

God's Word or Our Word: 7 Methodological Errors in Contemporary Liberal Theologies

Incorrect methods produce incorrect results. Or, as Marx said: "He who formulates the question, answers it." This is certainly true in theology. When we find ourselves in disagreement with contemporary liberal theologies, it is not sufficient to question their conclusions; we need to question the process itself that led to the problematic conclusions. In this session, we will look at seven methodological errors that contribute to erroneous conclusions in modern liberal theologies and one core issue that is the root of all seven.

Ádám Szabados is a Hungarian theologian and the leader of the Hungarian Evangelical Forum. Until 2017 he had been a pastor for 20 years. He is married to Dóra and has two adult sons. He studied English literature and linguistics at the University of Veszprém (MA equivalent, with honours), and theology at Schloss Mittersill Study Center (Diploma in Biblical Studies and Culture) and at Covenant Theological Seminary (ThM in Exegetical Theology). He received his PhD (summa cum laude) in the area of New Testament at Károli Reformed University. His study on the Reformational understanding of sin has been published by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He wrote three other books: *Erosz nyomában* (Traces of Eros) (Harmat Publishing House, 2008), *Az apostolok hagyománya* (The Tradition of the Apostles) (KRE-L'Harmattan 2020; 2nd edition 2021), and *Teológus a sakktáblán* (Theologian on the Chessboard) (Luther-Harmat, 2021). Ádám also has a popular theological-apologetic website (divinity.szabadosadam.hu).

I. Introduction

II. Adjusting exegesis to controversial scientific theories

III. Chronological snobism driving hermeneutical conclusions

IV. Trajectory hermeneutics offering justification to progressive Western values

V. Locating meaning in the perlocutionary act instead of the illocutionary act

VI. Making experience the norm for ethical principles

VII. Absolutizing certain metaphors at the expense of other metaphors

VIII. Enforcing an egalitarian logic on the biblical worldview

IX. Conclusions

Suggested Readings:

- D. A. Carson (ed.): *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016)
- Gregory K. Beale: *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism: Responding to Challenges to Biblical Authority* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008)
- Kevin J. Vanhoozer: *Is There a Meaning in This Text: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998)
- Kevin J. Vanhoozer: *Remythologizing Theology: Divine Action, Passion, and Authorship* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- M. J. Erickson, P. K. Helseth, J. Taylor (eds.): *Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004)
- Stanley N. Gundry (ed.): *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009)
- Stanley N. Gundry (ed.): *Four Views on the Historical Adam* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013)
- J. I. Packer: *'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1958, 1988)
- B. B. Warfield: *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible* (online here: https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/sdg/warfield/The_Inspiration_and_Authority_of_B_B_Warfield.pdf)