



### Imagine we have a question to answer: 'explain redaction criticism'

Notice this is not asking us to evaluate redaction criticism. Evaluation requires us to think of strengths and weaknesses, or problems with the use of redaction criticism. To explain is, in one sense, to break down an argument or an idea into its component parts. So when we analyse an idea we can do a number of things:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Pushing/extending</b> | we make a point and then push or extend the point   |
| <b>Illustrating</b>      | we make a point and then illustrate it with some specific, relevant examples.                   |
| <b>Contrasting</b>       | we make a point and then contrast the point with another, different idea, to sharpen the point. |

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH.

Redaction criticism emerged as part of the quest for the historical Jesus – indeed, it was a critique of this quest because redaction critics pointed out that history and theology are intertwined and inseparable. For example, where Matthew stresses that the scriptures are fulfilled, he takes many examples in his opening chapter of the genealogy of Jesus which stretches back to Adam. The point is not whether Adam existed (as a historical fact) but that the author of Matthew is trying to stress how Scriptural prophecy has been fulfilled in Jesus as a descendant both of David and of Adam. Matthew's gospel, we might conclude, is written for a Jewish audience who needed to be convinced that this Messiah (the chosen one of God) is the one foretold by prophets of old, and who stands in the line of the great Jewish kings of old, like David. And Solomon. In contrast with those who ask "what is the historical basis for the Jesus story", redaction critics ask 'what is the meaning and purpose of the Jesus story'. History, to the redaction critic, is lost in the mists of theological time.



Taking three coloured highlighters, (orange, green and red, for example) highlight a part of sentence that

- a. **extends** a point (orange)
- b. **contrasts** a point with something else (red)
- c. **illustrates** a point with an example (green)

EXAMPLE.

Redaction criticism emerged as part of the quest for the historical Jesus – indeed, **it was a critique of this quest because redaction critics pointed out that history and theology are intertwined and inseparable.** For example, where **Matthew stresses that the scriptures are fulfilled, he takes many examples in his opening chapter of the genealogy of Jesus which stretches back to Adam.** The point is not whether Adam existed (as a historical fact) **but that the author of Matthew is trying to stress how Scriptural prophecy has been fulfilled in Jesus as a descendant both of David and of Adam.** Matthew’s gospel, we might conclude, is written for a Jewish audience who needed to be convinced that this Messiah (the chosen one of God) **is the one foretold by prophets of old, and who stands in the line of the great Jewish kings of old, like David. And Solomon.** In contrast with those who ask “what is the historical basis for the Jesus story”, redaction critics ask ‘what is the meaning and purpose of the Jesus story’. History, to the redaction critic, is lost in the mists of theological time.