

- b. Fallacies of Generalization--you will profit from reading Fischer's fourth chapter which bears this title. Very important here is his catch-all heading: "fallacies of statistical nonsense." There is much misuse of statistics in biblical studies, and with the increased use of computers in the biblical fields, there will undoubtedly be more "nonsense" out there. Caveat emptor!

The use of statistics cannot necessarily prove something. In fact, they may not necessarily even be significant (Ex: Pro-homosexual position argues that "know" & its use in Genesis 57 story of Sodom means "to get to know" w/ no sexual intention on the basis of its statistical use in the OT - Misses context)

- c. The fallacy of Anachronism--an anachronism is "...the description, analysis, or judgment of an event as if it occurred at some point in time other than when it actually happened" (Fischer, pp. 132-33).

--a probable example of anachronism is Bultmann's hypothesis of pre-Christian Gnosticism as an interpretive framework for the NT.

- d. The fallacy of false dichotomous questions--dichotomy is division into two parts. "Dichotomy is used incorrectly when a question is constructed so that it demands a choice between two answers which are in fact not exclusive or not exhaustive" (Fischer, p. 10). An either...or question.

In fact, there are often more positions ~~or categories~~ or categories than just two.

4. The Problem of Meaning and Significance

Our basic concern here is with the question: how does the interpreter "translate" the culturally specific teaching of the Bible into a message that has significance (application) for a different time and culture. In the following points I am indebted, in part, to the discussion of W. C. Kaiser, Jr. (Toward an Exegetical Theology, pp. 114-21).

- a. Recognize that because Scripture is culturally specific it may be necessary to distinguish between the *content* and the *form* of a biblical injunction in order to apply it correctly to the new context. It may be that there are timeless principles embodied in culturally dated forms. In this case the principle should be identified carefully.

I say that it may be necessary, not that it always is necessary. For example, I would not say that the form of the sixth commandment needs to be changed in order to apply this injunction to modern culture.

The author and his context should be the final judge in making such distinctions.