

Chapter 1 tries to discern the thrust of the text of *2 Corinthians*. Young argues for the unity of the letter which is to read as a whole. According to him the letter is to be construed as Paul's apology in the quasi-technical sense of a "speech for the defense." The text's primary purpose is then self-explanation. Certain features of the OT material from Psalms, Prophets and Wisdom literature had come to mould his self-understanding and his discernment of what was going on in the conflict between himself and the Corinth community. This paves the way for a dynamic hermeneutic for the contemporary world. As the Bible gave Paul discernment into his own situation, so it can have a creative bearing on the lives of different peoples of different ages, cultures and situations. Young devotes chapter 4 to the question of determining meaning of the text. He observes what happens in the process of understanding a text and draws both theoretical and practical conclusions about the process itself.

Ford's contribution begins with the chapter on Hermeneutics and *2 Corinthians*. It aims to help the re-reading of the letter, or the reader's 'performance' of the letter. For this the author provides a set of questions, concepts and possibilities which may inform the practice of interpretation: relevance of hermeneutical theory to *2 Corinthians*, the significance of the language of the letter, the importance of the written form of the letter, and of its genre, the relevance of Paul's own intention in the meaning of this letter, the importance of the context for its interpretation, the possibility of overcoming the hermeneutical gap between ourselves and *2 Corinthians*, the 'subjective' character of our interpretation, the reality of truth of the letter, the application of the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' to it, and finally the way the letter can be appropriated and applied by readers.

In Chapter 6 Ford explores the metaphor of the "economy of God" in *2 Corinthians*, which may enhance our understanding of the letter. This metaphor plays a vital role both in taking up all of life into the movement of the gospel and in elucidating the meaning of gospel itself. The new sociological approach of Chapter 7 provides a more adequate account of the Church and wider social background of *2 Corinthians*. Chapter 8 assesses the concept of Paul's authority then and now. First, Ford looks at Paul's own way of understanding and using his authority in the letter. Then he relates these to the issue of Paul's apostleship and to his whole context in Church and society. The letter then becomes a part of the main written authority of the Church. The author brings it into dialogue with the way Scripture and Church authority developed. There