

## **Book Reviews**

## A Critical Review of Donald Hagner's "Ten Guidelines for Evangelical Scholarship"

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### INTRODUCTION

Baker Books blog recently published on March 12, 2013, Donald Hagner's "*Ten Guidelines for Evangelical Scholarship*." These guidelines were then praised by Craig Blomberg in the first blog comment on the Baker blog where Blomberg noted immediately below Hagner's listing of ten guidelines, "Excellent, Don, excellent. And I'm so enjoying reading your book. I hope you still have several more good ones to come."

Here are Hagner's guidelines (and we suspect many more critical, evangelical scholars would concur with his list). We cut/paste verbatim from the Hagner's blog: "*Ten Guidelines for Evangelical Scholarship*" by Donald A. Hagner:

Proposals for an evangelical criticism that affirms the indispensability of the critical method, i.e., being "reasonably" critical:

We must:

1. See what is there (avoiding maximal conservatism, anachronistic approaches, harmonizing and homogenizing, partial appeals to historical evidence).
2. Affirm the full humanity of the scriptures (the word of God in the words of men).
3. Define the nature of inspiration inductively (not deductively), i.e., in light of the phenomena of scripture (doing justice to it as it is).
4. Acknowledge that no presuppositionless position is possible and that the best we can do is attempt to step outside of our presuppositions and imagine “what if.” (Only a relative degree of objectivity is attainable.)
5. Modify the classical historical-critical method so far as its presuppositions are concerned, i.e., so as to allow openness to the transcendent, the action of God in the historical process, the possibility of miracles, etc. Develop a method not alien but rather appropriate to what is being studied.
6. Maintain a unified worldview, avoiding a schizophrenic attitude toward truth and criteria for the validation of truth. That is, all truth is God’s truth, including that arrived at through our rationality.
7. Acknowledge that in the realm of historical knowledge, we are not dealing with matters that can be proven (or

disproven, for that matter!), but with probability. Historical knowledge remains dependent on inferences from the evidence. Good historical criticism is what makes best sense, i.e., the most coherent explanation of the evidence.

8. Avoid the extremes of a pure fideism and a pure rationality-based apologetics. Blind faith is as inappropriate as rationalism. Faith and reason, however, both have their proper place. What is needed is a creative synthesis.

9. Develop humility, in contrast to the strange (and unwarranted!) confidence and arrogance of critical orthodoxy (concerning constructs that depend on presuppositions alien to the documents themselves).

10. Approach criticism by developing a creative tension between intellectual honesty and faithfulness to the tradition (each side needs constant reexamination), with the trust that criticism rightly engaged will ultimately vindicate rather than destroy Christian truth.

Note: The Holy Spirit cannot be appealed to in order to solve historical-critical issues or in the issue of truth-claims. Nevertheless, it is true that for the believer the inner witness of the Spirit confirms the truth of the faith existentially or in the heart.

Concede: Our knowledge is fragmentary and partial, and all our wisdom is but stammering. Full understanding can only

come after our perfection, and then it will no longer be understanding alone but also worship” (italics added—not in original).

### **Analysis of Proposed Guidelines**

Now let us respond to each of Hagner’s ten evangelical scholarship “guidelines.” The bottom-line is that critical evangelical scholars are becoming so much like their liberal counterparts that little differences remain on the whole. Ability to distinguish between these two groups in terms of presuppositions and conclusions is blurring rapidly.

#### ***PROPOSED GUIDELINE ONE:***

*“See what is there (avoiding maximal conservatism, anachronistic approaches, harmonizing and homogenizing, partial appeals to historical evidence).”*

#### ***RESPONSE:***

1. Historical criticism is really the anachronistic approach, spawned by Spinoza in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and aided by hostile, negative presuppositions. Read N. L. Geisler’s “Beware of

Philosophy,” JETS 42:1 (March 1999) 3-18.

2. Historical criticism does not accept “what is there” but wants only to see what they *a priori* have chosen NOT to be there (e.g., the slaughtering of the babies in Bethlehem [Robert Gundry] or the resurrection of saints in Matthew 27:51-52 [Mike Licona]).

3. Historical criticism, no matter how “modified,” assaults the integrity of God’s Word, i.e. this is the automatic “fruit” of historical criticism. It attacks rather than affirms; it casts doubt, rather than confirms. Liberal scholars admit this, but evangelical critical scholars seem to be blind to such effects.

3. No matter how much Hagner would attempt to modify historical criticism, would true historical critics (i.e. non-evangelicals) accept that modification?

4. Plenary, verbal inspiration allows for harmonization, while historical criticism divides God’s word into what is acceptable and what is not acceptable to the individual historical critic.

***PROPOSED GUIDELINE TWO:***

*“Affirm the full humanity of the Scriptures (the word of God in the words of men).”*

Unfortunately, among many younger evangelical scholars the “humanity” of Scripture is understood in a Barthian sense in which humanness implies error. If so, this guideline so understood must be rejected. For the written Word of God (the Scripture) can no more error than the Living Word of God (the Savior) can err.

**RESPONSE:**

1. Although the full-humanity of Scripture is true, since God is author of Scripture and God cannot lie or err, the Scripture cannot err (John 14:26; 16:13; 17:17).
2. The Bible is fully human without error; it is God’s Word as well as man’s words (2 Sam. 23:2; 2 Tim. 3:16). It is a theanthropic book, as Christ is a theanthropic person.
3. By Hagner’s same logic, Jesus must have erred (and sinned).

**PROPOSED GUIDELINE THREE:**

*“Define the nature of inspiration inductively (not deductively), i.e., in light of the phenomena of scripture (doing justice to it as it is).”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. This is a false disjunction since both induction and deduction are involved in determining the doctrine of Scripture, as they are in other doctrines as well (e.g., the Trinity).
2. The doctrine of inspiration is based on a complete inductive study of all of Scripture which yields two basic truths: a) the Bible is the written Word of God; b) God cannot error. From these we rightly deduce that: c) The Bible cannot err. As the *Westminster Confession of Faith* put it, the basis for our faith is “The whole counsel of God... [which] is either expressly set down in Scripture, *or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture* (Chapter I, VI, emphasis added).
3. Of course, the doctrine of Scripture should be understood in the light of the data of Scripture. However, as the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy [ICBI] put it, “We further deny that inerrancy is negated by the Biblical phenomena... (Article XIII). The data of Scripture do not contradict the doctrine of Scripture; they merely nuance and enhance our understanding of it (see Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, chap. 12).

**PROPOSED GUIDELINE FOUR:**

*“Acknowledge that no presuppositionless position is possible and that the best we can do is attempt to step outside of our presuppositions and imagine “what if” (Only a relative degree of objectivity is attainable.)”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. While it is true that there are no presuppositionless approaches to Scripture, it is not true that we should try to step outside of our basic epistemological premises (e.g., the Laws of Logic or valid methods of interpretations).
2. The question is not *whether* one approaches Scripture with presupposition, but *which* presuppositions he uses and whether they are biblical and justifiable.
3. As evangelical scholars, we approach the Bible as the inerrant written Word of God by way of the historical grammatical method of interpretation (ICBI Article XVIII).

Current critical scholarship denies both of these in the historic evangelical sense.

4. As ICBI stated it, “We affirm that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking in account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture” (Article XVIII).

5. ICBI adds importantly, “We deny the legitimacy of any treatment of the text of quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship” (Article XVIII). But this is exactly what Hagner and his British trained New Testament cohorts do.

6. Hagner comes dangerously close to denying that one can truly obtain an “objective” interpretation of Scripture.

Besides being a self-defeating claim to objectivity in denying objectivity, he apparently has not read and interacted with the excellent work by Professor Thomas Howe titled, *Objectivity in Biblical Interpretation* (Advantage Books: 2004).

**PROPOSED GUIDELINE FIVE:**

*“Modify the classical historical-critical method so far as its presuppositions are concerned, i.e., so as to allow openness to the transcendent, the action of God in the historical process, the possibility of miracles, etc. Develop a method not alien but rather appropriate to what is being studied.”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. If the “historical-critical method” needs to be “modified” before it can safely be used, then this is an admission that it is a dangerous method.
2. Further, if it is modified of its anti-supernaturalism, then why accept the method to begin with.
3. What value does this critical methodology have that could not have been gained by the traditional historical-grammatical method?
4. If it is not radically modified, then it does not help evangelicals. But if it is radically modified to suit evangelical, then why accepted it to begin with. If you have to radically modify a Ford to make a Cadillac, then why not start with a Cadillac?

5. Methodology determines theology, and an unorthodox methodology will yield unorthodox theology.

**PROPOSED GUIDELINE SIX:**

*“Maintain a unified worldview, avoiding a schizophrenic attitude toward truth and criteria for the validation of truth. That is, all truth is God’s truth, including that arrived at through our rationality”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. As the ICBI framers put it, truth means “that which corresponds with reality” (ICBI Article XIII, official commentary), whether God revealed it in Scripture (John 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16) or in nature (Psa. 19:1; Rom. 1:1-20), and God does not contradict Himself (ICBI Articles V and XIV).
2. We deny that truth is “*arrived at through our rationality*,” as Hagner meant it, since God is the source of all truth, whether in general or special revelation. The ICBI framers declared emphatically, “We affirm that the written Word in its entirety is a relation given by God... [and] We deny that

the Bible ...depends on the responses of men for its validity” (Article III). As for other alleged sources of truth, “We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth’s history be properly used to overturn the teaching of Scripture ...” (Article XII).

3. However, good reason must always be in accord with and enlightened by revelation and God’s Holy Spirit. As Article XVII declares: “We affirm that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God’s written Word. We deny that this witness of the Holy Spirit operated in isolation from or against Scripture.”

***PROPOSED GUIDELINE SEVEN:***

*“Acknowledge that in the realm of historical knowledge, we are not dealing with matters that can be proven (or disproven, for that matter!), but with probability. Historical knowledge remains dependent on inferences from the evidence. Good historical criticism is what makes best sense, i.e., the most coherent explanation of the evidence.”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. Historical knowledge can rise above mere “probabilities.”  
One can have moral certainty about many things. Luke spoke of “convincing proofs” of the resurrection of Christ (Acts 1:3--NAU).
2. Luke begins his Gospel with the assurance to the reader that he “may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught” (Luke 1:4-ESV).
3. In determining the truth of a historical presentation one certainly wants the interpretation that “makes best sense, i.e., the most coherent explanation of the evidence.” However, it begs the question whether what Hagner means by “good historical criticism” is the best way to achieve this. As a matter of fact, as manifest in the writings of many contemporary scholars who have adopted this method, it clearly did not lead to the best conclusion. Certainly, it did not lead to the most evangelical conclusion.

**PROPOSED GUIDELINE EIGHT:**

*“Avoid the extremes of a pure fideism and a pure rationality-based apologetics. Blind faith is as inappropriate as*

*rationalism. Faith and reason, however, both have their proper place. What is needed is a creative synthesis.”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. To speak of “blind faith” as one of the poles, is a straw man since one can be a Fideist without having blind faith. He can even offer some optional reasons for his Fideism.
2. True Christian scholarship involves “faith seeing understanding,” as Bible exhorts when it asks us to “give a reason for the hope that is in us” (1 Peter 3:15). Indeed, God said through Isaiah, “Come let us reason together...” (Isa. 1:18). And Jesus commanded that we love the Lord our God with our “mind,” as well as with our heart and soul (Mark 12:30).
3. There are other apologetic alternatives to Fideism and a rationally-based approach. Aquinas spoke of faith *based in* God’s Word but *supported by* evidence (see Geisler, *Thomas Aquinas: An Evangelical Appraisal*, Baker Books, 1991, chap.5). And Cornelius Van Til’s transcendental reduction to the necessity of accepting the Triune God revealed in Scripture was certainly not a form of pure fideism or pure rational in apologetics (see *In Defense of the Faith*, 100-101).

4. Faith and reason both have a proper place and need a “creative synthesis,” but they do not find it in critical method proposed by Donald Hagner’s “Ten Guidelines for Evangelical Scholarship.”

**PROPOSED GUIDELINE NINE:**

*“Develop humility, in contrast to the strange (and unwarranted!) confidence and arrogance of critical orthodoxy (concerning constructs that depend on presuppositions alien to the documents themselves).”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. This guideline is an ironic example of the very orthodox view it is criticizing. It is hardly an example of humility to exalt one’s own methodology and stereotype one’s opponent as having a “strange (and unwarranted!) confidence and arrogance.” Humble statements do not condemn others as having unwarranted confidence and arrogance!
2. The humble thing to do would have been to show some respect of the orthodox view of Scripture (see John Hannah, *Inerrancy and the Church* [Moody, 1984] and N.L. Geisler, *Biblical Inerrancy: The Historical Evidence* [Bastion Books,

2013] and the venerable historical-grammatical way of interpreting it (see *Explaining Biblical Inerrancy: Official Commentary on the ICBI Statements*, [Bastion Books: 2013]).

**PROPOSED GUIDELINE TEN:**

*“Approach criticism by developing a creative tension between intellectual honesty and faithfulness to the tradition (each side needs constant reexamination), with the trust that criticism rightly engaged will ultimately vindicate rather than destroy Christian truth.”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. Certainly Hagner does not mean what he says, since he asserts that “intellectual honesty” needs “constant reexamination” too!
2. Further, “faithfulness to the tradition” one has should not be a goal. Rather, it should be faithfulness to the Word of God.
3. What is more, the phrase “rightly engaged” is bristling with presuppositions that Hagner leaves unstated, unspecified, and unjustified.

4. Judging by these 10 guidelines, Hagner is “engaging” in a form of biblical criticism that is ill-founded and destined to disaster. For **bad methodology leads to bad theology, and he has adopted a bad methodology.**

**PROPOSED HAGNER NOTE:**

*“Note: The Holy Spirit cannot be appealed to in order to solve historical-critical issues or in the issue of truth-claims. Nevertheless, it is true that for the believer the inner witness of the Spirit confirms the truth of the faith existentially or in the heart.*

*Concede: Our knowledge is fragmentary and partial, and all our wisdom is but stammering. Full understanding can only come after our perfection, and then it will no longer be understanding alone but also worship.”*

**RESPONSE:**

1. This is an odd comment coming from an evangelical since Scripture affirms the role of the Holy Spirit in the production of His Word: John 6:63—“The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” and 2 Peter 1:19—“And so we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, to which you

do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:19 NAU).

2. The Spirit of God never affirms anything contrary to the Word of God. Further, the Holy Spirit is essential in a proper interpretation and application of the Word of God (see ICBI Statement on Hermeneutics, Articles IV, V, VI). As the Holy Spirit lead the apostles in writing the Word of God (John 14:26;16:13), even so he leads the believers in understanding the Word of God (1 John 2:26-27).

3. Just because *perfect* understanding of Scripture does not come until heaven (1 Cor. 13:10-13) does not mean we cannot have an *adequate* understanding of it here. Nor does it relieve us of our obligation, to “test the spirits” to discover the “false prophets” and to know “the Spirit of truth” from “the spirit of error” (1 John 4:1, 6). After all, we have in Scripture “a sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19), and we are exhorted to use it to “contend for the Faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

## THE RESULTS OF FOLLOWING THESE GUIDELINES IN HAGNER'S WRITINGS

Now let us look at the consequences of these principles that Hagner's own recently published New Testament Introduction operates from, i.e. Donald W. Hagner, namely, *The New Testament A Historical and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012).

The work is praised as follows on the Amazon website, reflecting similar wording on its jacket cover: "This capstone work from widely respected senior evangelical scholar Donald Hagner offers a substantial introduction to the New Testament. Hagner deals with the New Testament both historically and theologically, employing the framework of salvation history. He treats the New Testament as a coherent body of texts and stresses the unity of the New Testament without neglecting its variety. Although the volume covers typical questions of introduction, such as author, date, background, and sources, it focuses primarily on understanding the theological content and meaning of the texts, putting students in a position to understand the origins of Christianity and its canonical writings." The book includes summary tables, diagrams, maps, and extensive bibliographies. It is praised by such scholars as James D. G. Dunn, I. Howard Marshall, Craig Keener and Thomas Schreiner.

One may note two strategic factors regarding Hagner’s New Testament Introduction: First, his work represents the cutting edge of evangelical, British-influenced and trained critical scholarship who are currently teaching the next generation of preachers and scholars in the United States, both on a college and seminary level. Second, Hagner’s work will most likely replace the late Donald Guthrie’s New Testament Introduction that was last revised in 1990. If one wants to know where evangelical critical scholarship is moving, Hagner’s work provides that trajectory.

These two strategic factors are also the works gravest weaknesses. The work attributes the word “inspired” to the New Testament Scripture (4). Yet, Hagner maintains, “the inspired word of God comes to us through the medium of history, through the agency of writers who lived in history and were a part of history” which “*necessitate the historical and critical study of Scripture*” (p. 4). He says that the use of the word “critical” does not mean “tearing it down or demeaning it—but rather to exercising judgment or discernment concerning every aspect of it” (5). Therefore, Hagner asserts that “[w]e must engage in historical criticism, in the sense of thoughtful interpretation of the Bible” and “the historical method is indispensable precisely because the Bible is the story of God’s act in history” (5). **What Hagner means by this is the need for historical critical ideologies rather than grammatico-historical criticism.** This is the first signal that British-influenced

evangelical scholars are shifting markedly away from the Reformation tradition of grammatico-historical criticism and training the next generation of preachers in historical-criticism that markedly differs in approach both presuppositionally, historically, and in the qualitative kind of conclusions such an ideology reaches. Like many British-influenced evangelical critical scholars, he believes that he can use historical-criticism and be immune from its more negative elements: “The critical method therefore needs to be tempered so that rather than being used against the Bible, it is open to the possibility of the transcendent or miraculous within the historical process and thus is used to provide better understanding of the Bible” (7). This latter admission is telling, since it is an admission, no matter how indirect, of the dangers of historical criticism. Hagner argues that “[k]eeping an open mind concerning the possibility of the transcendent in history does not entail the suspension of critical judgment. There is no need for a naïve credulity and acceptance of anything and everything simply because one’s worldview is amenable to the supernatural” (7). Hagner apparently believes that he has discovered the proper balance of presuppositions and practice in the historical-critical method displayed in this work: **“It must be stressed once again that the critical method is indispensable to the study of Scripture. It is the sine qua non of responsible interpretation of God’s word.** The believer need have no fear of the method itself, but need only be

on guard against the employment of improper presuppositions” (emphasis added). An old pithy saying, however, is that the “devil is in the details.” Hagner’s argument here ignores the marked evidence or proof from history of the presuppositions and damage that historical criticism has caused by even well-intentioned scholars who have eviscerated the Scripture through such an ideology. History constitutes a monumental testimony against Hagner’s embracing of the ideologies of historical criticism as well as the damage that it has caused the church.

Hagner excoriates “very conservative scholars” and “obscurantist fundamentalism” that refused to embrace some form of moderated historical critical ideology. He commends Hengel’s belief that “fundamentalism” and its accepting belief in the full trustworthiness in Scripture is actually a form of atheism (cp. Martin Hengel, “Eye-witness Memory and the Writing of the Gospels: Form Criticism, Community Tradition and the Authority of the Authors,” in *The Written Gospel*. Eds. Markus Bockmuehl and Donald Hagner. Cambridge: University Press, 2005, 70-96), quoting and affirming Hengel’s position that “Fundamentalism is a form of ‘unbelief’ that closes itself to the—God intended—historical reality” (Hengel, 94 n. 100). Hagner insists that “[r]epudiation of the critical Study of Scripture amounts to a gnostic-like denial of the historical character of the Christian faith” (10). Apparently, Hagner agrees with Hengel that, Fundamentalist polemic against the

‘historical-critical method’ does not understand historical perception” (10) and that “Fundamentalism is a form of ‘unbelief that closes itself to the –God intended—historical reality” (page 10 footnote 17). Apparently, Hagner (and Hengel) believes that since the Scriptures were mediated through history and human agency, this opens the documents up to the documents being fallible human products. Because of the Scripture being based in historical knowledge, one cannot use the word “certain” but only “probable,” for Hagner insists that the “word ‘prove,’ although perhaps appropriate in mathematics and science, is out of place when it comes to historical knowledge” (9). In studying Scripture, compelling proof will always be lacking (9).

In response, Hagner (and Hengel) apparently do not understand the issue, for fundamentalism (e.g., *The Jesus Crisis*) never argued against criticism but only the kind of criticism utilized and the philosophical principle involved in such criticism that closed off the study of Scripture a priori before any analysis could be done, i.e., historical-critical ideologies. Historical criticism is a purposeful, psychological operation designed to silence Scripture and deflect away from its plain, normal sense implications, i.e., to dethrone it from influence in church and society. While left-wing critical scholarship will openly admit this, so-called “moderate” evangelicals like Hagner choose to ignore the intent of historical criticism.

With this operating assumption about understanding Scripture, some sampling highlights of Hagner’s alleged “balanced” approach to historical-critical ideologies: First, “we have no reliable chronology of Jesus ministry” in the Gospels (63). Since the Gospels are “historical narratives” they involve “interpretation” by the evangelists and that “level of interpretation can be high” (63). Since the gospel writers largely (but not completely) reflect ancient Roman *bioi* as the “closest analogy” from antiquity” and since *bioi* were not necessarily always without interpretation (61), the “[t]he Evangelists compare well with the secular historians of their own day, and their narratives remain basically trustworthy.” (65).

Second, like other critically-trained European scholars, Hagner accepts Lessing’s “ugly ditch” and the German/British concept of *historie*- (actual verifiable events) vs. *geschichte*—(faith interpretations of events) of a dichotomy between the Jesus of the Gospels and the “historical Jesus.” (83-104). Although critical of some historical Jesus research, Hagner concedes that “the Jesus of history was to some extent different from the Gospels’ portrayal of him” and “if we cannot look for a one-to-one correspondence between the Jesus of history and the Jesus of the early church’s faith, we can at least establish a degree of continuity between the two” (97). Furthermore, “we are in no position to write a biography of Jesus” based in the information from the New Testament since the gospels are “kerygmatic portrayals of the story of Jesus” (98).

Third, Hagner embraces the idea that a book can have “pseudonymity” as acceptable in the New Testament canon. Hagner argues, “We have very little to lose in allowing the category of Deutero-Pauline letters. If it happens that some other person have written these four, or even six documents [e.g. Ephesians, Pastorals] in the name of Paul, we are not talking about forgery or deception” (429). “The ancient world on the whole did not have the same kind of sensitivity to pseudonymity that is typical in the modern world, with its concern for careful attribution and copyright” (429). “The authority and canonicity of the material is in no way affected” by books put into final shape by disciples of the prophets” (429). “The fact is that the Pauline corpus, with deuteron-letters as well as without them, stands under the banner of the authoritative Paul” (429). Hagner supports British scholar, I. Howard Marshall’s view on “pseudonymous” writings in the New Testament: “In order to avoid the idea of deceit, Howard Marshall has coined the words “allonymity” and “allepigraphy” in which the prefix *pseudos* (“false”) is replaced with *allos* (“other”) which gives a more positive concept to the writing of a work in the name of another person (431). Hagner notes that another British scholar James Dunn has come to a similar conclusion (see I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, 84). Hagner says, “We do not know beyond a shadow of a doubt that there are Deutero-Pauline letters in the Pauline corpus, but if in the weighing

of historical probabilities it seems to us that there are, we can freely admit that this too is a way in which God has mediated Scripture to us” (432). Apparently, to Hagner and others, God uses false attribution to accomplish his purpose of communication of His Word that encourages the highest ethical standards upon men! Thus, for Hagner, Paul most likely did not write Ephesians as well as The Pastoral Epistles (1-2 Timothy and Titus) (428). They should be viewed in the category of Deutero-Pauline letters (429). Hagner even devotes a whole section of his Introduction to this category of Deutero-Pauline letters (585-642). He regards the book of James as possibly not written by James: “we cannot completely exclude the alternative possibility that the book is pseudonymous. Already in the time of Jerome it was regarded as such . . . Least likely of all, but again not impossible, the letter could have been written by another, little known or unknown, person named ‘James’” (675). 2 Peter is “Almost certainly not by Peter. Very probably written by a disciple of Peter or a member of the Petrine circle” (714). The author of Revelation is “Almost certainly not by the Apostle John. Possibly by John ‘The Elder’ but more probably by another John, otherwise unknown to us, who may have been a member of the Johannine circle” (761).

In sum, Hagner’s work represents what may well replace Guthrie’s *New Testament Introduction*. One can only imagine the impact will be that British and European evangelical critical

scholarship represented by Hagner's assertions regarding his "balanced" use of historical-critical presuppositions will have on the next generation of God's preachers and teachers! As Machen said long ago, "as go the theological seminaries, so go the churches" (Machen, *The Christian Faith in the Modern world*, 65).