

The Activity of Interpreting Scripture “from Particularity through Universality to Particularity”: Evangelical Faith and Biblical Studies (An abstract)

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This paper aims at discussing the role of Christian tradition in the process of interpreting the Holy Scripture which is the necessary moment of doing theology. However, the activity of “simply reading the Bible” is an impossible one because all kinds of possible reading may be involved, and interpretations unavoidably vary. In the early and mediaeval Church, Bible reading was guided by the Christian tradition and especially by the rule of faith. However, the radical practice of the slogan “Scripture Alone” in the Reformation changed the way of biblical interpretation and the change was reinforced during the Enlightenment in the 18th and 19th centuries as the influence of the Church tradition became subdued and people began to seek for a kind of objective interpretation. It was in this context that Schleiermacher purposed to establish a kind of non-historical, general, or universal hermeneutics, which is different from the particular or specific kind of hermeneutics practiced earlier by the Church. Historical criticism is the product of the general hermeneutics, and it aims at getting meaning out of the Holy Scripture by investigating into the past in a supposed very objective way. Against this, in the

20th century, narrative criticism rejects this approach for its neglect of the text itself in its attention to the past which lies behind the text. It approaches the text through close reading and it works on the structure of the text itself. We would like to say that this criticism share the spirit of historical criticism in the rejection of the dogmatic or theological to interpretation of the Holy Scripture. This paper tries to argue that it is not enough to merely interpret the Holy Scripture without any Christian tradition. While it is necessary to read the Scripture with the approaches of historical criticism and narrative criticism, only the dogmatic or theological interpretation is the necessary condition upon which the church makes proclamation and teaching possible. It follows that a question is to be asked: what tradition should the church follow as she reads the Holy Scripture? This paper argues that the Gospel itself, if not the only one, is at least one of the traditions along with which the Holy Scripture should be approached.