HISTORICAL AND LITERARY CRITICISMS FOR PREACHING

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1. **Historical Criticism:** Who was the author of the text? Where was the text written? When was the text written? For which situation was the text written?
2. **Philological Criticism:** What are the key words on which this text revolves? How would the listeners or readers to whom this text was originally addressed have heard these words? How can we translate these words in our contemporary words, without reducing their original meanings?
3. **Form Criticism:** What is the form of this text? What was the function of the form in the ancient community? Does the form of the text suggest a form for the sermon?
4. **Redaction Criticism:** Can we identify the approximate shape of the text before it reached the author’s hand? How has the author reshaped the tradition? Does the literary context cast light on the interpretation of the text by the redactor? Which passage comes before? What comes after? What is the effect of the placement of the text?
5. **Structuralism:** What is the basic plot of the text? What is the situation at the beginning and end of the text? What kind of transformation takes place as the text moves from beginning to end?
6. **Sociological Criticism:** What was the social position of the community to which the text was addressed? Does the text or background reading suggest that an aspect of social history might be important to the interpretation of the text? Is the congregation to which the sermon will be preached in a social position that is similar or dissimilar to that of the community to which the text was originally addressed?
7. **Canonical Criticism:** What was the function of this text in the community to which it was addressed? Does the text confirm or call for a reform of the present situation of the community?
8. **New Literary Criticism:** What is the literary genre of the text? Why did the author use this particular literary genre?
9. **Narrative Criticism:** What is the setting of the story? How does the story unfold its plot (a deep and surface structure of the story)? What are the functions of the characters in the story? How does an event(s) occur in the story? How is the event arranged in chronological order (liner, spiral, etc.)?
10. **Rhetorical Criticism:** What is the character of the author (“implied author”)? How does the author try to persuade his/her audience? What kind of communicative methods does the author use? How do we experience the dynamics between the author and the original audience?
11. **Performance Criticism:** How can the text be performed as a way to experience a new meaning of the text? Can the text be presented (performed) without violating the truthfulness of the performer’s presence (persona)?