view of spiritual gifts, especially that of prophecy.⁵⁶ We believe that all the gifts are operative in the Body, due to the very nature of the community of faith as an organic whole knowing no temporal or geographical boundaries.⁵⁷ As most important among the gifts, we need to reinvigorate prophecy and the prophetic office in our interpretation of Scripture and discovery of new truth. For the connection is this: the Spirit has come; it is by the Spirit that we receive and interpret revelation (Eph. 1:17-18; 1 Cor. 2:10ff.); and the renewal of prophecy is the sign of the coming of the Spirit. The prophetic gift pertains not just to foretelling but to proclaiming God's truth (forth telling). Indeed, this latter function is the predominant one, and the one ever present even if the other function is not.⁵⁸

In his message on the day of Pentecost, Peter affirms the universality of prophecy as he interprets Joel, who in turn had taken up Moses' desire stated to Joshua that all become prophets: "I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them" (Num. 11:25-29). Thus, it is not surprising that Peter says (Ac. 2:17-21):

"In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy'" (vv. 17-18).

Here the possession of the Spirit seems virtually equivalent to prophesying, just as the presence of the Spirit identified one as a prophet in Israel.⁵⁹ To have the Spirit by virtue of the New Covenant and to have God's law on our hearts and to know him (Heb. 8:10-11) means that prophecy has been revived.

Paul exalts the gift of prophecy and expects every believer to exercise it in some measure. A cursory overview of 1 Corinthians 11-15 supports this.⁶⁰ Even though there are extraordinary instances of prophecy,⁶¹ there can be little doubt that at least in its forth telling aspect all may exercise this gift. Paul

associates various ideas or manifestations with the gift of prophecy,⁶² including at least the following: understanding or interpretation, knowledge, edification, exhortation, and consolation (1 Cor. 14). He also elaborates it as knowing and understanding all mysteries and all knowledge (13:2).

In addition, it is appropriate that all believers fulfill the office of prophet, along with that of priest and king. It has been democratized for these last days. In summary, our prophetic office is based on our identity in Christ, the witness of Scripture, and the mandate of creation,⁶³ as well as our possession of the Spirit via the New Covenant.

So why are we making so much of the gift of prophecy in our study? If the paradigm of reality as a hermeneutic assumes that the biblical authors find an essential meaning,⁶⁴ and that we can follow their example, then it is vital that the gift of prophecy for interpretation and communication be within the reach, indeed the grasp, of every believer. In addition to finding essential meaning, prophets contextualize or particularize the message for their own day and interpret the times by the leading of the Spirit. Prophecy is also necessary for doing theology.⁶⁵

While some may possess this gift in special measure it is to be exercised by all just as the gift of faith or giving. We are to seek the gift of prophecy or discernment for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7). While gifts are given sovereignly, as the Spirit determines (1 Cor. 12:11, 18, 28), we are also to desire eagerly the greater gifts (12:31), especially prophecy (14:1, 5, 39), and pray for such gifts (14:13). Paul would have all believers prophesy (14:5, 12, 24, 29-32). The imperative for us today is that we should make concerted effort to pray for and seek the gift of prophecy, that we might interpret the voice of God afresh as he reveals his truth.

Understandably, this idea scares some people. They want things to be certain and under control, and they definitely don't want the truth to be corrupted, which is a valid concern. Such concern goes overboard, though, when it is the primary reason that we decide that these gifts cannot be for today. We are acting presumptuously when we quash the working of the Spirit in the interest of safeguarding the truth, as if he cannot take care of that himself as he works in the community in the exercise of his gifts.

Part of the ministry of the Spirit in protecting the truth from error is his gift of discernment.⁶⁶ As various people exercise the gift of prophecy, as described above, Scripture teaches that others in community, including other prophets (1 Cor. 14:32), should exercise discernment by comparing it with the truth, the faith already revealed (the principle of the analogy of faith: Rom. 12:6; so also 1 Thess. 5:20-21; 1 Jn. 2:27; 4:1-3).⁶⁷ In addition, Paul sets forth several rules for prophesying (1 Cor. 14:29-33).⁶⁸

The Spirit Must Be Central in a Biblical Hermeneutic

Our enlarged appreciation for the spiritual gifts, such as prophecy, which will facilitate our hearing the Spirit, must be accompanied by a hermeneutic which incorporates his active involvement and central place. So what goes into a biblical or spiritual hermeneutic? This is a crucial question, for to what we attribute the deeper or essential meaning of Scripture, as well as the literal, will demonstrate whether we are truly biblical. It is possible to assert that there is mystical or deeper or essential meaning alongside the literal, but if this is based on the findings of meaning in general or linguistic theory or philosophy, and is identified with what the human author intended, then our approach is still essentially secular and not sacred.⁶⁹ Even if we make a case for the spiritual preparation of the exegete, and his being led by the Spirit, this still does not make our method biblical.⁷⁰ It is here that much evangelical hermeneutics fails, we fear.

We have detected various ways by which interpreters affirm or explain deeper or essential meaning, including *sensus plenior*, Jewish exegetical methods (*midrash*, *pesher*, etc.), reader-response, canonical interpretation, and/or various theological motifs or centers such as covenant, promise, *Heilsgeschichte*, christology, kingdom, etc.⁷¹ Yet each of these fails to explain either why deeper meaning exists or how it came about--as well as fails to provide the means for us to practice the biblical approach.⁷² Each of these gives no special place to the Spirit.

So how do we make the Spirit central in interpretation? We need to define hermeneutics in such a way that we recognize that the Bible, while literature like any other, is also unique, being a divine-human product. Its supernatural nature means that hermeneutics must deliberately incorporate the Spirit in the practice of hermeneutics. In this sense we need a biblical or, better, spiritual or prophetic hermeneutic. A secular one will not do.

But it means more than this. It means that we must pursue and embrace the biblical world view of supernatural as well as temporal reality, the essential and the existential reality. It means that every thing

that is, including hermeneutics, exists within, and is to be interpreted or understood in light of, a biblical world view. Since hermeneutics is determined by world view, we do grave harm when we fail to practice a hermeneutic derived from a biblical world view. Allowing another world view, including our modern one with its emphasis in the West on rationalism, to determine the Church's hermeneutic has been the vice of the Church throughout its history. We cannot ever understand Scripture if we do not embrace the biblical world view where the unseen world of the Spirit is even more real than this earthly one. The biblical center of the Kingdom expresses this world view of reality and must control our hermeneutic.⁷³ We can practice this hermeneutic as we are empowered by the Spirit to do so.

Being committed to both the supernatural nature of the text and its world view means also that in our practice of interpretation our hearing the Spirit must be supernatural. That is, the Spirit's dominance in inscripturation must be matched by his dominance in interpretation. The dual authorship of Scripture must lead to the dual readership of it.

Let's expand this. When we reflect on the origination of Scripture which came about by a dual authorship, it is clear that it is the Holy Spirit who is predominant or supreme in the confluence of wills. While both the human author and the divine partake fully, the participation is not equal. The divine partner contributes much more. He originates Scripture. He is the active partner; the human is the passive partner. While we do not endorse a dictation theory of inscripturation, we think we must put greater emphasis on the divine author than is customary in our traditional approach to interpretation. God originated the thought, and also guided the choice of words made by the human author so that the final product reflects his will.

The witness of Scripture supports these observations. 2 Peter 1:20-21 puts the emphasis on the divine Author, describing the divine author as originator and active while the human author is described as passive, as "being carried along by the Holy Spirit" and as "speaking from God." In 2 Timothy 3:16 Scripture is described as "God breathed", not as "God and man breathed." The words of the person who communicates divine truth are "taught by the Holy Spirit," according to 1 Corinthians 2:13. Finally, the predominant way of citing earlier Scripture is to view it as God's word, not a human being's. This is exclusively so with Silas (Silvanus), or whoever the author to the Hebrews is.⁷⁴ Now this has implications for how we read Scripture as well.

We suggest that there is a direct parallel between the inspiration of Scripture and the interpretation of Scripture. We have tried to illustrate this in another study.⁷⁵ Even the words of 2 Peter 1:20 compel this comparison. For Peter tells us that the prophecy of Scripture did not come "about by the prophet's own interpretation." The Greek term *epilysis* can mean "release," "interpretation," etc. The idea is that the prophet not only gave a forecast of the future but more frequently read the past and present and interpreted their meaning for the present. And this we do whenever we speak the word for our contemporary generation: we read the past and present and interpret their meaning for the present. Verse 21 says that this process comes about by the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Should it not be so for us today, as it was so for the prophet of the biblical era, if the gift of prophecy is yet viable?⁷⁶ So we read Scripture and interpret its meaning for our present, and such a practice of interpretation parallels that of inscripturation, with the Holy Spirit predominant in this confluence of the divine and human.⁷⁷ Our hermeneutic, then, cannot take him for granted but must give him first place and center stage. This implies that somehow we must be practiced and deliberate in the art of listening to him communicate truth.

Now it is right here that another concern arises, namely the subjectivity of hearing the Spirit. Yet wonderfully the role of the Spirit has a double edge: he not only reveals truth (as the passages above show), but he reveals only truth--he will not teach in contradiction to what he has already taught in Scripture and elsewhere (as 1 John 2:27 affirms). He, not us, is the protector and preserver of truth. We need to be less characterized by a fear of heresy and subjectivity and more by an eager expectation of communion with the living Spirit (Rom. 8:15-27).

We have other, related corollaries (we choose this word over controls ⁷⁸) to the work of the Spirit to enable us to practice a biblical hermeneutic. The first is the proper role of the community.⁷⁹ We must allow the input of the rest of the Body, where the Spirit is revealing, maturing, and filling (Eph. 1:17-23; 3:16-19; 4:1-16; 5:18-21) to help discover and discern the truth. The Body is a living organism, and it is constantly growing in numbers and maturing in understanding. All believers, alive and dead, and everywhere, are part of this Body. We must bring every interpretation to the bar of this community. The Body as a whole may be blinded or unheeding of truth, or be immature, but the Body serves to discern truth. It is in community that truth is hammered out and put into practice. Tradition becomes part of our legacy. The great Church councils witness to this. A pressing need is to come to greater unity and the adoption of community identification.

Another corollary which will facilitate the hearing of the Spirit in a biblical hermeneutic is a theology of the Christian life which involves the whole person. In order for interpreters to hear the Spirit they must be spiritual. To accomplish this we need a synthesis of the Reformed model of sanctification and the mystical or contemplative model--a synthesis which embraces the objectivity of Scripture and the subjectivity of experience. This model will meet the needs of the total person, the cognitive as well as the effective and emotive.⁸⁰ This approach is anchored in the twin foci of love and truth, the relational and the cognitive, and flows from the nature of God himself as revealed in Jesus Christ. How this is worked out practically deserves our attention.⁸¹ Certainly it will mean that the spiritual disciplines, especially those of prayer, fasting, meditation, worship, guidance, along with study, will be an essential part of our spiritual formation. This model will open the door to a greater hearing of the Spirit as he interprets the Word and the world around us.

A final corollary to facilitate a biblical hermeneutic is paying attention to the voice of the Spirit in our history. We touched on this above as we called for a reading of Scripture which parallels the inscripturation of it: we seek to read our history of the past and present in light of the Christ event. God works in, and reveals himself, in all of history.⁸² In this sense, God's revelation is continuing. There is a "progress of revelation" within and outside of Scripture. The Revelation in Scripture serves as an interpretive norm for revelation in the rest of history. Among other things this means that we should look for the truth, for his voice, even in the philosophies and teachings that seem to be heretical; we can learn from them. It means that we do not embrace a salvation history or Heilsgeschichte that is supra historical or a special history per se, but that we view all of history as his story. All of history is a story properly told from God's perspective. We should think of it as "kingdom history," rather than "salvation history," for God is actualizing his Kingdom on earth, the essential in existential reality. This Kingdom history found in Scripture is the interpretive key, the center, to all of history. This center has implications for the role of tradition, for the way we think about ourselves and our lives, and for the way we should read Scripture (hermeneutics) and do theology.⁸³ Yet it is the Spirit who empowers us to read properly this history around us. In the unfolding of history he reveals to us all things in the mind of God (1 Cor. 2:10-14).

Conclusion:

A Prophetic-Grammatical-Historical Interpretation

Giving primary place to the Holy Spirit in the interpretive process seems a compelling conclusion. Scriptural instruction, as well as the nature of Scripture as a divine-human product, the Christian as prophet, and studies in the meaning of meaning--all support this conclusion. His controlling interest in interpretation must match such a place he had in inscripturation. While many fear this with its "hands off" approach to interpretation, it is our "open hand" and heart to the Spirit's to let him lead.

Now all of these are also necessary to facilitate interpretation: the proper role of the community; a model of sanctification which both opens up our expectations to hearing the Spirit afresh and discerns his voice from error; the recognition that our hermeneutic is determined by a world view and that we should submit to the biblical world view; and the role of history and tradition whereby God has spoken to his Church in the past. All of these corollaries are part of the total hermeneutical task and we risk failure if we neglect any one of them. This is so because they were all present and affirmed when biblical writers wrote and interpreted. They form part of the biblical world view whereby the Spirit is the prevailing interpreter in our interpretation pursuits.

In light of this, it is no longer possible to practice hermeneutics or exegesis or to construct theology where the Spirit is bypassed, given a secondary place to rationalism or emotionalism, or is an after-thought in the mind of hermeneutics experts. His place in interpretation parallels his place in inscripturation--a special, divine enterprise. He must be central, not peripheral. The only way, it seems, that we can duly recognize and remind ourselves of his work is to use special nomenclature for an evangelical approach. So we propose that, instead of talking about grammatical-historical interpretation, or grammatical interpretation, or historical-grammatical interpretation,⁸⁴ we Christians practice a spiritual or prophetic (or, Spirit-centered and led)-grammatical-historical interpretation or exegesis.⁸⁵

There is another benefit to the prophetic model of hermeneutics which this study sets forth. Its emphasis on the centrality of the Holy Spirit enables the ordinary Christian to engage confidently in the interpretation of Scripture. We find no basis in Scripture for relegating the interpretation of Scripture to a specially trained class.

Practicing a biblical hermeneutic means practicing the Spirit's hermeneutic. If the Spirit has been the source and means of discovering the meaning of the coming of Christ and his relation to the Old Testament, then we should seek to discover how this happened and transfer it to how he should be active in our interpretation, if we are to be truly biblical. The promise is that as he taught truth and interpretation to the Church in the past, so in accord with this he continues to teach us (1 John 2:27). What remains for us to do is to submit to the Spirit's work of informing us and convincing us of this reality.

1For these initial paragraphs see similar thoughts expressed in J. De Young and S. Hurty, *Beyond the Obvious: Discover the Deeper Meaning of Scripture* (Gresham, OR.: Vision House, 1995), 126ff.

2C.F.H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority* (Waco: Word, 1979), 4:278, notes this also.

3See Alistar McGrath, *A Passion for Truth* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996), 163ff. In chapter 4, "Evangelicalism and postmodernism," McGrath shows how rationalism has such a continuing influence on evangelical understanding of the nature of Scripture, spirituality, apologetics, and evangelism (166-179) that it "runs the risk of becoming a secret prisoner of a secular outlook which is now dying before our eyes" (173) in light of the rise of postmodernism. Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, 296, saw the antithesis of reason and trust and wrote: "The Spirit of God witnesses to the Redemption of Our Lord, . . . He cannot witness to our reason. . . . If we try to make Him witness to our reason, it is no wonder we are in darkness and perplexity. Fling it all overboard, trust in Him, and He will give the witness."

4Everyone who holds to the second option, that the Spirit helps us to understand Scripture, would also endorse the first option, that the Spirit helps us by enabling us to receive the Word.

5There is considerable discussion of this matter. It is interesting how widely assumed it is that illumination pertains to the aiding of the listener of the text so that he will receive or welcome the meaning of the text, that is, grasp its significance, rather than understand its meaning in the first place. In the endnotes of *Beyond the Obvious* (367-369) we evaluate the arguments of such writers as Kaiser and Silva, D. Fuller, C. Ryrie, Klooster, M. Erickson, Lindsley, N. Geisler, J. I. Packer, and R. Stein who support one or the other of these views. We argue that there is historical content to be heard in the gospel or read in the text, and this content is cognitively accessible to the unbeliever by grammatical-historical interpretation. It provides the hearing upon which basis faith may come (Rom. 10:14). Yet this falls short of true hearing and understanding which manifests itself in believing and obeying, and involves the entire person--mind, emotions, will. See also 138-151, 289-303. The resurrection ministry of Jesus parallels that of the Spirit and testifies that interpretation involves both the heart and the head. On the road to Emmaus and later, it was necessary for Jesus to encourage the disciples both to believe in their hearts all that the prophets had spoken (Luke 24:25, 32) and to open their minds so that they could understand the Scriptures (v. 45). This speaks to both the subjective and objective aspects of interpreting.

6As in M. Erickson, *Evangelical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 52. For him, the ministry of the Holy Spirit is necessary to help us understand what is in the biblical text. The passage of 1 Corinthians 2 refers not to the process of canonization in the hands of the Apostles (42) but tell of the ongoing ministry of the Spirit to illumine the text. Yet we believe that this passage is not to be limited to the work of the Spirit in interpreting the text, as we will show below.

7The meaning of verse 13 is beyond certainty, as most acknowledge. The verse could be limited to Paul, since Paul often uses the terms, we speak, found in verse 13 of his own ministry of speaking a message (vv. 1, 4, 6-7). Yet verse 13 probably refers to all believers, or to all who speak to the church as prophets, apostles, and other ministers of the Word. For the views see C. Kling, "The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," in *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, by J. Lange (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, rep. 1960), 59-64; and commentaries by Ellicott, Robertson and Plummer, H. Olshausen, Meyer, Pearson, Mare, Carson (on chs. 12-14), H. Conzelmann, E. P. Gould, H. J. Foster, and others. Those who see Paul referring to all believers include Grosheide, F. F. Bruce (apparently), T. C. Edwards, R. Gromacki, Moffatt.

The other major view is that the whole passage of 2:6-16 is limited to Paul and perhaps in a derivative sense to those fellow-teachers who worked with him. This is the view of Calvin, Hodge, Godet, F. Fisher, Kistemaker, Lenski, and others, including W. Kaiser, "A Neglected Text in Bibliology Discussions: 1

Corinthians 2:6-16," Westminster Theological Journal 43 (1980-81):301-19. Kaiser disallows the inclusion of other apostles and bases this on the use of the verb speak used here instead of preach and proclaim (vv. 1-3) and the use of but in v. 16 (to put himself in contrast to the perfect and members of the church in general). So Kaiser finds vv. 10-12 to refer to revelation, v. 13 to inspiration, and vv. 14-16 to illumination.

We think it is too narrow to limit the passage to Paul, as though v. 13 refers to those who write Scripture, as in 2 Timothy 3:16. Inspiration is usually seen as a trait of the written text, not of the writers of it (but see others including S. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* [Nashville: Broadman, 1994], 497-498, for the idea that it covers both the activity of the Spirit on the writer and the deposit of the writings).

It seems more consistent to see revelation and/or prophecy here and at least Paul and all his fellow workers--Sosthenes, Cephas, Apollos, Timothy, Silas, Aquila and Priscilla, and others, apostles and non-apostles--involved, and this explains the we in 2:6-16 and 3:9 (cf. 1:1, 12, 23; 3:5-9; 4:1, 6-13; 2 Cor. 1:1, 19; Acts 18:1-20:6). None but Paul and Cephas wrote Scripture, as far as we know. While writing occurs in 4:6, 14, Paul in 2:6-16 refers more broadly to the message he and others speak (2:6, 7, 13), not write. This would fit Paul and Apollos and other preachers well. Also, he commends the Corinthians for not lacking any spiritual gift (1:7), and this would include revelation (2:10; 14:26). So we think that 2:13 refers to Paul and any other preachers of and to the church there through whom revelation or prophecy comes. It probably refers to the "inspiration" of all believers, in light of the general nature of vv. 12 and 14. It is not about inspiration of the Canon.

Paul and Peter both assume that all believers should experience revelation. In Ephesians 1:17-18ff., Paul prays for the believers that the Father might grant them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they may fully know Him. In 1 Peter 4:10-11a Peter writes: "Each one should use whatever spiritual gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God." This is very similar to 1 Corinthians 2:13 and tends to support the idea of additional revelation from any Christian so gifted. The goal is the praise of God through Jesus Christ (v. 11c).

8This is so even though a different Greek word is used for understand in the two verses. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. H. Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 1:240, seems to agree, for he comments that our minds have to be renewed by the "enlightening of the Holy Spirit." Regarding 1 Corinthians 2:14, he says that the natural man has "no understanding in the spiritual mysteries of God" and that "they are made known only by the revelation of the Spirit"; he goes on to cite Ephesians 1:9 and 1:18 for support. He uses understand several times (see 484 also).

9The verb expressing ("interpreting," NIV margin) is difficult to translate. It may refer to interpreting in light of verses 12 and 14 which speak about understanding, rather than revealing. It is used on at least a half dozen occasions in the Septuagint for interpreting dreams (Genesis 40-41; Daniel 2, 5). Yet to interpret is to express, and to reveal is also appropriate; when one speaks by the Spirit the Spirit interprets the message into human speech as he reveals it. Other prevalent views take the word as comparing, uniting or combining (the latter idea used by Paul in 2 Cor. 10:12 is its only other use in the NT). Perhaps distinguishing these ideas does not matter, for comparing or uniting or combining would mean that the spiritual substance or content is combined with the spiritual form or means. Revelation is the basic idea. For support of interpreting or explaining see Kling, "Corinthians," 61-62, and the many commentaries cited above for this verse.

10So G. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 105, quoting Holladay, 47. This seems to be the meaning of 1 Peter 4:10-11 as well, and also 2 Peter 1:20-21.

Fee writes that the Christian life is "essentially the life of the Spirit, dynamically experienced and eschatologically oriented--but fully integrated into the life of the church" (italics his)(901). The Spirit must be experienced by the believer and the community (902).

11The words adapts and accommodates are from John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, trans. J. Pringle (Grand Rapids: Baker, rep. 1979), 20:114.

12Based on the presence of the word taught, some would point out that the Bible emphasizes here and elsewhere the continuity of the divine and human intention in that the Spirit teaches the person, rather than speaking through him things unknown to him. We agree that this is the emphasis of Scripture, but this is not all that the Spirit does. This is evident from the phenomena of Scripture using Scripture and from certain passages that affirm deeper meaning (eg., 1 Peter 1:10-12). Our everyday experience is that we can say things that have a deeper meaning for the listener which we never intended, but are still consistent with our intention. Cannot this happen also by the aid of the Spirit in the writing and reading of Scripture? It is quite conceivable that the biblical writers, while ruminating on the Kingdom as their world view and all of its

dimensions known to them, wrote Scripture by the aid of the Spirit who intended more meaning in it than they knew.

13 These words of Paul are significant in providing a basis for our proposed approach of finding via the world view of Scripture a deeper, divine meaning beyond the literal. The subject matter, the kind of revelation, determines the method of interpretation. The human intent lends itself to grammatical-historical interpretation, but the divine intent lends itself to an approach to interpretation which incorporates the role of the Holy Spirit. See Appendix E in *Beyond the Obvious* (289-303) for development of this.

14 It seems that W. Kaiser and M. Silva, *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), repeatedly make this wrongly refer to the written word (7 times in one paragraph) (40, 182). Kaiser would limit verse 13 to inspiration (see note above).

Erickson, *Interpretation*, 52, believes that verse 13 limits the Spirit's role of illumination to the biblical text. While Erickson argues against D. Fuller, who limits the Spirit's role to convincing of the truth, and supports the Spirit's role in interpretation, giving insight into meaning (he even allows for "deeper dimensions of understanding" which come from the illumination of the Spirit, but these are "not essential to salvation or to Christian fellowship") (54), in the end he makes an error similar to Fuller's. Erickson's own position does not arise from the text when he limits the role of the Holy Spirit to giving "insight or understanding of the meaning that is in the biblical text." There was no biblical text! While there was an Old Testament text, Paul cannot be limited to this. Erickson wants to avoid the subjectivity associated with giving the Holy Spirit the role of ongoing interpreter and revealer of the truth to his Church. Yet this seems too narrow a limit on the role of the Spirit. And is there not subjectivity involved in determining the new insight or understanding? Erickson writes similarly in *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 250. This appears to be the view of C. Pinnock, "The Role of the Spirit in Interpretation," *JETS* 36/4 (Dec. 1993) 497, although he says intended meaning can get "enriched, sharpened and enlarged" (495-496).

Henry, *Revelation*, also limits illumination to the biblical text. Following Hodge, 1 Corinthians 2:12 refers only to apostles (275-276); the Spirit illumines the meaning of the biblical text to believers (276ff.); special revelation comes only to the apostles (276); the Spirit also convinces believers of the Bible's truth (278, 282, 294); most scriptural propositions can be understood without the work of the Spirit (presumably he means that the natural man can understand much biblical truth) (278-279); that in some uses of the Old Testament in the New the Holy Spirit "stretches the evident meaning to embrace what is not contrary to the writer's intention but need not have been consciously intended by him" (281); the whole canon must be considered for a proper understanding of authorial intention (281); revelation can be derived only from the Bible and not also from the Spirit as "a second source alongside and independent of Scripture" (284)--unless we share the office and gifts of apostles and prophets, he adds. (But do we not share the gift of prophecy?). A major reason Henry shuns ongoing, direct revelation from the Spirit is that it may generate another "novel cult" (284).

While the doctrine of illumination is usually associated (esp. for us) with the written Word, it need not be. Illumination is necessary for written or spoken revelation. Illumination is mediated communication; revelation is unmediated communication. 1 Cor. 2:13 teaches unmediated oral revelation. The verse cannot be limited to illumination of the written text, for there was none. We must find support for this idea elsewhere.

F. Klooster, "The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Hermeneutical Process: The Relationship of the Spirit's Illumination to Biblical Interpretation," in *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 471, writes quite honestly when he says: "A precise definition of illumination does not seem possible." The doctrine cannot be "empirically demonstrated or rationally proven." He cites Calvin's own inability to explain the inner witness of the Spirit: "I speak of nothing other than what each believer experiences with himself--though my words fall far beneath a just explanation of the matter." *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J.T. McNeill, trans. F.L. Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1.7.5.

S. Grenz, *Theology*, 500-506, writes that the two processes of illumination and inspiration are intertwined, for the community was illumined to recognize the Canon of inspired writings. The compiling of Scripture took place within the community and its self-understanding. They were illumined to see God's addressing of them in these books. Grenz, however, also limits 1 Corinthians 2:13 to illumination.

Paul cannot be referring to interpreting the Old Testament, for he asserts that he speaks a message of wisdom--God's wisdom--hidden beforehand (1 Cor. 2:7). Elsewhere he makes it clear that this came to him by special "revelation . . . which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets . . . this mystery" (Eph. 3:3-9; cf. Col. 1:25-26).

15 As Kaiser and others (see note above).

16See the note above on the meaning of the verb expressing or interpreting.

17So Calvin, Corinthians, 113ff., and most others see it as the spoken word.

18Also, even the words, "We have the mind of Christ" (v. 16), are spoken probably of all believers and not just Paul and ministers of the message.

19Verse 13 affirms a lot more. (1) The Spirit communicates revelation which is beyond or in addition to or not found in Scripture. (2) Paul (and, in principle, others receiving this revelation) interprets, and in a sense, reveals this orally for the readers with words which the Spirit teaches. (3) The verse includes both revelation from the Spirit and interpretation of this all by Paul. In this sense Paul serves much in the manner of an Old Testament prophet. (4) The Spirit gives two revelations, the spiritual things and the spiritual words. Both the content of revelation and the mode of revelation come from the Spirit. (5) The words are both human and divine, not just divine, for Paul is taught them; he does not parrot them. (6) This verse, with verses 12 and 14, affirms that the Spirit both gives revelation directly and aids both our understanding and our reception of this oral revelation.

This verse apparently teaches that prophecy has two basic elements: the revelation (or content), and the interpretation (or meaning of it, and this may include the mode, such as words). When both are Spirit sourced, there can be no error. When the interpretation is not given but left to man, error can occur. Hence Paul insists that others (perhaps other prophets) should discern a prophet's utterance and that the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets (1 Cor. 14:29-32; cf. 1 John 4:1-3; 1 Thes. 5:21). The analogy to this is the gift of tongues which needs to be accompanied by an interpretation. Perhaps this explains why the two gifts are dealt with together. In 1 Corinthians 2:13 Paul is dealing with both the prophetic word and its interpretation as coming from the Spirit. This explanation of prophecy may be a better way to explain what W. Grudem and others mean when prophecy fails. It seems that D.A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 162-165, basically agrees with us.

20Ephesians 5:18 is to be interpreted somewhat akin to 1 Corinthians 2:13. To be filled with the Spirit is to let the Spirit within give expression to the spiritual truths in spiritual words to others. The exhortation is to "not get drunk on wine . . . Instead, be filled with the Spirit." The next verse regarding speaking to one another in various modes (psalms, hymns, songs) makes it clear that the parallel to v. 18 is Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom" in various modes (psalms, hymns, songs). This "word of Christ" can hardly be limited to the written text of Scripture. More likely it must include the ongoing revelation about Christ or from him which comes to members of the Body in worship. Thus Ephesians 5:18 refers to the collective Body in worship and is to be interpreted as 1 Corinthians 2. This filling in community is the major emphasis (cf. Acts 2:4; 4:31), although there are instances of personal fillings (eg. Acts 4:8; 6:3, 5; 6:10; 7:55; 9:17).

Also Ephesians 1:17-18ff. is Paul's prayer for the believers that the Father might give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they may fully know him. See also 1 Peter 4:10-11.

21F. Farrar, *History of Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, rep. 1961), 340, records Luther as follows: "The multitude of Christians in believing that God spoke to holy men of old have altogether forgotten that he speaks to them still, though neither then nor now does he raise the finite to the capabilities of the infinite, so that neither they nor we were made either perfect or all wise, or on all subjects infallible, although moved by the Holy Ghost. There was a time when saints and martyrs had no New Testament. As Zwingli said, 'He who is born of the Spirit is no longer dependent on a book.'"

22R. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale, 1989), writes that Paul's espousal of freedom in Christ (Gal. 5:1; 2 Cor. 3:17) bears hermeneutical implications. We can read Scripture with freedom as we are illuminated by the Spirit (154). For Paul, God's word "is alive and active in the present time, embodied in the community's Spirit-empowered life and proclamation" (171). The "true sense . . . is actualized in the community of Paul's readers only as a consequence of the hermeneutical transfiguration wrought intertextually in 2 Cor. 3:7-18. True interpretation depends neither on historical inquiry nor on erudite literary analysis but on attentiveness to the promptings of the Spirit, who reveals the gospel through Scripture in surprising ways" (156).

23W. Klein, C. Blomberg, and R. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Dallas: Word, 1993), take the view, that the passages refer to "the inspiration of the Spirit in providing the New Testament canon of Scripture" (85, n. 8).

24Points made by M. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 251.

25D. McCartney and C. Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand* (Wheaton: Victor, 1994), 76. They do not believe that an ongoing communication of the Spirit is taught in these passages.

26See Erickson, *Theology*, 251-252, for a defense of the need to have both an objective word (written) and a subjective word (the inner witness of the Spirit) as the authority for the Christian.

27Since there is a deposit of truth not revealed by the apostles--they did not inscripturate all that they knew (cf. Jn. 20:30; 21:24-25; cf. Lk. 1:1-4)--there is at least the suggestion that more may be revealed.

28See *Beyond the Obvious*, chapter 1 (29-42), and many others cited there.

29The Truth is not in the text of v. 20, but is supplied from v. 21 (as also the NIV recognizes).

30McCartney and Clayton, *Reader*, 77-78.

31See S. Smalley, "1, 2, 3 John," vol. 51, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco: Word, 1984), 124. It seems that we can affirm more, that the words concern the teaching of new truth, that is, revelation, and not just interpretation.

32This is the substance of *Beyond the Obvious*, chapters 1, 2, 3; also J. De Young and S. Hurty, "The Writer to the Hebrews: A Pioneer in Postmodern Evangelical Hermeneutics? Or, Rediscovering Vulgar Interpretation." Paper presented to the Evangelical Theological Society, Nov. 17, 1995, Philadelphia, PA.

33So far we have collected the remarks of more than 30 advocates of such, ranging from Calvin and Luther to such contemporaries as M. Terry, J. I. Packer, D. Moo, M. Silva, B. Waltke, C. F. Henry, S. L. Johnson, E. E. Ellis, R. Longenecker, W. La Sor, D. Hagner, M. Erickson, F. F. Bruce, R. Gundry, J. Wenham, G. Beale, D. McCartney, R. Stein, G. Fee, B. Chilton, W. Klein, C. Blomberg, R. Hubbard, D. Bock, E. R. Clendenen, E. Glenny, K. Snodgrass, V. Poythress, R. Hays, I. H. Marshall, C. H. Dodd; and commentators such as F. Delitzsch, B. F. Westcott, P. E. Hughes, etc., in their commentaries on Hebrews. See *Beyond the Obvious*, chapter 3 (65-80) and Appendix F (305-310) for acknowledgement of deeper meaning by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy.

34See M. Baggs, "Assessing the Deeper Meaning of Scripture: A Comparison of Current Evangelical Approaches." Th.M. thesis, Western Seminary, Portland, OR., March, 1996. Baggs set forth 12 arguments supporting deeper meaning, then weighed four approaches (sensus plenior, canonical, Jewish hermeneutical, and paradigm of reality) by 9 criteria which a good hermeneutical approach should meet. His conclusion was that the canonical and paradigm of reality approaches met the criteria best.

From another perspective J. Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), in his confessional rather than descriptive approach, cites with favor the position of J. Rambach (*Institutiones Hermeneuticae Sacrae* [Jena: Ex Officina Hartungiana, 1725], 55-75) who found in the single meaning of Scripture both a literal and a mystical sense, i.e., both the meaning of the words and the meaning of the things which the words call to mind--the meaning which words render to the mind (see pp. 231-232). Sailhamer cites both the older Rambach and the more recent G. Maier (*Biblische Hermeneutik* [Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus Verlag, 1990] as espousing a hermeneutica sacra--a special hermeneutics for the Bible because of its divine-human nature, and the need for the interpreter to be spiritually gifted (227-237). We concur in this.

35E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale, 1963), 126.

36Hirsch continues: "In that case it is His willed type we are trying to interpret, and the human author is irrelevant. We must not confuse his text with God's. In either instance the notion of a sense beyond the author's is illegitimate. . . . The fact that two different minds can intend quite different meanings by the same word sequence should not by now be surprising. Nothing is gained by conflating and confusing different 'texts' as though they were somehow the same simply because they both use the same word sequence." *Ibid.*, n. 37.

37S. L. Johnson, *The Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 50-51, also saw that Hirsch's view of dual authorship has implications for the divine will going beyond the human will.

38Hirsch, *Interpretation*, 86, 88. Indeed, he asserts that "all understanding of verbal meaning is necessarily genre-bound" (76). Sailhamer, *Introduction*, 214, 249f., 252, writes of the idea of montage (as in cinematography) where the reader seeks to understand the parts in light of the whole, and even supplies the whole where it does not exist. This seems to support the idea that there is a meaning beyond that intended by any one author.

39So the view of W. Kaiser in *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New* (Chicago: Moody, 1985), and elsewhere, including his article, "The Promise of Isaiah 7:14 and the Single-Meaning Hermeneutic," *Evangelical Journal* 6 (1988): 55-70. He negatively evaluates R. Kunjummen, "The Single Intent of Scripture--Critical Examination of a Theological Construct," *Grace Theological Journal* 7 (1986): 96-100, on his use of intrinsic genre. Yet Kunjummen has persuasively presented his case for a deeper meaning in Scripture. See our fuller discussion of this in S. Hurty and J. De Young, "Hirsch Is Right, There Is Deeper

Meaning in Scripture!: God's World View, Intrinsic Genre, and Dual Readership of Scripture." Paper presented to the Evangelical Theological Society, Nov. 16, 1995, Philadelphia, PA.

Even Scripture itself signals this. For example, Galatians 3:8 says: "The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: 'All nations will be blessed through you.'" We might read "Holy Spirit" in place of "Scripture." The foreknowledge of him determined to some extent the wording, hence the intention and meaning, of the promise in Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18.

40E. D. Hirsch, "Meaning and Significance Reinterpreted," *Critical Inquiry* 11 (Dec. 1984):210.

41Ibid.

42Ibid., 221, 223.

43Ibid., 223-24. Hirsch characterizes his change from 1960 to be so great as to be "a new and different theory."

44Erickson, *Interpretation*, 31-32.

45 See J. Arthurs, "Biblical Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism: Augmenting the Grammatical/Historical Approach." Ph.D. dissertation, Purdue University, 1992.

46Ibid. Reviewing this same issue of prophecy, D. Leschert, "Inspired Hermeneutics?: A Study in the Validity of Inspired New Testament Interpretation" (Th.M. Thesis, Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1981), 20, writes that "interpretation cannot limit itself to the conscious intention of the author."

47W. E. Glenny, "The Divine Meaning of Scripture: Explanations and Limitations." Paper presented to the Evangelical Theological Society, Washington, D.C., Nov. 19, 1993, 24-25.

48V. Poythress, "Divine Meaning of Scripture," *Westminster Theological Journal* 48 (1986):278-79. This seems to be supported by such passages as Galatians 3:8 and Hebrews 11:39-40.

49See De Young and Hurty, *Beyond the Obvious*, chapter 5 (99-122). This is not far from the concept of J. Rambach (noted above), who advocated both a literal and a mystical sense to the single meaning of Scripture. Yet we specifically identify levels of meaning as arising from the world view of Scripture and giving us existential and essential meaning. The world view of Scripture is another perspective of intrinsic genre or the mega context which contributes to meaning.

50G. Galloway, "The Efficacy of Propositionalism: The Challenge of Philosophical Linguistics and Literary Theory to Evangelical Theology." Ph. D. dissertation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, May, 1996, 188-194.

51Ibid., 265.

52Ibid., 266.

53Ibid., 267-269. It appears to this writer that the idea of the "interpretant" in the triadic approach to language and meaning seems related to the idea of J. Rambach (cited above in citing Sailhamer's Introduction) when he wrote in 1725 that the single meaning of Scripture "could entail both a literal and a mystical sense"--the meaning of the words and the meaning of the things which the words call to mind--"the meaning which words render to the mind" (Sailhamer, 231). It also reflects our distinction between the existential or particular meaning and the essential or deeper meaning which transcends the temporal. Yet Rambach limits this to an internal thing not an historical entity in the external world (232).

54Ibid., 262-263.

55Ibid., 261. This is the same conclusion we reached in *Beyond the Obvious* on the basis of an inductive study of how Scripture interprets earlier Scripture. The world view of Scripture, with its affirmation of essential or unseen reality as well as an existential reality, determines the hermeneutic employed within Scripture and we should emulate this hermeneutic. For this reason we devoted an entire chapter to the place of the Holy Spirit in interpretation.

56See *Beyond the Obvious*, chapter 8, "Community: Fellow Pilgrims on a Trek for Truth," for fuller discussion of spiritual gifts, especially prophecy.

57Death does not remove a believer with his gifts from the Body, and all believers with their gifts all over the world are part of the Body. The Body bears the same nature as its Head.

58This is confirmed by the meaning of the terms prophet and prophesy based in the Old Testament nabi and naba, meaning spokesperson for God, and by a cursory perusal of the word in Old and New Testaments (Paul's use and that of John in the Revelation are especially instructive). Even the foretelling aspect was anchored to the past. The Old Testament prophet was validated by his "acumen for reading the past clearly and interpreting its meaning for their present time." So C.H. Bullock, "Entree to the Pentateuch Through the Prophets: A Hermeneutics of History," in *Interpreting the Word of God*, ed. S. Schultz and M. Inch (Chicago: Moody, 1976), 76.

59Fee, *Presence*, 908, notes that Paul's words, that "all may prophesy, one by one" (1 Cor. 14:31), reflects the promise of Joel 2. He goes on: "In Paul's view, to despise prophetic utterances is to quench the Spirit." This juxtaposition of the Spirit and prophecy identifies Moses, the seventy elders, and Joshua as prophets (Num. 11:25-29; 27:18). If in Israel prophecy was replaced by wisdom, just as the prophet (Moses) was replaced by the teacher of wisdom (Joshua) (see Sailhamer, *Introduction*, 246-249), the return of the Spirit to all believers signifies the return of the prophet and prophecy throughout the present age of the "last days."
60Both women and men exercise the gift (11:4-5); it appears to be limited to some (12:10, 28) but isn't; it will someday cease, when the perfect comes (13:2, 8-10); yet Paul wishes that all prophesy as the greatest gift (14:1-6-19, 24-33) and all should desire prophecy (14:37-39).

61Owen, *Works*, 4:451ff., distinguishes prophecy as an extraordinary office and gift (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11), as an extraordinary gift only (Acts 19:6; 21:9; 1 Cor. 14:29-37), and as an ordinary office and gift (Rom. 12:6). We are thinking primarily along the lines of his second and third categories, but do not wish to make prophecy nothing more than teaching or preaching the word, as he does (452). Yet his distinction may help in the current debate over errant foretelling and the gift of prophecy.

62Prophecy differs from teaching in various ways. The former refers both to foretelling future things by direct revelation, and to declaring or telling forth the mind of God by the special, direct, immediate, and spontaneous revelation of the Holy Spirit. Teaching does not include foretelling, and seems to be not immediate revelation from God but the instruction resulting from deliberate attention to tradition or to the written Word of God. And these gifts are distinguished by Paul (1 Cor. 13-14). See also J. Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, ed. W. Goold (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967), 4:469.

In addition, we suggest that prophecy itself may encompass all the speaking gifts, that all (apparently different) terms are merely different manifestations of broader understanding of the gift of prophecy. This enhances our argument that it is a universal gift.

63See chapter 8 on community in *Beyond the Obvious*, 184-206, for an elaboration of this.

64This is the central focus of *Beyond the Obvious*. See especially chapter 5 (99-102).

65This seems to be a legitimate inference one could make from J. Sailhamer's (*Introduction*) confessional approach to Old Testament theology. Since the coming of the Spirit is associated with the gift of prophecy, who is better suited to doing theology than one fulfilling the role of prophet?

66The Holy Spirit is the dispenser, thus the protector of truth. None of us believers, even if he or she be the spiritual leader (pastor, elder, etc.), is sufficient to protect the truth. God will do this. The very nature of truth (see *Beyond the Obvious*, Appendix E, 289-304) puts it beyond the pale of human protection.

67We are not to quench the Spirit, nor treat prophecies with contempt. We are to "test everything" (1 Thess. 5:19-21; cf. 1 John 4:1-3; 2 Pet. 2; 3). This is just as it was in the Old Testament with the tests of fulfillment (Deut. 18:17-22) and the truth (Deut. 13). This implies that some prophesying may be wrong and not from God in the first place, or that it has been wrongly interpreted.

68These include limiting the number doing it; taking turns; yielding place to additional prophesying; and weighing one another's prophecy so that order and peace prevail. "The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets" (v. 32)--they are not carried out by their own power but are subject to the prophets' "own judgment, choice, and understanding." So J. Owen, *Works*, 470.

69So Rambach's approach, in Sailhamer, *Introduction*, 231, seems basically to be a secular one, when he finds a mystical sense along side the literal in the one meaning of Scripture, for this is identified with the distinction between the meaning of the words and the meaning of the things which the words portray to the mind (i.e., meaning resides in words and things). This would be true of all literature on the assumption that the human author understood everything. Rambach gives place to the Holy Spirit, for the spiritual sense was intended by the Holy Spirit in the words of the original authors--it finds "warrant from the text itself that this was the intended meaning" (232). He also calls this a "grander, more elevated sense" than the ordinary meaning of the words (232), which Sailhamer also identifies as a "significant layer of meaning" in the biblical text (234). Yet this simply makes Scripture of a special nature as uniquely inspired; it does not make the hermeneutics or method spiritual, sacred, or unique. Another concern is that this meaning or two-fold sense is discoverable only by trained theologians, not ordinary Christians (229). How can this find support from Scripture? We need a method which enables the ordinary, spiritual Christian to get meaning from the text. The prophetic and other gifts of the Spirit do this.

70So G. Maier's approach, called a "biblical historical" approach (see Sailhamer, *Introduction*, 234ff.) calls for the spiritual preparation of the interpreter and recognition of the distinctive nature of Scripture; yet he apparently fails to show whence the hermeneutic arose and how it can be duplicated by us.

71See *Beyond the Obvious*, chapter 3 (65-80), where we evaluate each of these approaches to deeper meaning.

72We assume that we should follow the biblical practice in light of such passages as Acts 17:10-12, and because of the logic that asks: How can we be sure of our theology if our method of discovering it differs from that of the biblical authors who give us the theology?

73See our defense of the Kingdom as the biblical center and the biblical world view, in *Beyond the Obvious*, chapters 4 and 5 (81-122); and in Appendix C: "The Kingdom Center As Rule and Relationship" (267-272). How such a center affects interpretation of difficult passages see Appendix D: "Kingdom Light on Difficult Issues" (273-288). The center of the Kingdom as transcendent and immanent (1) captures the mindset, the world view, of the authors as reflected in the New Testament and the LXX; (2) provides the intrinsic genre, the concept of the whole Canon, by which to interpret all the parts; (3) gives the basis for our practicing the biblical hermeneutic; (4) is intrinsically related to the Holy Spirit, since he inspired the approach. As he has taught, so he will continue to teach us (1 John 2:27). Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 216-217, writes of world view as "memesis"--the biblical narrative's ability to "re-present" its world, "a whole world of reality, in such a way that it presents itself to the reader as the real world--the only real world."

74We carefully sought to illustrate this characteristic of Hebrews in De Young and Hurty, "The Writer to the Hebrews: A Pioneer," 2-6.

75See Hurty and De Young, "Hirsch Is Right," 9-10, where we used the two strands of a rope woven together to represent the part that both the Holy Spirit and human authors play in inscripturation, the beginning of the process that brings us Scripture. The strand representing the Holy Spirit is predominant or greater. At the end of the process, interpretation and application, the two strands are still present, with the Holy Spirit's part still the predominant strand. Unless both strands are still present at the end of the process, the rope will break--interpretation and application cannot take place. This also suggests that interpretation and application are much closer pursuits than is customarily recognized, and when they are greatly bifurcated.

76So we argue in *Beyond the Obvious*, 136-138, and give several reasons.

77The practice is parallel but the results are not, for our interpretation or discovery is not normative or canonical, although it is authoritative to some extent.

78We call them "corollaries" rather than "controls," for the former idea complements the idea of faith and suggests positive benefits, whereas the latter is negative and suggests reason, rationality, and scientific evidence, which in the area of biblical interpretation is not the heart of the process, nor is certainty an achievable goal. We understand the work of the Spirit to be the first corollary to a biblical hermeneutic. All the corollaries serve also as aids for us to engage in a biblical hermeneutic.

79See *Beyond the Obvious*, chapter 8: "Community: Fellow Pilgrims on a Trek for Truth" (185-204).

80So McGrath, *Passion for Truth*, 174-175, calls for a spirituality that is more than understanding the biblical text and that recovers the relational, emotional, and imaginative aspects-- a middle road between the extremes of the intellectual or cerebral and the purely interiorized.

81See *Beyond the Obvious*, chapter 7: "Spirituality: How Do We Get to Know the Author?" (153-184).

82This contrasts that method of interpretation offered in some quarters which limits the process of getting meaning to events in the text; there is no place for deriving meaning from outside the text (history, general revelation, intuition, tradition, experience, reason, etc.). The most telling argument against this is that the authors of Scripture, especially Jesus and NT authors (eg. Jude 9, 14-15), did go to outside event to get meaning. So this approach makes it impossible to reproduce the biblical method of hermeneutics and fails to embrace the biblical world view. For such a view see Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology* ; and R. Lubeck, "Literal-Grammatical-Historical Interpretation: A Reappraisal." Paper presented to the Evangelical Theological Society, Chicago, IL., Nov., 1994.

83See *Beyond the Obvious*, chapter 9, "Kingdom History: History Is His Story" (205-220), and Appendix E: "Revelation Determines Our Hermeneutic" (289-304). The kind of revelation we embrace, namely a supernatural one, determines for us that a supernatural or biblical hermeneutic is necessary to interpret it. This is the summary of the burden of the present study.

84We cannot, under the strictures of this study, enter into the discussion of the place of historical considerations in our approach. For a persuasive argument for the ahistorical approach, see Sailhamer, *Introduction*, (cited above with our objections).

85And so others have argued. See Sailhamer, *Introduction* , 227ff., for the proposals of J. Rambach and G. Maier who affirm a hermeneutica sacra due to the special nature of the Bible. Sailhamer endorses these concepts in his affirmation of a confessional rather than a descriptive approach to doing theology.

