COM 803-12: Hermeneutics and Communication (Fall 2024, Subterm A)

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Professor

Dr. Strecker

Assignment #1 – Course Essential Elements

**Content Questions**

Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

a. Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the week

of the residency. Be prepared to discuss and engage with other students during

the live sessions. Post this document in DIAL.

b. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade

assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

Faith-Integrated Hermeneutics: Reading for Worldviews

If you have grown up in a religious setting, for example, gone to bible study, gone to church on Sundays, engaged in spiritual practices such as workshops and retreats, you may have preconceived notions about the term hermeneutics because of those events and experiences. The doctrines and text used in all those activities are shaped by the presenters whether teachers, preachers or ministers. Furthermore, you may have been taught or instructed to believe the only way to read and gain knowledge of the text given is through the guidance of your specific faith leaders. However, we owe it to ourselves to ensure that whatever is conveyed to us by others is rooted in facts and truth instead of tradition and religious beliefs and dogma.

Also, our words especially our words that govern who we are from a spiritual perspective have history. In addition, hermeneutics is as layered as an onion; one has to consider what is read to us. What is the message’s origin? How far from the word or phrase original meaning has the interpretation deviated? Who are the people affected by the words from the past and now? What are text’s undertones and nuances?

…A text goes beyond its literal meaning; it symbolizes deeper significance. Understanding the true depth of a symbol requires venturing beyond its surface meaning and delving into its historical context (Financy & Sitorus, 2024).

For example, different Christian religions and different denominations within particular religions share diverse hermeneutics viewpoints on tithing--Malichai 3:10. What is read and interpreted via that scripture varies. Some churches believe that the Old Testament scripture remains a type of mandate to give 10 percent back to the church to help with ministry, while other churches believe the scripture is now only a gesture and was only applicable before the New Testament.

The writer of this report has heard over and over again that there is a decline in religion, but what really is happening according to research is a growth spurt in religious diversity (Kärkkäinen, 2024). What this means is how we look at our sacred text and the doctrines of other religions may need to be reexamine. Recently two instructors practicing Buddhist, have been teaching me meditation. They use stories about life lessons. These instructors have different hermeneutics from my own, but their messages of acceptance, forgiveness, and moving in kindness are similar to what I have been taught biblically. I think what they have done is the beginning of a new way hermeneutics will be taught with a diversity of understanding.

Reference:

Financy, F., & Sitorus, F. K. (2024). Wilhelm Dilthey's Thoughts on Understanding, Hermeneutics and Communication. Asian Journal of Philosophy and Religion, 3(1), 17-28.

<https://doi.org/10.55927/ajpr.v3i1.9360>

Kärkkäinen, V. M. (2024). Christian Theology as Comparative Theology. Progress in Theology: Does the Queen of the Sciences Advance?, 50.

https://doi.org/10.1111/dial.12764