

## New Testament Exegesis

### Lecture # 3. Trying to Learn from the Past

#### I. Introduction

- A. Here is a brief history of various exegetical schools. Some of your required reading will cover the same territory so we do it briefly here.
- B. Is anything totally new? Not much, at least and this includes the pitfalls of exegesis.
- C. And this reminds us of the value of research which lies not only in what we learn but what we un-learn as a consequence of the study.

#### II. Discussion: The Schools of interpretation speedily considered. Various books will list them in various ways. Therefore the terms are somewhat our own although the ideologies are consistent.

- A. The allegorical school: the school of secondary meanings as best expressed in the old cliché "I heard what he said but what did he mean?"

1. The contribution of Philo (allegory in general)
2. The Alexandrian school...most notably Origen who offered an interpretation idea that looked like this:

| <u>Man is:</u> | <u>Scripture meaning is:</u> |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Body           | literal                      |
| Soul           | moral                        |
| Spirit         | allegorical                  |

3. The church fathers had many allegorizers. The one who gave character to the work and some hermeneutic justification was Augustine "De Doctrina Christiana". His scheme saw the Scripture as being interpreted:  
historically, aetiologically, analogically, allegorically.
4. In the mediaeval period (most commentators from the Roman church) Scripture was interpreted as having meanings literal, moral, allegorical, and anagogical. Under this system, Jerusalem meant first, a city, second, the church, third, the believer and finally, the heavenly Jerusalem.
5. Reformation: Allegorists represented by John of Leyden, Carlstadt, etc. Later by the Pietists.
6. Present times: in the mainstream of Protestant Christianity only partial allegorizers remain in the swim. In Rome...things are changing allegory is still prominent. In Orthodoxy allegory rules.
7. General note on the appeal and dangers of allegory.
- B. The rationalistic school...the school where reason interprets without the aid of and in spite of faith.
  1. In Hebrew culture best seen in the Sadducees.