Institute of Biblical Studies

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#### CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: God, Bible, and the Holy Spirit

Gregg R. Allison, course instructor

## STRUCTURED NOTES

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### INTRODUCTION TO SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

1. definition of systematic theology
2. definition of “theology”
* *narrow* sense
* *broad* sense
1. definition: systematic theology is any study that answers the question
2. relationship to other disciplines
* exegetical theology
* biblical theology
* historical theology
* philosophical theology
* apologetics
* ethics
1. application to life
2. systematic theology and disorganized theology
* systematic theology *treats biblical topics in a carefully organized way*
* systematic theology *treats topics in a gospel-centered way*
* systematic theology *treats topics in an accurate way*
* systematic theology *treats all the relevant Bible passages for each topic*
1. systematic theology and “theological competencies” for CCC staff

“direct” competencies

* “Understands and embraces the core doctrines of the Christian faith expressed in our statement of faith (i.e., Trinity, Bible, person and work of Christ, humanity, salvation, person and work of the Holy Spirit, church, eschatology) and relates them to the gospel.” (# 8)
* “Able to work effectively with those who hold differing theological views allowing for differences of opinion on matters not central to our statement of faith and calling while pointing people to a compelling center (i.e., Christ, the gospel, and our mission). Able to address basic theological error.” (# 9)
* “Able to articulate the biblical/theological basis for our identity, distinctives and mission; confidently and appropriately represents this identity to others inside and outside the organization.” (# 10)

“indirect” competencies

* “Possesses a contagious love for Christ and passion to see Christ exalted in their life, the lives of those around them and all the peoples of the world.” (#1)
* “Understands, experiences and models the basics of spiritual growth; grows in humble dependence on Christ, lives a holy, God-honoring life.” (# 2)
1. systematic theology and “The Campus Crusade for Christ Statement of Faith”
* “The sole basis of our beliefs is the Bible, God’s infallible written Word, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that it was uniquely, verbally and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit and that it was written without error (inerrant) in the original manuscripts. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks.” (Introduction)
* “There is one true God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each of whom possess equally all the attributes of Deity and the characteristics of personality.” (# 1)
* “The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to men. He convicts and draws sinners to Christ, imparts new life to them, continually indwells them from the moment of spiritual birth and seals them until the day of redemption. His fullness, power and control are appropriated in the believer’s life by faith.” (# 10)
* Every believer is called to live so in the power of the indwelling Spirit that he will not fulfill the lust of the flesh but will bear fruit to the glory of God.” (# 11)

some statements also touch partially on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit:

* Jesus Christ’s “miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit” (# 2)
* “Every man is in need of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit” (# 7)
* the witness of the Holy Spirit, in conjunction with Scripture, produces assurance of salvation (# 9)
1. convictions, persuasions, and opinions (adapted from Alan Scholes, “Doctrinal Convictions and Persuasions,” in Ted Martin and Michael Cozzens, eds., *Principles of Leadership: What We Can Learn from the Life and Ministry of Bill Bright*, 363-375)
* convictions: “central beliefs, crucial to salvation, over which we should be willing to denounce someone in serious disagreement and (if there is no repentance) eventually divide fellowship” (e.g., the Trinity, the deity and humanity of Christ, salvation by grace through faith)
* persuasions: “beliefs about which we are personally certain, but which are not crucial for salvation. We should certainly accept those with differing persuasions as members in good standing of God’s family, even when we are certain they are wrong” (e.g., millennial views, the place of speaking in tongues in the Christian life)
* opinions: “beliefs, desires, or even wishes which may not be clearly taught in Scripture or which may legitimately differ for various believers. Opinions may concern subjects on which we either have a preference but acknowledge that others may also be right in holding a different view, or we do not have any confidence that we yet know the truth of the matter” (e.g., how long before Jesus’ return, what kind of music may be used in worship, the best Bible translation)
* boundary statements: “creeds, statements of faith, or doctrinal statements that may legitimately incorporate a combination of convictions, persuasions, and even opinions”

### DOCTRINE OF REVELATION

1. revelation is generally divided into two areas or spheres
	1. general revelation (also called universal revelation)
	2. special revelation (also called particular revelation)
	3. examples of these two kinds of revelation
2. general revelation: the biblical teaching
	1. Romans 1:18-25
	2. Romans 2:12-16
	3. Acts 14:8-18
	4. Acts 17:22-31
3. general revelation: theological summary
	1. Scripture indicates several loci of general revelation: God reveals himself in and through
	2. the content of this revelation is also multifaceted: through general revelation, God reveals
	3. the outcome of general revelation
* what does God intend to accomplish by his communication through general revelation (what is the desired outcome)?
* what, however, is the response of human beings to general revelation (what is the actual outcome)?
* the bottom line
	1. the problem with general revelation
* there is NOT a problem with general revelation itself
* the problem does not lie with general revelation, but with the intended recipients of general revelation: sinful human beings
* general revelation is adequate but insufficient
* the significance of general revelation
	1. the need for special revelation

Calvin picks up the imagery of near-sighted people to picture humanity’s plight in relation to general revelation: the evidence is there—a book containing knowledge about God is available—but human sight is too poor to read it correctly; thus, Calvin offers this metaphorical solution: the spectacles/ glasses of Scripture:

Just as old or bleary-eyed men and those with weak vision, if you thrust before them a most beautiful volume, even if they recognize it to be some sort of writing, yet can scarcely construe two words, but with the aid of spectacles will begin to read distinctly; so Scripture, gathering up the otherwise confused knowledge of God in our minds, having dispersed our dullness, clearly shows us the true God. (*Institutes*I.6.1)

1. special revelation
2. definition (review)
3. Scripture indicates several loci of special revelation; God reveals himself in and through
	* + historical acts (e.g., the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt through the Passover, the plagues, the crossing of the Red Sea; the conquest of the promised land; the captivity; the post-exilic return to the land; Pentecost)
		+ dreams and visions (e.g., the dreams of Joseph, Pharoah, Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel, Joseph and Mary)
		+ direct divine speech (e.g., God’s prohibition of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the call of Abraham, God’s speaking with Moses)
		+ the incarnation of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1-3; John 14:8-9)
		+ Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21)

conclusion: the doctrine of revelation is important because of the One who reveals himself both generally and specially: the triune God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

# DOCTRINE OF GOD

## introduction to theology proper

## the God who is there: the incomprehensibility and knowability of God

1. incomprehensibility
	* Scriptural teaching

Deuteronomy 29:29

Job 11:7-8

Job 36:26

Isaiah 40:18

we can never fully understand *any single thing* about God:

his greatness (Ps. 145:3)

his understanding (Ps. 147:5)

his knowledge (Ps. 139:6)

his riches, wisdom, judgment, and ways (Rom. 11:33)

his ways and thoughts (Isa. 55:9)

* + reasons for God’s incomprehensibility

the finite cannot comprehend the infinite

the noetic (intellectual) effects of the fall

1. knowability
	* Scriptural teaching

Jeremiah 9:23-24

Matthew 11:27

John 17:3

1 Corinthians 13:12

1 John 5:20

Romans 1:19-20

1 Cor. 1:21; Gal. 4:8; 1 Thess. 4:5

* + grounds of the knowability of God

God’s self-disclosure

the image of God

## a definition of God:

“We all believe with the heart and confess with the mouth that there is only one simple and spiritual Being, which we call God; and that he is eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, immutable, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, just, good, and the overflowing fountain of all good” (*Belgic Confession of Faith*, article 1)

## the incommunicable attributes of God

1. independence (*aseity*)
* definition: God does not depend on us or the rest of creation for his existence or for anything else, yet we and the creation glorify him and bring him joy

Acts 17:24-25

John 5:26

1 Thess 1:9; cf. Jeremiah 10:9-10

Exodus 3:14

* significance

God’s existence is unlike that of any other being

though God does not need us, we and the rest of creation can glorify God and bring him joy: indeed, we are very meaningful because God has created us and has determined that we would be meaningful to him

Karl Barth: “God does not need us. Indeed, if He were not God, He would be ashamed of us.” (*Epistle to the Romans*, 35)

* personal reflection
1. unchangeableness (*immutability*)
* definition: God is unchanging in his person, perfections, plans, and promises, yet God does act and feel emotions, and he acts and feels differently in different situations

Psalm 102:25-27

Malachi 3:6

unchanging as to his person

unchanging as to his perfections

unchanging as to his plans (Psa. 33:10-11; Eph. 1:11)

unchanging as to his promises (Num. 23:19)

* does this mean that God is unfeeling, static, and unaffected by the people and the events of this world?
* in light of God’s unchangeableness, what does Scripture mean when it speaks of God changing his mind? (e.g., Ex. 32:9-14; Isa. 38:1-6; Jonah 3:4-10)
* significance
1. eternity (infinity with respect to time)
* definition: God has no beginning, end, or succession of moments in his own being, and he sees all time equally vividly; yet God sees events in time and acts in time

Isaiah 57:15

Psalm 90:1-2

Habakkuk 1:12

Jude 25

Revelation 1:8

* God is able to relate to time and act in time: he does certain things *before* he does others (Eph. 1:4), and he does some things *after* he does others (1 Cor. 15:22-24)
* yet God enjoys a unique relationship to time as well (Psa. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8)
* significance
1. omnipresence (infinity with respect to space)
* definition: God does not have size or spatial dimensions, and is present at every point of space with his whole being; yet God is present differently in different places

Jeremiah 23:23-24

1 Kings 8:27

* how *not* to think about God’s omnipresence: (1) God is absolutely huge or somehow a “bigger space” surrounding the space of the universe as we know it (2) part of God is in one place and part of him is in another
* what does it mean that God is present differently in different places?
* significance

Psalm 139:7-12

1. spirituality
* definition: God exists as a being that is not made of any matter, has no parts or dimensions, is unable to be perceived by our bodily senses, and is more excellent than any other kind of existence

John 1:18

1 Tim. 1:17, 6:15-16

John 4:24

* why does the Bible offer strong warnings against making idols or images of God (Ex. 20:4-5)?
* so how can we come “face-to-face” with God now?
* significance
1. the communicable attributes of God
2. knowledge (omniscience): God fully knows himself and all things actual and possible in one simple and eternal act (1 John 3:20; Job 37:16; Psa. 147:5)
* God fully knows himself(1 Cor. 2:10-11)
* God knows us and everything about us (Psa. 139:1-6)
* God knows all actualthings (all things that exist and all things that happen)

he knows the present (Heb. 4:13; Job 28:24; 2 Chron. 6:9; Ps. 139:16)

he knows the future (Isa. 41:22-23; 46:9-10; 42:8-9)

currently, some Christians deny that God has exhaustive knowledge of the future; this view is called *open theism*

he knows the most minute details of our lives (Matt. 10:30) and all of our needs (Matt. 6:8)

* God knows all possiblethings: he gives information about events that might happen but that do not actually come to pass (1 Sam. 23:11-13; Matt. 11:21-23)
* personal reflection
1. wisdom: God’s wisdom means that God always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals (Job 9:4; Rom. 16:27)
* God exercised his wisdom in creation (Ps. 104:24; Prov. 8:22-32)
* God exercised his wisdom in redemption (1 Cor. 1:18-31)
* God exercises his wisdom in building the church (Eph. 3:7-11)
* God exercises his wisdom in his work in our lives (Rom. 8:28)
* personal reflection
1. omnipotence: God’s omnipotence means that God can do all that he is able to do (Jer. 32:17; Matt. 19:26)
* God cannot do some things (thankfully!)
* God’s power is at work in our lives (2 Pet. 1:3; Gal. 5:16-17; Acts 1:8)
* personal reflection
1. sovereignty: God’s sovereignty means that he does as he pleases to accomplish all his good will and bring great glory to himself
* example: the creation of the universe (Rev. 4:11)
* example: the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-23; 4:27-28)
* example: God’s choice of us to become Christians (Eph. 1:5-6)
* God’s purpose is unfailing: Job 42:2; Isa. 14:26-27; Eph. 1:11)
* personal reflection
1. truthfulness and faithfulness: God’s truthfulness means that he always tells the truth
* Titus 1:2; Hebrew 6:18; Romans 3:3-4
* God’s revelation is wholly true (John 17:17; Prov. 30:5)
* personal reflection (truthfulness)

Why are people in our society, sometimes even Christians, quite careless with regard to truthfulness in speech? Why do we not very often realize that the greatest harm of all that comes from lying is the fact that God himself is dishonored? Do you need to ask God's help to more fully reflect his truthfulness in speech in any of the following areas: promising to pray for someone, saying that you will be some place at a certain time, exaggerating events to make a more exciting story, taking care to remember and then being faithful to what you have said in business commitments, reporting what other people have said or what you think someone else is thinking, fairly representing your opponent's viewpoint in an argument? (from Grudem, 207-208)

* faithfulness: God’s faithfulness means that God will always do what he has said and fulfill what he has promised (Num. 23:19; 2 Tim. 2:13; 1 Cor. 1:8-9)
* personal reflection (faithfulness)
1. love: God’s love means that he always gives himself and his good gifts to benefit others (1 John 4:8)
* love is eternally present among the persons of the Trinity (John 14:31; 17:24-26)
* love was present for people under the Old Covenant (Deut. 7:7-8) and is present for all people in the time since Christ came (John 3:16; Rom. 5:6-8)
* God’s love is a self-initiating love (1 John 4:9-10)
* the nature of God’s loving relationship with believers, according to John 15:13-15, is one of friends, not master to slaves
* varieties of the divine love

grace

mercy

patience

* personal reflection
1. righteousness/justice: God’s righteousness means that he always does what is right and that his judgment of what his creatures do is fair
* God himself is perfectly righteous/just (Deut. 32:4)
* God establishes moral judgments: he determines what is right and wrong
* God requires conformity to his standard of right and wrong (Rom. 2:5-8); this involves:

rewarding obedience to his moral law

punishing disobedience to his moral law

* the greatest proof of God’s justice is the cross of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:25-26)
* remember, the righteous judgment of God is for both unbelievers and believers: the deeds of believers will be evaluated by God; in the case of good deeds, believers will be rewarded, but in the case of evil deeds, there will be the loss of potential reward (1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Cor. 5:10)
* personal reflection
1. holiness and jealousy: God’s holiness means that he is greatly exalted above everything else and he is completely pure and separated from sin
* God is exalted over/absolutely separated from his creation (Isa. 40:21-25; Ex. 15:11; Isa. 6:1-4)
* God is absolutely pure (Hab. 1:13)
* jealousy: God’s jealousy means that he rightly guards his own honor (2 Cor. 11:2; Ex. 20:5; 34:14)
* it may seem strange to say that God is jealous, because our concept of jealousy is often problematic
* why is it appropriate for God to be jealous for his own honor?
* our holy and jealous God stands opposed to anything and everything that is an affront to him and his sovereign purpose (Isa. 48:11)
* personal reflection
1. wrath: God’s wrath means that he intensely hates all sin to the point that he is ready to punish it to the fullest extent
* the wrath of God is provoked whenever and wherever there is deep and persistent sin against him (Ex. 32:9-10; Deut. 9:7-8)
* now that Jesus Christ has come, the situation has intensified with regard to God’s wrath (John 3:16-18, 36; Rom. 1:18; 2:5; Eph. 2:3; 5:5-6)
* believers never have to fear the wrath of God (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10)
* this escape means believers must made a clean break from their former way of life (Col. 3:5-8)
* God’s patience is the reason why God doesn’t pour out his wrath quickly and all at once upon everyone who deserves it (Psa. 103:8-9; Rom. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9)
* personal reflection:
1. the glory of God: God is absolutely perfect, fully blessed, and gloriously beautiful
* God’s perfection: he does not lack anything—even the smallest part of any one quality—that is desirable for him to have as God
* God’s blessedness: he takes complete delight in his infinite excellence
* God’s glorious beauty: glory is the brilliant radiance that surrounds God because of his majesty (Psa. 145:5; 27:4)

##### DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

A. our affirmation of the triune God:

the *Apostles’ Creed*: “I believe in God, the Father Almighty...and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord...and in the Holy Spirit...”

the *Doxology*: “Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost”

the hymn *Holy, Holy, Holy*: “...God in three persons, blessed Trinity”

the importance of the doctrine: it protects against error; we are not

polytheists

unitarians

Jehovah Witnesses

we face the same issue today as at the time of the New Testament: is Jesus God?

the doctrine of the Trinity treats the question: what is God like in himself, in his essential being?

the doctrine of the Trinity inherently belongs to the gospel itself; the Trinity belongs to the necessary presuppositions of the gospel

salvation is the work of the triune God and reflects a Trinitarian order: how the doctrine of the Trinity enters the consciousness of a Christian (adapted from Fred Sanders, *The Deep Things of God: How the Trinity Changes Everything*)

* a person hears the gospel and accepts it; he/she is saved by Jesus
* this prompts reflection on that salvation: how did Jesus bring about salvation?
* this prompts reflection on Jesus: who must Jesus be, if he is capable of saving in this way?
* this prompts reflection on God: if Jesus if divine, who must God be?
* theological order: Trinity, incarnation, atonement, salvation

the doctrine of the Trinity is at the heart of divine revelation (John 7:16-18; 8:28; 12:47-50; 14:10, 24-26; 1 Cor. 2:10-16)

the economy of salvation (the plan he has designed and executed to bring salvation to fallen human beings) has a central focus: the Father sends the Son, and he sends (along with the Son) the Holy Spirit to accomplish redemption

* Jesus is sent by the Father (John 3:16; 4:34; 6:38)
* Jesus works in company with the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35; Acts 10:38; Heb. 9:14)
* the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit (see later discussion)
* the Father, the (incarnate) Son and the (outpoured) Spirit accomplish salvation: the Father purposes redemption, the Son secures it, and the Spirit applies it (the *missio Dei*; John 20:21-22)

the mighty act of God of adoption is adoption into the Trinity (Gal. 4:4-7; Rom. 8:14-17)

* adoption means that we are joined to the sonship of the incarnate Son, which is in turn the human enactment of the eternal sonship of the second person of the Trinity: Sonship was always within God, and it comes to be on earth as it is in heaven as sinners are adopted into sonship
* implications for prayer:

prayer has a Trinitarian shape to it (Eph. 2:18)

has double intercession built into it (Rom. 8:26-27, 34): we are invited to enter an eternal conversation in an appropriately lower, creaturely way, but the heavenly analogue of prayer is already going on in the life of God rather than waiting for us to get it started

pray as a son of God like the Son of God (Matt. 6:9): the Son invites us to join him in his prayer to his Father, making prayer a family activity, open only to sons of God

B. key theological elements in the doctrine of the Trinity

1. the word *Trinity*
2. the *economic* Trinity
	* when we speak about the *differences in roles* or activities between the three, we are talking about the *economic* Trinity
	* “economy” = an ordering of activities (e.g., home *economics* = a subject studied in school to learn how to manage the activities of the home)

Father (Gen. 1:1)

Son (Luke 2:11)

Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:16)

* more precisely:

Father

Son (John 1:3; Col. 1:16)

Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2)

Son

Father (John 3:16)

Holy Spirit (2 Thess. 2:13)

Holy Spirit

Father (Heb. 2:11)

Son (1 Cor. 1:2)

1. the *ontological* Trinity
* when we speak about the *differences in relationships* between the three, we are talking about the *ontological* Trinity
* “ontology” = something to do with *being* (e.g., the *ontological* argument for God's existence has to do with the being of God)
* other names for the ontological Trinity: the essential Trinity, the Trinity of being, the immanent (internal to himself) Trinity
* though these relationships are difficult to understand, a few points can be made
	+ 1. the Father is *autotheos* = God of himself; the Son is *autotheos* = God of himself; and the Holy Spirit is *autotheos* = God of himself.

all three person share in the one identical and undivided being of God; all three persons are fully and eternally divine

* + 1. the Father eternally relates to the Son in a *paternal* *relationship*. This means that the Father always commands, supervises, and directs the Son, and the Son always submits to him and obeys what he says

the Son, who is *generated* by the Father, is the Son in respect to person; his person is *begotten* of the Father; this is the *generation* of the Son by the Father; the Son is *begotten* of the Father.

John 5:26

John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18

1 John 4:9

1 John 5:18

* + 1. the Holy Spirit relates to the Father and the Son as one who *proceeds* from both of them; thus, an eternal characteristic of the Holy Spirit in relationship to these two is *procession*; the *eternal procession* of the Holy Spirit means he is the Spirit in respect to person; his person is *spirated* by both Father and Son.

John 14:26

John 15:26

John 16:7

John 22:22

* + 1. summary: in the ontological Trinity, these distinctions can be recognized

the Father: *paternity* (he is neither begotten, nor does he proceed)

the Son: *sonship* (he is eternally begotten of the Father)

the Holy Spirit: *procession* (he eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son)

remember: God would have been God the Trinity whether he had created us or not, revealed himself to us or not, redeemed us or not

1. the *social* Trinity
* this aspect of the doctrine of the Trinity emphasizes that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are intimately and dynamically related to each other in the divine community. They are “persons-in-relationship,” and the Trinity should be thought of less in terms of a divine essence or substance and more in terms of relationality. “Father, Son, and Spirit…as distinct centers of love, will, knowledge, and purposeful action” are “related to each other in some central ways analogous to, if sublimely surpassing, relations among the members of a society of three human persons” (Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.).
* according to Scott Horrell, a “definition of *social* *model* of the Trinity is that the one divine Being eternally exists as three distinct centers of consciousness, wholly equal in nature, genuinely personal in relationships, and each mutually indwelling the other.” Furthermore, he defines “an eternally ordered social model as the social model that, while insisting on equality of the divine nature, affirms ‘perpetual distinction of roles within the immanent Godhead;’…this entails something like the generous preeminence of the Father, the joyful collaboration of the Son, and the ever-serving activity of the Spirit”
* the historical roots of this aspect may be traced to the Cappadocian Fathers (4th century) and to Richard of St. Victor (12th century); the modern development of this springs from Karl Barth, who began his massive *Church Dogmatics* with the doctrine of the Trinity
* a key concept is *perichoresis*—the personal interpenetration or indwelling of each member of the Trinity in the other; this is the primary sense of divine unity
* the social order or *taxis* is an eternal social order. This may be described as “the generous preeminence of the Father, the joyous collaboration of the Son, and the ever-serving activity of the Spirit…all within the self-givingness of the divine fellowship” (Horrell)
* each person of the Trinity “loves, each is self-rendering, each serves, but within a harmonious order reflective of the disposition of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit….The divine persons are completely themselves in perichoretic harmony. Rather than an imposed order, this is an authentic, generous order” (Horrell)
* the implications of the social Trinity
	+ 1. “The Christian community lives by celebrating and serving the deeds, presence, promise and commands of the God whose identification constitutes this doctrine.” (Bruce D. Marshall, *Trinity and Truth*, 4)
		2. the social Trinity becomes the archetype for the intimate, dynamic, and loving relationships that should characterize people generally and Christians particularly.

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* + 1. this also prompts us to move away from our common perception of an individual as one who is in isolation or abstracted from community. Thus, we should understand a person not just as an individual but as someone who finds his/her true being-in-communion with God and with others. This is the counterpoint of the trinitarian God. This aspect may be especially important to emphasize in our postmodern context in which the paradoxical loss of the self is coupled with the quest for relationships in the form of community.
		2. two dangers inherent in this discussion: (1) Tritheism. To avoid this, don’t isolate this social aspect from the unity aspect of the Trinity: “The mutuality and equality of the Godhead must be held in tension with trinitarian social order” (Horrell, 75). (2) Classical subordinationism, or Arianism, which denies the essential equality of nature between the persons of the Trinity. The subordination affirmed in a proper social trinitarian model with eternal social order signifies an eternal, joyful, and willing obedience of God the Son to God the Father (and similarly with regard to the Holy Spirit in relationship to the Father and the Son) who are equally divine persons (not inferior or superior to one another).

C. a summary of the chief points of the doctrine of the Trinity

1. God eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

believing the three persons are distinct from each other helps us understand certain biblical passages

1. each person—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is fully God

all of the attributes of God that we have discussed—independence, unchangeableness, eternity, presence everywhere, knowledge of all things, wisdom, power, love, holiness, righteousness or justice, jealousy, truthfulness and faithfulness, sovereignty, wrath, and glory—apply equally to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

1. there is only one God

because of Scripture’s constant insistence that there is one and only one true God, it is hard to imagine how anyone could understand the doctrine of the Trinity as teaching there are three gods

summary: the doctrine of the Trinity consists of three affirmations:

1. God eternally exists as three distinct persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
2. each of these persons is fully God—the Father is fully God, the Son is fully God, and the Holy Spirit is fully God
3. there is only one God

each of these three affirmations is essential to our belief in the Trinity

D. substantiation of each of the key points

1. God eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

this is progressively revealed in Scripture (the OT starts with the foundation of the world (Gen. 1:1); but the story of Jesus starts before that (John 1:1), and the NT explores the divine reality before the creation of the world):

* the Old Testament: a partial revelation

Genesis 1:26-27 (cf. 3:22; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8)

Psalm 45:6-7 (Heb. 1:8)

Psalm 110:1 (Matt. 22:41-46)

* the New Testament: more complete revelation

Matthew 3:16-17

Matthew 28:18-20

1 Peter 1:1-2

2 Corinthians 13:14

conversations between the Father and the Son, or affirmations of the Son regarding his intimate relationship with the Father

 2. each person—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is fully God

* the Father is fully God

recall: the Father is the Father because he is Father of the Son, from eternity; there was never a time when he existed as a solitary God without his Son, so he was always God the Father (he did not “become” the Father when he created or “fathered” the world)

* the Son is fully God

a. Scriptural teaching

John 1:1

Hebrews 1:3

Philippians 2:5-7

Colossians 1:15-17

1 John 1:1-4

b. his divine titles

“Son of God” (Matt. 26:63-65; Luke 2:49; Mark 1:11)

“Lord” (Acts 2:36; John 20:28)

c. the divine references

Titus 2:13

2 Peter 1:1

Hebrews 1:8

d. the divine attributes and activities

omnipresence (Matt. 28:20; 18:20)

eternality (John 1:1; 8:58)

omniscience (John 2:25; 4:18; 11:14; 18:4; 21:17)

universal authority and power (Matthew 28:18)

creation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16)

sustaining the universe (Colossians 1:17)

judging (Matthew 25:32-32; John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42; 17:31)

forgiving sins (Mark 2:10)

giving eternal life (John 5:21; 10:28)

performing miracles

* the Holy Spirit is fully God

a. Scriptural teaching

Acts 5:3-4

b. his divine attributes and activities

 omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-8)

omniscience (1 Cor. 2:10-11)

omnipotence (Luke 2:34-37)

incarnation (conception) of the Son (Luke 1:35)

creation (Genesis 1:2)

regeneration (John 3:5-8)

sanctification (1 Peter 1:2)

 inspiration of Scripture (2 Peter 1:19-21)

c. his divine prerogatives

baptism into his name (Matthew 28:19)

benediction (2 Corinthians 13:14)

3. there is only one God

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Isaiah 45:5-6

Romans 3:30

James 2:19

E. the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity

this doctrine distinguishes Christianity from all the other religions of the world

Christian worship is distinctively Trinitarian

this doctrine expels unworthy ideas about the perfection of God’s life: it is unworthy of God to think that he without human beings is lonely or bored (we must reject the idea of divine loneliness or boredom)

this doctrine expels unworthy ideas about God’s love: the tri-personal love of God is not a love that needs any completion (so we don’t present the gospel in a way that suggests that God is begging us to come to him so he can finally be happy again)

this doctrine expels unworthy ideas about God’s glory: it is unworthy to think that God without us would have nobody to show his glory to (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit eternally adore, honor, and glorify each other)

this doctrine should affect our worldview, our treatment of others, our evangelism and missional endeavors, and our enterprising work for the kingdom of God

### DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE

introduction: the importance of this doctrine

1. “The Campus Crusade for Christ Statement of Faith:” the doctrine of Scripture

# “The sole basis of our beliefs is the Bible, God’s infallible written Word, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that it was uniquely, verbally and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit and that it was written without error (inerrant) in the original manuscripts. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks.” (Introduction)

C. the canonicity of Scripture

1. the concept of *canon*
2. definition: the canon of Scripture is the list of all the books that belong in the Bible
* the canon of the Protestant Church differs from that of the Roman Catholic Church
* the Roman Catholic canon includes the *Apocrypha*, extra books in the Old Testament (e.g., *Tobit*, *Judith*) and additions to certain Old Testament writings as found in the Protestant Bible (e.g., additions to Esther, *Bell and the Dragon*)
1. the Old Testament canon
* the Hebrew Bible was composed over a period of time stretching from the writing of the five books of Moses to the last of the prophetic books (Malachi) and the last of the historical books (Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther)
* the belief that divinely authoritative words from God had ceased following this point is confirmed by extrabiblical Jewish literature; for example, the eminent Jewish historian Josephus (A.D. 37 – 100) noted: “From Artaxerxes (464-423 B.C.) to our times a complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets” (*Against Apion* 1.41)
* the Hebrew Bible of Jesus and the apostles consisted of twenty-two books (twenty-four by some accounts) arranged in three divisions:
* *Law* = the five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
* *Prophets*, subdivided into

*Former Prophets*: Joshua, Judges (with Ruth), Samuel (1 and 2 Samuel), Kings (1 and 2 Kings)

*Latter Prophets*: Isaiah, Jeremiah (with Lamentations), Ezekiel, book of the Twelve Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi), Job, Daniel, Ezra (with Nehemiah), Chronicles (1 and 2 Chronicles), Esther

* *Writings* = Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs
* evidence for this three-fold division comes from several sources, including the New Testament itself: “the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms” (Luke 24:44); the New Testament most commonly refers to the Old Testament as “the Law and the Prophets” (e.g., Matt. 7:12; Rom. 3:21)
* beginning in the third century before Christ, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible was undertaken; the term *Septuagint* (i.e., seventy) became attached to this Greek translation
* this Bible became widely circulated among Greek-speaking Jews, and as the church expanded into Gentile areas the LXX became its Old Testament; the Septuagint is more extensive than Hebrew Scripture

*1 Esdras* (a variant account of 2 Chronicles 35:1 – Nehemiah 8:13); 2 Esdras

is the name given to the collection of our Ezra and Nehemiah

Esther (considerably expanded with a *preface*, a *conclusion*, and *three*

*additional narrative sections*)

*Judith* (a woman assassinates the commander of the Assyrian troops and

Nebuchadnezzar’s armies are defeated)

*Tobit* (an obedient son receives miraculous help from an angel)

*the Book of Wisdom* (or *the Wisdom of Solomon;* a writing in praise of wisdom, and the story of the exodus from the viewpoint of wisdom)

*Ecclesiasticus* (or *Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sirach*; a guide to wise and virtuous

living, and a eulogy of great Old Testament saints)

*Baruch* (a prayer, a poem about wisdom, and a prophecy of Israel’s future

hope)

*Letter of Jeremiah* (a letter from Jeremiah to the exiles, warning against

idolatry)

*Prayer of Manasseh* (a prayer of confession of the king of Judah)

Daniel, with *The History of Susanna* (a victim of false accusations is rescued

by Daniel’s wisdom), *Bel and the Dragon* (Daniel exposes false gods), and *The Song of the* *Three Children* (the prayer of Azariah [Abednego] in the midst of the fire, and the song of Daniel’s three friends in the furnace)

*1* and *2 Maccabees* (a history of Jewish revolts in the 2nd century B.C.)

1. the Old Testament canon in the early church
* the earliest Christian evidence is decidedly in support of the view that canonical Old Testament Scripture corresponds to the writings as found in the Hebrew Bible
* the first precise list of Old Testament books recognized and used in the early church was given by Melito of Sardis; calling them “the books of the old covenant/testament,” Melito’s list includes all the books of the Hebrew Bible except Esther and does not name any of the apocryphal writings
* Origen (185-254), the greatest biblical scholar of the early church, listed the Old Testament books and indicated twenty-two of them (he includes the *Letter of Jeremiah* and leaves out the *Book of the Twelve Prophets*, though this latter reference appears to have dropped out in the course of transmission); he specifically excludes *1 and 2 Maccabees* from his list
* Athanasius, in his position of bishop of Alexandria (he held this post from 328 to 373), was responsible for determining the annual date of Easter; in his *Thirty-ninth* *Easter* (*Paschal*) *Letter* to the churches informing them of Easter Sunday for the year 367, he dealt with the canon of the Old (and New) Testament and listed twenty-two books (he included *Baruch* and the *Letter of Jeremiah* as belonging with Jeremiah and Lamentations)
* Athanasius also listed other books that “are not indeed included in the canon, but have been appointed from the time of the fathers to be read to those who are recent converts and wish to be instructed;” these were *Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus,* Esther, *Judith,* and *Tobit*; he made no mention of *Maccabees*
* beginning in the second century after Christ, a Latin translation of the entire Bible was undertaken, reflecting the shift from Greek to Latin as the universal language of the Roman Empire; the version of the Old Testament that was originally translated was the Septuagint, not the Hebrew Bible
* in 382, the bishop of Rome invited Jerome (345 – 420) to embark on a new Latin translation of the Bible, and as he commenced his work on the Old Testament, Jerome realized that a proper translation required a Hebrew original and not the Greek Septuagint
* he composed a list of canonical Old Testament Scripture that included only the writings in the Hebrew Bible (these alone were Scripture); he then commented: “This preface to the Scriptures may serve as a general introduction to all the books that we translate from Hebrew into Latin, so that we may be assured that what is not found in our list must be placed among the *apocryphal* writings” (these writings were: *Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus,* *Judith, Tobit*, and *1* and *2 Maccabees*)
* in commenting on the first two apocryphal writings, Jerome indicated the role or purpose of the *Apocrypha*: “As then the church reads *Judith*, *Tobit*, and the books of *Maccabees* but does not admit them among the canonical Scriptures, so let it read these two volumes (i.e., *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Ecclesiasticus*) for the edification of the people, not to give authority to doctrines of the church”
* Augustine (354-430), a contemporary of Jerome, exercised an even greater influence on the church’s perspective toward the apocryphal writings; indeed, his influence on this and many other church doctrines and practices was so great that he is regarded as a “doctor” of the Catholic Church and one of the principal foundations of the Protestant Church
* the basis of Augustine’s view toward the canon of Scripture was his belief that “one and the same Spirit had spoken” through both the writers of the Hebrew Scripture and the translators of the Septuagint, so even when the two versions differed significantly, the Spirit’s work of inspiration had been active in both
* if the founders of the church held this view, it must continue to be Augustine’s view—and thus the church’s view—of Scripture: “According to my ability, I follow in the footsteps of the apostles. They themselves quoted prophetic testimonies from both the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint, and have thought that both should be used as authoritative, since both are one and divine.”
* in a series of letters between them, Augustine urged Jerome to translate the Old Testament into Latin from the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew; as Jerome included translations of the apocryphal writings in his Latin *Vulgate*, these became widely known in the church
* Augustine’s *Apocrypha* differed from the list of apocryphal books found in the LXX and included the following writings: *Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus,* additions to Esther and Daniel, *Baruch,* the *Letter of Jeremiah,* and *1* and *2 Maccabees* (*1* and *2 Esdras* and the *Prayer of Manasseh* are considered deuterocanonical)
* the Council of Hippo in 393, the Third Council of Carthage in 397, and the Fourth Council of Carthage in 419 all ratified the canon of Augustine; thus, the Old Testament with the Apocrypha would be canonical Scripture for the church
1. the New Testament canon
* to the collection of authoritative Hebrew Scripture were eventually added some additional writings in the form of gospels, a historical account, letters, and an apocalypse (a revelation of future events)
* some of these writings themselves pointed to an expansion of the canon of Scripture; for example, Peter spoke of the letters of the apostle Paul in the context of “the rest of the Scriptures” (2 Pet. 3:14-16) and Paul himself connected a saying of Jesus (“The laborer is worthy of his wages”) with Deuteronomy 25:4, referring to both as “Scripture” (1 Tim. 5:18)
* in addition to the writings that eventually became part of the recognized New Testament canon, several other writings were held in very high esteem by the early church, including the *Didache* (or *The Teaching of the Twelve*), the *Letter of Barnabas*, and *The* *Shepherd of Hermas;* the crucial question became
* this issue of the canon of Scripture became particularly critical when false teachers and prophets appeared; for example, Marcion (excommunicated in A.D. 144) was a leader of a heretical movement whose views were obviously wrong, and his “canon” of Scripture consisted of “the Gospel and the Apostle:”
* a mutilated version of the Gospel of Luke: he removed the account of Jesus’ birth as well as any reference to Jesus acknowledging the Creator God to be his Father
* ten letters of Paul: he removed all of the apostle’s references to Old Testament prophecies of Christ’s advent as well as any reference to the Creator God as the Father of Jesus, and he rejected 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus
* the church turned to defining the canon of Scripture, and two key criteria emerged to determine which writings to include in the canon:
* *apostolicity*: does this writing have an apostle for its author (e.g., Paul’s letters, the gospels of Matthew and John)? if not, is an apostle associated with this writing (e.g., Mark’s gospel records the account of the apostle Peter)?
* *antiquity*: has the church historically recognized the voice of God speaking to his people in this writing?
* the earliest list that we possess, the *Muratorian Canon* of A.D. 170, includes the following as canonical New Testament writings: the four Gospels, Acts, thirteen letters of Paul, Jude, 1 and 2 John, Revelation, the *Wisdom of Solomon,* and the *Revelation of Peter* (the writings missing from this list are Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, and 3 John)
* in the third and fourth centuries, several other lists—Origen’s canon and Eusebius’ canon—presented a New Testament very similar to the one we now possess, though several writings continued to have a questionable existence as canonical Scripture

Hebrews

James

2 Peter

2 and 3 John

Jude

* the first appearance of a list of New Testament writings that corresponds exactly with the canon as we know it today was Athanasius’ *Thirty-ninth Easter(Paschal) Letter* in A.D. 367 (we have already seen him and this letter in our discussion of the Old Testament canon)
* the Council of Hippo (A.D. 393), the Third Council of Carthage (397), and the Fourth Council of Carthage (419) confirmed Athanasius’ list of canonical New Testament writings
1. the canon of Scripture in the Reformation (sixteenth century)
* in the sixteenth century, the church experienced a return to its foundational writings (the Hebrew Old Testament, the Greek New Testament, and the works of the early church) and the Reformers became convinced that the church’s Old Testament should be based on the shorter Hebrew Bible, not on the Septuagint with its additional apocryphal writings; the reasoning was that since the Jewish Scripture, with its twenty-two (or twenty-four) books, had been the Word of God used by Jesus and the disciples, that must be considered the Bible of the church
* adopting Jerome’s classical distinction, the Reformers urged that the church could appeal to canonical Scripture alone to establish its beliefs and practices; since the *Apocrypha* was non-canonical, it could not be used as the basis of church doctrine
* the Reformers urged that, just as the church’s Old Testament should be based on the Hebrew Bible, so should its New Testament be based on the Greek original; where the church’s beliefs and practices were based on the poorly translated Latin *Vulgate*, they must be modified or abolished
* the Roman Catholic Church reacted to this Protestant rejection of the *Apocrypha* by reaffirming belief in it at the Council of Trent; in its fourth session (1546) the Council sought to stamp out the Protestant heresy:

 If anyone does not accept all these books in their entirety, with all their parts, as they are being read in the Catholic Church and are contained in the ancient Latin *Vulgate* edition, as sacred and canonical and knowingly and deliberately rejects the above mentioned traditions, let him be anathema (cursed).

D. the inspiration of Scripture

1. the affirmation of Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16-17

* *theopneustos* = expiration (not inspiration); breathed out
* translation

“every God-breathed (inspired) Scripture is also profitable...”

 OR

 “all Scripture is God-breathed (inspired) and profitable...”

* the utility/profitability/functionality of Scripture is tied to its divine origin

2 Peter 1:19-21

* “the prophetic word”/ “no prophecy of Scripture”
* “comes from someone’s own interpretation”
* “no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man”
* “men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”
* the fine balance of attributing Scripture to both human writers and God

2 Timothy 3:16-17 emphasizes the RESULT of God's work in Scripture:

 2 Peter 1:19-21 emphasizes the PROCESS of God's work in Scripture:

John 10:30-36

* the confrontation

Jesus cites Psalm 82:6 to repel the charge that he blasphemed in referring to himself as the “son of God”

the Old Testament gives evidence that the term “God,” under certain circumstances, could be used to refer to human beings (as in the case of rulers in their official capacity as judges)

if this point is true, then it is not blasphemy to call Jesus Christ, whom God the Father sent into the world, the “son of God”

* Jesus Christ's doctrine of Scripture (B. B. Warfield): “What we have here is therefore the strongest possible assertion of the indefectible authority of Scripture. In the Saviour’s view the indefectible authority of Scripture attaches to the very form of expression of its most casual clauses. It belongs to Scripture through and through, down to its most minute particulars, that it is of indefectible authority.”

Matthew 5:17-19

1. the definition of inspiration
* the requirements of a definition of inspiration: what elements must be present for our definition to be adequate?
	+ 1. divine authorship (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21)
		2. a truly human authorship
		3. rejection of mechanical dictation
		4. the issue of WHAT is inspired

2 Peter 1:19-21

2 Timothy 3:16-17

it seems to me that the inspiration of the Holy Spirit focused on in 2 Peter 1:19-21 includes the “mental words” in the minds of the biblical authors as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, but the ultimate product of this was that they “spoke from God:” the outcome was written words (indeed, we would have no clue as to what the “Holy Spirit inspired mental words” in the minds of the biblical authors were had those not been recorded for us in written words)

God communicated his thoughts by means of the biblical authors who, expressing their own personality and theological perspective and employing their own grammatical abilities and writing styles, communicated the divine revelation in their written text

* + 1. corollary: Scripture is divinely authoritative (John 10:30-36; Matt. 5:17-19)

these passages stress the indefectible authority of Scripture: it is not liable to failure or fault

this point is becoming an increasingly important issue today, as some emphasize that the authority of Scripture is due to is functional ability; but we emphasize the authority of Scripture itself: because God is its author, Scripture possess divine authority

* + 1. corollary: Scripture is wholly true (inerrant)

* the resulting definition

Inspiration is the special work of the Holy Spirit in which he superintended the human authors of Scripture in such a manner that, employing their different theological perspectives, writing styles, and grammatical abilities, he ensured that what they wrote was precisely what God wanted them to write: the Word of God, fully truthful, without error in the original manuscripts and with divine authority.

1. some specifications of the doctrine of inspiration
* inspiration is *plenary*

definition: fully inspired (all of its parts)

 Scriptural support: 2 Tim. 3:16

today, many people—many evangelicals—hold to something less than a fully inspired Scripture: most of it is inspired (so goes the theory), and those parts which are not are susceptible to error

what is the general discriminating criterion, the factor that allows us to distinguish between inspired and uninspired parts of Scripture?

what do you find to be problematical about this?

* inspiration is *verbal*

definition: inspiration extends to the very words of Scripture

it is not just an influence of providential care or guidance extending to a heightened religious consciousness or extending only to the thoughts or ideas in the minds of the human authors

 Erickson presents two arguments for verbal inspiration:

1. some arguments and lessons in Scripture depend on very precise wording (Matt. 22:32 quotes Ex. 3:6; Matt. 22:43-45 quotes Psa. 110:1; Gal. 3:16 quotes Gen. 12:7)
2. the New Testament writers attribute to God certain statements in the Old Testament that, in their original form, are not specifically ascribed to him (Matt. 19:4-5 quotes Gen. 2:24; Acts 4:24-26 quotes Psa. 2:1-2)
* inspiration is *confluent*/*concursive*

confluence (diagram)

 river 1

 CONFLUENCE

 river 2

definition: “the flowing together of two streams...the body of water so formed;” or, “the coming together of people”

definition of “confluent” (adjective): “flowing or running together; blending into one”

when used of the inspiration of Scripture

concursive

definition: (literally) “writing with/together”

when used of the inspiration of Scripture

1. the mode of inspiration
* this is difficult to determine

the *Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*, article VII: “We affirm that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.”

* several modes/methods seem to have been employed
	+ natural/normal powers and abilities were employed; e.g. historical research (Luke 1:1-4); observation of life (Eccles.)
	+ miraculous revelation (2 Cor. 12:1-4)
	+ Spirit-assisted memory (John 14:26)
	+ sound judgment (1 Cor. 7:25-26, 39-40)
	+ dictation (Is. 8:1; Jer. 30:2; Hab. 2:2; Rev. 2-3; 14:13)
1. the truthfulness and inerrancy of Scripture
	1. the importance of this doctrine of Scripture
	2. the truthfulness of Scripture
* definition: the truthfulness of Scripture means that whatever Scripture affirms is true
* biblical affirmations

Prov. 30:5-6; John 17:17; Psa. 12:6

* a theological consideration

Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18

* how is it possible to affirm that God’s Word is truthful?
* how does the doctrine of the truthfulness of Scripture stand in contrast with

pluralism?

postmodernism?

* 1. the inerrancy of Scripture
* the definition of inerrancy: the inerrancy of Scripture means that Scripture does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact

Paul Feinberg’s definition: “Inerrancy means that when all facts are known, the Scriptures in their original autographs and properly interpreted will be shown to be wholly true in everything that they affirm, whether that has to do with doctrine or morality or with the social, physical, or life sciences” (“The Meaning of Inerrancy”)

* inerrancy is characteristic of all of Scripture
* inerrancy applies to the original manuscripts, or autographs, of Scripture

could God have so superintended the transmission process so as to preclude error in the copies of Scripture?

did God so superintend this process?

an easy objection may be raised

how could we respond to this objections?

but isn’t this qualification unnecessary, seeing that God uses and blesses the existent, errant copies we possess today?

or, put in another way, what’s the big difference between an original inerrant text which has become corrupted and an original errant text which has become corrupted?

to put it in still another way, what difference does the inerrancy of Scripture make? after all, we don’t have the original errorless manuscripts in our possession

**INERRANT ORIGINAL ERRANT ORIGINAL**

undergoes textual corruption undergoes textual corruption

restoration thru textual criticism restoration thru textual criticism

valid interpretation valid interpretation

CONCLUSION CONCLUSION

the final step on the right is a necessary concomitant to the view that the autographs were errant: one could say that it is hopelessly subjective

but note the final product coming from our position of the inerrancy of the original texts!

thus, the qualification that inerrancy of Scripture applies to the autographs alone is not pedantic: it is of great importance!

* inerrancy is consistent with the Bible’s use of the language of ordinary, everyday speech

popular, observational language—phenomenological language—is used very commonly even in today’s “enlightened” (i.e., scientific) world (e.g., “the sun *rises*” or “the sun *sets*”)

* inerrancy is consistent with the New Testament’s use of loose or free quotations from the Old Testament

the doctrine of inerrancy does not preclude any of these conventions from being used by the New Testament writers when making reference to the Old Testament; thus, the fact that precise (i.e., word for word) quotes do not always appear does not weigh against the inerrancy of Scripture

* inerrancy is consistent with the fact the *logia Jesu* (the sayings of Jesus) do not contain the *ipsissima verba* (the exact words) of Jesus

exceptions: Mark 5:41; 15:34

we don’t have the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus; we have his *ipsissima vox*

* inerrancy is consistent with unusual grammatical constructions in the Bible

example: Revelation 21:9

but inerrancy will be defined in terms of truth: what is truth?

* inerrancy is consistent with different chronological ordering of events

each of the biblical authors was free to arrange his material as he wished, according to his own theological and/or literary purposes

problem: what was the “real chronological order” of the temptations of Jesus?

Matthew 4:1-11 Luke 4:1-13

1. stones into bread 1. stones into bread

2. throw yourself down 2. worship Satan

 3. worship Satan 3. throw yourself down

* inerrancy is consistent with divergent parallel accounts in the Bible

variant accounts purporting to relate the same event are quite troublesome

Erickson (*Christian Theology*) notes five different approaches to the problem of conflicting accounts in Scripture: they range from the view that one must explain all the problem passages, to the view that some problem passages can be explained while others do not lend themselves to explanation, to the view that the problems are insurmountable and therefore one must admit to errors in Scripture

my view (like Erickson’s view):

in principle, I oppose forced harmonization: the solution is far worse than simply admitting our inability to know exactly what happened; it is better to be honest than to look ridiculous by trying to foist harmony on the data

in the case of apparently irreconcilable differences in accounts purporting to describe the same event, we may note that

what can account for these divergences?

example: the “sermon on the mount” (Matt. 5:1) and the “sermon on a level place” (Luke 6:12, 17)

example: the length of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt (Gen. 15:13; Ex. 12:40; Gal. 3:17)

 example: the death of Judas (Matt. 27:1-10; Acts 1:15-19)

example: the healing of ? and ? (Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43)

example: the first events of holy week (Matt. 21:12-22; Mark 11:11-26)

example: Peter’s denial of Jesus (Matt. 26:33-35, 69-75; Mark 14:29-31, 66-72; Luke 22:33-34, 54-62; John 13:37-38; 18:15-18, 25-27)

example: the Lord’s Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4)

* inerrancy may be asserted, but not demonstrated, with respect to all of the phenomena of Scripture

“when all the facts are known”

* 1. responding to some current challenges to inerrancy
* the Bible is inspired, truthful, and authoritative for “faith and practice”
* the biblical writers “accommodated” their messages in minor details to the false ideas current in their day and affirmed or taught those ideas in an incidental way
* there are some clear errors in the Bible

F. the sufficiency of Scripture

definition: the sufficiency of Scripture means that Scripture contained all the words of God he intended his people to have at each stage of redemptive history, and that it now contains everything people need to know for salvation and everything Christ-followers need in order to live lives that are fully pleasing to God

the affirmation of Scripture

2 Timothy 3:15-17

Psalm 19:7-11

1 Peter 2:2

Matthew 4:4

Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18-19 (passages prohibiting additions to, or subtractions from, Scripture)

specifications

* + the sufficiency of Scripture is not absolute (Deut. 29:29); rather, the sufficiency of Scripture is restricted
	+ historically, the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture was articulated in opposition to Roman Catholic insistence on the authority of Church tradition

Roman Catholicism denied the sufficiency of Scripture, insisting upon another authority—Tradition—that supplemented Scripture; thus, everything a person needed to know to be saved and everything a believer needed to live a life that was pleasing to God was not contained in Scripture alone (e.g., purgatory, transubstantiation)

* + the Reformers and post-Reformers denied this, countering with the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture: everything that a person needs to know for salvation and for living a godly life is contained in Scripture; thus, the doctrine of Scripture's sufficiency and the principle of *sola Scriptura*—“Scripture alone”—are connected

the cash value of the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture (Grudem, 130-135)

* + the sufficiency of Scripture should encourage us as we try to discover what God would have us to think (about a particular doctrinal issue) or to do (in a particular situation)
	+ the sufficiency of Scripture reminds us that we are to add nothing to Scripture, and that we are to consider no other writings of equal value to Scripture
	+ the sufficiency of Scripture tells us that God does not require us to believe anything about himself or his redemptive work that is not found in Scripture
	+ the sufficiency of Scripture shows us that no modern revelations from God are to be placed on a level equal to Scripture in authority
	+ the sufficiency of Scripture reminds us that nothing is sin that is not forbidden by Scripture either explicitly or by implication
	+ the sufficiency of Scripture tells us that nothing is required of us by God that is not commanded in Scripture either explicitly or by implication
	+ the sufficiency of Scripture reminds us that in our doctrinal and ethical teaching we should emphasize what Scripture emphasizes and be content with what God has told us in Scripture

application (adapted from Grudem, 135)

* + If the Bible contains everything we need God to tell us for obeying him perfectly, what is the role of the following in helping us to find God’s will for ourselves: advice from others; sermons or Bible classes; our consciences; our feelings; the leading of the Holy Spirit as we sense him prompting our inward desires and subjective impressions; changes in circumstances?
	+ Have you ever imposed upon yourself a prohibition against some belief or act that is not found in Scripture? Have you ever imposed upon yourself a requirement to do or believe something that is not found in Scripture? What have the results been in your life and ministry? What does the sufficiency of Scripture have to say about this?

G. the necessity of Scripture

1. definition: the necessity of Scripture means that the Bible is necessary for knowledge of the gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for certain knowledge of God’s will, but it is not necessary for knowing that God exits or for knowing something about God’s character and moral laws.
2. the affirmation of Scripture

Romans 10:13-17

2 Timothy 3:15-17

 a theological consideration: as Calvin notes (*Institutes*I.6.3)

Suppose we ponder how slippery is the fall of the human mind into forgetfulness of God, how great the tendency to every kind of error, how great the lust to fashion constantly new and artificial religions. Then we may perceive how necessary was such written proof of the heavenly doctrine, that it should neither perish through forgetfulness nor vanish through error nor be corrupted by the audacity of men.

1. clarifications
	* there is no absolutenecessity for Scripture

rather, there is a necessity conditioned on God's good pleasure to reveal his truth through a written Word

* + Scripture is not necessary for knowledge of God’s existence and something about his character and moral laws
1. the historical backdrop for affirming the necessity of Scripture: the doctrine of the necessity of Scripture was directed at two extremes
* those who held that God speaks to people so as to save and guide them apart from his written Word
* the Roman Catholic view that the Church could progress and true doctrine could be maintained by means of Church Tradition without the aid of Scripture: Roman Catholicism would admit that Scripture was necessary for the *bene esse* (well-being) of the Church but not for its *esse* (existence)

the Reformers and post-Reformers, however, insisted that Scripture is necessary for the very existence of the church

the church needs Scripture exactly as “daily bread is necessary, which this life cannot do without” (Polanus)

1. application

H. the clarity (perspicuity) of Scripture

1. definition: the clarity of Scripture means that the Bible is written in such a way that its teachings are able to be understood by all who will read it seeking God’s help and being willing to follow it

for advanced discussion

Perspicuity is a property of Scripture as a whole and of each portion of Scripture whereby it is comprehensible to all believers who possess the normal acquired ability to understand oral communication and/or written discourse, regardless of their gender, age, education, language, or cultural background. However, the level of people’s comprehension of perspicuous Scripture is appropriate to and usually varies proportionately with various factors, including, but not limited to, spiritual maturity. In addition, the doctrine of perspicuity is always affirmed in the context of a believing community, a context which assumes the assistance of others in attaining a more precise understanding of Scripture, and perspicuity requires a dependence on the Holy Spirit for Scripture to be grasped and calls for a responsive obedience to what is understood. Moreover, perspicuity includes the comprehensibility of the way of salvation to unbelievers who are aided by the Holy Spirit, and it does not exclude some type of cognition of Scripture in general by unbelievers.

a closer look at this definition

* clarity is a property of Scripture
* the basic idea
* the only prerequisite for understanding
* understanding is not dependent on
* the level of understanding may vary
* the issue of “internal” clarity
* understanding insists on obedience
* the important role of the church
* the clarity of Scripture for unbelievers
1. the historical backdrop for affirming the clarity of Scripture
* at the time of the Reformation, Catholicism insisted that only people trained to interpret the Bible—the priests—could rightly read and understand it
* the Reformers—Martin Luther, Huldrych Zwingli, John Calvin, and many others—disagreed and formulated the doctrine of the clarity of Scripture
1. biblical support for the clarity of Scripture
* the metaphor of Scripture as a light or lamp

Psalm 119:105

2 Peter 1:19

* biblical affirmations of the usefulness of Scripture

Psalm 19:7

2 Timothy 3:16-17

1 Corinthians 10:6, 11

Romans 4:22-24

* commands and exhortations to read/hear Scripture

1 Timothy 4:13

1 Peter 2:2

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

* biblical examples of Scripture being understood

Acts 17:10-11

Nehemiah 8:2-3

* direct biblical affirmations of its own clarity

Deuteronomy 29:29

Deuteronomy 30:11-14; cf. Romans 10:6-10

1. difficulties
* what is to be made of the lack of understanding or misunderstanding of Scripture?

2 Cor. 3:12-4:6

John 5:31-47

1 Cor. 2:14

* what of the social/political/cultural/economic/religious/linguistic gulf—chasm!—that exists between Scripture and today’s readers/hearers of Scripture?

the Scriptural writings are characterized by *the presumption of continued intelligibility* of those writings through vast changes

the Old Testament looks forward (Deut. 30:11-14; 31:9-13)

the New Testament looks backward (Rom. 4:22-24; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11)

* yet the biblical authors recognized that social/political/cultural/economic/ religious/linguistic differences between Scripture and its readers can make Scripture difficult to understand; thus, they seek to “bridge the gulf:”
* they translate foreign words when they use those words

Matthew 1:23; Mark 5:41

* they provide background information when needed

Ruth 4:7-8; Mark 7:1-4

* the explain the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar

Genesis 13:10; 1 Samuel 9:9-14

* they make editorial comments

John 7:37-39

* but what about Peter’s frank admission of the obscurity of Scripture (2 Pet. 3:15-16)?
1. practical encouragement from this doctrine
* what should be our expectation when we open up the Bible to read or study it?
* with what expectation should we encourage others to explore Scripture?
1. the role of scholars

*Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics*, Article 24 (1978)

*We Affirm* that a person is not dependent for understanding of Scripture on the expertise of biblical scholars.

*We Deny* that a person should ignore the fruits of the technical study of Scripture by biblical scholars.

I. the authority of Scripture

1. definition: in virtue of its divine inspiration, Scripture, as the expression of God’s revelation and will to us, possesses the supreme right to command what we are to believe and how we are to act (adapted from Erickson, *Christian Theology*)
2. specifications
	* a corollary of divine inspiration
	* authority is a property/quality/characteristic of Scripture

this is opposed to some contemporary views of the authority of Scripture:

a. the authority of Scripture is functional

Scripture functionsin a certain way: it leads to salvation, it equips believers for godly living, it instructs Christians in sound doctrine, etc

“The Bible’s authority…rests in the very ingenuity and irresistibility of the experiences it describes, not in its having God as its author.” John Killinger, Ten Things I Learned Wrong From a Conservative Church.

b. the authority of Scripture is instrumental

God uses the Bible to speak to us what he wants to reveal to us today; thus, Scripture is the instrumentthat the Holy Spirit employs to communicate to us

c. the authority of Scripture is a conferredauthority

Scripture does not possess some intrinsic authority, but whatever is attached to Scripture is the authority conferredon it by the Christian community

there are several reasons for highly regarding Scripture as an authority in community life and worship

in my view, authority is an ontological matter: it has to do with the very nature of Scripture itself

but functional authority, instrumental authority, and “community-conferred” authority are all based on the ontological reality that Scripture inherently possesses authority

* + the authority of Scripture intersects with the ministry of the Holy Spirit

Erickson notes that the work of the Holy Spirit is essential in regenerating us, enabling us to understand the gospel, helping us to accept divine revelation (1 Cor. 2:15-16), enlightening our hearts to the comprehension of Scripture, employing Scripture to convict us of sin and to encourage us in godliness, etc.

a key truth here is the interface of Scripture with the Holy Spirit

there are two very common extremes; what are the results of these?

 Scripture is emphasized and the Holy Spirit is de-emphasized

the Holy Spirit is emphasized and Scripture is de-emphasized

as Erickson notes: “Actually, it is the combination of these two factors that constitutes authority. Both are needed.”

1. the affirmation of Scripture, and theological support
	* authority is a corollary of inspiration
	* the prophets of the Old Testament spoke and wrote with divine authority

“...Moses spoke to the children of Israel, according to all that the Lord had commanded him to give to them...” (Deut. 1:3)

“thus says the Lord”

* + the authority of Old Testament Scripture is attested to by Jesus Christ and the apostles (Matt. 5:17-18; John 10:35 )
	+ the authority of New Testament Scripture is anticipated by Jesus Christ and acknowledged by its apostolic authors (John 14:26; 16:13)

the apostles viewed their own writings as divinely authoritative, based on the authority that Jesus Christ himself gave to them to command the church (1 Thess 4:1-2; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:14; 1 Cor 14:37; 1 Thess 2:13)

* + some people point to “external” evidences of Scripture’s authority

its saving and sanctifying power

fulfilled prophecy

historical reliability

* + in my view, the most important support for the authority of Scripture is the internal witness of the Holy Spirit

in his *Institutes*, Calvin addresses the authority of Scripture: he notes that this issue is of such fundamental importance that it requires absolute certainty: “The Scriptures obtain full authority among believers only when men regard them as having sprung from heaven, as if there the living words of God were heard.” (1.7.1)

he rejects the error that claims that the authority of Scripture derives from the Church, i.e., that the authority which Scripture enjoys is one that is conferred on it by the Church: the Church confers authority on it, and therefore Scripture is authoritative

Calvin also notes that, though good arguments could be advanced for the fact that Scripture comes from God

thus, he underscores the role of the Holy Spirit:

If we desire to provide in the best way for our consciences—that they may not be perpetually beset by the instability of doubt or vacillation, and that they may not also boggle at the smallest quibbles—we ought to seek our conviction in a higher place than human reasons, judgments, or conjectures, that is in the secret testimony of the Spirit.

The testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men’s hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets, must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded.

Let this point therefore stand: that those whom the Holy Spirit has inwardly taught truly rest upon Scripture, and that Scripture indeed is self-authenticated; hence, it is not right to subject it to proof and reasoning. And the certainty it deserves with us, it attains by the testimony of the Spirit. For even if it wins reverence for itself by its own majesty, it seriously affects us only when it is sealed upon our hearts through the Spirit. Therefore, illumined by his power, we believe neither by our own nor by anyone else's judgment that Scripture is from God; but above human judgment we affirm with utter certainty (just as if we were gazing upon the majesty of God himself) that it has flowed to us from the very mouth of God by the ministry of men.

1. opponents of/detractors from the authority of Scripture
	* the authority of Scripture plusthe authority of the church
	* the authority of Scripture plusthe authority of critical reason

Packer (*Fundamentalism and the Word of God*, 72-73) describes those who elevate reason to an authority along with Scripture; he notes that they are

subjectivists in the matter of authority. Their position is based on an acceptance of the presuppositions and conclusions of...critical Bible study, which are radically at variance with the Bible’s own claims for itself. On this basis, they think it necessary to say—indeed, to insist—that some scriptural assertions are erroneous. They say we must use our Christian wits to discern beneath the fallible words of fallible men the eternal truth of God. But this makes it impossible to regard Scripture as authoritative without qualification; what is now authoritative is not Scripture as it stands, but Scripture as pruned by a certain type of scholarship—in others words, human opinions about Scripture. It is true that these critics pay lip-service to the principle of biblical authority, and, indeed, suppose themselves to accept it; but their view of the nature of Scripture effectively prevents them from doing so. It is evident that they have not thought out with sufficient seriousness what subjection to biblical authority means in practice. Their view really amounts to saying that the question of biblical authority is now closed; the supreme authority is undoubtedly Christian reason, which must hunt for the word of God in the Bible by the light of rationalistic critical principles.

* the authority of Scripture plusthe authority of the “inner light” or personal revelations

historically, the Quakers disassociated Scripture from the action and inner illumination of the Holy Spirit; this resulted in the “inner light” being pre-eminently important and a minimizing of Scriptural authority

more common today is the emphasis on the reception of personal words from the Lord; this is not the inner light phenomenon of the Quakers, but there are some similarities; as Grudem (132) notes:

At various times throughout the history of the church, and particularly in the modern charismatic movement, people have claimed that God has given revelations through them for the benefit of the church. However we may evaluate such claims, we must be careful never to allow (in theory or in practice) the placing of such revelations on a level equal to Scripture. We must insist that God does not require us to believe anything about himself or his work in the world that is contained in these revelations but not in Scripture. And we must insist that God does not require us to obey any moral directives that come to us through such means but that are not confirmed by Scripture. The Bible contains everything we need God to tell us for trusting him and obeying him perfectly.

* the authority of Scripture versuspostmodern anti-authority

in a culture which is anti-authority, how can we live and minister with Scripture that claims to be not only authority but the supreme authority?

we can no longer assume that people will grant us the authority of Scripture, nor that, once evidence for Scripture’s authority is presented, people will respond with respect and acknowledgement

how can we approach the generations in high school and college, students whose basic view of life is anti-authority and who are indifferent to moral standards, unconcerned about truth, cynical about institutions in general and the church in particular?

### DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the CCC “Statement of Faith”

two complete statements address this doctrine:

* “The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to men. He convicts and draws sinners to Christ, imparts new life to them, continually indwells them from the moment of spiritual birth and seals them until the day of redemption. His fullness, power and control are appropriated in the believer’s life by faith.” (# 10)
* Every believer is called to live so in the power of the indwelling Spirit that he will not fulfill the lust of the flesh but will bear fruit to the glory of God.” (# 11)

three statements also touch partially on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit:

* Jesus Christ’s “miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit” (# 2)
* “Every man is in need of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit” (# 7)
* the witness of the Holy Spirit, in conjunction with Scripture, produces assurance of salvation (# 9)

B. the importance of this doctrine

C. divisions within evangelicalism

Pentecostals/charismatics

non-Pentecostals/charismatics

third wave evangelicals

D. the personality of the Holy Spirit

1. some difficulties involved
2. the affirmation of Scripture

Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:21-22

Acts 15:28

his personal characteristics (1 Cor. 2:10-11; Eph. 4:30; 1 Cor. 12:11)

his personal activities (Acts 8:29; Rom. 8:26-27; John 14:26; John 15:26; Romans 8:16)

John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:13-14

Luke 4:14; Acts 10:38; Romans 15:13; 1 Cor. 2:4

E. the deity of the Holy Spirit

1. the affirmation of Scripture (Acts 5:3-4; cf. 1 Cor. 3:16-17)
2. the Holy Spirit exhibits divine attributes

Psalm 139:7-10

Isaiah 40:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11

John 16:13

Luke 1:35

Hebrews 9:14 (?)

1. the Holy Spirit performs divine works

Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4; Psalm 104:27-30

John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5

2 Peter 1:19-21

Romans 8:11

1. divine honor is paid to him

Matthew 28:18-20

2 Corinthians 13:14

1. conclusions

F. the Holy Spirit in the old covenant

1. his work of creation and preservation

Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4

Psalm 104:27-30

1. his endowments of humanity

Job 32:8

Genesis 41:38-39

Exodus 28:3; Exodus 31:3-5 and 35:30-35

1. his work in relation to redemption
	* general statement

a.

Judges 3:10-11; 6:34; 11:29-33

b.

1 Samuel 16:13

1 Samuel 16:14 (Psalm 51:11)

c.

2 Sam. 23:1-2; Ezek. 2:2; 8:3; Micah 3:8

2 Peter 1:19-21; cf. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

* the expectation

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Ezekiel 36:25-27

Joel 2:28-32

G. the Holy Spirit in the new covenant

1. John the Baptist and the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:15-17)
2. Jesus and the Holy Spirit

Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:18-20

Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:29-34

Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13

Luke 4:14-21

 Matt. 12:22-29

John 7:37-39

 John 14:17

 Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:4-5

1. Jesus’ teaching on the Holy Spirit
* John 14-16

a. teaching on the person of the Holy Spirit

b. teaching on the work of the Holy Spirit

* other teachings

a. blasphemy against the Holy Spirit

b.

1. Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-21, 33)

H. differences between the old covenant and new covenant experiences of the Holy Spirit

1. key differences
2. diagrammatically

 the age to come

 C R

 C E H E

 H V R T

 R E I U

 I N S R

 S T T’ N

 T S

 this present evil age

 Old Covenant New Covenant experience

 experience of of Holy Spirit

 Holy Spirit

I. the Holy Spirit’s ministry today

1. the start and finish of salvation

John 16:8-11

John 3:3-5; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 6:11

Romans 8:11

2. works related to assurance/perseverance

Romans 8:16

1 John 3:24, 4:13

Galatians 4:6

Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30

Romans 8:23

2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5

3. sanctifying ministry

1 Peter 1:2

Galatians 5:22-23

2 Corinthians 3:18

4. other particular ministries of the Holy Spirit

Romans 8:26-27

Ephesians 2:18

1 Corinthians 2:12-15

1 Corinthians 12-14

Romans 8:4-6, 14

Galatians 5:16 ff.

Acts 16:6-15

Ephesians 4:3

2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:1-2

how is this possible?

Romans 15:30; Colossians 1:8

Romans 14:17, 1 Thessalonians1:6

* Acts 20:28

5. avoid sinning against the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 4:30

1 Thessalonians 5:19

6. living in the Spirit

* be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18)
* do everything in the Holy Spirit

Luke 10:21

Acts 19:21

Romans 5:5

Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20

Galatians 3:2-3

1 Thessalonians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

7. conclusion (Zech. 4:6)