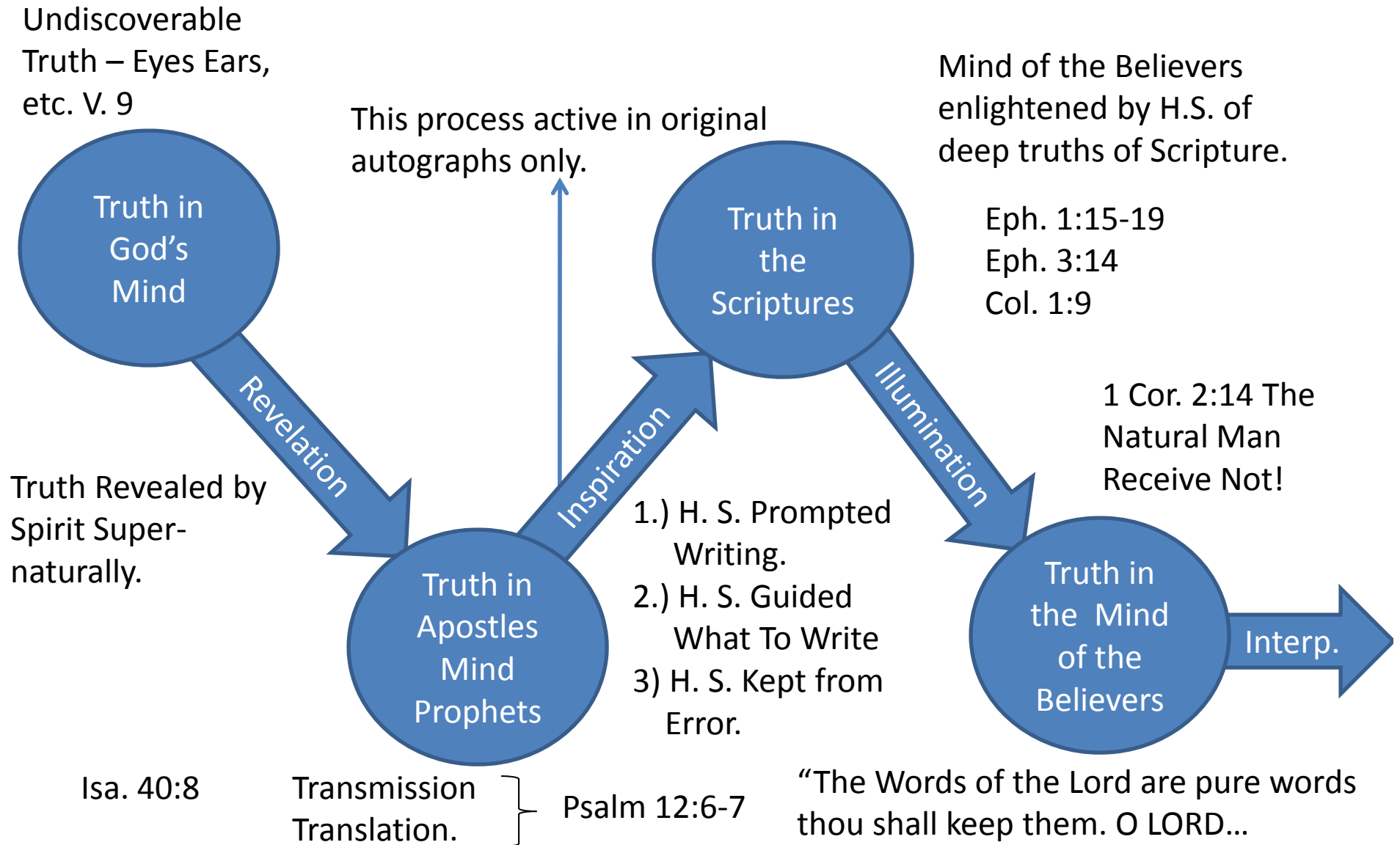


Three Divine Processes 1 Cor. 2:9-16



How do you know the Bible is True?

Wouldn't it be really easy to just make stuff up and make it fit together so that the Bible looked true?

You're entire faith rests almost solely on the writing in one book, what if that book is wrong?

What evidence is there that shows the book is not wrong?

1. The New Testament was written too close to the death of Christ.
 - if the church was able to flourish just years after the death and resurrection of Christ, especially the church in Jerusalem, then the beliefs must have had merit, or others would have refuted them.
 2. The New Testament authors were almost all alive and knew Christ while he walked the earth.
 - this was not legend or folklore, these are eyewitness accounts What if the Version we read has errors from translation?
 - Bruce Metzger, professor emeritus Princeton Theological Seminary: "compared with other ancient documents there is an unprecedented number of New Testament manuscripts and they can be dated extremely close to the original writings." The modern New Testament is 99.5% free of textual discrepancies, with no major doctrines in doubt.
- Well, what else?
3. Archeology
 - findings have only enhanced the credibility of the bible. Ex. The Dead Sea Scrolls
 - In particular, historical findings have supported the credibility of the author Luke so much that he is regarded as one of the best historians of all of antiquity.
 4. Historical Accuracy about stuff unrelated to God
 - Luke takes time to include several historical details that have little to no effect upon theology, but they are overwhelmingly accurate.
 5. Lack of perfect harmony
 - The authors of the gospels were honest and willing to include difficult-to explain material.
 - "The harmony among the gospels on essential facts, coupled with divergence on some incidental details, lends historical credibility to the accounts."

-Stobel

-Examples: Birth accounts in Matthew and Luke, what Paul did after the road to Damascus

Assignment #3 – Case Study – A Friend with A Crisis of Faith.

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Bible Introduction

Instructor: Dr. Weymann S. Lee

July 19, 2010

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Outline

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Assignment:

Assignment #3: Due at the end of week 8
Case Study

Provide a response to the following situation by employing what you have learned about the process of canonization and the doctrines of inerrancy, inspiration, or illumination.

While you are walking back to the dorm from class one night, one of your fellow students confesses to a crisis of faith. He says the he isn't sure that he actually believes that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God and is not sure how he can trust a fallible book. He also expresses concern about the human origins of the canon and of the text itself. He does not feel that he can trust the rational arguments learned in the classroom, but is willing to listen to other arguments.

Assume that your friend is in this class with you. Construct an apologetic argument that you might use to convince your friend that the bible is trustworthy.

Introduction

This paper is a Case Study on how I would use what I learned in this Class to create an apologetic argument for a given situation. Apologetics is defined in Vanhoozer on page 57 and means to discuss the validity of ancient and modern biblical translations. But in this situation I will need to focus on the theopneustos or “God breathed” aspect of Scripture and its infallibility as it pertains to a saved person. The situation is this, while I’m walking back to the dorm from class one night, a fellow student confesses to a crisis of faith. He says the he isn't sure that he actually believes that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God and is not sure how he can trust a fallible book. He also expresses concern about the human origins of the canon and of the text itself. He does not feel that he can trust the rational arguments learned in the classroom, but is willing to listen to other arguments.

I am to assume that my friend is in this class with me. Construct an apologetic argument that you might use to convince your friend that the bible is trustworthy..

Assumptions

I am to assume that my friend is in this class with me, but, for me, the controlling assumption is that my friend doesn't think he can trust the rational arguments learned in the classroom. I will also assume that my friend is saved else 1 Corinthians 2:14 “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,” will come into play. (KJV)

Preliminary Questions to Narrow the “Scope of the Crisis”

The very first thing I would do is establish his baseline position by asking a few questions and to score some undercover points for what we are going to talk about. I would ask, “You still believe in God, don't you?”(authority of Scripture) ... “You don't question your salvation do you?” (Faith in the power of the Savior) ... “You are going to Heaven aren't you?” (God is in his heart) ... “Have you prayed about this?” (Faith intact) I'm assuming the answers to these questions would be an unequivocal Yes!, No!, Yes!, and then perhaps a yes or no. With these questions my hope would be that my friend would likely start to defend his salvation and his relation with his Savior, Jesus Christ. This would have the effect of having him take account of the fact that God is still in control and he still can approach the Throne boldly.

I might even ask more questions, like, “Do you believe God cannot lie?” (Inerrancy) “Do you believe God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omnipotent? (Complete authority and control) Do you believe God is Infallible? (Duh) This means God cannot fail you. He is incapable of failure. So, the coup de gras question is, “Do you believe the Holy Spirit dwells in you? And, does He chasten and even speak to you in non-verbal ways. I expect a yes, or at least an, I don’t know from this question.

Sooner or later, I would expect my friend to get exasperated with me and say something like, “Enough already, I’m not questioning my faith or my personal relationship with God. I’m questioning whether I can rely on what God is supposedly telling me in the Bible! It seems to me that it’s just a book written by fallible man or at the very least so polluted by man that I can’t use it as a guide for my life.”

Now this is exactly where I want my friend to go. I now have completely “cornered” him and have successfully narrowed the scope of the crisis.

Non-Faith and Non-Scripturally Based Evidence of Divine Inspiration of Scripture

The earliest and closest evidence we have of the original biblical text appears on Silver Amulets written in paleo-Hebrew script generally dated about 7th century B.C. These are real artifact that we can hold and look at. The next oldest are the Qumran fragments that are dated from about 250 B.C. protected for a time by the Essenes, a tribe of monks and scribes, Right. Again, real physical documents from before Christ was even born, right?

Remember, the discovery of the Qumran “Dead Sea Scrolls” in 1947 exploded into Textual Criticism / Apologetics because these texts were over 1000 years older than any known biblical text at that time and proved to be nearly flawlessly accurate when compared. (Wegner, 186-187) Together with the Masada transcripts and the Silver Amulets provide further confirmation of God’s promise to preserve his word.

Did I ever tell you that I actually visited Qumran. Wow! What an experience, I was literally brought to my knees at my first realization that not only did they discover the Isaiah Scroll, completely accurate but they were able to assemble hundreds of complete Bibles from fragments which were shown to have very little degradation of content from the next most ancient manuscripts available. This strengthened my faith in the promises of God to my very core. And to be in the place where this happened, to visit the places I had read about, see the landscape, the architecture, the Temple Mount,

the Mount of Olives, Laodicea, Ephesus, Corinth.... Visiting Israel was a life changing experience for me and I really want to bring the feeling of Biblical reality I felt about what I had read in the Bible to you, here and now...

Let's talk about the formation of canon – you know - the group of God breathed or inspired books of the Bible. I know, that is what you are questioning, But, we really don't want this class we just took to mean nothing, right? Let's start with the New Testament because that one is easier.

So, we have real physical writings from all these guy, Ignatius (c. 66-117) Justin Martyr (c11-165), Marciono (c. 140), Irenaeus (c.130-202), Clement of Alexandria (c. 155-220), Hyppolytus, Origen, Eusebius of Ceesarea, Athanasius ... all talking about what books made up the canon of the NT, and some of them live while the NT Bible text was still being written. Then we have the Synods shortly after that; remember? The Synod of Laodecea (363), of Hippo (393), of Carthage (397), and the Council of Carthage all settled on the same 27 books to include in the cannon of the New Testament. This started only a little more than one generation after Christ's death while a lot of the NT books were being written by eye witnesses of Christ's ministry. Is that cool or what? Remember what we learned, the Canon was determined by God. The early Church only had to recognize what God had already defined. How did the Church do it? Well as it turned out they used some pretty powerful rules. 1) Was the book written by an apostle, or at least someone of recognized authority? 2) did it agree with the Canon of Truth (a body of apostolic teaching by which the truth of other teachings could be evaluated until written word was completed – this prevented contradictions) 3) Did it enjoy universal acceptance by the Universal Church? And 4) Does it have a self authenticating divine nature? (ok, somewhat subjective). But Godly men stove to be superintended by the Holy Spirit to define the content of the NT. So, even Paul who wasn't physically part of the twelve did not bring any new revelation to the Message of Jesus, but just expounded and clarified the teachings of Jesus' ministry.

Like-wise for the formation of the Old Testament Canon. The Jews preserved the writings of their profits first by oral tradition for those writing they felt were authoritative. The same group of researchers wrote about the Canon for the OT using similar rules like for the NT. 1) It does not contain contradictions. 2) It was written by a prophet or someone recognized as having divine authority (Moses, Joshua, Daniel, Jerimiah, etc.) 3) It originated through inspiration from God. 4) It was accepted by the

Jews as authoritative material. These were real guys, many if not all of whom believed in Christ as the Messiah. Why do you think their work has stood the test of time? Could it be because their work was also inspired? Could it be that God preserved the revelation of Himself through preserving their work. Godly, Godly men, examining the very best and oldest manuscripts to get to the most accurate rendering of the text using all the evidence we have regarding the contents of the original autographs. 1000 years older, keep ringing in my ears. Do you know we still have not been allowed to excavate under the Temple Mount. And that is was about the time of the Temple's destruction that Christians and Jews strove to protect God's Word from being obliterated by the Romans. What future discoveries do you think God has in store for the textual criticism nerds...? Man I'm excited, aren't you?

Let's talk about all the Archeological Evidence of the Ministry of Christ. The Dead Sea Scroll were only found 60 some years ago. And they agreed with evidence over 1000 years newer. They keep finding of Ancient Manuscripts and not one says, Opppss we got it all wrong, here it is the real Word of God. No way, God keeps just letting us find things that say, see, told ya so. I wouldn't kid you guys, you're my peeps! (Sorry, couldn't help myself.)

You said you believe that the Holy Spirit chastens you and talks to you, right? So, let's Discuss the doctrine of **inspiration**, not only for you and me but for the human authors of the Bible, for those in the process of canonization, those involved in the process of translation. Remember "Scripture is authoritative because it indicates the sovereignty and perfection of God's self-communication.... In the theological tradition, this divine oversight is usually is usually termed 'inspiration' By this is meant God's superintending of the process of creaturely text-production." (Vanhoozer, 724) Article VI of The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy says, "WE AFFIRM that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration." Article VII says, "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."

Remember you said you believe that God cannot lie? Let's discuss the doctrine of **inerrancy** and **infallibility**. The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy states, "**inerrancy** signifies the quality of being free from all falsehood or mistake and so safeguards the truth that Holy Scripture is entirely true and trustworthy in all its assertions." (CSBI) **Infallibility** signifies the quality of neither misleading nor being

misled and so safeguards in categorical terms the truth that Holy Scripture is a sure, safe, and reliable rule and guide in all matters. Article XI of the CSBI states, "WE AFFIRM that **Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible**, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses." (CSBI) Like the word says in Titus 1:2, God cannot lie. WE DENY that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. (CSBI)

By the same token, if you believe that the Holy Spirit chastens you, then you believe in the doctrine of illumination. Remember Kennard in one of the articles we read, He says, "The Holy Spirit is promised to every Christian so that they might understand the biblical text better. Whether conservative or liberal, the illumination from the Holy Spirit is seen as rendering clear the authoritative message of the Word of God."

Faith and Scriptural Based Evidence of Divine Inspiration of Scripture

So, do you now believe that God has protected his Word? If yes then let's get some edification from God's Word. Let's not let the mechanics of transmission and translation cloud God's promises with respect to his Word.

God said he would preserve his Word. Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." and 1 Peter 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." Even though no original manuscripts, or autographa, exist (Wegner, 165)

When Satan is pressing in on me a go to 2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; KJV

Whenever I feel lost in my faith I reflect on Psalms 4:3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

Hebrews 11:1 tells us, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

All we need is the child-like faith required by our Savior in Matthew 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven., Mark 10:15, and Luke 18:17.

And finally, whenever I feel Satan pressing in on me, I read these verses; I call these my fear not verses... enjoy.

(Deuteronomy 31:6 KJVR) Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

(Deuteronomy 31:8 KJVR) And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

(1 Chronicles 28:20 KJVR) And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.

(2 Chronicles 20:17 KJVR) Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you.

(Psalms 27:3 KJVR) Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

(Psalms 56:4 KJVR) In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

(Psalms 118:6 KJVR) The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

(Proverbs 19:23 KJVR) The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

(Isaiah 35:4 KJVR) Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.

(Isaiah 41:10 KJVR) Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

(Isaiah 41:13 KJVR) For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

(Isaiah 41:14 KJVR) Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

(Isaiah 51:7 KJVR) Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

(Jeremiah 32:40 KJVR) And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

(Joel 2:21 KJVR) Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.

(Malachi 3:5 KJVR) And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

(Matthew 10:31 KJVR) Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

(Luke 12:7 KJVR) But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

(Romans 8:15 KJVR) For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

(2 Timothy 1:7 KJVR) For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

(Hebrews 13:6 KJVR) So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

(1 John 4:18 KJVR) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

(Revelation 1:17 KJVR) And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

(Revelation 15:4 KJVR) Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

Conclusion

So hopefully I have walked my friend down a path to a complete belief and unwavering faith in the fully and divinely inspired, authoritative, inerrant, infallible Word of God embodied in the Bible he uses every day.

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The Branches of Theology



Following is a list, in no particular order, of the eight branches of theology. These branches of theology are used for study.

Exegetical Theology *— from the text*

Exegetical theology is theology that is drawn directly from the exegesis of the text of Scripture. The term *exegesis* is from a Greek term and means “to draw meaning out,” hence, this is theology “drawn out” from the text (rather than “read into” a text; eisegesis). This theological task involves the study of the grammar and syntax of the original languages of the Bible.

Biblical Theology *— what is the writer saying*

While all evangelical theology seeks to be biblical in a broad sense, when used in its technical meaning *biblical theology* refers to the theology of particular portions of the Bible (Pentateuch, Psalms, Gospels) or particular authors of parts of the Bible (Paul, Isaiah, John). Some theologians distinguish two types of biblical theology.

Descriptive: In which the study attempts only to discover and articulate the theology of the portion of Scripture in view in its own context. In other words, the theologian is only trying to restate the theology as the writers “meant it” in their day; there is no attempt to say what it “means to us” to us today. Here there is only description.

Normative: In which the study not only tries to restate the theology as the writers “meant it” in their day, but here the theologian does attempt to say what it “means to us” to us today. Here there is description but also an attempt to find “norms” or principles that apply to us today, or indeed always apply to people no matter what the context.
apply to reality

Bible Doctrine

In distinction from systematic theology, the study of *Bible doctrine* collects all the passages from the Bible that speak to an issue or teach something about a particular truth. This study asks the question, “What does the Bible say

about . . .” and then finds and arranges all the passages that talk about the topic. This study may be thought of as biblical theology of the whole Bible, but it does not yet attempt a full systematic theology (see below).

Historical Theology

Historical theology is the study of the development and unfolding of doctrine through history. Some historical theologians distinguish two types of historical theology.

1. **Diachronic:** A particular doctrine is studied through successive periods of history. For instance, if a theologian studies the doctrine of Christ in the early church period, then the medieval period, then the modern period, she would be using this type of historical theology.
2. **Synchronic:** The theologian studies all the key doctrinal issues and developments of a particular period. For instance, if a theologian studies the doctrines of God, Christ, the church, and salvation as these were generally understood or debated in the medieval period, she would be using this type of theology.

Dogmatic Theology

In distinction from systematic theology, *dogmatic theology* is the study of particular creedal systems or the theology of a particular denomination or ecclesiastical body (i.e., Lutheranism, Roman Catholicism). Some theologians use systematic theology.

Philosophical Theology

In *philosophical theology*, the questions and issues are of a theological nature (Is there a God? Why is there evil in the world?) but the data and answers are drawn from philosophy more than (or exclusive of) the data and answers of the Bible.

Systematic Theology

The systematic theologian begins with the deliverances and conclusions of exegetical theology; he employs the deliverances and conclusions of biblical theology and Bible doctrine; he factors in the pertinent deliverances and conclusions of historical, dogmatic, and philosophical theology (that is the systematic theologian uses these other disciplines to formulate his statements and articulate his understanding of theology); and then he arranges all this into a coherent “system” of theology. In doing so he will factor in the context (the culture, the current issues, and intellectual climate) in which he lives as he articulates his system.

Practical Theology

Practical theology is the study of “practical” matters facing those who are involved in local church ministries. These matters include how one conducts a wedding or funeral, how one should plan and arrange worship services, and how one should conduct the business of the local church (Erickson 22-28; Demarest 1064-66).

Sources of and Authority for Theology

Reason and Rationalism

If reason is “the power of thinking, comprehending, and inferring,” then rationalism is the view that holds that human reason can have either a formative role or at least a critical role in the discovery, formation, and evaluation of theological propositions. In other words, some theologians would suggest that human reason on its own can discover theological truth.

Conscience

This is the faculty within the human heart (mind) that either approves or disapproves of one's own behavior or thinking (Rom. 2:14-16). With respect to the issue of authority for theology, the conscience functions as a guide for evaluating theological propositions more than a source of theological data.

Religious Experience

A wide variety of phenomena and experiences fall into this category. Essentially, the idea here is that one's experiences (from the ecstatic to the intellectual, from the emotional to the cerebral) provide the data from which one articulates theological propositions.

Tradition/The Church

Here the idea is fairly straightforward. The church as represented in its official pronouncements and its officials provides the data for and serves to evaluate all theological propositions.

The Community

For theologians such as Stanley Grenz and others, the community is not so much a source of theology as it is an "integrative motif." That is, it is within the Christian community that one engages Scripture, utilizes tradition, and has "experiences." "The existence of this community provides the only 'foundation' necessary for launching into the process" of theology. (Grenz and Franke 230ff; Grenz; Grenz).

The Scriptures

"Thus we arrive at the Bible—the source by which reason, church, and religious experience can and must be evaluated theologically" (Montgomery 283). Scripture is not only the primary source for all theology but the norm and guide by which one evaluates all theological propositions.