



Whose Community? Which Interpretation? (The Church and Postmodern Culture): Philosophical Hermeneutics for the Church

Merold Westphal

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In this compelling volume, renowned philosopher Merold Westphal introduces current philosophical thinking related to interpreting the Bible. Recognizing that no theology is completely free of philosophical "contamination," Westphal engages and mines contemporary hermeneutical theory in service of the church. He encourages readers to embrace the proliferation of interpretations based on different perspectives as a way to get at the richness of the biblical text.

"Merold Westphal is a clear, insightful, and astute interpreter of philosophers for Christian understanding and of Christianity for philosophical understanding. A faithful and learned churchman, Westphal here mines his deep philosophical learning but wears it lightly, enabling beginners to access important insights while inviting others to probe significant issues. This book deserves a wide readership."--**L. Gregory Jones**, dean of the Divinity School and professor of theology, Duke University

"Westphal deftly navigates between hermeneutical despair and hermeneutical arrogance to arrive at a hermeneutic that affirms the vital importance of interpretation and yet insists that Scripture itself truly speaks. The result is not only a judicious and correct theory of interpretation but also a striking demonstration of what such a humble and respectful hermeneutic looks like in practice."--**Bruce Ellis Benson**, professor and chair of the philosophy department, Wheaton College

"In this beautiful little book, Merold Westphal brings to bear on the interpretation of Scripture his life-long interest in hermeneutics. With his customary clarity of analysis and style, the author debunks the common equation of interpretation with relativism, showing theologians, pastors, and laypeople what the church can learn from philosophical hermeneutics about reading and performing God's word. Besides showing how 'Athens can be helpful to Jerusalem,' this book provides an excellent introduction to Gadamer's hermeneutics and to the most-central issues and thinkers surrounding interpretation theory, including the important aspects of community and politics. This book is a gift not only to the church but also to anyone looking for a clear and thoughtful introduction to contemporary interpretation theory."--**Jens Zimmermann**, professor of English and Canada Research Chair for Interpretation, Religion, and Culture, Trinity Western University

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