

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE: BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS pdf

1: Trinity > History of Trinitarian Doctrines (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Historical theology is the study of the doctrinal development or the progress of dogma (as one man has called it) in the history of the church. The study of historical theology is one of the premier benefits in the study of church history.

Just give me Jesus! Such statements reveal a misunderstanding of what doctrine is. Doctrine is simply a set of accepted beliefs held by a particular group. Biblical doctrine defines the parameters of Christian teaching on a given topic, such as God, sin, salvation, etc. To study doctrine is to learn essential theological truths for the purpose of embracing them in our lives. We see in Scripture that we are nourished by doctrine in order to be good ministers of Christ 1 Timothy 4: The Bible makes plain the importance of adhering to sound teaching. But how can we be faithful to that which we are not familiar? In order to live according to the tenets of the faith we must be aware of what they are! The Danger of Forgetting Doctrine If we view the Christian life as one of merely loving Jesus and loving others, at the expense of understanding theological truths, we are ill-equipped to guard the doctrine that has been handed down to us. Consider this recently published survey from Ligonier Ministries and Lifeway Research. That such basic elements of the Christian faith could be misunderstood by significant portions of Christians displays a shocking ignorance of biblical doctrine. Having a firm grasp of correct doctrine prevents us from adopting false doctrine. Doctrinal study grounds our morality in the truth of Scripture and enables us to live God-honoring lives. It also allows us to articulate our beliefs in a consistent and biblical manner. Studying doctrine allows us to live out the Christian faith with clarity, confidence, and consistency. Yes, doctrinal truths are often presented with unfamiliar and complicated terminology. These topics are not reserved for the academically minded. These truths have been entrusted to all believers and we have a responsibility to understand and preserve them. Where to Start Ready to begin studying Christian doctrine? This will help you learn concise, historical statements of the faith. To dig deeper, consider studying the London Baptist Confession of Faith. A confession is simply a summary of orthodox doctrine, and here you will find teaching and Scripture references on a wide range of issues from a Reformed Theological perspective. Additionally, it is helpful to begin using a catechism. A catechism teaches doctrinal positions in a question and answer format. These are great for both children and adults. One last note of advice: While creeds, confessions, and systematic theologies are indispensable resources, we should recognize that they are intended to summarize and present the truths of the Bible. Our theological studies must always begin with, and be checked against, the authority of Scripture. So how should you proceed? Get a hold of some of these recommended resources. Study the Scriptures and consult the knowledge of others. Pray that God would give you wisdom.

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2: What is biblical theology?

Doctrine (Gk. didaskalia [didaskaliva]). Act of teaching or that which is taught. The use of the term in Scripture, however, is broader than a simple reference to information passed on from one person to another or from one generation to the next.

Roman Catholic and Eastern Christians recognize 73 books as canonical, with 46 books for the Old Testament 7 more than Protestants. The Old Testament canon entered into Christian use in the Septuagint, a Greek translation with a few books in Greek originally. In addition to the Septuagint, Christianity subsequently added various writings that would become the New Testament. Somewhat different lists of accepted works continued to develop in antiquity. In the 4th century a series of synods, most notably at the Synod of Hippo in AD, produced a list of texts equal to the 46 book canon of the Old Testament that Catholics use today and the book canon of the New Testament that all use. A definitive list did not come from any early Ecumenical Council. With the benefit of hindsight it can be said that this process effectively set the New Testament canon, although there are examples of other canonical lists in use after this time. During the Protestant Reformation, certain reformers proposed different canonical lists of the Old Testament. The texts that are present in the Septuagint, but not included in the Jewish canon, fell out of favor and, in time, they would come to be removed from Protestant canons. These texts are referred to as Deuterocanonical books in Catholic Bibles, whereas in a Protestant context they are referred to as the Apocrypha. The "New Testament apocrypha" has a very different meaning. It is a poorly defined group of early writings in which, generally, none ever achieved acceptance by any widespread group.

God[edit] Main article: God in Christianity In Christianity, God is the creator and preserver of the universe. God is the sole ultimate power in the universe but is distinct from it. The Bible never speaks of God as impersonal. Instead, it refers to him in personal terms "who speaks, sees, hears, acts, and loves. God is understood to have a will and personality and is an all powerful, divine and benevolent being. He is represented in Scripture as being primarily concerned with people and their salvation. For example, saying he is immutable is saying that he does not change. Enumeration[edit] Some attributes ascribed to God in Christian theology [17] are: Aseity "That "God is so independent that he does not need us. Eternity "That God exists beyond the temporal realm. Graciousness "That God extends His favor and gifts to human beings unconditionally as well as conditionally. Holiness "That God is separate from sin and incorruptible. Noting the refrain of " Holy, holy, holy " in Isaiah 6: Sproul points out that "only once in sacred Scripture is an attribute of God elevated to the third degree The Bible never says that God is love, love, love. Impassibility "That God does not experience emotion or suffering a more controversial doctrine, disputed especially by open theism. Impeccability "That God is incapable of error sin. Incorporeality "That God is without physical composition. While the Mission of God is not traditionally included in this list, David Bosch has argued that " mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. Omnibenevolence of God refers to him being "all good". Omnipotence "That God is supremely or all-powerful. Omnipresence "That God is the supreme being, existing everywhere and at all times; the all-perceiving or all-conceiving foundation of reality. Omniscience "That God is supremely or all-knowing. Oneness" That God is without peer, also that every divine attribute is instantiated in its entirety the qualitative infinity of God. See also Monotheism and Divine simplicity. Providence "That God watches over His creation with interest and dedication. While the Providence of God usually refers to his activity in the world, it also implies his care for the universe, and is thus an attribute. Righteousness "That God is the greatest or only measure of human conduct. The righteousness of God may refer to his holiness, to his justice, or to his saving activity through Christ. Transcendence "That God exists beyond the natural realm of physical laws and thus is not bound by them; [22] He is also wholly Other and incomprehensible apart from general or special self-revelation. Triune "The Christian God is understood by trinitarian Christians to be a "threeness" of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that is fully consistent with His "oneness"; a single infinite being who is both within and beyond nature.

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Because the persons of the Trinity represent a personal relation even on the level of God to Himself, He is personal both in His relation toward us and in His relation toward Himself. Veracity – That God is the Truth all human beings strive for; He is also impeccably honest. Christ in Gethsemane, Heinrich Hofmann , Some Christians believe that the God worshiped by the Hebrew people of the pre-Christian era had always revealed himself as he did through Jesus ; but that this was never obvious until Jesus was born see John 1. Also, though the Angel of the Lord spoke to the Patriarchs, revealing God to them, some believe it has always been only through the Spirit of God granting them understanding, that men have been able to perceive later that God himself had visited them. This mysterious "Trinity" has been described as hypostases in the Greek language subsistences in Latin , and "persons" in English. Nonetheless, Christians stress that they only believe in one God. Most Christian churches teach the Trinity, as opposed to Unitarian monotheistic beliefs. Historically, most Christian churches have taught that the nature of God is a mystery , something that must be revealed by special revelation rather than deduced through general revelation. Christian orthodox traditions Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant follow this idea, which was codified in and reached its full development through the work of the Cappadocian Fathers. Some critics contend that because of the adoption of a tripartite conception of deity, Christianity is a form of tritheism or polytheism. This concept dates from Arian teachings which claimed that Jesus, having appeared later in the Bible than his Father, had to be a secondary, lesser, and therefore distinct god. For Jews and Muslims , the idea of God as a trinity is heretical – it is considered akin to polytheism. Christians overwhelmingly assert that monotheism is central to the Christian faith, as the very Nicene Creed among others which gives the orthodox Christian definition of the Trinity does begin with: In the 3rd century, Tertullian claimed that God exists as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – the three personae of one and the same substance. In Christianity , the doctrine of the Trinity states that God is one being who exists, simultaneously and eternally , as a mutual indwelling of three Persons: At that time, the Emperor Constantine convoked the First Council of Nicaea , to which all bishops of the empire were invited to attend. Pope Sylvester I did not attend but sent his legate. The council, among other things, decreed the original Nicene Creed. For most Christians, beliefs about God are enshrined in the doctrine of Trinitarianism , which holds that the three persons of God together form a single God. The Trinitarian view emphasizes that God has a will and that God the Son has two wills, divine and human, though these are never in conflict see Hypostatic union. However, this point is disputed by Oriental Orthodox Christians, who hold that God the Son has only one will of unified divinity and humanity see Miaphysitism. To the ancients, personhood "was in some sense individual, but always in community as well. Since the beginning of the 3rd century [28] the doctrine of the Trinity has been stated as "the one God exists in three Persons and one substance , Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. A small minority of Christians hold non-trinitarian views, largely coming under the heading of Unitarianism. Most, if not all, Christians believe that God is spirit, [John 4: With this background, belief in the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit is expressed as the doctrine of the Trinity , [30] which describes the single divine ousia substance existing as three distinct and inseparable hypostases persons: The holy three are separate, yet the Son and the Holy Spirit are still seen as originating from God the Father. The New Testament does not have the term "Trinity" and nowhere discusses the Trinity as such. Some emphasize, however, that the New Testament does repeatedly speak of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit to "compel a trinitarian understanding of God. God the Father[edit] Further information: God the Father In many monotheist religions, God is addressed as the father, in part because of his active interest in human affairs, in the way that a father would take an interest in his children who are dependent on him and as a father, he will respond to humanity, his children, acting in their best interests. Thus, humans, in general, are sometimes called children of God. The New Testament says, in this sense, that the very idea of family, wherever it appears, derives its name from God the Father, [Eph 3: However, there is a deeper "legal" sense in which Christians believe that they are made participants in the special relationship of Father and Son, through Jesus Christ as his spiritual bride. Christians call themselves adopted children of God. According to the Nicene Creed , the Son Jesus Christ is "eternally begotten of the Father", indicating that their divine Father-Son

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relationship is not tied to an event within time or human history. Christology and Christ[edit] Main articles: Christology and Jesus in Christianity Christology is the field of study within Christian theology which is primarily concerned with the nature, person, and works of Jesus Christ , held by Christians to be the Son of God. There have been and are various perspectives by those who claim to be his followers since the church began after his ascension. The controversies ultimately focused on whether and how a human nature and a divine nature can co-exist in one person. The study of the inter-relationship of these two natures is one of the preoccupations of the majority tradition. Teachings about Jesus and testimonies about what he accomplished during his three-year public ministry are found throughout the New Testament. Core biblical teachings about the person of Jesus Christ may be summarized that Jesus Christ was and forever is fully God divine and fully human in one sinless person at the same time, [34] and that through the death and resurrection of Jesus , sinful humans can be reconciled to God and thereby are offered salvation and the promise of eternal life via his New Covenant. While there have been theological disputes over the nature of Jesus, Christians believe that Jesus is God incarnate and " true God and true man " or both fully divine and fully human. Jesus, having become fully human in all respects, suffered the pains and temptations of a mortal man, yet he did not sin. As fully God, he defeated death and rose to life again. Scripture asserts that Jesus was conceived, by the Holy Spirit, and born of his virgin mother Mary without a human father. The apostle Peter, in what has become a famous proclamation of faith among Christians since the 1st century, said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. The word is often misunderstood to be the surname of Jesus due to the numerous mentions of Jesus Christ in the Christian Bible. The word is in fact used as a title , hence its common reciprocal use Christ Jesus, meaning Jesus the Anointed One or Jesus the Messiah. Followers of Jesus became known as Christians because they believed that Jesus was the Christ, or Messiah, prophesied about in the Old Testament , or Tanakh. Trinitarian Ecumenical Councils[edit] See also: Ecumenical council Major christological schisms and related early councils. The Christological controversies came to a head over the persons of the Godhead and their relationship with one another. Christology was a fundamental concern from the First Council of Nicaea until the Third Council of Constantinople

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3: T&T Clark Companion to the Doctrine of Sin (Bloomsbury Companions) Keith L. Johnson: T&T Clark

Still, it is contested issue whether or not the doctrine can be deduced or otherwise inferred from the Christian Bible, so we must turn to it. 2. The Christian Bible The Old Testament. No trinitarian doctrine is explicitly taught in the Old Testament.

After the Middle Ages , systematic approaches to Christology were developed. The term "Christology from above" refers to approaches that begin with the divinity and pre-existence of Christ as the Logos the Word , as expressed in the prologue to the Gospel of John. Christology from above was emphasized in the ancient Church, beginning with Ignatius of Antioch in the second century. Other relevant topics of faith are: The term "monastic Christology" has been used to describe spiritual approaches developed by Anselm of Canterbury , Peter Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux. The Franciscan piety of the 12th and 13th centuries led to "popular Christology". Systematic approaches by theologians, such as Thomas Aquinas , are called "scholastic Christology". Here, the apostle attempted to convey the underlying concepts about Christ to a Greek audience, and the sermon illustrates some key elements of future Christological discourses that were first brought forward by Paul. In early Christian belief, the concept of Kyrios included the pre-existence of Christ , for they believed if Christ is one with God, he must have been united with God from the very beginning. In Greek, this has at times been translated as Kyrios. While the term Mari expressed the relationship between Jesus and his disciples during his life, the Greek Kyrios came to represent his lordship over the world. The Gospel of John provides a different perspective that focuses on his divinity. Richard Bauckham argues that Paul was not so influential that he could have invented the central doctrine of Christianity. Before his active missionary work, there were already groups of Christians across the region. For example, a large group already existed in Rome even before Paul visited the place. The earliest centre of Christianity was the twelve apostles in Jerusalem. Paul himself consulted and sought guidance from the Christian leaders in Jerusalem Galatians 2: The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. Following the Apostolic Age , from the second century onwards, a number of controversies developed about how the human and divine are related within the person of Jesus. For example, Arianism did not endorse divinity, Ebionism argued Jesus was an ordinary mortal, while Gnosticism held docetic views which argued Christ was a spiritual being who only appeared to have a physical body. Eventually, by the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in , the Hypostatic union was decreedâ€”the proposition that Christ has one human nature [physis] and one divine nature [physis], united with neither confusion nor divisionâ€”making this part of the creed of orthodox Christianity. The language used was that the one God exists in three persons Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ; in particular, it was affirmed that the Son was homoousios of the same being as the Father. The Nicene Creed declared the full divinity and full humanity of Jesus. The council was called because in defense of his loyal priest Anastasius, Nestorius had denied the Theotokos title for Mary and later contradicted Proclus during a sermon in Constantinople. Pope Celestine I who was already upset with Nestorius due to other matters wrote about this to Cyril of Alexandria , who orchestrated the council. During the council, Nestorius defended his position by arguing there must be two persons of Christ, one human, the other divine, and Mary had given birth only to a human, hence could not be called the Theotokos, i. The debate about the single or dual nature of Christ ensued in Ephesus. In , the Council of Chalcedon affirmed dyophysitism. The Oriental Orthodox rejected this and subsequent councils and continued to consider themselves as miaphysite according to the faith put forth at the Councils of Nicaea and Ephesus. Most importantly, it unquestionably established the primacy of Rome in the East over those who accepted the Council of Chalcedon. This was reaffirmed in when those Eastern Chalcedonians accepted the Formula of Hormisdas anathematizing all of their own Eastern Chalcedonian hierarchy who died out of communion with Rome from Although, the Chalcedonian Creed did not put an end to all Christological debate, it did clarify the terms used and became a point of reference for many future Christologies.

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4: Review of "The Cross and Salvation" by Bruce Demarest | Anthony DeRosse - www.enganchecubano.com

Not a single doctrine emerges in the Bible complete with no further need of development. In general, whenever Scripture refers to the increasing knowledge and maturity of Christians and the Church, an idea very similar to doctrinal development is present.

Related Media Introduction The Christian church did not arise in an historical vacuum, nor did it arise with a complete systematic theology. Rather it adopted many of its attitudes toward religion from its reluctant mother, Judaism. With this in mind, it is the purpose of this lesson to trace the historic understanding of the Church toward its sacred writings, beginning with its earliest period, up through the present. God had spoken from heaven to the Patriarchs and the prophets and given his divine law. In a very real sense Judaism was Noministic, founded upon the supreme authority of that God- given law. With the exception of the direct appearance of God, all these revelations were mediated by the Spirit of Yahweh. The Holy Spirit was regarded as the spirit of prophecy. Thus, any to whom God would reveal Himself was deemed to be a prophet. Thus the title prophet came to be applied not only to the major and minor prophets, but also to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, and even Mordacai. Moore, Judaism Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, , p. In defining a prophet as one to whom God spoke, the concept of an inspired Scripture naturally grew. Everything in Scripture was viewed as inspired, although everything revealed was not inscripturated. While in the first century Philo proposed a mantic theory of revelation which was reminiscent of Plato, the Rabbinical schools knew nothing of such a theory. According to the Rabbis, the Holy Spirit had inspired the prophets and the scriptural authors so that every syllable of Scripture had the verity and the authority of the Word of God. Yet despite this assertion, they did not speculate as to the method of this inspiration. In their eyes it was simply an accomplished fact. As such it was believed impossible for contradictions or real differences to appear in the text. The Torah was seen as having emanated in its entirety from God, every verse and letter. This revelation was complete and final; the Rabbis had no conception of progressive revelation. The Prophets and the Hagiographa were seen to add nothing to the Torah. Rather these later writings served to reinforce, repeat, amplify, and explain the Torah. Not only was any contradiction between the Torah and the later writings denied, any real difference was also denied. To illustrate this mentality we may look at how the Rabbis used the Scriptures. Proof texts for theological points were quoted in triplets; a verse from the Torah, one from the prophets and a verse from the writings. This practice did not demonstrate a confirmation of the Mosaic precept, but that God taught His lessons by reiteration. The prophets and the Hagiographa were seen as inspired but in a lesser degree since these books were not given by actual dictation, but only through inspiration. If one should exclude even one verse of the Torah claiming that Moses added it on his own authority, this proscription was applied to him. There was never a formal distinction drawn between the plenary inspiration of the Torah and the more general inspiration attributed to the other books of Scripture. It was all regarded as having full divine authority extending to its very words. The apocryphal letter of Aristes states that the seventy-two translators of the LXX completed their task of translation on seventy days without error under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Christ and the Apostles Jesus Christ and the Scriptures When one examines the life and ministry of our Lord, he is immediately impressed with the fact that he lived and breathed Scripture. For Him Scripture was the final authority in matters of history, doctrine and ethics. Jesus Christ accepted the fabric of Old Testament History without reservation. We should note however, for Him this history was not merely academic, for him it held special relevance for each contemporary situation. Doctrine That Christ accepted the Old Testament on doctrinal matters is to speak a truism. Rather the opposite was true. While theologically the Jews held a high view of Scripture, their tradition had so hedged the text that they had in effect nullified its teaching. Jesus condemned them not for their belief but their unbelief. Ethics Jesus Christ made it plain that his teaching s were not opposed to Scripture, but based upon it. The Jews had so twisted the injunction so as to justify it. He saw it as the totally trustworthy Word of God. These views

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made the words of Scripture co-extensive with the words of God. The Apostolic Fathers G. The Bible is, indeed considered as showing, although its different parts arose in different places and times, a wonderful and convincing and even perfect consent in all matters pertaining to religion and saving truth. This view was not the result of critical study and a detailed reconciliation of the various apparent discrepancies in the Scriptures; it is rather an immediate inference from the assumed nature of that inspiration in which the Bible has its origin to the nature of the product thus supposed to have been brought about by inspiration. A few Representative examples will suffice to demonstrate the attitude of Scripture held in the ancient Church. Observe that nothing false is written in them. To him it is a product of the Divine logos. But when you hear the utterances of the prophets spoken as it were, personally, you must not assume that they are spoken by the inspired themselves, but by the divine word that moves them. Having said all this, Irenaeus also speaks of the human authors as genuine authors, not mere scribes. With Tertullian, the most theologically astute of the apologists, one finds a conscious broadening of authority from just the Old Testament to the written developing canon of the NT. A place is given to the human author as well as the divine, yet in such a way so as not to compromise the absolute veracity and authority of the Scriptures, down to their very letters. Origen As with other early fathers, Origen insisted that the Scriptures formed a harmonious unity which was perfect in every particular. Inspiration was seen to extend to the very letters of the text. The problem in Origen comes in his application of his hermeneutics. Specifically, he often denied the historicity of events which offended his platonic framework, interpreting them in an allegorical fashion. He refers to Scripture variously as the word of God, the words of God, the divine word, divine oracles, the book of God, the holy book, divine Scripture, Holy Scripture, divine Scriptures, Scriptures of God, divine letters, prophetic letters, divine authority, divine testimony, and the Testimony of God, to mention but a few. He did not regard his view as being novel, rather he saw himself as holding the ancient doctrine of the Church. For Augustine the fact of inspiration was so obvious that he seldom sought to prove inspiration from the Scripture itself. Rather, he assumed it. The Nature of Inspiration Inspiration: In truth, he held to the vital involvement of the human authors with their material. So far removed is his theory of inspiration from mechanical dictation, at one point he asserts that revelation is not necessary for inspiration. While at other times the divine is stressed to the apparent exclusion of the human. Polman in trying to resolve this tension has stated: This was consistent with his belief that the external works of the trinity could not be divided among its members. Rather all three members worked in concert with one another. However once moved by the Holy Spirit, the scriptural authors were not left to their own devices. The Spirit continued to influence and guide. He noted of the process as it related to the composition of the Pentateuch: So strong is the divine imprint in Scripture that it is to be regarded as the voice of God. It should go without saying that the divine inspiration of the Scriptures was plenary. Augustine sees the entire body of Scripture as immediately inspired, yet in such a way as to maintain the integrity of the human authors. Inerrancy Augustine saw inerrancy as the necessary consequence of inspiration. He held both to the formal inerrancy of Scripture i. He saw Scripture as absolutely trustworthy. Should a book claiming inspiration be found to contain a single error, it must be ipso facto be rejected as uninspired. In affirming the non-contradiction of Scripture he notes: The authority of these books has come down to us from the apostles through the succession of bishops and the extension of the church, from a position of lofty supremacy, claims the submission of every faithful and pious mind. In the innumerable books that have been written latterly we may sometimes find the same truth as in Scripture, but there is not the same authority. Scripture has a sacredness peculiar to itself. Otherwise no a single page will be left for the guidance of human fallibility, if contempt for the wholesome authority of canonical books either puts an end to that authority or involves it in hopeless confusion. The true Christian is not free to doubt the veracity of Scripture at any point. In fact inerrancy was seen as such a foundational doctrine, one could not be saved without believing it. There will not be left a single sentence of those books which if appearing difficult or hard to believe, may not by the same fatal rule be explained away, as a statement in which intentionally the author declared what was not true. The Medieval Church During the medieval period the problem was not with the inspiration of Scripture, but rather

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with the subtle elevation of the Church to a position equal in authority with the Scriptures. Scriptures were still seen as divinely inspired and authoritative, but the Church held the interpretive key. I do not accept the authority of popes or councils, for they have contradicted each other I cannot and will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. How could it be otherwise? Not with less, but with more radical seriousness they wanted to proclaim the subjection of the church to the Bible as the Word of God, and its authority as such. Even in his early period, Luther demanded, *ut onne verbum vocale, per quemcunque dictatur, velut Domino ipse dicente suscipiamos credamos, cedumus et himiliter, subicciamus nostrum sensum.* The Holy Ghost doth not let Himself be severed or parted, that he should let one part be taught truly and another part falsely. For it is the fashion of all heretics, that they begin first with a single article, like a ring which is of no further value when it has a break or cut. Luther is emphatic that this inspiration extends to the form as well as the content of the Scripture. In other words he affirms the inspiration of the words of Scripture. Because disbelieving one single word, you no longer live by the Word of God.

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5: Looking at Biblical historical considerations

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The Doctrine of Christ in History A. The former deals with man, created in the image of God and endowed with true knowledge, righteousness and holiness, but through wilful transgression of the law of God despoiled of his true humanity and transformed into a sinner. It points to man as a highly privileged creature of God, still bearing some of the traces of his original glory, but yet as a creature that has lost its birthright, its true freedom, and its original righteousness and holiness. This means that it directs attention, not merely, nor even primarily, to the creatureliness, but to the sinfulness of man. It emphasizes the ethical distance between God and man, the distance resulting from the fall of man, which neither man nor angels can bridge; and is as such virtually a cry for divine help. Christology is in part the answer to that cry. It acquaints us with the objective work of God in Christ to bridge the chasm, and to remove the distance. It shows us God coming to man, to remove the barriers between God and man by meeting the conditions of the law in Christ, and to restore man to His blessed communion. Anthropology already directs attention to the gracious provision of God for a covenant of friendship with man, which provides for a life of blessed communion with God; but it is a covenant which is effective only in and through Christ. And therefore the doctrine of Christ, as the Mediator of the covenant, must necessarily follow. Christ, typified and predicted in the Old Testament as the Redeemer of man, came in the fulness of time, to tabernacle among men and to effect an eternal reconciliation. In the early Christian literature Christ stands out as both human and divine, the Son of Man, but also the Son of God. His sinless character is maintained, and He is regarded as a proper object of worship. Naturally, the problem presented by Christ, as at once God and man, and the difficulties involved in such a conception, were not fully felt by the early Christian mind and only dawned on it in the light of controversy. It was but natural that Judaism, with its strong emphasis on monotheism, should exercise considerable influence on the early Christians of Jewish extraction. The Ebionites or part of them felt constrained, in the interest of monotheism, to deny the deity of Christ. They regarded Him as a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, who was qualified at His baptism to be the Messiah, by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him. There were others in the early Church whose doctrine of Christ was constructed on similar lines. The Alogi, who rejected the writings of John, because they regarded his doctrine of the Logos as in conflict with the rest of the New Testament, also saw in Jesus a mere man, though miraculously born of a virgin, and taught that Christ descended on Him at baptism, conferring on Him supernatural powers. In the main this was also the position of the Dynamic Monarchians. Paul of Samosata, its main representative, distinguished between Jesus and the Logos. He regarded the former as a man like every other man, born of Mary, and the latter, as the impersonal divine reason, which took up its abode in Christ in a pre-eminent sense, from the time of His baptism, and thus qualified Him for His great task. In view of this denial it was part of the task of the early Apologetes to defend the doctrine of the deity of Christ. If there were some who sacrificed the deity to the humanity of Christ, there were others who reversed the order. The Gnostics were profoundly influenced by the dualistic conception of the Greeks, in which matter as inherently evil is represented as utterly opposed to spirit; and by a mystic tendency to regard earthly things as allegorical representations of great cosmic redeeming processes. They rejected the idea of an incarnation, a manifestation of God in a visible form, since it involved a direct contact of spirit with matter. Harnack says that the majority of them regarded Christ as a Spirit consubstantial with the Father. According to some He descended upon the man Jesus at the time of His baptism, but left Him again before His crucifixion; while according to others He assumed a merely phantasmal body. The Modalistic Monarchians also denied the humanity of Christ, partly in the interest of His deity, and partly to preserve the unity of the Divine Being. They saw in Him merely a mode or manifestation of the one God, in whom they

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recognized no distinction of persons. The Anti-Gnostic and Alexandrian Fathers took up the defense of the deity of Christ, but in their defense did not altogether escape the error of representing Him as subordinate to the Father. Even Tertullian taught a species of subordination, but especially Origen, who did not hesitate to speak of a subordination as to essence. This became a steppingstone for Arianism, in which Christ is distinguished from the Logos as the divine reason, and is represented as a pre-temporal, superhuman creature, the first of the creatures, not God and yet more than man. Athanasius took issue with Arius, and strongly defended the position that the Son is consubstantial with, and of the same essence as, the Father, a position that was officially adopted by the council of Nicea in Semi-Arianism proposed a *via media* by declaring the Son to be of a similar essence as the Father. When the doctrine of the deity of the Son was officially established, the question naturally arose as to the relation in which the two natures in Christ stand to each other. Apollinaris offered a solution of the problem. Accepting the Greek trichotomic conception of man as consisting of body, soul, and spirit, he took the position that the Logos took the place of the spirit *pneuma* in man, which he regarded as the seat of sin. His chief interest was to secure the unity of the person in Christ, without sacrificing His real deity; and also to guard the sinlessness of Christ. But he did so at the expense of the complete humanity of the Saviour, and consequently his position was explicitly condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 381. One of the things for which Apollinaris contended was the unity of the person in Christ. That this was really in danger became quite apparent in the position taken by the school of Antioch, which exaggerated the distinction of the two natures in Christ. Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius stressed the complete manhood of Christ, and conceived of the indwelling of the Logos in Him as a mere moral indwelling, such as believers also enjoy, though not to the same degree. They saw in Christ a man side by side with God, in alliance with God, sharing the purpose of God, but not one with Him in the oneness of a single personal life, — a Mediator consisting of two persons. In opposition to them Cyril of Alexandria strongly emphasized the unity of the person in Christ, and in the estimation of his opponents denied the two natures. While they in all probability misunderstood him, Eutychus and his followers certainly appealed to him, when they took up the position that the human nature of Christ was absorbed by the divine, or that the two were fused into a single nature, a position involving the denial of the two natures in Christ. The Council of Chalcedon in 451 condemned both of these views and maintained the unity of the person as well as the duality of the natures. For some time the Eutychian error was continued by the Monophysites and the Monothelites, but was finally overcome by the Church. The further danger that the human nature of Christ would be regarded as entirely impersonal was warded off by Leontius of Byzantium, when he pointed out that it is not impersonal but in-personal, having its personal subsistence in the person of the Son of God. John of Damascus, in whom the Christology of the East reached its highest development, added the idea that there is a circumincession of the divine and the human in Christ, a communication of the divine attributes to the human nature, so that the latter is deified and we may also say that God suffered in the flesh. He shows a tendency to reduce the human nature to the position of a mere organ or instrument of the Logos, yet he admits that there is a co-operation of the two natures, and that the one person acts and wills in each nature, though the human will is always subject to the divine. In the Western Church Felix, bishop of Urgella, advocated adoptionism. He regarded Christ as to His divine nature, that is, the Logos, as the only-begotten Son of God in the natural sense, but considered Christ on His human side as a Son of God merely by adoption. He sought to preserve the unity of the person by stressing the fact that, from the time of His conception, the Son of Man was taken up into the unity of the person of the Son of God. Thus a distinction was made between a natural and an adoptive sonship, and the latter did not begin with the natural birth of Christ, but had its inception at the time of His baptism and was consummated in the resurrection. It was a spiritual birth that made Christ the adopted Son of God. The Church saw the unity of the person in Christ once more endangered by this view, and therefore it was condemned by the Synod of Frankfurt in 754. The Middle Ages added very little to the doctrine of the person of Christ. Due to various influences, such as the emphasis on the imitation of Christ, the theories of the atonement, and the development of the doctrine of the mass, the Church retained a strong grasp on the full humanity of Christ.

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Peter the Lombard did not hesitate to say that in respect of His humanity Christ was nothing at all. But this Nihilism was condemned by the Church. Some new points were stressed by Thomas Aquinas. The human nature of Christ received a twofold grace in virtue of its union with the Logos, a the gratia unionis, imparting to it a special dignity, so that it even became an object of worship, and b the gratia habitualis, which sustained it in its relationship to God. The human knowledge of Christ was twofold, namely, an infused and an acquired knowledge. There are two wills in Christ, but ultimate causality belongs to the divine will, to which the human will is always subject. The Reformation did not bring any great changes in the doctrine of the person of Christ. Both the Church of Rome and the Churches of the Reformation subscribed to the doctrine of Christ as it was formulated by the Council of Chalcedon. Their important and deep-seated differences lay elsewhere. There is one peculiarity of Lutheran Christology that deserves special mention. The question naturally arose, how this could be harmonized with what we know of the earthly life of Jesus. This question led to a difference of opinion among Lutheran theologians. Some held that Christ laid aside the divine attributes received in the incarnation, or used them only occasionally, while others said that He continued in possession of them during His entire earthly life, but concealed them or used them only secretly. Some Lutherans now seem inclined to discard this doctrine. Reformed theologians saw in this Lutheran doctrine a species of Eutychianism or of the fusion of the two natures in Christ. Reformed theology also teaches a communication of attributes, but conceives of it in a different way. It believes that, after the incarnation, the properties of both natures can be attributed to the one person of Christ. The person of Christ can be said to be omniscient, but also, to have but limited knowledge; can be regarded as omnipresent, but also as being limited at any particular time to a single place. Hence we read in the Second Helvetic Confession: Therefore we do not think nor teach that the divine nature in Christ did suffer, or that Christ, according to His human nature, is yet in the world, and so in every place. About the beginning of the nineteenth century a great change took place in the study of the person of Christ. Up to that time the point of departure had been prevalingly theological, and the resulting Christology was theocentric; but during the last part of the eighteenth century there was a growing conviction that better results could be attained by starting closer at home, namely, with the study of the historical Jesus. The new point of view was anthropological, and the result was anthropocentric. It proved to be destructive of the faith of the Church. A far-reaching and pernicious distinction was made between the historical Jesus, delineated by the writers of the Gospels, and the theological Christ, who was the fruit of the fertile imagination of theological thinkers, and whose image is now reflected in the creeds of the Church. The supernatural Christ made way for a human Jesus; and the doctrine of the two natures, for the doctrine of a divine man. Schleiermacher stood at the head of the new development. He regarded Christ as a new creation, in which human nature is elevated to the plane of ideal perfection. Yet his Christ can hardly be said to rise above the human level. The uniqueness of His person consists in the fact that He possesses a perfect and unbroken sense of union with the divine, and also realizes to the full the destiny of man in His character of sinless perfection. His supreme dignity finds its explanation in a special presence of God in Him, in His unique God-consciousness. The Word become flesh means for him God become incarnate in humanity, so that the incarnation really expresses the oneness of God and man. The incarnation of Christ was, so it seems, merely the culmination of a racial process. While mankind in general regards Jesus only as a human teacher, faith recognizes Him as divine and finds that by His coming into the world the transcendence of God is changed into immanence. Here we meet with a pantheistic identification of the human and the divine in the doctrine of Christ. Something of this is also seen in the Kenotic theories, which represent a rather remarkable attempt to improve on the construction of the doctrine of the person of Christ. The term kenosis is derived from Phil. This theory appeared in various forms, of which the most absolute is that of Gess, and for a time enjoyed considerable popularity. It aimed at maintaining the reality and integrity of the manhood of Christ, and to throw into strong relief the greatness of His humiliation in that He, being rich, for our sakes became poor. It involves, however, a pantheistic obliteration of the line of demarcation between God and man.

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6: Worldview: History, Theology, Implications

That is to say, they isolate a particular biblical truth or doctrine and trace its development down through history in a strictly chronological way. This approach is not overly concerned with the broader historical and intellectual context of a doctrine's "life".

Demarest earned a Ph. Demarest has authored numerous books some of which include Integrative Theology, Seasons of the Soul: Demarest divides his nearly page book into six parts: Demarest takes time to examine soteriology as it relates to the economic Trinity and then closes his chapter with pointing out the relationship of soteriology to other doctrines. After a lengthy section that provides the historical interpretations of grace Demarest gives his exposition on the matter. He makes sure to touch central issues such as prevenient grace, special and effectual grace, as well as how these relate to soteriology. Is election to service? Demarest visits the oft-asked question of double predestination in this section. Demarest closes this chapter by reflecting on the implications of election for the believer. After emphasizing penal substitution and other peripheral motifs, Demarest divides the atonement into two parts: Demarest makes the distinction between the general and effectual call. He differs from consistent Calvinists at this point. Whereas a high Calvinist would attribute conversion to the regenerating work of the Spirit Demarest, attributes it to the effectual call, something he claims is conceptually distinct from regeneration. After historical considerations, Demarest sees the nature of conversion consisting in two inseparable parts: Thus, a majority of the exposition is aimed at understanding these two concepts. Demarest dips into the issues surrounding the lordship salvation debate and leans toward a lordship view. Subsequent to historical interpretations, Demarest provides his exposition. Demarest visits a number of controversial issues surrounding regeneration. The chapter focuses on union with Christ, a largely neglected area within academia. Demarest surveys its biblical usage, its basis, nature, and results. Parallel to the regeneration issue in the preceding chapter, Demarest spends time on whether or not OT saints could be in union with Christ. Following a historical survey of interpretations, Demarest explains justification as an answer to the problem of human sinfulness. He surveys the basis, the nature and legitimacy of imputation, the results, and the implications of justification. Demarest uses chapter 10 to discuss the doctrine of salvation. Following historical considerations, Demarest makes a helpful distinction between positional and progressive sanctification. He deals with the legitimacy of the charismatic claim of a second blessing, the legitimacy of the claim that sinless perfection is possible, and the legitimacy of the existence of carnal Christians. Demarest also surveys the use of the Law in Christian sanctification. He divides the doctrine of preservation into two parts: It is difficult to imagine a notable work on soteriology that does not consult Demarest. The Cross and Salvation contains several positive characteristics that make it an excellent recommendation. First, and most importantly, while reading The Cross and Salvation the reader, at least this reader, cannot help but be convinced that Demarest above all desires to be biblical. Parenthetical verse references make up a significant percentage of these sections. Second, Demarest seems to be fair and objective in his analysis of various positions under the umbrella of soteriology. Third, The Cross and Salvation, although not a short read, remains a very clear. In other words, the structure is fixed throughout the whole book and makes Demarest very easy to follow. The four sections in each chapter—introductory matters, historical interpretations, biblical exposition, and practical implications—allow even the most novice bible student to follow with ease. Historical theology remains an important area of study because it has the ability to demonstrate the development of critical doctrines. The strengths of The Cross and Salvation certainly outweigh the weaknesses. No book, save scripture however, is without any critique. One point however, is worth stating. Some may question why Demarest has placed historical considerations before a biblical discussion. Another critique in the same vein concerns the length of the sections on historical interpretation. The historical sections and the biblical exposition sections are nearly the same length. Readers may wonder whether or not this is a systematic theology or a historical theology. The above critiques find further foundation on this point. A

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description of methodology in the beginning of his book may have served Demarest at this point. In the final opinion of this reviewer, *The Cross and Salvation* by Bruce Demarest is a noteworthy recommendation. It is very clear and comes across as an honest look at the biblical data to arrive at biblical conclusions regarding soteriology. Demarest does well at explaining the doctrines, their relationship to other doctrines, and at addressing many contemporary issues that arise within the discussion. Any student of soteriology should consult Demarest.

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7: Christian theology - Wikipedia

Doctrine is simply a set of accepted beliefs held by a particular group. Biblical doctrine defines the parameters of Christian teaching on a given topic, such as God, sin, salvation, etc. To study doctrine is to learn essential theological truths for the purpose of embracing them in our lives.

Looking at Biblical historical considerations [http: Krejcir](http://Krejcir) Inductive and Deductive examination of Matthew This parable is about rejection. The illustration of a landowner who uses his money, time, and resources to build a business of making wine is a parallel on how our Lord was received and treated. This business was necessary and essential in that time. Others sought to take advantage and then tried to take it away. The landowner put forth efforts and sought others to care for his property. When he sent messengers to collect what was his, they rejected the messengers. They not only rejected, they became violent, even resorting to murder to get their way and not seek his. Even though it was his vineyard, they only saw it as opportunity to get something without using their own money, labor, or efforts. They wanted for themselves what they were not willing to strive for. When the landowner sent his son, he expected better treatment; but their true wickedness showed as they killed him, too. The tenants represent the people whom God brought out of Egypt and slavery, and gave them a land they did not make. God sent His Law and prophets, and they beat and killed them; when God sent His Son, they were to do the same. They sought their gain, but only obtained their own depravity. They did not honor or respect the things and call of God. Jesus quotes one of their favorite Psalms to show them their error in their own words! Furthermore, they did not listen or respect the Son of God. Culturally, most of the western world at this time was controlled by landowners who hired tenants to care for their lands and businesses while they leisured. They hired people to collect their money and goods, and to manage their properties. Most such landowners treated their workers as slaves and oppressed them for personal gain. The image of a benevolent landowner would be peculiar, and draw attention to the subject. An actual landowner, in this culture, who would act this way, would be considered naive or foolish. The irony is in context; the landowner is depicted as benevolent and the leaders as wicked, just as the tenants Matt. Killing the son represents the crucifixion to come. Leaders are custodians to the tending and development of the people in their care; the leaders were the wicked tenants. They were negating their oath and responsibility. The image in the O. In Isaiah, chapter five, the image is the care of a vineyard as this passage asserts. Here, God is the gracious Landowner who patiently seeks to deal with His sinful people in a kind and loving way. Fruit in Scripture means result, something that happens because, such as, the work of the Spirit within us creates spiritual fruit. A certain percentage went to the workers and tenants, and the bulk went to the owner, as per agreement. Normally, the landowner was the one who hired people to inflict punishment and retribution. The landowner had the right to act swiftly and remove the tenants by lethal force, but chose to be slow to vengeance and offer a stronger and more powerful emissary that they would respect. The image is that Christ, even though He is slow to vengeance for our sin, they we still sought to kill Him. The tenants had no rights to the land either legally or morally. Only the government or a wealthier landowner could seize land in that time and culture, unless a piece of property went unclaimed; it could then be declared "ownerless," and claimed by the tenants. The leaders also lost sight of their call and the reality of God! Both were only serving themselves and not God. The answer, in that culture, was obvious; kill the tenants and replace them with loyal ones. The real question is, how is this like you? How are you, as a leader, like those wicked tenants? Do you understand how patient God is with you even when you are being foolish and murderous? Jesus was looking to see if they would realize their own sin and so judge themselves 2 Sam. The tenants were acting like an owner in power, exploitation, and in corruption. Over the centuries, the Jewish leaders martyred many of the prophets, acting like the wicked tenants. It is interesting to note that by the second century, the early church members were nearly all Gentiles! Jesus followed the standard, Jewish, rabbinic way of asking questions to provoke people to take a careful look at them- selves. David also became the wicked tenant for a time 2 Sam. The image is the

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Temple Psalm It was either the top cap of an arch or the corner of the foundation, each one critical to design integrity and satiability. If cut or placed incorrectly, the building would not be built accurately and might fall. Their matter of choosing was not in the best interest of the building Israel, but rather their personal profit and agenda. God had made it clear in His covenant with Israel that if they were not obedient, they would lose the land Ex. I guess they got it! As my students would say, you think! They rejected Truth, and sought lies. Jesus was a threat to the power and personal agendas of the leaders. Corrupt people do not want to be shown truth or be convicted; they will fight with all of their might to destroy whatever they fear will uncover their sin! Peter and Paul both used this image Rom. Jesus was still popular, and they did not have the power to directly oppose or punish Him. They were also politicians and sought the favor of the public; so, they deceitfully conspired to do it at night, away from the crowds Matt. What did the tenants receive for this malevolent attitude? What do we gain by our rejection of the Lord? The answer is, judgment and condemnation! This may not be politically correct, but it is true; we are responsible for our behaviors, actions, and how we will receive and treat our Lord Jesus Christ! We have to see how gracious and loving our Lord is with us, and throughout redemptive history. When we reject Him, we are, in fact, rejecting our growth and betterment. We are seeking destruction and not life. We are seeking corruption and not hope or cooperation. When we oppose Jesus, we are just hurting ourselves! We cannot fixate only on our rights to ourselves; life has far more to it than only what we see and perceive. Life is not about "me"; it is not about selfish determination or agendas. It is about God, who loves and cares for us-His tenants-and gives us so much of what we did not build or earn, especially His grace! Jesus wants to remove our oppositions and self-realizations and replace them with the Substance that is so much more and so much better-Himself! Because, our joy and purpose in life is Christ, and our relationship in Him! Will you allow yourself to become less, and Him to become more John 3: If not, what is in the way? The question we need to be asking today is, how has your church received and treated our Lord Jesus Christ? What can be done to spur them on to think about more than just themselves? This will help determine the diction and potential direction of stewardship. Then, what can you do, personally, to remove your oppositions and self-realizations, and replace them with the Substance that is so much more and so much better-Jesus as LORD? What about your church as a whole? Will you allow yourself to become less and Him to become more John 3: The answer to these questions will put you on the right track to the percepts Jesus is communicating! Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development www. Some people may only see a small change or you may see a dramatic change Like I did. In either case these tips can help you save up to several hundred dollars per year! The Teething of Tithing [http:](http://) How do you feel when churches, ministries, or even missionaries seek you, asking for funds? Does it give you a toothache? Do you cringe and make the quickest possible exit, or do you see those requests as opportunities to serve? A lot of people run away from stewardship because they do not see it as God does. This is a reflection of our spiritual condition! We should never separate money and finances from our spiritual life. Yet, so many Christians do, seeking to be cheerful with what they can keep, not with how they can be used. Have you ever thought that Biblical Stewardship [http:](http://) In my experiences and observations, I have observed, with sadness, that most people in evangelical circles do not see stewardship as important. A common response to the subject of stewardship is that all we need to have is a good heart, or be sincere in our faith.

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8: The Importance of Studying Doctrine | www.enganchecubano.com

For Him Scripture was the final authority in matters of history, doctrine and ethics. History Our Lord's acceptance of the authority of Scripture is seen in the warp and woof of His teachings.

That is because both divisions are logically preliminary to Systematic Theology. The reason for this in the case of Exegetics is obvious. With respect to Historical Theology it is not so clear. The History of Doctrines, however, sheds great light on Exegetical and Doctrinal issues and in one sense Systematic Theology is the child of Historical Theology. Even the renowned exegete and systematician, John Murray, embraces this relationship. Systematic theology has been a development within the church of God. The fact that systematic theology is a development within the sphere of the church reminds us that it should not be thought of as the product of a theologian or series of theologians. It is true that the greatest contributions have been made by theologians. We think of Athanasius, Augustine, and Calvin. We may not underestimate the influence exerted by these men upon subsequent history. But history conditioned their work also and it is only because they occupied a certain place in history that they were able to contribute so significantly to the superstructure we call theology. The following memorable diagram will make the relationship between the different departments of theology plain: This leads me to say something about the approach used in these courses. That approach is epitomized in my insistence on referring to them as historical theology rather than church history. Because in my view this particular theological discipline culminates in the history of doctrines and because our overarching reason for studying this subject in this context the context of a local church and a school of theology rather than the academic context of a college or university the approach of these lectures will be to concentrate upon historical theology and the history of doctrines rather than church history. This is to say that we carry as our burden in all these studies the desire to discern how the church of Christ was increasingly able to formulate and articulate the system of truths contained in the Scriptures. It is not to say that there will be no treatment of those aspects of historical theology which may more broadly and precisely be described as church history. The emphasis of the lectures and some of the reading will be, however, upon the development of Christian dogma. Some attention must and will be given to those matters which are more broadly church-historical in the lectures. This will frequently be the emphasis of the reading. Church History in general will be covered in the reading, although some high points will be covered in the lectures. The emphasis of the lectures, some reading, and of the courses as a whole will be Historical Theology i. I am addressing this subject because I am convinced that the lack of such a biblical approach is not only responsible for many common errors which have plagued the study of church history, but also because without the perspectives I intend to lay out you will not feel the practical impact of what I hope to set before you during this course. Now in constructing a biblical approach to the study of church history we will deal with four perspectives with which the study of the history of the church must be approached will be set out. You may think of these four perspectives as constructing a runway from which the study of church history must lift off. The first perspective which forms a biblical approach to church history is this: Church history reflects, enshrines, or contains the supernatural activity of Christ through His Spirit. Only one text is needed to establish this first perspective on the study of church history. It is Matthew The focal point of this relationship is stated in the promise of v. Confirmation of this comes from the fact that the Great Commission as stated here and elsewhere in the New Testament was given directly to the apostolate, that body of men which formed the foundation of the church Matt. It is the church, then, as established on the foundation of the apostles and prophets Eph. The Duration of the Promise Notice the duration of this promise. Most important for our purposes is the fact that though the commission is given directly to the apostles of Christ, it cannot be restricted to the apostolic period of church history. That this promise remains in effect after the apostolic period and throughout the history of the church is clear from three considerations. This commission was not exhaustively fulfilled by the apostles. Since the commission remains to the post-apostolic church to complete,

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the promise given with a view to its fulfillment must also remain in effect. Second, the promise is modified by the phrase "all the days" or "always" as it is translated in the NASB. This naturally suggests a period not restricted to the lifetimes of the apostles. Third, the phrase "all the days" and the promise it modifies is defined by the concluding words of v. If any further proof of the meaning of the consummation of the age within the context of the Gospel of Matthew is necessary, the four other occurrences of this phrase in this gospel will put the matter beyond doubt Matt. The context of this promise assures us, then, that Christ will be specially and graciously present with His people throughout the church age. The Bearing of This Promise Notice the bearing of this promise. This promise of the special and gracious presence of Christ comes in the context of the activities assumed and commanded in the Great Commission. It is for the making, baptizing, and teaching of disciples that Christ promises His special presence. The Authority of this Promise Notice the authority of this promise. This promise comes within the framework of v. What an absolutely thrilling encouragement in the work of church-planting! But I am not here to speak to you about the work of church-planting, but about the study of church history. Thus, we must hasten on to a second perspective with which we must approach its study The activity of Christ in church history has a progressive character. When Christ promises to be present with His church all the days, we are not to think that he will start from scratch on each of those days. There is a process, a growth, a building involved which spans the entire gospel age. In fact it was the idea of building which the Great Carpenter Himself used in His most famous statement of the progressive character of His activity in church history. The passage which I am thinking of is, of course, Matthew No examination of the biblical proof for the relation of Christ to His church during this age would be complete which did not prominently expound this text. It is the first mention of the church in the New Testament and one of two recorded uses of this term by Christ during his earthly life. This promise, that is to say, very directly suggests the thought that Christ will build His church through the gospel age and that this process of building will only be completed at His return and only consummated in the eschatological kingdom. Could He have been, perhaps, merely referring to a building completed during his life or that of His apostles? First, the church mentioned is the universal church. This is clearly the force and implication of the entire context of this statement in Ephesians 1: If it is the universal church to which Jesus was referring, then the implication would appear to be that the building process continues throughout this age. Second, the Peter-foundation mentioned in Matt. According to the Apostle Paul Peter is the representative of the apostolate. This naturally suggests that the generation of the apostles merely laid the foundation of the church and that the building process was far from complete. Third, Paul views the building process as presently proceeding. Note the present tenses of Eph. The activities in which Paul regards this building process as consisting are not activities which in any way suggest restricting it to the initial period of the gospel age. The building process is, then, age-long and eschatological in nature. This activity of Christ in church history with its progressive character has a doctrinal dimension. This is important because I intend to argue that the church of Christ has had a growing ability throughout the ages to understand and articulate the teaching of the Bible. I intend to argue that Baptists today owe a great debt to those whom God used to bring the church to new levels of understanding in the history of the church. I intend to argue that we have a great heritage of truth which has been bequeathed to us by the Holy Spirit through such men. Finally, I intend to argue that not all or nor even perhaps the most important of those men to which we owe such a debt were Baptists. Let me, therefore, set out before you an argument which I believe indisputably confirms that there has been a progressive, doctrinal development in the history of the church. I will unfold this argument under three sub-headings: The Argument Logically Stated Let me put my argument this way. If the historical life of the church reflects the gracious activity of Christ, if this activity of Christ has a progressive character, then since a very important part of the life of the church is its doctrinal life, we may conclude that its doctrinal life will manifest a progressive character. This is just another way of saying that there will be doctrinal development in the history of the church. The Argument Simply Illustrated I acknowledge that the logical steps involved in that argument may strain rusty, rational faculties. Let me, therefore, illustrate what I am saying. Take your little five-year old son. This process of growth will

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affect every major facet of the life of your little boy. He will grow up physically, emotionally, and intellectually. Thus, you know that instead of adding two plus three in his kindergarten workbooks, he will in ten years be studying symbolic logic, geometry, and calculus. It is precisely the same with the church. It also must grow up. Since its doctrinal or intellectual aspect is a crucial dimension of its life, we must conclude that there will be intellectual or doctrinal growth in the church. The Argument Biblically Confirmed This argument for the doctrinal development of the church is implied by each of the two passages we have so far studied. Verse 20 reads, "Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Similarly in Matthew The church is built on the foundation of the apostolic testimony about Christ. The church is built on the rock of the truth about Jesus Christ as it was infallibly proclaimed by Peter and the other apostles. The church, therefore, has a doctrinal foundation, and we cannot eliminate doctrine from the building process of which Jesus speaks. Two of the most explicit parables in this regard are found in Mark 4: Both parables emphasize the idea of organic growth in the kingdom of God. Perhaps, the clearest passage which confirms the thought of the intellectual maturation or doctrinal development of the church is to be found in Eph. This passage is commonly given an individual or local church application. While such an application is not invalid, there is the necessity of seeing in it an age-long eschatological process.

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9: THE ENCYCLOPEDIA ANALYSIS OF HISTORICAL THEOLOGY- Samuel Waldron

The Development of Ideas: 2. The Antecedent Argument in behalf of Developments in Christian Doctrine: 3. The Historical Argument in behalf of the existing Developments: 4. Instances in Illustration: Part 2. Doctrinal Developments viewed Relatively to Doctrinal Corruptions: 5.

Where the battle rages there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battle field besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point. Attacks on the foreknowledge of God happened throughout church history, but they had been infrequent. The battle regarding the foreknowledge of God has been intensifying since the publication of W. PLC, , 5. Walden and Stowe, Fordham University Press, A Study of the Nature of God St. Calvary United Church, Henry Beveridge Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, , 2: Reformists adopt new significant changes in Library Albany, OR: Neff reported that the resolution was passed by a vote of to 66, with 41 members abstaining. Having debated issues ranging from biblical inerrancy to the reality of hell, evangelicals are now openly debating the traditional doctrine of God represented by classical theism. Furthermore, traditionalists utilize every resource available to clarify unclear doctrines. Reformists, on the other hand, revise difficult doctrines by emphasizing multiplicity of meanings and creating indefiniteness, or fluidity, of truth. An examination of Openness Theology will reveal a rejection of traditionalism and a desire for obfuscating biblical truths. What Is Openness Theology? The future is conditioned upon other events that are undeterminable to man or God. A new wave of critical reappraisal and competent reconstruction of the doctrine of God is sweeping over the intellectual landscape. Pinnock and Rice have been most influential in getting attention for the movement. Some reformists, such as progressive dispensationalists, combine an understanding of the biblical text based upon a grammatical-historical approach with an allegorical or symbolic approach. Progressive dispensationalism is only an example of reformist trends; it does not mean that this movement also embraces openness theology. All that God does not know is the content of future free decisions, and this is because decisions are not there to know until they occur. Pinnock Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, , 9. Paul, Minnesota, and former professor of theology at Bethel College, began an intense debate within the Baptist General Conference and Baker Book House, which is evident from the comments in his book Letters from a Skeptic. In the Christian view God knows all of realityâ€”everything there is to know. If we have been given freedom, we create the reality of our decisions by making them. Their recurring response is that classical theism has been polluted by Greek philosophy. The answer, in part, is found in the way Christian thinkers have used certain Greek philosophical ideas. Greek thought has played an extensive role in the development of the traditional doctrine of God. But the classical view of God worked out in the Western tradition is at odds at several key points with a reading of the biblical text. The early church fathers lived in the intellectual atmosphere where Greek philosophy especially middle Platonism dominated. Victor Books, , InterVarsity, , Augustine always believed in the biblical God, but in my opinion he allowed neo-Platonic metaphysics to constrain that God. He quotes the Bible extensively but interprets it within the neo-Platonic framework. Owen, Concepts of Deity [New York: One can always find someone who holds to some foolish and unreasonable idea in the history of the church. Nevertheless, Sanders dispensed with the views of Luther, Calvin, and Aquinasâ€”authors of monumental works on the nature of Godâ€”in less than five pages! Such a surface appraisal linking their theologies with Greek philosophy will not suffice. Consequently, the adherents of open theology list many Scriptures in their writings perhaps to create a semblance of accuracy as evidence that they have avoided Greek philosophy and are advocating the truly biblical teaching. If Open Theology is correct and great minds throughout the history of the church have been so deceived by Greek philosophy, then an obvious question should arise. How has the openness view of God maintained purity from an alleged undiscerned, ongoing Greek influence throughout the centuries upon the traditional doctrine of God? Hasker provided the following response: Without doubt a very large number of philosophical issues are involved in the difference between the divine openness view and the classical

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conception of God—far too many to discuss in a single chapter. My task is made somewhat easier, however, by the fact that many of the indications and preconception with which we today approach these issues are decidedly different from those that prevailed when the theological tradition was being formed. But when we are assessing the merits of views supported by a long tradition, it is surely appropriate to consider the ways in which the assumptions that influenced the shaping of the tradition differ from our own. The infidels, on the contrary, were using their reason to argue concerning the nature of God. Belief that God is perfect is not a doctrine that is true because it is rational; it is reality because Scripture testifies that it is true. Man is expected to use reason,²⁶ but not to elevate it beyond the authenticity and reliability of revelation; therefore, one can reason without imbibing rationalism. The clear testimony of Scripture is that God is immutable, but this does not imply that He is static. Psalm 110:3 “God does not change His mind in the same manner as humanity does. Anthropomorphisms are simply ways of describing God as having human characteristics, e. Every diligent student of Scripture understands that these are not literal descriptions of God. Why then should anthropomorphisms be any different? As to repentance, we must hold that it can no more exist in God than ignorance, or error, or impotence. If no man knowingly or willingly reduces himself to the necessity of repentance, we cannot attribute repentance to God without saying either that he knows not what is to happen, or that he cannot evade it, or that he rushes precipitately and inconsiderately into a resolution, and then forthwith regrets it. Baker, , Historical Considerations and Openness Theology 71 Spirit, that in the very mention of repentance he declares that God is not influenced by any feeling of regret, that he is not a man that he should repent. For instance, Scripture states that the knowledge of God holds no bounds Job 38:36 “Another example is when God challenged Job to search the extent of His wisdom, convinced Job of his ignorance and finitude, and then enumerated His perfections Job 38:36 “The change of action or mind that occurs on a human level cannot be understood as representing God in the same manner. Such similarities of emotions between God and mankind can be simply understood as theomorphisms, since man is created in the image of God. The emotions of man come from His creator but cannot be equated with the same emotions that God possesses. Such emotions indicate that the God of the Bible is personal, but a distinction must be made between the manner in which God experiences emotions and the manner in which man experiences emotions. The fact that man can experience theomorphic emotions is a gift of God; however, when God repents, it cannot be said that He regrets the prior decisions that He had made. Rather, it is best to understand divine repentance as a genuine emotion because God foreknows the sorrowful act as it occurs in the time-space dimension of mankind. When the act occurs that God has foreknown, He genuinely grieves over the sinfulness of mankind cf. Therefore, it would only make sense to seek a plain reading of the text without denying the absolute foreknowledge of God. The golden rule of interpretation has always been this: Biblical Research Society, , The assertions made by the openness movement are not the doctrines of those who hold Scripture in high regard; rather, they are consistent with the liberalism so characteristic of the enemies of orthodox Christianity. Harnack sought to create a Jesus that would coincide with his own nineteenth-century liberal worldview. In fairness, it should be said that the gist of the above argument was not invented by the authors of *The Openness of God*, nor is it a product of the most recent modern theology. It originated in the early nineteenth century in Germany, where it was connected with such names as Ferdinand Christian Baur “ and August Neander “ Later on it was picked up by Albrecht Ritschl “⁸⁹ , but the classic exposition that became famous all over the world is that of Alfred von Harnack “ , expressed most clearly in a series of lectures delivered in Berlin in and published in English translation as *What is Christianity?* Kelly “⁹⁷ and H. Turner “⁹⁵ and is no longer taken seriously by church historians. It comes as a surprise to see this old idea served up as something new. More alarmingly though, the authors of *The Openness of God* show no sign that they have discovered where this idea comes from, nor do they appear to be

31 Historical theology is the study of the unfolding of biblical doctrine throughout the centuries. Historical theology is important for understanding the formation of systematic theology and deviations from Scripture. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society,]: Mormonism is also presenting itself as a theology that reverses the effects of Greek philosophy upon the Christian concept of God.

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For instance, Richard R. Horizon Publishers, , argued that Greek philosophy corrupted nearly all Christian theology, or classical theism. Historical Considerations and Openness Theology 73 aware that it has been convincingly refuted by the above-named scholars among others. Essentially, this is the methodology of the openness theists. In other words, Openness theologians believe that the correct doctrine of God was lost because of a Greek perversion of Christianity. The Openness theists are now attempting to challenge and correct the perversion. However, the traditional understanding of God gives all the evidence of being an accurate systematization of Scripture rather than the polluted Christianity that openness theists proclaim it to be. The reasoning of openness theists is by no means new. Dispensationalism is argued to be the product of Baconian inductivism; pretribulationism, the result of the visions of Margaret Macdonald; young-earth creationism, the figment of Ellen G. Rather than deal with the biblical text, the critics or evangelical left³⁶ revert to what is called post hoc arguments since A preceded B, then A caused B. Openness Theology and Process Theology The question asked continually of Open theists is whether they are Process theologians. Some Open theists have been influenced by the arguments of Process theologians for a dynamic view of reality, responsive God, and a partly open future. It needs to be stated, though, that Openness Theology is not identical to Process Theology. Consider the following from Boyd: Some evangelical authors have wrongly accused open theists of being close to process thought, but in truth the two views have little in common.

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