Report on the Hermeneutics Conference at Chicago November 10-13, 1982

Until recently I had not realized the great force of the new attack that is being made on the Scripture. For many years there have been those who have declared that the Scripture is unscientific, unhistorical and unreliable. These attacks constitute a real problem for the Christian church. There have also been those who claim to believe in the authority of Scripture but deny its inerrancy. I believe this, which centers largely in Fuller Seminary, is also a great danger to the Christian church. It was on account of this danger that the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy was founded. When the council met five years ago it worked out a very excellent statement on biblical inerrancy and most of the three hundred or so who were in attendance signed it. A number of those present felt that it was important to deal next with the question of hermeneutics.

In recent years there have been books written under such titles as The New Hermeneutics or "The Two Horizons." There is quite a movement to question whether language is adequate to convey truth about God, and that since the Bible was written by people living in a different age with a different culture, different background, different thought patters, etc., it is very difficult to know what it really means. The idea of the two horizons is

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that there is a great differential between the horizon of thought of the ancient writer s ' and that of the individual who reads it today with a different language and a different culture, and that we must seek a blending of these two horizons. Thus then the meaning of the Bible would be different for every reader.

This is a very clever device of Satan to break down authority of the Bible. There are now a number of books devoted to this theme, and many articles, written in various languages. It was planned five years ago that a conference on hermeneutics should be held and it was expected it would be held quite a bit before now.