

we like them or not, whether we presuppose them or not, or whether we believe them or not, they exist. They are undeniably there, and to examine them completely and impartially is the duty of all those who are going to serve the Lord in an intelligent fashion (i.e. in a way that does not "piously" deny reason or the evidence it is faced with).

It would properly follow to assert that all people do actually "presuppose" the evidence correctly, it is only their subsequent misconstruing of the evidence that leads them to wrongly assert falsehoods such as the Wellhausen theory. This is why it is my conviction that when we examine the facts which God has made, and the Book which he has inspired, we will find they fit together. Therefore, I think it is worthwhile for us to examine them and to see how they fit together. We will see that where people go off track it is not simply because they adopted a false presupposition at the first point, but it is because they failed to look the facts in the face at many points along the way and instead misinterpreted them and drew wrong conclusions from them.

My desire for this course is twofold. On the one hand I want to remove from you any attitude which you may have of thinking that it is completely senseless to believe in this documentary business, and that it is absurd to even pay any attention to it. The reason for this is that there are many people of great intellect, who have done a great deal of very careful study, have believed in it and still believe in it today. I want you to see the great strength it has, of how it came into existence and widespread acceptance when many men, against their will and their own presuppositions, were dragged into it because they could not answer the facts presented to them in faith. Therefore, it is my desire for you to have something of a sympathetic understanding of its development and of the situation of some of those who have had such doubts. My second desire is that you should see something of the actual situation as regards the argument and the basis upon which it rests, and thus help you to see its weaknesses and the facts which I believe make it clear that it does not rest upon a true conclusion from fact. I think that in a group with your background it is vital that both of these purposes be realized. Of course it is possible for someone to ignore the existence of Higher Criticism altogether and simply go on and do evangelistic, pastoral, or missionary work and never pay any attention to the questions it raises or its effects upon those around them. You may completely ignore the Higher Criticism, but if your work is at all successful you will find students from families affected by your ministry, who are bright young people anxious to make their lives count for the Lord, who have gone to universities, and of whom many in a very short time will become affected directly or indirectly by the Higher Criticism and its results and implications. You will then find that if you know nothing about it, except that it is perfectly absurd to believe and that no sensible person could believe it, then very soon your young people will be put into a position of having to decide who is intelligent, who is right -- this godly minister who has been a nice spiritual influence or this professor. Many of them will decide from what they will see as the viewpoint of intellectual honesty. If they think that they must hold their faith completely when regarding the Pentateuch, then they are going to consider the facts presented to them by their professors and interpret them according to the conclusions of the Higher Critical Theories.