
Introduction: Why Study *Antiochene Theōria*?

This book consists of three main thrusts. In the first (chapter 2), I seek to define and illustrate *theōria* in two primary Antiochene church fathers—Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret of Cyrus—of the fourth and fifth centuries.¹ In the second (chapters 3–4), I unpack this research in order to understand how these two Antiochenes locate links between the OT and the NT, as well as between the biblical text and the lives of their readers.² Here I have several goals. One is to help correct the misperceptions of some who affirm what they believe to be an Antiochene exegetical method, while ignoring or minimizing Antiochene *theōria*. My second goal is to challenge claim of others that Antiochene exegesis is essentially the same as Alexandrian. In the third thrust of the book (chapters 4–6), I attempt to show how Antiochene *theoretic*³ exegesis offers both a critique of some recent forms of (or approaches to) theological interpretation of Scripture (TIS) and a paradigm for good TIS.

Returning to the first thrust—defining and illustrating Antiochene *theōria* in the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret of Cyrus—I chose the Antiochenes for at least four reasons. First and generally, because they tend to be ignored in the discussions of TIS, and I want to make a case that they have something to offer the TIS movement.⁴ Second and more particularly, I chose Theodore and Theodoret because they represent examples of the Antiochene exegetical method on either end of the spectrum, with Theodore’s more literal and Theodoret’s less so. A case will be made that the school of Antioch remains a viable entity for a particular brand of faithful literal-historical exegesis that also incorporates at times a spiritual⁵ or theological signification for a given passage. This is Antiochene theoretic exegesis.

Third, I chose Theodore and Theodoret because there are sufficient extant primary sources for the study. These sources include Greek and Latin translations of their exegetical works found in such multivolume series as J. P. Migne’s *Patrologia Graeca* and *Patrologia Latina*, and those translated into English in the Fathers of the Church series, among others.⁶ These will be supplemented with catenae from the Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (ACCS).⁷

Fourth, I chose Theodore and Theodoret, because there is little research focused on their use of *theōria*. While significant research on Antiochene exegesis exists, there remains a relative dearth of serious and accurate study on Antiochene *theōria*.⁸ Bradley Nassif’s dissertation, which addresses Antiochene *theōria* particularly in John Chrysostom’s homiletic writings, is the most sustained treatment of Antiochene *theōria* over the last quarter century.⁹ He fills a lacuna for Chrysostom’s understanding of *theōria*, but only touches on Theodore and Theodoret, acknowledging a gap in the literature for Theodore’s and Theodoret’s understanding of *theōria*.¹⁰

Nassif also provides a useful service by chronicling the research on Antiochene *theōria* from 1880 through 1990 for seven major scholars and a number of secondary sources, while adding to that base of scholarship with his own study of *theōria* in Chrysostom's writings. In chapter 3 of this book, I attempt to build on Nassif's foundation, surveying the secondary research conducted on Antiochene—and in particular Theodorian and Theodoretian—*theōria* since 1991. In particular, chapter 3 surveys four patristic scholars (Robert Hill, Frederick McLeod, Bradley Nassif,¹¹ and Frances Young) and six biblical scholars (Godfrey Ashby, John Breck, David Dockery, Walter Kaiser, Harry Pappas, and Jerry Shepherd) for their views on Antiochene *theōria*. These scholars are of Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant backgrounds, providing a broad range of perspectives in the analysis.

In that part of the book, I attempt to show how the primary research of chapter 2 can help correct misperceptions of some commentators, who affirm what they believe to be an Antiochene exegetical method, while ignoring or minimizing Antiochene *theōria*, and of others who claim that Antiochene exegesis is essentially the same as Alexandrian. These two misreadings are related. The first reductionistic explanation of Antiochene exegesis (as strictly an early form of historical-critical exegesis as practiced by scholars in the last century) has given way to a second, and opposite reductionism by some patristic scholars today who say there is no essential difference between the Antiochene and Alexandrian schools of interpretation. It is true that certain historical critics as well as conservative exegetes in the last couple of centuries have strongly recommended emulation of Antiochene exegesis, while essentially disposing of the its use of *theōria*. For example, Frederic Farrar in the late 1800s characterized the perspective of Antiochene exegesis as strictly an early form of historical-critical exegesis:

The third great school, the School of Antioch, possessed a deeper insight into the true method of exegesis than any which preceded or succeeded it during a thousand years. . . . [T]heir system of Biblical interpretation approached more nearly than any other to that which is now adopted by the Reformed Churches throughout the world, and . . . if they had not been too uncharitably anathematised by the angry tongue, and crushed by the iron hand of a dominant orthodoxy, the study of their commentaries, and the adoption of their exegetic system, might have saved Church commentaries from centuries of futility and error.¹²

Farrar expresses frustration that the Antiochene method of exegesis did not survive as the dominant method into the Middle Ages because of uncharitable “angry tongues” and stifling orthodoxy.¹³ Yet, as Farrar praises the Antiochene “true method of exegesis,” he never discloses awareness of Antiochene *theōria* as integral to that method.¹⁴

Heinrich Kihn provides another example of misunderstanding *theōria* in Theodore’s writings, arguing that Theodore dismissed the use of the term, because many in his day confused it with allegory.¹⁵

Other biblical scholars express more balance. For example, Joseph Barber Lightfoot describes the methods of exegetes of “the great Antiochene school of interpreters” as grammatically precise and of a “critical spirit generally. . . . But . . . discarding the [Alexandrian] allegorical treatment of Scripture and maintaining *for the most part* the simple and primary meaning.”¹⁶ So Lightfoot hints at something beyond the literal in Antiochene exegesis without designating it as *theōria*.

More recently, Maurice Wiles approves of Theodore of Mopsuestia’s critical method, while warning against anachronistic affirmation of Theodore’s historical exegetical methods. “For the moment it must suffice to insist that the emphasis on literal and historical interpretation, which is so much the most famous characteristic of Antiochene exegesis, *did not in any way detract from the strictly theological character of the enterprise.*”¹⁷ Wiles notes the

“famous” nature of the “literal and historical” aspects of Antiochene exegesis, which apparently was quite popular in and before his day.¹⁸ Simultaneously, Wiles claims that Antiochene exegesis was “strictly theological.”¹⁹ He cannot laud Theodore’s theologically driven exegesis, apparently for its lack of objectivity pursuant to historical-critical exegesis.²⁰ But Antiochene objectivity, expressed in the emphasis on history²¹ and eschewal of allegorizing, is why many who affirm historical-grammatical interpretation appreciate Antiochene exegesis. Nevertheless, the affirmation of the historical text does *not* deny the *theōria* of the text for the Antiochenes.²²

Misreading of the Antiochene interpretation continues in this century. For example, in 2002, V. George Shillington published *Reading the Sacred Text*. Though he rightly acknowledges that Antiochene interpretation at times is allegorical, he wrongly denies that the necessity of Spirit enabled interpretation for the Antiochenes.²³ In so doing, Shillington overlooks *theōria* (the Antiochene interpretive method enabled by both human contemplation and the Spirit) in the name of an early example of a foothold for literal interpretation.²⁴ The present study demonstrates that both Theodore and Theodoret would ask Shillington why literal interpretation must deny Holy Spirit illumination.²⁵

Other recent analyses acknowledge the Antiochenes’ emphasis on literal interpretation, without ignoring their “spiritual” interpretation. For example, Dennis Brown notes, “From the Antiochene school Jerome learned that an interpreter of the Bible must first study and explain the literal, plain sense, and only after this has been accomplished should he venture beyond this to the deeper, spiritual interpretation.”²⁶ Brown does not, however, explain how the Antiochenes determined this “deeper, spiritual interpretation.” But G. A. Keith does with a brief description. “Insight (Gk. *theōria*) was

the name they [the Antiochenes] gave to this additional [spiritual] sense.”²⁷

Few evangelical scholars attempt to explain Antiochene *theōria*, and even fewer actually use it in their exegesis.²⁸ If an exegetical method is not used, it remains only an impractical theory or is forgotten. But it is hoped that—as a third thrust of this book—my analysis may offer practical help to critique the contemporary return to TIS, by showing that interpretation can be theological without dismissing the historical aspects of the text. Theological interpretation is now a major topic of research and discussion for a broad range of biblical scholars, even finding its way to the pulpits of conservative evangelical churches.²⁹ But what rationale is used for theological interpretation and how does it challenge the hallmarks of historical-grammatical exegesis? I believe an understanding of Antiochene *theōria* may offer an overlooked paradigm for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of recent TIS.³⁰

Necessity of the Study

As noted above, too many biblical scholars continue to display insufficient understanding of patristic exegetical methods. There may have been a time when that had little impact on Western Protestant churches, but now Western church members are seeking their early church roots, including Eastern church roots.³¹ Furthermore, some evangelicals are questioning the sufficiency of historical-grammatical interpretation and are turning to patristic theological interpretation by Augustine or even Origen without asking the Antiochenes to the table. The study of Antiochene theoretic exegesis (*theōria* in their exegesis) can offer balance to the extremes of purely historical interpretation, on the one hand, and theological interpretation uprooted from the text of Scripture, on the other. It can help to

keep the Bible *in* Bible study. Furthermore, analysis of Antiochene theoretic exegesis can provide a window onto better understanding of Eastern patristic exegesis (as viewed from primary sources and the writings of Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox scholars).

Expand Knowledge of Patristic Exegesis

The earlier part of this introduction outlined some discussion on Antiochene interpretive method. The trajectory there suggested that earlier biblical scholars showed too little awareness of *theōria* as integral to Antiochene exegesis. Even a study dedicated to Chrysostom's biblical interpretation places undue focus on historical-grammatical interpretation.³² Nassif objects, calling this a "truncated caricature of his [Chrysostom's] aims."³³ Admittedly, some evangelical descriptions of Antiochene *theōria* do appear helpful. For example, Rodney Petersen rightly describes *theōria* as a means *to discern* a text's "historical reality and proper spiritual intent" in the progress of revelation.³⁴ But he also seems to confuse typology with *theōria*.³⁵ And it may surprise some (for example, dispensationalists) to know that for the Antiochenes, *theōria* tends to promote continuity between the Old and New Testaments.³⁶

Among evangelicals, Gerald L. Bray, David S. Dockery, and Christopher A. Hall offer recent discussions of Antiochene *theōria* as an interpretive method.³⁷ And its greatest evangelical advocate remains Walter Kaiser.³⁸ Kaiser is the only evangelical I know who explicitly publishes exegesis with an Antiochene *theōria* approach.³⁹ Despite this, there has been tepid response to his writings on Antiochene *theōria* as an interpretive method.⁴⁰ And praise of an "Antiochene" interpretive method (like that of Farrar) continues to appear without any acknowledgment of Antiochene *theōria*.⁴¹ One

must read Eastern Orthodox scholars like Bradley Nassif or John Breck or Roman Catholic works like Bertrand de Margerie for more thorough treatments on Antiochene *theōria*.⁴²

Nevertheless, some evangelical biblical scholars, perhaps without realizing it, have suggested interpretive methods—which wed serious textual study with a theological reading—that appear similar to Antiochene *theōria*.⁴³ Though many appreciate the Antiochene school of interpretation as a “precursor” of historical-grammatical interpretation, apparently few really understand the Antiochene exegetical method. In a cultural milieu when many in the church are seeking to return to early church roots, understanding Antiochene *theōria* appears warranted.

Affirm Historical-Grammatical-Theological Interpretation

Evangelical biblical scholars today are far less likely to agree that historical-grammatical method (à la early E. D. Hirsch) is a sufficient means of biblical interpretation. Even conservative evangelicals have questioned the orthodoxy of bare singularity between the human and divine author’s intent. For example, Vern Poythress in 1986 argued for a nuanced approach that goes beyond merely seeking to interpret the human author’s intent as sufficient hermeneutic. Poythress rightly agrees that interpretation of a text must be based on the context of the speaker/author. But if there are two authors—human and divine—how can their contexts be *exactly* the same?⁴⁴ Poythress cites Kaiser as holding most strongly to one and the same intention between the human and divine authors.⁴⁵ Is this informed by Kaiser’s affirmation of Antiochene *theōria*?⁴⁶ Both Kaiser and Nassif emphasize that Antiochene *theōria* affirms single meaning in biblical texts.⁴⁷ Furthermore, Poythress acknowledges the relationship

between authorial intent and the NT authors' use of the OT, while denying that NT authors simply used historical-grammatical exegesis.⁴⁸ Nassif suggests that Antiochene *theōria* affirms the ability of the NT authors under inspiration to see connections with the OT and offers answers for application of Scripture and the use of the OT in the NT, all topics which have dominated much scholarly interest of evangelicals.⁴⁹

Evangelicals, who question the sufficiency of historical-grammatical interpretation alone as the means to properly understand Scripture, propose various augmentations. Some recommend historical-grammatical-*literary* interpretation and others historical-grammatical-*theological* interpretation—or both. For example, the authors of *Cracking Old Testament Codes* seek to help Christians understand their Old Testament better by promoting a historical-grammatical *theological and literary* approach to interpretation.⁵⁰ Perhaps the realization that fourth- and fifth-century allies have already provided a paradigm for historical-grammatical-*theological* interpretation could help evangelical biblical scholars as they seek to develop their own.⁵¹

Growing Non-Denominational Atmosphere

Related to the desire to connect with early church roots is a growing non-denominational atmosphere within evangelical churches. This should encourage biblical scholars to become more aware of Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox perspectives in order to distinguish points of agreement and disagreement. Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox scholars have dominated the study of Antiochene *theōria*, and relatively little scholarly work on the topic has been written from an evangelical or Protestant perspective.⁵² With the growth in

Eastern Orthodox churches in the West over the last several decades, evangelical leaders should become more aware of Eastern Orthodox views of biblical interpretation, which embrace Eastern patristic interpretation.⁵³ Antiochene *theōria* is a significant piece of this patristic interpretation.⁵⁴

Theōria: A Lens for Theological Interpretation

Theological interpretation of Scripture—most of which embraces some form of patristic exegesis—is no longer found only in Catholic or liberal circles.⁵⁵ Evangelical bastions like Wheaton College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary now also promote TIS.⁵⁶ Though an abundance of divergent views on TIS has been recently developed, few evangelicals have seriously entered the discussion.⁵⁷ Still fewer evangelical proponents of TIS include the Antiochenes in their recitation of the history of theological interpretation, and I am aware of none who explicate how Antiochene *theōria* could offer a paradigm for implementing TIS.⁵⁸ Perhaps we have overlooked a useful model for practicing theological interpretation, and for evaluating other TIS proposals.

Structure of the Study

The structure of this work follows the threefold thrust (discussed above) rather closely. After a survey of Theodore's and Theodoret's backgrounds and writings, their primary sources (commentaries) are analyzed in chapter 2, filtered with the goal of understanding their general programs of interpretation, and in particular, how they use the terms *theōria* and *theoreō* in their exegesis. Even more particularly, I seek to clarify how they use these two terms *hermeneutically*.

However, prior to this research, I engage the scholarship on who is an Antiochene, to show that both Theodore and Theodoret fit into this school of interpretation.⁵⁹ Theodore's and Theodoret's understandings of *theōria* are then summarized at the end of chapter 2, so as to provide a basis of comparison with the secondary literature.

In chapter 3, I summarize and engage the secondary literature, asking, What are the different views of Antiochene *theōria*? How do they compare with each other, with Nassif's dissertation (and the major seminal Antiochene scholars he chronicles)? And, in particular, I compare the secondary scholarship with my findings in chapter 2. For the most part, the secondary literature reviewed in chapter 3 is published after Nassif's 1991 dissertation (since Nassif's dissertation provides this summary of secondary sources prior to 1991). The secondary literature is compared and evaluated as a heuristic means to validate the conclusions of chapter 2 on Theodore's and Theodoret's views on *theōria*. Furthermore, the survey and analysis of the secondary sources reveals different opinions on the topics related to Antiochene *theōria*, which call for further discussion and synthesis.

Four such topics rise to the top, which I address in chapter 4. Because they are such large topics, I delimit the discussion of each by the views of the scholars whom I include in chapter 3 along with the views of Theodore, Theodoret, and Chrysostom. Of course, other views are brought into the discussion as foils or to validate conclusions for each of the four discussion topics. The first topic discussed in chapter 4 is the relationship between typology and allegory, addressed through the Antiochenes' treatment of Gal. 4:24. The second covers the two Antiochenes' views of the inspiration of Scripture and how theirs compare with the pneumatological interpretive insight of *theōria*, as well as with the Eastern Orthodox understanding of the inspiration of Scripture and Tradition. The third topic is the doctrine of illumination. In particular, how does

illumination of Scripture adhere to Theodore's and Theodoret's understandings of *theōria* and how does that compare with the same doctrine as taught in Scripture? Fourth, in the secondary literature on Antiochene *theōria*, a dissonant cord often sounds regarding the single or polyvalent sense of Scripture. To which did the Antiochenes hold and, more importantly, which accords best with Scripture?

These four issues provide further background analysis prior to undertaking serious study on TIS through the lens of Antiochene *theōria*—the theme of chapter 5. In chapter 5, first a general spectrum of approaches to commentary writing—from totally historical (with no references to theology) to totally theological (with no references to history)—is put in place.⁶⁰ This spectrum helps to orient the reader to modern TIS approaches. Then I survey five kinds of TIS. Specifically I survey and evaluate the TIS approaches of Adam, Fowl, Watson, Billings, and Vanhoozer.⁶¹ I attempt to determine each of their places on Trimm's spectrum and to ascertain how their proposals are helpful or where they appear deficient. In particular, I compare Vanhoozer's approach with Antiochene theoretic exegesis, because his appears most favorable and most similar to Antiochene TIS. I find seven positive comparisons. However, Vanhoozer's writings provide scant inclination toward Antiochene *theōria* as a paradigm for TIS. Indeed, he seems to express disinclination toward Antiochene *theōria*. Thus, several suggestions are made as to why this might be. In closing chapter 5, I engage D. A. Carson's recent article "Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Yes, But . . ." with an eye toward whether the two Antiochenes might be inclined to agree with him on his ayes and nays of much that goes on recently in the world of TIS.⁶² I believe their inclinations, from the analysis of their commentaries in chapters 2–4, to be rather close to Carson's.

In chapter 6, the various conclusions of the entire dissertation are pulled together, after a brief comparison of Antiochene theoretic exegesis with canonical interpretation.

This work affirms that Theodore and Theodoret are Antiochene in their interpretive methods. They both emphasize a literal interpretive method while also using *theōria* as a hermeneutical term. The significant secondary scholars affirm this. They also affirm a continued distinction between typology and allegory for the Antiochenes, though nuanced. Inspiration for the two Antiochenes is unique for the Bible, but the term is at times confusingly used for other postcanonical writings when it reflects accurately the teachings of Scripture. And illumination (especially as linked to *theōria*) for the two Antiochenes is understood as the Holy Spirit-wrought ability to interpret Scripture, to make appropriate links between the Testaments, and to apply it to one's (reader's) life. Authorial intent—and, in particular, single-authorial intent—remains a concern for the two Antiochenes (because of their high view of ἱστορία), while not always claiming an absolute unity between human and divine intent. Finally, Theodore and Theodoret offer a balanced (centrist on Trimm's spectrum) approach to TIS, which provides a theology rooted in and informed by the text, similar to that seen in Vanhoozer's program of TIS.

Notes

1. "The watchword of the Antiochian school was *theōria*, from a Greek word meaning 'to see.' They contended that the spiritual sense was in no way separable from the literal sense, as it was in the Alexandrian school. The exegetes of the Antiochian school were united in their single-minded concern to preserve the integrity of history and the natural sense of a passage. But they were just as concerned about being overly literalistic as about the

excesses of allegory and what they called ‘Judaism.’ Both extremes were equally dangerous; only *theōria* could offer the middle road out of the dangers on both sides” (Walter C. Kaiser Jr. and Moisés Silva, *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning*, 1st ed. [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994], 266). Antiochene *theōria* is not to be confused with the mystical *theōria* of the Alexandrian school (Edmund J. Rybarczyk, *Beyond Salvation: Eastern Orthodoxy and Classical Pentecostalism on Becoming like Christ*, Paternoster Theological Monographs (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 29 n. 25). But the use of *theōria* even among the Antiochenes is not monolithic. For example, “Chrysostom knew *theōria* as the divine revelation or mystical illumination of spiritual realities which attended the processes of inscripturation, interpretation, or homiletical discourse. The Antiochene pastor utilized the hermeneutic to describe the nature of the prophetic experience as an inspired revelation of heavenly realities or of deeper Christian truths. Quite unlike Theodore of Mopsuestia or Diodore of Tarsus’s hyperbolic method of messianic prophecy, Chrysostom generally uproots such prophecies as Zechariah 9:9 from their historical setting and interprets them as direct prophecies of Christ. However like Diodore, his exegetical tutor, Chrysostom also applied *theōria* to the interpretive task of disclosing the soteriological significance of typological relationships and a broad range of narrative statements and figures of speech in Scripture” (Bradley Nassif, “The ‘Spiritual Exegesis’ of Scripture: The School of Antioch Revisited,” *Anglican Theological Review* 75, no. 4 [Fall 1993]: 437–70, here 457).

2. That is, how did *theōria* help them to see “the spiritual sense . . . in no way separable from the literal sense”? (Kaiser and Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*, 1st ed., 266).
3. “*Theoretic*” is the adjectival form of *theōria*.
4. A case for this will be made in chapter 5. But a dismissal of the Antiochenes is also found in the writings of patristic scholars, few of whom acknowledge a clear distinction between Antiochene *theōria* and Alexandrian ἀλληγορία (for example, Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*, 2 vols., Bible in Ancient Christianity 1 [Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004]; John Behr, *The Case against Diodore and Theodore: Texts and Their Contexts*, Oxford Early Christian Texts [Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011]). For all that this author appreciates in Donald Fairbairn’s analysis of the relationship between exegesis and theology for the early church fathers, Fairbairn also minimizes the distinctions between

typology (not even mentioning *theōria*) and allegory (Donald Fairbairn, “Patristic Exegesis and Theology: The Cart and the Horse,” *WTJ* 69, no. 1 [Spring 2007]: 1–19). This will be discussed further in chapter 2.

5. This is defined in chapter 2.
6. The Fathers of the Church series (FC) is published by Catholic University of America Press. See bibliography for details.
7. The ACCS is published by InterVarsity Press. See bibliography for details. A catena is defined as a biblical commentary consisting of a chain of excerpts from various authors, in this case patristic authors.
8. For example, the patristic scholar Rowan Greer writes an entire chapter on “Theodore’s Exegetical Method” and mentions *theōria* only once (Rowan A. Greer, *Theodore of Mopsuestia, Exegete and Theologian* [Westminster, UK: Faith Press, 1961], 86–111, esp. 93; Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation: A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese 15 [Tübingen: Mohr, 1973], 224–63). More recently, another patristic scholar, Frederick McLeod, wrote a similar chapter, mentioning *theōria* a couple times, but these are quotations from Diodore, Theodore’s mentor (Frederick G. McLeod, *Theodore of Mopsuestia, Early Church Fathers* [London and New York: Routledge, 2009], 17–23, esp. 20–21). Other, less-specialized books on the history of exegesis, when covering Antiochene exegesis, mention *theōria* generically for the Antiochenes or for John Chrysostom but rarely mention Theodore’s or Theodoret’s use of the term (for example, Robert Grant and David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 63–72, esp. 66, 68; cf. Karlfried Froehlich, ed., *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 20–23; J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th ed. [San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1976], 74–76; Joseph Wilson Trigg, *Biblical Interpretation, Message of the Fathers of the Church* 9 [Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1988], 32). Some commentators unduly separate the literal from the spiritual meaning (cf. Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* [1940; repr., Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964], 14). G. W. Ashby wrote a dissertation on Theodoret’s exegesis and covered *theōria*, but he focused on what he deemed to be examples of theoretic interpretation rather than on actual uses of the terms *theōria* or *theōreō*, by which a more clear definition of the terms can be garnered (G. W. Ashby, “Theodoret of Cyrrhus as Exegete of the Old Testament” [PhD diss., Rhodes University, 1972]).

9. Bradley Nassif, “Antiochene ‘*Theoria*’ in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis” (PhD diss., Fordham University, 1991). Walter Kaiser believes that Nassif’s dissertation “could supply the help evangelicals need to help them interpret the NT’s use of the OT and in its understanding of the prophetic texts of the older testament. Nassif’s contribution has enormous implications for much of the contemporary debate, though much of that research is unrecognized by evangelicals” (Walter Kaiser, “Psalm 72: An Historical and Messianic Current Example of Antiochene Hermeneutical *Theoria*,” *JETS* 52, no. 2 [June 2009]: 257). While Nassif touches from time to time on Theodore’s and, to a lesser extent, Theodoret’s use of *theōria*, his is not intended as a sustained study of their views of *theōria*.
10. Nassif, “‘Spiritual Exegesis’ of Scripture,” 469.
11. Nassif is included here because he has continued to write on the subject during the appointed period of this study.
12. Frederic William Farrar, *History of Interpretation: Eight Lectures Preached before the University of Oxford in the Year MDCCCLXXXV on the Foundation of the Late Rev. John Bampton* (London: Macmillan, 1886), 210–11. In his summary of Theodore’s exegesis, Farrar lists Theodore’s shortfalls and even mentions his use of typology, but he does not mention *theōria*. Farrar concludes, “There can be no better indication of the fine original genius of Theodore than the fact that in these conclusions, without any aid from the immense apparatus of subsequently-accumulated thought, he anticipated by fourteen hundred years many of the accepted conclusions of modern days” (pp. 213–19, esp. 218–19; cf. Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Treatise on the Interpretation of the Old and New Testaments*, 2nd ed., 1890 [repr., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1890], 647–51). Even when Terry turns to describe Theodoret’s exegetical method, he compares it to Theodore, concluding, “Theodore paid a terrible penalty for having been born in an age too soon. His aberrations from traditional dogma brought him into suspicion, and ‘a century later a pigmy generation anathematised exegetes, who were already half forgotten.’ But his merits have been recognised in later days, and the stream of truth, having flowed for centuries in its subterranean course, once more emerged at the Reformation into regions of light and day” (p. 219, citing Eduard Reuss, *Die Geschichte der Heiligen Schriften Neuen Testaments* [Braunschweig: C. A. Schwetschke, 1874], §521). Terry, quoting the church historian Socrates, describes the Antiochene exegesis of Diodore as consisting of “many treatises, in which he limited his expositions to the literal sense of Scripture, without attempting to explain that which was mystical” (pp. 646–47, citing Socrates,

Ecl. Hist., book 6, ch. 3 [NPNF2, 2:139]). Terry does not note that the term *mystical* is *theōria*, nor that Socrates uses the term in the Alexandrian sense, rather than in the Antiochene sense. (The editors of NPNF2 rightly acknowledge that Socrates uses the term “θεωρίας, lit. ‘speculations,’ by which are evidently meant the allegorical and subjective or contemplative explanations of the Alexandrians,” but also never explain its distinction from how the Antiochenes used the term [NPNF2, 2:139 n. 3]). Despite these oversights, Diodore’s exegetical advice in the preface to his commentary on the Psalms is renowned: “We do not forbid the higher interpretation and *theoria*, for the historical narrative does not exclude it, but is on the contrary the basis and substructure of loftier insights. . . . We must, however, be on our guard against letting the *theoria* do away with the historical basis, for the result would be, not *theoria*, but allegory” (Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 76–77; cf. Robert C. Hill, trans., *Diodore of Tarsus: Commentary on Psalms 1–51*, Writings from the Greco-Roman World 9 [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005], 4). Even a hermeneutical scholar of the stature of Anthony Thiselton, when quoting this excerpt from Diodore’s preface to *Com. on Psalms*, inserts “[allegory]” next to *theōria* in the first two uses but not the third, lest Diodore be absurdly accused of saying “for the result would be, not allegory, but allegory” (Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009], 110). This displays a profound disregard for Diodore’s own words and the continued lack of understanding of the distinctions between Antiochene *theōria* and Alexandrian allegory.

13. The relationship between exegetical methods (stereotypically contrasted as literal Antiochene and allegorical Alexandrian) and undergirding theology raises important questions. Namely, did Antiochene interpretation fail to become the dominant medieval method primarily because it was based on a faulty view of the incarnation? If so, would this imply that Alexandrian allegory is the basis of an orthodox Christian understanding of the incarnation? Or instead, did Antiochene interpretive method simply suffer the demise of guilt by association? How does a comprehensive understanding of *theōria* as intrinsic to Antiochene exegetical methodology inform this discussion? These issues are addressed in chapter 2 (particularly under the critical work of Donald Fairbairn) prior to a detailed study of the primary sources and again in the survey of Frederick McLeod’s work in chapter 3.
14. According to the Antiochene interpreter Diodore, “Scripture does not allegorise . . . it does not abrogate the *historia*, but theorizes (*epitheōrei*), that is, it develops a higher vision (*theōria*) of other but similar events in addition”

(Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], 179). Farrar rightly points out that Antiochene exegesis was best restored in the Reformers. John Calvin in particular often quoted from John Chrysostom, and Calvin's emphasis on illumination finds support in Antiochene *theōria* (cf. Najeeb G. Awad, "The Influence of John Chrysostom's Hermeneutics on John Calvin's Exegetical Approach to Paul's Epistle to the Romans," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 63, no. 4 [November 2010]: 414–36, esp. 414; and John R. Walchenbach, *John Calvin as Biblical Commentator: An Investigation into Calvin's Use of John Chrysostom as an Exegetical Tutor*, 2nd ed. [Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010]).

15. The term *allegory* in this book is generally defined as interpretation that is symbolic or figurative such that it may accord with other scriptural passages, but not with the passage being interpreted (or its near context). The Antiochenes usually reject the kind of allegory that tends to dismiss the historical realities of persons, places, things, or events in the text (perhaps for reasons of embarrassment or an attempt to provide a Christian interpretation of a passage that does not appear to have such meaning intrinsically). Even the seminal Antiochene scholar Heinrich Kihn wrote, "To avoid any ambiguity between *theoria* and allegory, Theodore opted to avoid the terminology altogether and maintain a strict historical reading of the text" (Michael Maas and Heinrich Kihn, *Exegesis and Empire in the Early Byzantine Mediterranean: Junillus Africanus and the Instituta Regularia Divinae Legis*, Studies and Texts in Antiquity and Christianity 17 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003], 101). Kihn, who wrote seminal on Antiochene *theōria*, focused more on the writings of Junillus Africanus rather than Theodore. Actually, Theodore does use the term *theōria* but not in his *Com. on Psalms*. But Kihn did not have access to the digital databases of Theodore's extant works that are available today. And the list of discovered manuscripts of Theodore's writings has grown in the last 130 years. For example, according to Milton Terry, a contemporary of Kihn, only Theodore's commentaries on the twelve prophets in Greek, and on Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, and some fragments in Latin were available in the later 1800s (Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 647 n. 6). Theodore *did* use the term *theōria* in his writings, though that usage was relatively rare, as chapter 2 displays. (Literarily, allegory can also be defined as extended metaphor, when it is understood that the author intended such a genre or rhetorical expression.)
16. Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians: A Revised Text with*

Introduction, Notes, and Dissertations, 4th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1874), 228 (emphasis mine).

17. Maurice F. Wiles, "Theodore of Mopsuestia as a Representative of the Antiochene School," in *Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to Jerome*, ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 492 (emphasis mine).
18. Perhaps Wiles refers to those schooled in Farrar's perspective.
19. He supports this conclusion by discussing Theodore's view of inspiration (Wiles, "Theodore of Mopsuestia," 492–94), which relates to Antiochene *theōria*. But Wiles does not note the connection to Antiochene *theōria* (cf. John Breck, *Scripture in Tradition: The Bible and Its Interpretation in the Orthodox Church* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001], 18, 63, 65, 70; Nassif, "Antiochene 'Theoria' in John Chrysostom's Exegesis," 157; and Dimitri Z. Zaharopoulos, *Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Bible: A Study of His Old Testament Exegesis*, Theological Inquiries [New York: Paulist, 1989], 78–102). For an analysis of Breck and Nassif, see Grant R. Osborne, "The Many and the One: The Interface between Orthodox and Evangelical Protestant Hermeneutics," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 39, no. 3 [1995]: 281–304).
20. Wiles expresses discomfort with Theodore's theological interpretation, which Wiles sees more in Theodore's commentary on John's Gospel than in his commentary on Paul's epistles, where "[t]he theological character of Theodore's exegesis is in less danger of imposing itself upon the text which it is supposed to be expounding" (Wiles, "Theodore of Mopsuestia," 506, 507). The research herein will seek to establish that Theodore's exegesis is generally historical and textually grounded, while not ignoring the theology of the text. So Wiles's assertion that Antiochene exegesis was "strictly theological" is deemed an overstatement that he likely felt necessary to trumpet in a time when only the "literal and historical interpretation . . . [was] the most famous characteristic of Antiochene exegesis." Donald Fairbairn believes that most patristic scholarship since the mid-twentieth century "has insisted that to a great degree, theology was the horse and exegesis the cart." (He admits that theology dominated but did not exclusively drive the exegetical cart.) This leads him to conclude that the "differences of exegetical method [between Antiochenes and Alexandrians] were *derived from* the theological differences, and were *not the source* of the differences themselves." Later he more accurately describes patristic interpretation (of all stripes) as "theology and

exegesis . . . involved in a continual interplay” (Fairbairn, “Patristic Exegesis and Theology, 10–11, 15; emphasis original). But in his conclusions, Fairbairn returns to his earlier assessment that theology dominated exegesis for all church fathers (p. 16).

21. McLeod notes correctly that “the Antiochenes did make *historia* a central tenet of their exegesis, believing that what God has actually revealed in the scriptural narrative (or in an event) is his will. They were convinced that since God has inspired the sacred writer, every word, phrase, clause, and sentence of what he has written ought to be carefully heeded as truly revealing God’s inspired message. One must, therefore, pay attention to what the sacred author actually intended to affirm in what the text affirms and be ready to justify this in a strictly literal and rational way. This view is substantiated in Diodore’s prologue to his *Commentary on the Psalms*, where he declares that *theoria* and *allegoria* differ from each other on the basis of *historia*, by which he meant not ‘history’ as such but Scripture’s narrative account” (Frederick G. McLeod, *The Roles of Christ’s Humanity in Salvation: Insights from Theodore of Mopsuestia* [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005], 31–33; cf. Robert C. Hill, “Psalm 41 [42]: A Classic Text for Antiochene Spirituality,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 [2003]: 27, 27 n. 16, 31). The distinction between the precritical view of Scripture as itself history (historical narrative) and the modern (postcritical) view where history is not in the text but behind it is addressed by Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974).
22. Farrar and especially Terry as cited above are examples of this appreciation of Antiochene interpretation without an acknowledgment that it often incorporated *theōria* with the literal reading. It is good to see this starting to change in books on hermeneutics. For example, Robert W. Bernard notes that “the school of Antioch founded its approach on consideration of the literal text: its literal meaning, grammar, and historical context. . . . Furthermore, although the Antiochenes also had an emphasis upon insight or *theōria* into spiritual truth to be gained from Scripture, they insisted that such insight be rooted in the literal meaning of the text.” Bernard makes a helpful comparison: “One may understand an exegetical school best by examining where that school begins in its search for truth. Alexandria began with the divine reality expressed symbolically by Scripture, the truth ‘from above.’ On the other hand, Antioch began with the literal sense of Scripture as a foundation ‘from below’ to gain spiritual insight” (Bernard,

“The Hermeneutics of the Early Church Fathers,” in *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture*, ed. Bruce Corley, Steve Lemke, and Grant Lovejoy, 2nd ed. [Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002], 90–100, here 94; cf. Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006], 98). But Bernard’s use of “from above” and “from below” should not be tied anachronistically to the twentieth-century christological schools. He simply means tied to the text first for Antioch and tied to the Spirit first for Alexandria.

23. Shillington’s denial will be shown to be false in chapter 2 from Theodore and Theodoret’s writings and in chapter 4 from further analysis of their views of illumination.
24. V. George Shillington, *Reading the Sacred Text: An Introduction to Biblical Studies* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2002), 221–22.
25. See Theodore’s and Theodoret’s uses of *theōria* in chapter 2, and in particular under illumination in chapter 4.
26. Dennis Brown, “Jerome (C. 340–420),” in *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Downers Grove, IL, and Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity, 2007), 569. For example, Jerome notes, “I have confined myself to the brief exposition and translation of the narrative which you particularly requested; and I have sometimes thrown in a few of the flowers of the spiritual interpretation” (Jerome, *Preface to Commentary on Matthew*, in NPNF2, 6:496). However, Jerome lived in Palestine an area between the between the location of the Alexandria school, which used *theōria* as a synonym of allegory, and that of the Antiochene school, which did not. And so Jerome’s form of spiritual interpretation was likely influenced by both schools.
27. G. A. Keith, “Antiochene Theology,” in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Sinclair B. Ferguson and J. I. Packer (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 33; *Theōria* is how the Antiochenes located links between the OT and the NT, as well as between the biblical text and the lives of their readers.
28. For several evangelicals who have given some attention to the topic, see the subsection entitled “Expand Knowledge of Patristic Exegesis” below. Walter Kaiser is the one evangelical who has both studied the topic and uses Antiochene *theōria* in his exegesis (e.g., Kaiser, “Psalm 72: Example of Antiochene *theōria*,” 255–70). Nassif cites C. K. Barrett as another (Nassif, “Antiochene ‘Theoria’ in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” 144, 144 n. 213, 159;

- cf. C. K. Barrett, “The Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New,” in *Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to Jerome*, ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970], 410–11).
29. See A. K. M. Adam, Stephen E. Fowl, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, and Francis Watson, *Reading Scripture with the Church: Toward a Hermeneutic for Theological Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006); Markus Bockmuehl, *Seeing the Word: Refocusing New Testament Study* (Studies in Theological Interpretation; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006); Stephen E. Fowl, *Engaging Scripture: A Model for Theological Interpretation*, *Challenges in Contemporary Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998); Werner G. Jeanron, *Theological Hermeneutics: Development and Significance* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991; repr., London: SCM, 1994); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, ed., *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005); and Jens Zimmermann, *Recovering Theological Hermeneutics: An Incarnational-Trinitarian Theory of Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004). For works more focused on theological interpretation in preaching from a conservative perspective, see Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000); Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans: 1988), 102–21; Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999); and Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981).
 30. See the final pages of this introductory chapter for a preliminary summary of conclusions.
 31. For example, Frank Schaeffer, *Dancing Alone: The Quest for Orthodox Faith in the Age of False Religion* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1994); Robert L. Plummer et al., *Journeys of Faith: Evangelicalism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Anglicanism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012); Peter E. Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox: A Journey to the Ancient Christian Faith*, rev. ed. (Ben Lomond, CA: Conciliar, 1992).
 32. Frederick Henry Chase, *Chrysostom: A Study in the History of Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Deighton Bell, 1887).

33. Nassif, "Antiochene 'Theoria' in John Chrysostom's Exegesis," 183.
34. Thus *theōria* may be viewed in part as a form of illumination (Rodney Petersen, "Continuity and Discontinuity: The Debate throughout Church History," in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship between the Old and New Testaments. Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.*, ed. John S. Feinberg [Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988], 21; cf. Nassif, "Antiochene 'Theoria' in John Chrysostom's Exegesis," 67, 73).
35. Petersen's description of *theōria* may show overdependence on G. W. H. Lampe and K. J. Woollcombe's dated understanding of *theōria*, which emphasized the historical over the spiritual sense (Lampe and Woollcombe, *Essays on Typology*, Studies in Biblical Theology 22 [London: SCM, 1957]; Nassif, "Antiochene 'Theoria' in John Chrysostom's Exegesis," 211). Nevertheless, Petersen offers an insightful summary, contrasting Alexandrian allegory and Antiochene *theōria*. The former leaned on symbolism, tending to partition Scripture's flow, while the latter emphasized "correspondence" with types. "Events and persons in an earlier revelation were 'types' of that which would appear later. In this way the spiritual meaning and historical sense of the text were closely bonded. Through insight (*theoria*) one might discern both the historical reality and proper spiritual intent of a text set within a clearer picture of the development of revelation (fuller truth about Christ is found in the Gospels, not in a spiritual interpretation of the OT)" (Petersen, "Continuity and Discontinuity," 21). Nassif shows that the secondary research beyond the seven major scholars of Antiochene *theōria* is predominantly inadequate. "As a rule, Antiochene *theōria* remains an obscure and understudied topic." His goal in this section is "not to polemicize. . . . Rather the aim is to understand the ways . . . *theōria* has been presented in the secondary literature and to offer constructive evaluation" of its accuracy in light of the expert scholars he surveys (Nassif, "Antiochene 'Theoria' in John Chrysostom's Exegesis," 124–50, esp. 124–25).
36. The method of Antiochene *theōria* "had the advantage of offering a more integral understanding of the unity of the Bible" (Petersen, "Continuity and Discontinuity," 21). Petersen summarizes the distinction between Alexandrian and Antiochene exegesis: "Both Alexandria and Antioch deepened theological perspectives on the interrelationship of the Testaments. However, in the former it came at the expense of history, in the latter at that of mystery or spirituality" (p. 22). Here Petersen, in his efforts to categorize, is somewhat reductionistic, suggesting that Antiochene exegesis dismissed the

spiritual dimension of Bible study, *contra* Kaiser, Nassif, Breck, de Margerie and others.

37. Gerald L. Bray only introduces the topic (*Biblical Interpretation: Past & Present* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996], 106). David S. Dockery unpacks it more significantly (*Biblical Interpretation Then and Now: Contemporary Hermeneutics in the Light of the Early Church* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992], 75–128, esp. 106–19). He proposes a synthesis for interpretive praxis that (implicitly) incorporates the Antiochene method (pp. 176–83). Dockery also links Antiochene exegesis with Jesus’ interpretive treatment of OT passages, with typology, and with theological interpretation (David S. Dockery, Kenneth A. Mathews, and Robert B. Sloan, *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation* [Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994], 41–42; cf. Ellen F. Davis, “Critical Traditioning: Seeking an Inner Biblical Hermeneutic,” in *The Art of Reading Scripture*, ed. Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 163–80). Christopher A. Hall offers a helpful and more nuanced study of *theōria*, but he focuses on one statement by Diodore and, in his discussions of Theodore of Mopsuestia, does not mention *theōria* again (*Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998], 156–76, esp. 158–69).
38. His writings on Antiochene *theōria* span from 1978 to 2009; see *Toward an Old Testament Theology* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978], 28; “The Promise to David in Psalm 16 and Its Application in Acts 2:25–33 and 13:32–37,” *JETS* 23, no. 3 [September 1980]: 219–29, here 222; *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New* [Chicago: Moody, 1985], 71–72; *The Promise-Plan of God: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008], 215; Kaiser, “Psalm 72: Example of Antiochene *Theoria*,” 255, 258–70; Kaiser and Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*, 158). These are discussed in chapter 3.
39. Kaiser, “Psalm 72: Example of Antiochene *Theoria*.”
40. This may be explained by the fact that his 2009 *JETS* article is so recent. But that does not hold for his references to Antiochene *theōria* in his book with Silva on hermeneutics (first ed. 1994 and second ed. 2007). Admittedly, this book refers to *theōria* only twice, seeing it as emphasizing “three aspects to prophecy” including “1. *The predicted word* . . . 2. *The historic means* . . . and 3. *The ultimate fulfillment* of that word” (Kaiser and Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*, rev. ed., 209; cf. 266 [emphasis in original]). Yet Kaiser also applied Antiochene *theōria* in an earlier journal article (“Promise

to David in Psalm 16,” 219–29). But interaction with Kaiser seems to focus more on his view of the OT prophetic authors’ knowledge of the referent(s) to messianic prophecies rather than to Kaiser’s source for such understanding (Kaiser, “Psalm 72: Example of Antiochene *Theoria*,” 255; cf. Gregory V. Trull, “Peter’s Interpretation of Psalm 16:8–11 in Acts 2:25–32,” *BSac*, 161, no. 644 [October 2004]: 432–48). Kaiser also promoted Antiochene *theōria* in *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*, 61–76, esp. 71, where he writes, “Such a solution [generic prophecy] is very close to the concept of *theōria* posed by the Antiochian school of interpretation.” But his reference to this more original source may have been muted by his comparison with Willis J. Beecher’s concept of “generic prophecy” (cf. Willis J. Beecher, *The Prophets and the Promise* [New York: Crowell, 1905], 130, 376). This is seen, for example, in Bruce Waltke’s favorable review of Kaiser’s use of Beecher’s generic prophecy concept, without noting Antiochene *theōria* (Bruce Waltke, “Kingdom Promises as Spiritual,” in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship between the Old and New Testaments. Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.*, ed. John S. Feinberg [Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988], 284; cf. Herbert W. Bateman IV, “Psalm 110:1 and the New Testament,” *BSac*, 149, no. 596 [October 1992]: 447 n. 41, 447 n. 43). Bateman twice cites this key section of Kaiser’s *Uses of the OT*, but never mentions Antiochene *theōria*.

41. For example, “Chrysostom’s preaching was characterized by simple Bible exposition, [emphasizing grammar and history rather than the Alexandrian allegory] fearless proclamation of morality rather than dogma, deep earnestness, and application directed to the common man” (John F. MacArthur, *Rediscovering Expository Preaching* [Dallas: Word, 1997], 45). Mike Stallard suggests here (in a personal response to an earlier draft of this chapter) that this lack of use of Antiochene *theōria* in exegesis may be due not to ignorance of the sources but to “belief that what the Antiochenes offer is a mixed bag.” That may be true. No thoughtful exegete wants to mimic another’s methods, especially those developed sixteen hundred years ago. But I would suggest first that many younger church members are turning to patristic exegesis regardless of the mixed bag. Furthermore, Kaiser is correct to call on the church, especially conservative evangelicals, to take another look at the whole exegetical package that the Antiochenes offer because it may have some relevance for today. Kaiser poignantly exclaims, “It is an amazing fact that . . . the term *theōria* . . . should have had so little effect, or any major part, in the current discussions of evangelical biblical

hermeneutics, even though the issues are very much the same today as they were then” (Kaiser, “Psalm 72: Example of Antiochene *Theoria*,” 255).

42. Nassif summarizes six scholars’ definition of *theōria* with three “criteria.” Then he notes approvingly that Kaiser provides a fourth criterion for use of *theōria* (Nassif, “Antiochene ‘*Theoria*’ in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” 149–50, citing Kaiser, *Uses of the Old Testament in the New*, 68). “Kaiser noted [Alberto] Vaccari’s foundational study but did not consciously build on the criteria he or [Paul] Ternant laid out. Neither did he interact with some of the critical issues raised by the other principal scholars in the history of Antiochene *theōria*, such as Julian’s definition or the primary texts of patristic authors. His proposal, nevertheless, remains faithful to the principles of *theōria* and has been highly successful in introducing the hermeneutic into the arena of Protestant exegesis. His work in this field remains one of the most developed of its kind” (Nassif, “Antiochene ‘*Theoria*’ in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” 150). That an evangelical actually contributed to the scholarship on *theōria* is significant and should be mined, though one may question whether its introduction “into the arena of Protestant exegesis” has been “highly successful.” For recent Eastern Orthodox sources on Antiochene *theōria*, see Breck, *Scripture in Tradition*, 4, 23, 24, 30–44; and Breck, *The Power of the Word in the Worshiping Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1986), 25–113. And for some modern Catholic sources, see, for example, Henry de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, vol. 1, *The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. Mark Sebanc (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); Bertrand de Margerie, *An Introduction to the History of Exegesis*, vol. 1, *The Greek Fathers* (Petersham, MA: Saint Bede’s, 1991–95), 165–86; Manlio Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, trans. John A Hughes (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 59–77, 84, 85, 127; Peter Williamson, *Catholic Principles for Interpreting Scripture: A Study of the Pontifical Biblical Commission’s The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, *Subsidia Biblica* 22 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2001), 171; and Alberto Vaccari, “La Θεωρία nella scuola esegetica di antiochia,” *Biblica* 1 (1920): 3–36.
43. For example, that outlined in Bruce Corley et al., eds., *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 1–19, esp. 9–13; cf. 275–92. Their approach links the author, text, and reader to six strategies that overlap significantly with the Antiochene method. Historical context and literary form, grammatical analysis and lexical elements underscore the Antiochene emphasis on precision, lexis, closer study

of the text, and staying with both authorial intent and the history in the text. Corley et al. then include a focus on the discourse argument, which he also describes as “summation.” This is akin to the Antiochene emphasis on σκοπός and maintaining the discourse of the larger passage. Finally Corley et al. promote incorporating the passage with the theological message, which is also akin to the “Antiochene *orientation* of Scripture [which] also acknowledges that the true meaning of Scripture is best understood by wedding theology and historical exegesis” (Bradley Nassif, “Antiochene Θεωρία in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” in *Exegesis and Hermeneutics in the Churches of the East: Select Papers from the SBL Meeting in San Diego, 2007*, ed. Vahan S. Hovhannessian [New York: Peter Lang, 2009], 54).

44. Vern S. Poythress, “Divine Meaning of Scripture,” *WTJ* 48, no. 2 (Fall 1986): 249–55. Essentially, Poythress argues that the two meanings are in unity. “Hence there *is* a unity of meaning and a unity of application here. We do not have two diverse meanings, [for example] Isaiah’s and God’s, simply placed side by side with no relation to each other. But the matter is complex. What we have here is a situation of personal communion between God and prophet. Each person affirms the significance of the other’s presence for proper interpretation. On the one hand, God has formed the personality of the prophet, has spoken to him in the heavenly counsel (Jer. 23:18), has brought him into inner sympathy with the thrust of his message. What the prophet says using his own particular idiom fits exactly what God decided to say. On the other hand, the prophet affirms that what God is saying is true even where the prophet cannot see all its implications” (pp. 259–60; cf. Jared M. Compton, “Shared Intentions? Reflections on Inspiration and Interpretation in Light of Scripture’s Dual Authorship,” *Themelios* 33, no. 3 [December 2008]: 23–33, esp. 27 n. 24; and Michael S. Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology: The Divine Drama* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002], 85–92, 172–82). These discussions revolve around several issues, including the relationship of meaning to significance and illumination and inspiration, all of which will be taken up in chapter 4 under the rubric of the Antiochene perspective.
45. Poythress also notes that Kaiser’s commitment to incorporating antecedent Scripture into the author’s understanding for effective exegesis as well as “systematic theology” (or the entirety of Scripture) at a later step for purposes of application (Poythress, “Divine Meaning of Scripture,” 243 n. 7) seems to align with an Antiochene emphasis on continuity of discourse (cf. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*).

46. See discussion in chapter 4 under Does Antiochene *Theōria* Promote Polyvalency?.
47. Kaiser and Silva note that “the Antiochians claimed that an event in Scripture had only one meaning—meaning that, to the trained eye of the ‘theoretic’ exegete, was at once both literal and spiritual, historical and typological” (Kaiser and Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics*, rev. ed., 266 n. 13; cf. Nassif, “Antiochene ‘*Theoria*’ in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” 295). While all patristic experts of Antiochene *theōria* do not agree, Nassif notes that five believe that “the prophets had a clear, conscious and, for the most part, complete knowledge of the future,” including Heinrich Kihn, Alberto Vaccari, Francisco Seisedos, Paul Ternant, and Walter Kaiser (Nassif, “Antiochene ‘*Theoria*’ in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” 164). “All the patristic experts [who studied Antiochene *theōria* as found in Nassif’s dissertation] were in agreement that theōria was a literal, single meaning hermeneutic which sought to obtain the meaning that the biblical author originally intended and which his words conveyed.” And to clarify what Nassif means by “literal” he notes, “The ‘literal’ meaning of Scripture refers both to the original historical meaning intended by the human author and to the ordinary sense conveyed by his words” (Nassif, “Antiochene ‘*Theoria*’ in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” 159, 164).
48. “I would claim that the NT authors characteristically do *not* aim merely at grammatical-historical exegesis of the OT” (Poythress, “Divine Meaning of Scripture,” 276; cf. 241–43). See also Kenneth Berding, and Jonathan Lunde, eds., *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008). Poythress also reviews the standard “one meaning and many applications” approach and finds it wanting (Poythress, “Divine Meaning of Scripture,” 245–48; cf. Millard J. Erickson, *Evangelical Interpretation: Perspectives on Hermeneutical Issues* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993], 11–32). Erickson’s work also analyzes Kaiser’s principlizing method for application, which relates to the concerns of *theōria*. For a comparison of Kaiser’s and Vanhoozer’s method with responses, see Gary T. Meadors, ed., *Four Views on Moving beyond the Bible to Theology* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009], 19–73, 151–213. For an analysis of one pastor-theologian’s move from the Bible to theology, see Brian C. Dennert, “John Calvin’s Movement from the Bible to Theology and Practice,” *JETS* 54, no. 2 (June 2011): 345–65.
49. “In moving from text to context, Chrysostom delineated the underlying theological principle beneath the surface message of the text in order to span the gulf between the past and the present. Similarly, theōria today bridges

meaning with significance, and is in fact inherent within both” (Nassif, “Antiochene ‘Theoria’ in John Chrysostom’s Exegesis,” 330, cf. 233).

50. D. Brent Sandy and Ronald L. Giese Jr., eds. *Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 2, 4.
51. Some may question this, since I have already proposed Antiochene *theōria* as a paradigm *to critique* modern approaches to TIS. Antiochene exegesis does critique certain kinds of TIS. But the Antiochenes also *practiced* their own variety of TIS. The issue is what *kind* of TIS they practiced and thus promoted. Antiochene TIS sought to maintain the union between the text and its theological message, whereas this union is often lost in other approaches to TIS. Therefore, Antiochene theoretic exegesis can provide a paradigm for *both critique and praxis* of TIS.
52. Little has been written beyond the works of Walter Kaiser recently and Heinrich Kihn in Germany, who wrote about 120 years ago (Kihn, *Theodor von Mopsuestia und Junilius Africanus als Exegeten* [Freiburg: Herder, 1880]). Kaiser’s work, while very helpful as a summary and practical application of Antiochene *theōria*, does not interact with primary Antiochene sources.
53. Such insights can help the church leader to understand similarities and differences in the interpretation of Scripture between Protestants and non-Protestants to improve dialogue and for evaluating where sound reasons for disagreement remain.
54. See John Breck, “Theoria and Orthodox Hermeneutics,” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (January 1976): 195–219; and Breck’s other works.
55. The Catholic scholar Brian Daley answers the question, “Is patristic exegesis still usable?” in the affirmative, promoting theological interpretation (Brian E. Daley, “Is Patristic Exegesis Still Usable? Some Reflections on Early Christian Interpretation of the Psalms,” in *The Art of Reading Scripture*, ed. Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 69–88). *The Art of Reading Scripture* provides a way forward with theological interpretation, which emphasizes rule of faith and the coherent story of Scripture. But it does so at the price of single-authorial intent (see *Art of Reading Scripture*, 1–3).
56. For example, Daniel J. Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008); and see *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 12, no. 4 (Winter 2008), which is

entirely dedicated to the topic of biblical theology. Graeme Goldsworthy has no intention for biblical theology to be a discipline unconnected to practical exegesis, application, and preaching of Scripture. Thus, he links it to theological hermeneutics (Goldsworthy, “Biblical Theology and Hermeneutics,” *SBJT* 10, no. 2 [Summer 2006]: 3–16; see also Goldsworthy, “Lecture 2: Biblical Theology in the Seminary and Bible College,” *SBJT* 12, no. 4 [Winter 2008]: 31–32). Robert W. Yarbrough helps with a synthetic definition of what Goldsworthy means by “biblical theology” and how that relates to a canonical theological interpretation. “Biblical Theology . . . involves us in the two-fold exercise of analysis or exegesis of individual texts, and the synthesis of the individual texts into a big picture or metanarrative. Once we accept the overall unity of the Bible we have to realize that every single text is in some way supported by every other text. No individual part of Scripture stands alone. The context of any text, which prevents its misuse, is the whole canon” (Yarbrough, “The Practice and Promise of Biblical Theology: A Response to Hamilton and Goldsworthy,” *SBJT* 12, no. 4 [Winter 2008]: 80).

57. “And not only is there a plethora of approaches calling themselves TIS, but few seem to be bothered by the diversity. Moreover, Evangelical biblical scholars on the whole have not engaged and responded to TIS and its varying forms” (Charlie Trimm, “Evangelicals, Theology, and Biblical Interpretation: Reflections on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20, no. 3 [2010]: 311). Vanhoozer is a prolific and capable proponent of TIS (see, for example, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, ed., *Theological Interpretation of the Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Survey* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005]; Vanhoozer, ed., *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*; idem, *First Theology: God, Scripture and Hermeneutics* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002]; Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005]).
58. In chapter 5, I survey the TIS writings of A. K. M. Adam, Stephen Fowl, Daniel Treier, Charlie Trimm, Kevin Vanhoozer, Francis Watson, and J. Todd Billings, none of whom gives significant attention to Antiochene theoretic exegesis as a paradigm for TIS. Nevertheless, at least one of these proponents offers an approach to TIS quite similar to the Antiochenes.
59. Furthermore, this step is necessary because some scholars (for example, Donald Fairbairn) propose that only those deemed heretical by the church, and thereby unworthy of emulation, fit within the Antiochene school. I

affirm both Theodore and Theodoret as representative pillars at opposite ends of the Antiochene spectrum of interpretation. They both value the historical aspects of the text while affirming spiritual aspects without (generally) disintegrating the discourse.

60. This TIS spectrum comes from Trimm, “Evangelicals, Theology, and Biblical Interpretation,” 311–30.
61. These are chosen because they represent a spectrum from premodern, to Reformational, to postmodern. Furthermore, all of them have written significantly on TIS and are active proponents of TIS for the academy and the church. Others are discussed in chapter 5 but not with the same degree of detail as these five.
62. D. A. Carson, “Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Yes, But...,” in *Theological Commentary: Evangelical Perspectives*, ed. R. Michael Allen (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 187–207.