

COURSEWORK FOR
TH503 SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY III
SOTERIOLOGY

An Assignment Presented to the Faculty
of Louisiana Baptist University

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for TH503 Systematic Theology III
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January, 2011

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ASSIGNMENT
TH503
SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY III

TEXT: Theissen, Henry (rev. by Doerksen), LECTURES IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., any date is acceptable.

COURSE OBJECTIVE: This study pertains to the Person and work of Christ, and then proceeds to consider the doctrines of grace, election, repentance, faith, conversion, justification, regeneration, adoption, sanctification, union with Christ and the security of the believer.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- (1) Read chapters 21-34 of the textbook for understanding. Mark listings, Scriptures and information you wish to quickly locate for outlining each of the above chapters and for preparing the required questions and answers that are described below.
- (2) Select another conservative theology book and read what the author teaches about the subjects shown above under "Course Objective." Document what you read on the "Required Supplemental Reading Report".
- (3) Prepare a detailed outline (at least three or four full pages for each chapter of Thiessen) in such a way that it can be used for teaching a series of lessons about these theological subjects to your college class, church congregation, staff members, or a Sunday school class.
- (4) From each of the above chapters, prepare and show the answers to at least eight (8) questions (true or false, fill in the blank, multiple choice or listings of important facts) which you feel could be an appropriate final exam if you were actually developing this course for a college or Christian school. Indicate the page number where you found each question and its answer, and place these questions and answers after your reading report.

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Supplemental Reading Report - Soteriology

The selected conservative theology books listed below were read and considered in light of what Thiessen covered on the course objectives (The Person and work of Christ, and then proceeds to consider the doctrines of grace, election, repentance, faith, conversion, justification, regeneration, adoption, sanctification, union with Christ and the security of the believer.)

Cambron, Mark G., "Bible Doctrines, Beliefs That Matter", 1954, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Erickson, Millard J., "Christian Theology", 1985, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI

Ryrie, Charles C., "Basic Theology", 1981, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois

Specific differences from Thiessen's work are analyzed below:

The Person and Work of Christ

Cambron – Names of Christ pg 60- 69

Erickson - Introduction to the Word of Christ pg 761- 780

Although this was a heading containing the subheadings covered in more detail below, it was of interest that Cambron and Erickson covered it distinctly different than did Thiessen. Whereas Thiessen covered the doctrine of Christ as a sub-point to soteriology Cambron covered it specifically as a doctrine and Erickson as a 'theological discussion' of the Person of Christ. Cambron, treating the doctrine of Christ as a stand alone subject provides a much more systematic coverage of doctrine which begins with the names of Christ, a topic not even

addressed by Thiessen. Erickson, always waxing more scholarly, philosophical and less eloquent chooses to give his attention to “not only ontologically prior to his work, but also epistemologically prior.” (pg 762) In English defined as¹: on·tol·o·gy n. The branch of metaphysics that deals with the nature of being. e·pis·te·mol·o·gy n. The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, its presuppositions and foundations, and its extent and validity. With my preference for a systematics in a systematic theology the doctrine of Christ should indeed be covered outside the realm of soteriology.

Historic and Preincarnate (Thiessen Ch 22 pg 283-288)

Ryrie – The Preincarnate Christ pg 237- 240

Erickson – History and Christology pg 662- 674

Erickson – Historical Departures pg 693- 697

Of Thiessen and Erickson there is very poor and non-systematic coverage of the Preincarnate Christ; in my sources only Ryrie digs into this doctrine with a Bible centered examination. I suppose it somewhat necessary to investigate the errors of the earliest Catholics with their counsels and heretics. But Thiessen spends most of his effort there and exerts precious little priority on what the Bible teaches us about the Preincarnate Christ. Erickson also places his emphasis on “Christology of the earliest centuries of the church” and the “historical reliability of the whole of Scripture” (pg 665) rather than doing this rich topic Biblical justice. Ryrie, however covers the meaning, importance and Biblical evidence of the preexistence of Christ, then examines his 'eternality' and Biblical activity. It is no wonder Baptist's generally prefer

¹ The American Heritage Dictionary, 3rd Edition, 1994, Softkey International Inc.

Ryrie over Thiessen for their Theology. Even though he is not quite as systematic, he is always more Biblical.

Humiliation (Thiessen Ch 23 pg 289-298)

Cambron – The Incarnation pg 69- 81

Ryrie – The Incarnation pg 241- 246

Ryrie – The Self Emptying of Christ pg 260-262

Acts 8:32-33 says “The place of the scripture which he (a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority) read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.” and this is the one and only use of the word 'humiliation' as applied to Christ. It speaks of the miscarriage of justice in his trial and not of his incarnation. Thiessen is ill advised and unjustified in using it synonymous with the incarnation. Cambron, as would be expected from a Baptist, presents a much more Bible based analysis of the incarnation of Christ than does Thiessen. Below is a table comparing the given reasons necessitating the incarnation as given by Thiessen, Cambron and Ryrie. All gave 7 reasons, and I rearranged there orders to categorize them together. It is interesting if not insightful.

<i>Thiessen's reasons for the incarnation</i>	<i>Cambron's objects of incarnation</i>	<i>Ryrie's purposes of the incarnation</i>	<i>Comment</i>
To reveal the Father,	To reveal the invisible God,	To reveal God to us	All agreed.
To confirm God's promises,	To fulfill prophecy,		He was not incarnate because it was prophesied, It was prophesied because

	To fulfill the Davidic Covenant,	To fulfill the Davidic Covenant	he need come! How about because “God so loved the world” instead. Again the the covenant was because he was coming, not the coming because it was covenanted.
To put away sin,	To sacrifice for our sin,	To provide an effective sacrifice for sin	All agreed.
To become a faithful High Priest,	To provide the redeemed with a High Priest,	To be able to be a sympathetic high priest	All agreed, but should include something about Job's cry for a 'Daysman'.
To destroy the works of the Devil,		To destroy the works of the devil	Not at all! He came for man, for love, and to fix man's fall, Satan did not warrant God becoming flesh in any way.
To give us an example of a Holy Life, and To prepare for the second advent.	To show believers how to live, and To become the head of a new creation.	To provide an example for our lives To be able to be a qualified judge	All agree. This is awkward or sloppy. To be a mediator and/or daysman would be more fitting here.

Two Natures and Character (Thiessen Ch 24 pg 299-311)

Cambron - Two Natures pg 81- 93

Erickson – The Unity of the Person of Christ pg 723-738

Christ, who is he? The question has been debated, analyzed and philosophized for over 2000 years now. How can their be a union of two natures, God and man in one being is perplexing a question as will ever be asked. Finally, Thiessen seems to answer the quest, or at least wrest with it, as well as any conservative theologian in print. Cambron superbly organizes the Scriptures around the Humanity of Christ and then the Deity of Christ followed by an outline of the errors of concerning the two natures. Even Erickson, usually so noncommittal in taking a position, clearly presents the “Basic Tenets of the Doctrine of Two Natures in One Person.” (pg

734-738) But Thiessen truly captures this dilemma. The two natures in Christ “are inseparably found together so as to constitute but one person with two consciences and two wills “ and yet “a true union of the two natures” (pg 304)

His Death Importance and Meaning (Thiessen Ch 25-26 pg312-330)

Cambron – The Death of Christ pg 93- 101

Ryrie – The Meaning of the Death pg 286-297

There are two areas wherein Thiessen did excel in the consideration of Christ's death. Where as Cambron and Ryrie were absorbed in the Biblical analysis of the importance of Christ's death, they likewise only did Biblical analysis of the unscriptural theories concerning the death.

Cambron listing well the Scriptures refuting that 1) The Death of Christ was a Martyr's Death, 2) The Death of Christ Was Accidental, 3) The Death of Christ Was a Moral Example, 4) The Death of Christ Was an Exhibit of God's Displeasure with Sin, 5) The Death of Christ Was to Show Man That God Loves Him, and 6) The Death of Christ Was the Death of a Criminal.

Ryrie gave these obscure errant theories almost no coverage at all. Thiessen, however gave each one a more thorough background analysis of where each came from, who founded and promoted the philosophy and errant sects that spring from the heresy. Also while Cambron used Scripture well to developed that Christ's death was a ransom, Thiessen exerted great effort to clarify that this ransom was not a payment to Satan as expressed in the ransom idea in the commercial theory held to by the philosopher Origin of Alexandria and worded by Justin Martyr. These details reported by Thiessen and neglected by Cambron and Ryrie point out the need of a good Baptist Systematic Theology text which first and foremost uses the Bible as its sole authority,

(Thiessen does not) but also exposes some of the errant philosophies at their roots, (Cambron and Ryrie do not.)

His Resurrection and Ascension (Thiessen Ch 27 pg 331-342)

Cambron – The Resurrection pg 101- 109

Cambron – The Ascension and Enthronement pg 109- 113

Cambron's expository treatment of 1 & 2 Corinthians on this subject dwarfs Thiessen's topical and philosophical coverage hands down. Some theologians teach about the Bible, some teach the Bible. The latter is always preferred.

Election and Vocation (Thiessen Ch 28 pg 343-351)

Erickson – Predestination pg 907- 929

Cambron Election ZIP- NATA- NILCH

In Thiessen's (and all other Reformed Theologians) analysis of how God could elect individuals souls for salvation, and reject others there is always an abundant use of the concept of Supreme Sovereignty and God's grace and always a dismissal of man's free will and God's mercy.

Thiessen's wrestling with this problem is commendable but he will not let go of the old Augustinian concept of election of individuals. Erickson likewise finally lands on Calvinist ground as each pretend at least they are not supralapsarianists. Thiessen even has the audacity to propose his view eliminates all tension between decrees, providence and prayer. Blind leaders of the blind comes to mind. Cambron, unfortunately, in his text on Bible doctrines remains silent on election, which is insightful in that election is not a Bible doctrine, it is an Augustinian doctrine.

Conversion = Repentance & Faith (Thiessen Ch 29 pg 352-361)

Cambron - Repentance & Faith pg 188-191

Erickson – Call, Conversion, Regeneration pg 930- 947

Erickson – Current Conception of Salvation pg 887- 906

When it comes to soteriology Cambron 'nails it.' When it comes to soteriology, conversion, being repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, he defines it. When it comes to repentance toward God Thiessen just don't get it and Erickson is afraid to say it. Why Thiessen, charged with writing out a systematic theology, begins every doctrinal coverage avoiding what Christ taught and highlighting what men have philosophized is an ongoing frustration in his work; but when he comes to soteriology, repentance in particular, this frustration crescendos into new heights. Fundamentalism either focuses into a Bible centered separatist Baptist individualism, or softens and dulls into Evangelicalism. Erickson is so very much the cutting edge on the dull sword of Evangelicalism, that he should re-title his book, from "Christian Theology" to 'Evangelical Opinions.' .

Consider then Cambron's cutting edge in describing repentance coupled with faith as the Biblical quintessence of the salvation process. "To those who say that repentance is not to be preached today, and that it is not essential for salvation, we point out that repentance was preached by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Apostle Paul. Repentance was proclaimed *before* Pentecost, *at* Pentecost, and *after* Pentecost. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5)." (pg 188) Cambron then details that repentance is NOT Reformation, NOT contrition, NOT Penance, and it IS change of mind. He also describes repentance manifestation to include Change of Intellect, Change of Feeling, Change of Will, and

Change of Action. Such coverage far exceeds Thiessen's weak coverage of repentance. It is unfortunate that Cambron never connects repentance and faith as the two sided coin called conversion. I do not recall where I came across such a description but considering that Jesus said "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt 18:3) "lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." (Mar 4:12b) "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." (Acts 3:19a) Indeed Cambron says almost nothing about conversion, except to allude that "conversion means to turn around" (pg 192).

The Biblical consideration that Cambron gives to faith is equally of higher caliber than Thiessen's coverage. He considers that faith is composed of 1) Knowledge, 2) Belief, 3) Trust, and 4) Recumbency (? def as assuming a position of comfort or rest) It is remarkably inadequate that no author I cited references Hebrews 11 in their dissertation on faith, Cambron remarkably paralleled his four to God's four of Heb 11:13 "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off (knowledge), and were persuaded of them (belief), and embraced them (trust), and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (recumbency)" All theologians call God's definition of faith "The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." inadequate and fail miserably in providing a better one.

Justification and Regeneration (Thiessen Ch 30 pg 362-369)

Cambron – Justification pg 194-196

Erickson – Objective Aspect Justification pg 954- 960

Cambron – Regeneration pg 192-194

Erickson – Call, Conversion, Regeneration pg 930- 947

While Erickson's wordy analysis of justification considers “The linguistic evidence that justification is forensic or declarative in character.” (pg 957) it is Cambron that skillfully differentiates a declarative justification of Romans, and manifest justification of James. Thiessen, holding to elect individuals getting justification and non-elect getting damnation cannot hold a candle to Cambron's thoroughly Biblical analysis of justification and quickening, and all of soteriology.

Union with Christ and Adoption (Thiessen Ch 31 pg 370-376)

Erickson – Objective Aspect Union with Christ pg 948- 953

Cambron – Adoption pg 201-202

Erickson – Objective Aspect Adotion pg 961- 966

It is beyond me how Thiessen can mix up the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of Christ with the believer being place 'in' Christ, but Carmon is practically silent on this union and Erickson, the wordy non-committal evangelical, seems to provides the best coverage of this baptism into Christ. Even Erickson, however, fails to call it the latter.

Erickson also clarifies that adoption is justifications acquiring of a positive standing, adoption into God's family. Thiessen mixes adoption into the actual operations of salvation rather than treating it as a result of the operations. Camron provides the extensive Biblical examination and analysis of this adoption that one would expect of a Baptist who bases all doctrine on Sola Scripture. He too recognizes adoption as a result of salvation not an operation of salvation.

Sanctification (Thiessen Ch 32 pg 377-384)

Cambron – Sanctification pg 196-201

Erickson - Sanctification pg 967- 973

Where Thiessen's Calvinism prevents his competent examination of 'so great salvation' he, and Erickson operating under the same handicap, provide very extensive coverage of Sanctification. Cambron, the Baptist begins his Scriptural coverage of Sanctification with “This is one phase of salvation which is very much confused today. The Bible student will be surprised at what God has to say about sanctification” and proceeds surprise with a very Biblical accounting. “Sanctification” says Cambron “is the work of God which perfects the believer in the likeness of Christ by his appearing in glory.” Awesome coverage of this topic from all three of these examined sources.

Security of the Believer (Thiessen Ch 33 pg 385-391)

Erickson – Perseverance pg 986- 996

Ryrie – The Security of the Believer pg 328- 334

“The doctrine of perseverance does not stand alone but is a necessary part of the Calvinistic system of theology,” Erickson's quote of Boettner (pg 987) clarifies both Thiessen's and Erickson's misnomer of a doctrine of perseverance, rather than the proper doctrine of eternal security. While Thiessen and Erickson both find the doctrine of perseverance in the Augustinian decrees and individual soul election of God, Ryrie aptly defines the doctrine of the security of the believer using the Holy Scriptures.

***Grace – Thiessen=Means of Grace – The Word of God and Prayer
(Thiessen Ch 34 pg392-398)***

Cambron – Prayer pg 203-210

Erickson – Views of the Means of Salvation pg 1003-1014

The doctrine of Grace, although called out as a course objective in the syllabus, is not particularly dealt with by Thiessen or in any of my sources. That said, it is interesting that Thiessen must address the 'Means of Grace' to draw off criticism on his insistence that God chose and elect all the individuals for salvation before the foundation of the world. He, thus, did a 'soft show' contending, or pretending that the means of grace is both the Word of God and Prayer. As Erickson always does he presents several opinions about a doctrine without taking sides and never pursuing any Biblical depth to a doctrine. At the end of his section on the means of salvation we know what liberation theology holds, what Gutierrez's views are, and what Catholics consider true about sacraments, and even what Evangelicals view as true, but find no Biblical examination of the means of salvation. Cambron, however, presents the means of salvation well integrated throughout his soteriology chapter which ends with a thorough Biblical examination of prayer. This treatment far exceeds Thiessen's 'soft shoe'. When a person believes that the Bible is our sole authority for doctrine, and believes in both mans free will and that prayer changes things, it is amazing how much insight is found in his theology book, even when he calls it a doctrine book.

Q&A From Chapter 21 The Purpose, Plan, and Method of God pg 275-282

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 275-282 (r 199-205)

1. The Reformed Baptist, Augustus H. Strong, begins his soteriology study with “Redemption Wrought by Christ.” The Independent Baptist, Mark G. Cambron, begins his soteriology study with “Repentance, Faith and Regeneration.” How does Thiessen start his study and why?

Ans pg 275 Thiessen begins his soteriology lectures by explaining God's definite purpose, plan and program. Thiessen obviously does this because he believes that God chose, before the foundation of the world, who would be saved and who would be condemned to hell.

2. The Reformed Baptist, Strong, begins his soteriology study with the verse “but when the fullness of time came God sent forth his Son.” The Independent Baptist, Cambron, begins his soteriology study with the verse “Jesus began to preach and say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” With what verse does Thiessen begin his discourse and why?

Ans pg 275 Thiessen begins his soteriology lectures with “chose us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame(KJV) (*blemish'* Thiessen's *ASB*) before him in love.” Obviously Thiessen's staunch Calvinistic bias is going to taint his whole examination of soteriology.

3. When addressing the purpose of God in Soteriology, Thiessen first references the most snagging issues of his logic. What is his leading topic sentence, and why is it a snag to ones intellect?

Ans pg 275 “By His foreknowledge God was fully aware of the fact that man would fall into sin and become utterly ruined even before He created him.” This statement and reasoning is nowhere found in the Bible it is derived by a logic that is several steps removed from the revelation of God in the Scriptures, but it is a logic always pursued by a Reformed Augustinian.

4. According to Thiessen, In what two ways is the purpose of God in soteriology indicated?

Ans pg 275-277 According to Thiessen the purpose of God in soteriology is indicated by the human nature via a knowledge of God, and of Sin and of a needed sacrifice, and in the Scriptures via the law and the prophets.

5. What are Thiessen's 5 parts of God's plan for bringing salvation?

Ans pg 277 “This plan includes 1) the means by which salvation is to be provided, 2) the objectives that are to be realized, 3) the persons that are to benefit by it, 4) the conditions on which it is to be available, and 5) the agents and means by which it is to be applied.

6. In his explanation of a plan of God for salvation Thiessen must needs include one of the 5 Presbyterian TULIP points. Which one and why so?

Ans pg 278 According to Thiessen's explanation of the plan of God in salvation “Salvation was provided ... more particularly for the elect, those who will believe on Christ and walk in his way.” This aligns with the Presbyterian TULIP model's 3rd point of Limiting the atonement for only 'the elect' and not having it available to 'the whosoever will' as the Bible clearly implies.

7. What is Thiessen's three fold object of the preparation time before Christ?

Ans pg 279 Thiessen's threefold object of a preparation time for salvation is 1) to disclose to man the true nature of sin and the 'depth of depravity' to which he had fallen 2) to reveal mans

powerlessness to save himself, and 3) to teach man that forgiveness and restoration are possible by substitutionary sacrifice.

8. Under soteriology and the methods of God Thiessen, normally a reformed theologian who would hold to a Covenant Theology² or Replacement Theology³ outlines verbatim the 7 dispensations depicted by C.I. Scofield. What are they?

Ans pg 279-282 Thiessen, provides that the methods of God change and in the past there was an 1) Edenic Period, where the environment was most perfect, this aligns with C. I. Scofield's dispensation of innocence; 2) an Anti-Deluvian Period where conscience now became active, aligns with Scofield's dispensation of conscious; 3) a Post-Deluvian Period, wherein God asked Noah to institute human government, aligns with Scofield's 3rd dispensation of human government; 4) a Patriarchal period wherein God made a covenant with Abraham, which aligns with C. I. 's dispensation of Promise; and 5) a Period of Mosaic Law that Thiessen calls a covenant of works (taken directly from the old Reformed Covenant Theology) which aligns with Scofield's 5th dispensation of Law. Thiessen then describes the present method of soteriology as the Church period, (interestingly enough he avoids the use of the word grace, although the Covenant Theology leans on it heavily) this aligns with Scofield's 6th dispensation of Grace. He then speaks of a future method in the Kingdom Period, which aligns with the 7th and final dispensation of Scofield's notes, the Kingdom Age. Thus Thiessen seems to hold an interesting position striving to hold onto Reformed Theologies Calvinism, but departing from their Covenant Theology and embracing Dispensationalism.

2 Covenant Theology (or Federal theology) see Appendix

3 Replacement Theology or (Supersessionism) see Appendix

Q&A From Chapter 22 The Person of Christ: Historical Views and Pre-Incarnation State pg 283-288

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 283- 288 (r 206-)

1. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Ebionites.

Ans pg 283 Ebionites are from 2nd century Jewish believers who retain Mosaic ceremonies and as Nazareans and Judaizers they both deny Christ's divine nature thinking it incompatible with monotheism.

2. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Gnostics.

Ans pg 283 Gnostics deny the reality of Christ's human body (Docetae) or deny his real body was material, or consider that Jesus and Christ were distinct (Cerinthians)

3. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Arians.

Ans pg 284 Arians are followers of Arius, an Alexandria Egypt presbyter of 280 AD, who opinioned that Christ was the first of created beings, through whom all other things are made, ... including time.

4. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Appollinarians.

Ans pg 284 Appollinarians denied the integrity of the human nature of Christ because of the difficulty in conceiving how two complete natures can be united in one life and consciousness.

5. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Nestorians.

Ans pg 285 Nestorians follow Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, deny the real union of the divine and human natures in Christ, implying a twofold personality in Christ, making him simply indwelt by God. Nestorius was deposed and banished in 431 AD.

6. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Eutychians.

Ans pg 285 Eutychians, followers of Eutyches who considered Christ so deified that it was not of the same human nature as our. Opposite of Nestorians.

7. Summarize the historical view of Christ for the Orthodox.

Ans pg 286 “In one person Jesus Christ there are two natures, a human nature and a divine nature, each in its completeness and integrity and these two natures are organically and indissolubly united, yet so that no third nature is formed thereby. ... Orthodox doctrine forbids us either to divide the person or to confound the natures.”

8. Summarize the pre-incarnate Christ.

Ans pg 286-288 In the eternal past Christ was with God, and indeed he was God, and the term 'the Angel of Jehovah' “seems in the Old Testament with hardly more than a single exception, (Hag 1:13) to designate the pre-incarnate Logos, whose manifestation in angelic or human form foreshadowed His final coming in the flesh.” Sixteen of these references are Gen 16:7-14, 22:11-18, 31:11,13, Exod 3:2-5, 14:19, 1Cor 10:4, Num 22:22-35, Jud 6:11-23, 13:2-25, 1Chron 21:15,18, 1Kings 19:5-7, 9-18, 2Kings 19:35, Zech 1:11, 3:1.

**Q&A From Chapter 23 The Person of Christ: The Humiliation of Christ
pg 289 - 298**

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 289-298 (r)

1. Thiessen begins this poorly titled chapter justifying the narrative of Christ's birth against the textual critics; how and why?

Ans pg 289 Thiessen uses a citation of Orr to document that the narratives of Christ birth are undoubtedly genuine and present in all ancient texts and versions. Such a rigorous defense indicates that textual critics had attacked the genuineness of these texts in his day.

2. When listing seven primary reasons why God became man Thiessen overlooks the two most important and best referenced reasons; what are they with reference?

Ans pg 290-294 Unbelievably Thiessen leaves out “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” God became flesh because he loved man and provided the only possible means for his redemption by his incarnation. Thiessen, a reformed theologian and Calvinist, likely missed this reason because the verse includes the whole world and the 'whosoever will' provision. His theology has neither. Secondly, Thiessen misses the essential provision of a daysman required by Job, “For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in Judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.” (Job 9:32-33) It was necessary for God to become flesh “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man' the man Christ Jesus. (1Tim 2:5) Thiessen only brushed against these two reasons for the incarnation in his 'High Priest' and 'Put Away Sin' consideration.

3. In Thiessen's first reason for the incarnation he seems to have gotten the cart before the horse; how so?

Ans pg 289 Thiessen states his first reason of the the incarnation to be “in order to confirm the promises made to the fathers and to show mercy to the Gentiles.” This is stated as if God had to because He promised, rather than he promised because He had to, i.e. because “He so loved the world.” Such an impersonal almost callous consideration of redemption is spawned by the view that God is just executing His plan ... keeping his promise to save a few.

4. The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th reasons given for the incarnation are straight forward; what are they?

Ans pg 290-291 Some more straight forward reasons for the incarnation are to reveal the Father to man, to become a faithful High Priest, to man, and to put away the sin of man. These three are also presented by Thiessen as though they are distant from God's love for man.

5. How do Thiessen's 5th and 7th reasons relate to the cart and the horse questioning of his first?

Ans pg 292, 293 Again Thiessen reasons for the incarnation skirt God's main purpose, the redemption of mankind. The reason is not really to destroy the works of the devil, nor to prepare for the second advent. These are both secondary results connected to his primary reason.

6. The poor title to this chapter "The humiliation of Christ" seems to stem from consideration of Phil 2:6; what does it state, and in context, what does it say?

Ans pg 294 "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Phil 2:5-7) The theme here is the attitude which was in Christ Jesus had and should be in us. When he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," it cannot be interpreted that 'he thought it not robbery to attain equality with God' or 'to become equal to/with God', or to achieve equality with God he was already equal with God, equal to God, and he became man.

7. That Christ was as much man as if he were not God, and as much God as if he were not man seems to be a good representation, but it is impossible to comprehend or accurately word. If Christ took on finiteness of humanity he had to set down the infinite attributes, i.e. His relative attributes, or the 'omni' attributes. But Thiessen, evidently in good

company with other Reformed Theologians, insists that he kept his omniscience, omnipotence and even his omnipresence! How so?

Ans pg 295-296 Thiessen and Strong contend that Christ “emptied Himself by giving up the independent exercise of His relative attributes” while still being 'omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent.” Somehow Thiessen argues “That this is the true view is evident from the fact that Jesus speaks of the things that the Father had showed Him, taught Him and given Him to do”

8. Refute each argument made for Jesus retaining his omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence.

Ans pg 295-296 Thiessen provides evidence that Jesus was indeed omniscient because he “knew all men and He knew what was in man” in John 2:24,25, but you or I could say the same with just a little Bible study. “He knew all things that should come upon him” in John 1:4, but again such knowledge does not necessitate omniscience, only a very close relationship to the Father. Some better argument that Thiessen does not account are the 5 marriages of the woman at the well (John 4) or the three denials of Peter, but again each of these, although they could make one suspect omniscience, they do not necessitate it. Indeed the overriding emphasis of Scripture is that the works that Jesus did, the perceptions, attitudes, compassions and zeal which he had are available to the spirit filled believer today and are available without omniscience, omnipotence or omnipresence.

The same observations go for the arguments that Christ asserted his own power to work miracles and therefore he must have been omnipotent. In actuality it was not until he was resurrected and being placed in his old position of glory where in he said 'all power is given unto me.” Even therein implying that it was previously set aside from and previously not so.

That Christ in his finite form of Son of man was omnipresent seems hardly worth arguing but backed into his untenable corner Thiessen draws out John 3:13 “And no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven.” To stretch this tremendous revelation about the son of man to an untenable argument that causes the son of man to be omnipresent is worse than illogical, it is almost criminal.

Understanding the union of God and Man will prove difficult or impossible, trying to insist that he be omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence in a finite body is not a good start for the controversial discourse.

Q&A From Chapter 24 The Person of Christ: The Two Natures and the Character of Christ pg 299-311

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 299-311 (r)

1. Thiessen's lead paragraph of this chapter does not clarify the problem under consideration as well as his closing paragraph of section III, point 1. Succinctly word the dilemma from that paragraph.

Ans pg 304 The two natures in Christ “are inseparably found together so as to constitute but one person with two consciousnesses and two wills “ and yet “a true union of the two natures”

2. In Christ's virgin birth, when considering if he inherited a sinful nature from Mary, what view does Thiessen call derogatory and bordering blasphemy?

Ans pg 300 “That in the incarnation Christ took fallen human nature and through the power of the Holy Spirit, or his own divine nature he not only kept his human nature from manifesting itself in any actual sin, but gradually purified it through struggle and suffering, until in his death he completely extirpated its depravity and reunited it to God” That is humanist, Catholic and modernist blasphemy.

3. Rather than use Christ's human development to defend his omniscience, Thiessen used it to defend his humanity, how might he have done the former?

Ans pg 301 John 7:15 says “And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” Thiessen could have followed this lead to argue for the omniscience of Christ. Combined with the 12 year olds astonishing understanding and instructions to doctors in Luke 2, there is a good argument for his omniscience here, but instead Thiessen leaves Christ's superior knowledge on a good home schooling and regular trips to the synagogue. My my.

4. In an overbearing development of a total depravity wherein the human nature is a carnal nature and a carnal nature is the human nature; what must Thiessen now deal with when considering Christ's human nature?

Ans pg 301 “But in saying that he took on our nature, we must ever distinguish between a human nature and a carnal nature. Jesus had the former, but not the latter.” Such is the required path of one who overdeveloped and over emphasized depravity.

5. What are the 7 previous proofs that Thiessen gave for the deity of Christ?

Ans pg 303 In showing the deity of Christ it was shown that 1) He possess the attributes of deity; 2) divine prerogatives are his; 3) OT things said of Jehovah are said of Him in the NT; 4) the names of Deity are given to him; 5) He sustains certain relationships to God; 6) He accepts divine worship, and 7) He was conscious of being God incarnate and represented himself as such.

6. Thiessen lists 6 things that are not comparable to Christs union of two natures; list them.

Ans pg 304 The union of two natures in Christ is NOT comparable to 1) marriage, 2) believers united with Christ, 3) Christs dwelling in a believer, 4) Neither could Christ unite himself with imperfect humanity, 5) Neither did the two natures combine to form a third, 6) Nor did Christ gradually take of the divine nature.

7. What is theanthropic?

Ans pg 305 The person of Christ is theanthropic but the natures of Christ are not. i.e. we may speak of the God-man in relation to his person, (not God and Man in his person) but we may NOT speak of a divine-human nature. (We must speak of the nature of God and the nature of man separate but united.)

8. Explain non-theanthropic natures with the contrast made by Thiessen.

Ans pg 305 “Christ had an infinite intelligence and will and a finite intelligence and will; that He had a divine consciousness and a human consciousness. His divine intelligence was infinite, His human intelligence increased. His divine will was omnipotent; His human will had only power of unfallen humanity. In his divine consciousness He said “I and the Father are One”; in His human consciousness He said “I thirst.” In Christ's present exalted state the essential elements of his humanity continue which the accidental elements, his hunger , his thirst his weariness, these elements have ceased.” Amazing.

9. Volumes could not contain the character of Christ, what 7 attributes does Thiessen attach to it?

Ans pg 307-311 Thiessen attaches 7 qualities to Christ's indescribable, uncapturable character; 1) He was absolutely holy, 2) He had genuine love, 3) He was truly humble, 4) He was throughly

meek, 5) He was perfectly balanced, 6) He lived a life of prayer, and 7) He was an incessant worker.

Q&A From Chapter 25 The Work of Christ: His Death – Importance and Misinterpretation pg 312-320

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 312-320 (r)

1. Give 7 reasons why the death of Christ, over the earthly life of Christ, is of supreme importance.

Ans pg 312-315 The death of Christ, more so than the life of Jesus, is given supreme importance because it is 1) it is foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures, 2) it is most prominent in the New Testament Scriptures, 3) it is the chief purpose of the incarnation, 4) it is the fundamental theme of the Gospel, 5) it is essential to Christianity, and 6) it is essentially the so-great salvation provided from heaven where 7) his death is of supreme interest.

2. Thiessen mentions that the death of the Christ has been approached with “bias and philosophical predilection” such that 5 miss representations have been expanded over the years; what are they?

Ans pg 315 – 320 Satan has lead the minds of man away from the supreme importance of Christ's death to where they have considered it an 1) accident or that he was simply 2) a martyr. They in their philosophy have considered that Christ's death was just a 3) moral demonstration of God's love or even a 4) governing demonstration of God's hatred of sin. Some have weighed his death as 5) only an infinite payment for an infinite sin, sort of like a commercial enterprise. All of these philosophical perspectives miss the great value and provision in the atoning substitutionary sacrificial death of Christ.

3. Extreme rationalists held that Christ's death was just an accident; how is this refuted?

Ans pg 316 Christ's death is clearly foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures most clearly in Isaiah 53 or Psalms 22, “for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.” ... “my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.” The death of Christ was no accident but the sacrificial, substitutionary, atonement for sin in God's plan.

4. Laelius and Faustus Socinus of Poland in the 16th century contended that Christ was just an exemplary martyr; what denominational movement is founded in that contention?

Ans pg 316 Laelius and Faustus Socinus of Poland in the 16th century founded the modern Unitarian movement, contending that Christ was just an exemplary martyr; and that there was no propitiation, no substitutionary mediation, no sacrificial benefit, and no atoning work in his death, burial and resurrection. They continue today with the same balderdash.

5. Origen (185-254 AD) of Alexandria Egypt and Schleiermacher (1768-1834 AD) “The father of modern Protestant theology” had strange philosophies about the death of Christ, what was it?

Ans pg 317 Origen (185-254 AD) of Alexandria Egypt and Schleiermacher (1768-1834 AD) “The father of modern Protestant theology” had strange philosophies about the death of Christ because they were philosophers, not theologians. They believed that Christ's death was a supreme show of God's love for man and had no connection with a propitiation.

6. The “Governmental Theory” for the death of Christ believes it simply demonstrates God's despise of sin and again was no propitiation; define propitiation.

Ans pg __ Propitiation used 3 times in the Authorized version and NOT AT ALL in the NIV, (in the Greek, ἰλαστηριον hil-as-tay'-ree-on OR ἰλασμοσ hil-as-mos') always means relating to

an appeasing or expiating, having placating or expiating force, expiatory; a means of appeasing or expiating, a propitiation (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance)

7. What was and what ails the ransom idea in the commercial theory held to by the philosopher Origen of Alexandria and worded by Justin Martyr?

Ans pg 319 Mixing Philosophy into theology is always detrimental to the truth and Origen of Alexandria, editor of the Alexandrian bible manuscripts which form the basis for all modernist English bibles, (NIV,NASB,NEB, et al.) was first and foremost a philosopher. Some where there developed after him a philosophy that the “ransom for many” which Christ provided was paid out to Satan himself and that Christ bought us out of Satan's Kingdom with his death. Such a view is very good hedonistic, diabolical philosophy, and completely lacking in a Scriptural basis.

8. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1033-1109 AD) expressed a view which “did not sufficiently stress the substitutionary aspect of Christ's death.” but is “true as far as it goes.” In that it “does not go far enough”, reword Anselm's view so that it DOES go far enough.

Ans pg 319-320 Thiessen states that Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1033-1109 AD) (erog spokesman for the Church of England and all Episcopal doctrine) presents a view of Christs death that is “true as far as it goes but it does not go far enough.” A slight rewording of Episcopal doctrine that would then go farther and answer Thiessen's complaints might be:

“Sin violates the divine HOLINESS (not just honor) and since it is committed against an infinite Being, it deserves infinite punishment. God's HOLINESS (not just honor) requires Him to punish sin, while the love of God pleads for the sinner. This conflict between the divine

attributes is reconciled by the voluntary, SUBSTITUTIONAL, PERPETUATIONAL, sacrifice of Christ, by which the divine claims are satisfied and God is free to pardon the sinner WHO IN HIS FREE WILL SEEKS AND APPROPRIATES THAT PARDON.” (Of course Thiessen, a devout Reformed Theologian, ergo a Calvinist, would never agree to this last added clause, contending instead that God 'in Sovereign grace' choose who would be saved and lost.)

Q&A From Chapter 26 The Work of Christ: The Work of Christ: His Death – Its True Meaning and Extent pg 321-330

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 321- 330 (r)

1. What does Thiessen state about the statements already made about the death of Christ?

Ans pg 321 Of all the statements thus far made concerning the death of Christ Thiessen says “They are true as far as they go but they do not go far enough.”

2. What three qualities of Christ's death does Thiessen emphasize to the previous lack?

Ans pg 320-328 To the previous lack of coverage on Christ's death Thiessen adds and emphasizes that Christ's death is Vicarious, it is Satisfaction and it is a Ransom, he should more so include that it was a propitiation and substitutionary.

3. What 5 things must be satisfied in Christ's death?

Ans pg 324-327 Christ's death must need satisfy 1) the Justice of God, 2) the Law of God, 3) the Atonement for Sin, 4) a Propitiation, and 5) a reconciliation. None of these aspects of satisfaction can be laid aside by philosophy.

4. When considering Christ' death as a ransom how is it not a ransom to Satan?

Ans pg 328 Thiessen clarifies that a ransom is “a payment of a price in order to set another held in bondage free.” We are held in bondage to God's Justice not Satan's whiles. “God's mercy ransoms man from God's justice.” Careful word smithing is necessitated here because a price

had to be paid, even a ransom, but that is not paid to Satan even though he holds man captive and man is redeemed from Satan and his hold on him, however he gets no ransom.

5. In explaining the ransom Thiessen lists 4 things we are redeemed from; what are they?

Ans pg 329 The death of Christ redeems man from 1) penalty and/or curse of the law, 2) redeems from sin as a power, 3) redeems from Satan who held us in captivity and 4) redeems from all evil including, eventually, our present mortal body.

6. Concerning the extent of Christ's death Thiessen's first sentence connects the question to what, and to where is the answer bound up?

Ans pg 329 When transgressing clear Scripture about the extent of Christ's death, Thiessen likens the discord to a "difference of opinion" and binds up the answer to the difference in "ones conception of the order of the decrees." But I would contend that when one properly and rightfully tosses out the all inclusive decrees, one resolves the difference and the transgression.

7. It is herein contended that Calvin was neither a superlapsarian nor a sublapsarian but a proponent of universal atonement; what is the meaning of these three categories?

Ans pg 329 A superlapsarian view holds that Christ died only for 'the elect.' A sublapsarian view holds that Christ died, 'at least in some sense', also for the whole world.. Calvin holding to a universal atonement held that Christ's death was in every Scriptural way an atonement for the whole universal need of mankind, Christ was indeed the lamb that taketh away the sin of the world.

8. What 7 inconclusive verses does Thiessen provide to demonstrate that Christ died for only the elect and how are they inconclusive?

Ans pg 329 To demonstrate that Christ died for only the elect, Thiessen provides inconclusive evidence such as Matt 20:28 “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many;” wherein 'a ransom for many' cannot be construed to mean 'a ransom for ONLY the many and NOT the REST.' and 1Tim 4:10 “For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe;” is not and CANNOT be ONLY to them that believe, likewise in John 17:9 “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine;” Jesus praying “for those who thou hast given me; for they are thine,” except by some twisted extrapolated logic and preconceived bias, cannot even be brought to bear on the issue, and in 2Tim 1:9 God “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,” except by some twisted extrapolated logic and preconceived bias, cannot even be brought to bear on the issue. In Eph 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” except by some twisted extrapolated logic and preconceived bias, cannot even be brought to bear on the issue. And Rev 13:8 “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” except by some twisted extrapolated logic and preconceived bias, cannot even be brought to bear on the issue.

9. Thiessen and all Reformed Theologians including Reformed Baptist, like Augustus H. Strong, carry a bias into soteriology when they consider that God chose before the foundation of the world those who would be saved and received in heaven and those who

would be damned to an eternal hell; this bias requires the question who then did Christ die for? and Thiessen lists 8 verses to answer Christ died for the whole world; what are they?

Ans pg 330 That Christ died for the whole world and not just a few chosen ones is amply displayed in 1Tim 4:10, John 1:29, 1Tim 2:6, Tit 2:11, 2Pet 2:1, 3:9, Heb 2:9, 1John 2:2, and 2Cor 5:18-20.

10. Critique Thiessen's summary of the sense in which Christ is the Saviour of the world.

Ans pg 330 Thiessen just finished establishing that Christ's death is a vicarious ransom yielding satisfaction of God's justice, law, atoning requirements, propitiation, and reconciliation of man to God, but in his summary he extremely limits it for the world as a 'significant delay to execution, and a "space for repentance" with no "whosoever will" for effectual repentance. Thiessen again references Catholic penitence for restoration instead of Bible repentance for restoration.

Thiessen implies that Christ as Saviour of the world provides us the preaching that can be the "powerful incentive to repentance, "while avoiding the reality that our preaching can indeed change the eternal fate of a "whosoever will may come." Lastly he insinuates that Christ the Saviour of the world provides some assurance to those who die in infancy when indeed Reformed doctrine holds the same for those infants as it does for you and I , "only the elect get in" those infants not elect are cast into eternal hell fire. It is no wonder Robert Ingersoll rebelled against their doctrine and became the founder of Atheism in America, Joseph Smith rebelled against their doctrine and founded the Mormons, Charles Taze Russel rebelled against their doctrine and founded the JW's. Such doctrine erases all mercy of God and the Mercy of God endureth forever!

Q&A From Chapter 27 The Work of Christ: His Resurrection and Ascension pg 331-341

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 331-341 (r)

1. What 3 parts are necessitated in the gospel of Jesus Christ and by Paul in 1Cor. 15 And what four listed by Thiessen in the opening of this chapter? Discuss the difference.

Ans pg 331 Paul defines the gospel of Jesus Christ as 1)“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2) By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3) For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4) And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5) And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6) After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.” (1Cor 15:1-6) While Thiessen says our salvation must include consideration of His death, resurrection, ascension and exaltation.

These differences would occur as Paul teaches what must be believed to attain salvation while Thiessen is covering the distinctive parts that provide salvation, or have a larger bearing on bringing us salvation.

2. Briefly expound Thiessen's three reasons for the importance of the resurrection.

Ans pg 331-332 The resurrection of Christ is important because 1) it is the fundamental doctrine of Christianity. If Christ be not raised from the dead, we are of all men most miserable. 2) The resurrection is essential in the application of salvation; He must needs be risen to be our redeemer, our mediator and daysman, our intercessor, our High Priest. And 3) the resurrection is the essential 'polemic' for all of God's miracles. Strong says in attempting to prove the

miracles of the Bible we should not begin with Balaam's Ass or Jonah's Whale, but with Christ's resurrection. Believe that and all other miracles present NO difficulty.

3. Briefly expand three aspects of the nature of Christ's resurrection.

Ans pg 332-333 Thiessen gives these three aspects to the nature of Christ's resurrection; First it was an actual resurrection wherein Christ was actually dead and buried i.e. separated body, soul, and spirit, and He actually came back to life after suffering this separation of death. Second, it was a bodily resurrection wherein His body was taken from the tomb, reunited with soul and spirit (or for Thiessen's shallow, errant dichotomous belief only body and soul) and made alive again. And lastly, it was a unique resurrection. The Widow of Zaraphath and the Shunamite's son raised back to life by Elijah and Elisha, respectively, died again later; as did Jarus' daughter, the young man of Nain, Lazarus, Tabitha and Eulychus, but Jesus' resurrected body will never die again, it has eternal life and cannot again see corruption.

4. What causes the so called “discrepancies” in the accounts of Christ's post resurrection appearances to vanish?

Ans pg 335 Believing the Bible as currently infallible (lacking with Dr. Thiessen, Evangelicals, and Fundamentalists using modernist bibles) and understanding the order of occurrence of the resurrection details causes the so called “discrepancies” in the account of Christ's resurrection to vanish.

5. What are the four 'cause and effect' arguments which Thiessen tries to use to lend credibility to Christ's resurrection?

Ans pg 335-336 Thiessen leans on 4 'cause and effect' arguments to bolster credibility for Christ's resurrection: 1) The tomb must have been empty or the deception would have been

discovered; 2) the Lord's Day has been Sunday, the 1st day of the week ever since His resurrection; 3) All of Christianity is only accounted for via the resurrection of Christ; and 4) the rise and propagation of the 27 books of the New Testament can be attributed to the reality that the Christ arose.

6. What are 4 results of Christ's resurrection?

Ans pg 337 The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb 1) attests to Christ's deity; 2) the resurrection of Christ assures the acceptableness of Christ's work; 3) the resurrection of Christ enables him to function as our High Priest and 4) the resurrection of Christ provides additional blessings in the provision made to bestow repentance, forgiveness, regeneration (quickenings) and the sending and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The resurrection of Christ is additionally the guarantee of our own resurrection.

7. List 5 things 'embraced' in the exaltation of Christ.

Ans pg 339 In the exaltation of Christ we find he is 1) crowned with glory and honor; (Heb 2:4) 2) He is given a name above every name; (Phil 2:9) 3) He is enthroned at the right hand of the Father; (Heb 10:12) 4) He became 'head of the Body, the Church'; (Eph 1:22) 5) He serves as the High Priest; (Heb 4:14) and lastly 6) All things are put under His feet (Eph 1:22)

8. Similar to the things 'embraced' in his exaltation, Thiessen lists some results of his ascension and exaltation, what are they?

Ans pg 339-340 "The results of His ascension and exaltation may be treated together." They are 1) Christ is now not merely present in heaven, but is 'spiritually' present everywhere (and is thus 'with us always', Matt 18), 2) He led captivity captive (Eph 4:8), 3) He began his priestly ministry in heaven (Eph 4:8-13), 4) He poured out his Spirit baptizing believers into His body.

Q&A From Chapter 28 Election and Vocation pg 343-351

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 343-351 (r)

1. What are the parts and sections which Thiessen has broken the study of “so great salvation” (soteriology) into, and is it appropriate?

Ans pg 341 Thiessen has divided the study of 'so great salvation' or soteriology, into two parts; first the provision of salvation and then the application of salvation. These divisions seem to be very functional and applicable. He then sections the application of salvation into the beginnings of salvation wherein he covers “getting in” and then the continuation of salvation. He deals with the “super structure” of the Christian life under the latter. Although this sectioning seems a little contrived, the jury is still out.

2. Reformed Augustinian Theology and Thiessen will ever insist that God made an election of those individuals who are to be saved; How does Thiessen hope to depart from sublapsarianism and Hyper-Calvinism and yet hold to Augustinian's pervasive doctrine?

Ans pg 343-344 Thiessen is trying to hold on to the Augustinian error that God elect a few for salvation by holding on to those verses which contradict Hyper-Calvinism and explain the election as being based on God's foreknowledge of what individuals would do.

3. In holding to the election of individual souls for salvation two concepts are wholly over emphasized to the complete peril of two others; explain.

Ans pg 344-351 In Thiessen's (and all other Reformed Theologians) analysis of how God could elect individuals souls for salvation, and reject others there is always an abundant use of the concept of Supreme Sovereignty and God's grace and always a dismissal of man's free will and God's mercy. Thiessen's wrestling with this problem is commendable but he will not let go of the old Augustinian concept of election of individuals.

4. What does the doctrine of baptismal regeneration have in common with the doctrine of individual soul election?

Ans pg 344 Baptismal regeneration is inferred from a couple outlying verses in the Bible; Ac 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”; Ac 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”; and Lu 3:3 “And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” These verses carefully read in context do not teach what the baptismal regeneration proponent sees. But these verses alone without due consideration of others indicate that baptism washes away sin and brings about conversion. It is thus locked into the brain as a definite clearly presented truth while all the other verses and principles implying that there is no water baptism connected to conversion and quickening will be dismissed with extreme bias. Thus a whole unBiblical doctrine is developed and read into all the Bible. So to the idea that individual souls are elect for salvation is inferred from a couple outlying verses in the Bible; Eph 1:4 “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world!”; Rom 8:30 “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”; 1Pe 1:2 “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” These verses carefully read in context do not teach what that individuals are chosen for salvation before the foundation of the world as the Calvinist sees. But these verses alone without due consideration of others indicate to them that God chose individuals for

salvation and only the elect will attain it. It is thus locked into the brain as a definite clearly presented truth while all the other verses and principles implying that whosoever will may come and God changes things by prayer, can be dismissed with extreme bias. Thus a whole unBiblical doctrine is developed and read into all the Bible. It is just amazing that Calvinists and Reformed Theology will forever insist this misnomer is truth.

5. In Thiessen's mind his supposing a different ordering for the decreeing makes his approach different than a hyper-Calvinist and their supposed if the decrees; how so and why so?

Ans pg 343 – 344 Hyper-Calvinism (an undefined term used by Thiessen in hopes to imply that there is some form of Calvinism which is not hyper, and whereby he may imply that his view is Calvinistic but not so much) supposes that the very first thing God decreed was to save some and reprobate the rest. Thiessen expects that by moving that decree to the supposed end of the list of decreed things and adding some supposition about how God may have relied on a divine foreknowledge of personalities to render his decree to 'save only some' that his definition of election is superior to the supposed hyper-Calvinist class of definitions. However, all the smoke and mirrors of reasoning, the sequential ordering and explanation does not remove the conundrum that all of God's supposed decrees were formed up and decreed before the foundation of the earth. Purely human rationing about how God may or may not have come up with a supposed election list is of little value. Whether God used foreknowledge in His selection list, determining that my gene pool or DNA is more likely than my brothers gene pool or DNA cannot help in the least.

6. Thiessen tries to differentiate a redemptive aspect of salvation vs an “election to outward privileges”; What is his definition of election and how many verses does he use to establish each of these two aspects?

Ans pg 344 Thiessen addresses 21 references for our “election to outward privileges” which in reality should be deemed our election for service because every election in the Bible, OT or NT, is an election to service and never an election for heaven. However, Thiessen references NOT ONE SINGLE Bible reference to establish that there is an election for salvation. In fact he states “We are nowhere told what it is in the foreknowledge of God that determines His Choice.” (pg 344) Such is the case because Thiessen brings his philosophy that God chose who would be saved from the philosophies of Origin and Augustinian and finds it nowhere taught in Scripture.

7. What is Thiessen's “postulation” about individual soul election for salvation and why must he make this wild postulation?

Ans pg 344 Thiessen “postulates” that an individual's reaction to the revelation of God is mystically foreseen through the ions of time before his conception and it is that off in the future reaction to the gospel which forms a basis for God to determine whether that individual will be on an election listing or no. By his own admitting such a preposterous postulation must needs be made because 1) it is nowhere worded in Scripture, 2) Scriptures instead demand that individuals are responsible for their own actions, and 3) Scripture instead demands that individuals are responsible for accepting or rejecting the gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ. It is striking that rather than discard Augustinian's unBiblical postulation that God made up a 'to be saved' election list, Thiessen makes up a grander unBiblical postulation that God used an unrevealed mystical future probing foreknowledge to justly but unmercifully make up this list.

8. When considering Election and Predestination How does Thiessen broaden Schofield's corporate definition without bending it to a Calvinistic individual rendering?

Ans Pg. 345 Thiessen broadens Schofield's corporate definition of Predestination by saying, "As applied to redemption this would mean that in election God has decided to save those who accept His Son and proffered salvation and in foreordination He has determined effectively to accomplish that purpose." (pg.345) In this definition Thiessen conceptualizes the corporate election revealed in the Bible. He errors greatly when he departs from this corporate definition and tries to apply it to the individuals in St. Augustinian's individual election for salvation list.

9. Expand Thiessen's proof of his view, its necessity, the four problems it attempts to remedy and the two that it never touches.

Ans. Pg. 345-347 In defending his wholly unsupported view of election Thiessen outlines the conundrum of the whole Reformed election doctrine by stating "In the minds of some people, *(i.e. Calvinists and Reformed Theologians)* election is a choice that God makes *(before the foundation of the Earth)* for which we can see no reason. And which we can hardly harmonize with His justice. *(His Bible and His Mercy)* We are asked to accept the theory of "unconditional election" as true but unexplainable *(and unBiblical)* in spite of the fact that the persistent demand of the heart *(the head, and the Scripture)* is for a theory of election that does commend itself to our sense of justice and that harmonies the teaching of Scripture concerning the sovereignty of God and the responsibility *(and free will)* of man." *(italics added by author to emphasize the gross extent of the conundrum)*. Thiessen goes on to list four misjustices of Scripture which "unconditional election" affords and which his exasperated view 'helps remedy':

1) Individual soul-necessarily election is unconditional ergo God's decrees are as well: Calvinism

and Reformed Augustinian Theology necessarily adapted Paul's wording in Eph. 2 to decree that election is not of works or of merit lest any man should boast. Just like the atheist's view of how we got here, random chance and random selection is the Calvinist and Reformed Augustinian Theology view of how we get "There!" 2) Calvinism and Reformed Augustinian Theology necessarily devise that if God elect before the foundation of the world individuals for salvation then the means of salvation was directly for them and Christ did not die for all, but only for those he had selected. 3) Calvinism and Reformed Augustinian Theology, depicting that some get chosen but most do not, and that it is a completely random selection made by a Sovereign, just because he gets to choose, rubs hard on the heart of man that has a sense of justice, right and wrong. 4) If the eternal fate of all souls is sealed before the foundation of the world it is unreasonable and illogical that we are commanded to warn them, yes, compel them, yea persuade them to be saved from an eternal hell. You will make no eternal difference, just lay back and let those unmitigated Presbyterian's and Reformed Augustinian Theology's 'Sovereign Decrees' play out.

Two other considerations that are violated by Reformed Augustinian Theology's doctrine of election are God's mercy and the hermeneutical spiral. The idea that God chose before the foundation of the world all the individuals that would be saved, labeled them elect and sends the rest to hell springs from two Bible verses and two thousand years of vain philosophy, it will never be reconciled to a good hermeneutic. Further, that God has condemned individuals to eternal suffering in hell and there is nothing in their life or in this world that will remove that fate, is irreconcilable with God's mercy, and His mercy endureth forever. Those who believe the

Bible and have tasted his mercy will never swallow such preposterous idea no matter how many theologians you line up behind it.

10. In Thiessen's fictitious "Doctrine of God's Call" what ails his coverage of the means of the call?

Ans. pg.350 Thiessen's unfitting entanglement in a faulty doctrine of election caused him to invent a new doctrine called his "doctrine of vocation" or as he describes it the "doctrine of Gods call." Herein he confesses that Scripture does not allow him to differentiate between a 'general call' and a 'special call' as other Calvinists do, expresses that God's call is real not fictitious as other Calvinists make it, and then tries to document the means of God's call. In the latter he inadequately captures that believers being His Witnesses are the sole means of his call in this age of Grace, contending rather that there are a variety of means. Three 'variety of means' that should be subcategories under His Witnesses are 1) through His Word- which he left in the hands of His witnesses to propagate, copy and utilize, 2) through His Spirit that indwells His Witnesses and propagates through the word via their presence and 3) through His providential dealings with men wherein he brings them into contact with His Witnesses. Thus a supportable thesis can be made that the ONLY means of propagating the gospel and God's call to repentance is through His Witnesses.

Q&A From Chapter 29 Conversion pg 352-361

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 352-361 (r)

1. What are the 5 instantaneous operations within “so great salvation” and how does Thiessen's list differ from the Biblical list?

Ans pg 352 Thiessen accurately emphasizes that five distinct operations occur instantaneously without chronological sequence, but considered here in a logical sequence, His list of 5 in this logical sequence are 1) conversion, 2) justification, 3) regeneration, 4) union with Christ, and 5) adoption, and they differ from a Biblical list in three areas. First and second in syntax in that the Bible calls 'regeneration', 'quicken' and 'union with Christ', 'baptism into Christ'. Quicken means 'to make alive' not 'remake alive again'. Baptism means 'full immersion into'; which is bigger than simply uniting with. Words are important, and KJV Bible words carry the best English depth of meaning. Thirdly adoption, is an illustrative portrayal of the result of salvation and not an operation of salvation. Indwelling, a distinct operation involved in salvation is left off Thiessen's list.

2. Why does Thiessen deal with conversion first off?

Ans pg 352 Although these 5 operations occur instantaneously with not chronological sequence, there is a logical sequence wherein Conversion seems, in our mind, to lead off the occurrence of the other 4.

3. In Scripture what are the two necessary ingredients of conversion and how does Thiessen demean this authority?

Ans pg 353 There is no greater Scripture delineating the ingredients of conversion than Acts 20:21, “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith

toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Thiessen references this key Scripture only one time and there he uses it only to establish that 'in Paul's opinion' repentance is important. Again, Thiessen's Lectures attempt a systematic theology, but they base all argument on logic and deductive reasoning about Scripture, rather than on the supreme authority of Scripture.

4. Differentiate the elements of repentance.

Ans pg 353 Thiessen addresses an intellectual element of repentance, wherein sin is intellectually recognized as irreparable personal guilt before a holy God, and an emotional element wherein there is present an emotion or feeling of sorrow for sin and desire for pardon. He makes no mention of a voluntary element that appropriates a salvation. Thought and feeling may be present without a voluntary element wherein is voluntary surrender to our own helplessness and His own holiness. Nor does he mention a spiritual element wherein the Holy Spirit of God is convincing one of their condition and His righteousness. The former is dealt with as a distinct element of faith, the latter is not regarded by Thiessen as an element of repentance nor faith and ergo not an essential part of conversion. But it indeed is..

5. Finally Thiessen differentiates repentance from Catholic penance, how is this yet lacking?

Ans pg 354 Finally Thiessen points out a gross error of Catholic doctrine, the base doctrine that reformed theology is reforming, wherein they removed all concepts of repentance and substituted for it 'do penance', to derive a works salvation system. Although he references the errant Douay Version of the Catholic bible, which states 'do penance' which “is positively not the meaning of the word in Scripture,” he fails to point out that the Latin Vulgate errantly translates it on every occurrence of the word!

6. How does Thiessen muck up Hebrews 11:1-2?

Ans pg 356 The Bible says “Now faith is the SUBSTANCE of things hoped for, the EVIDENCE of things not seen.” but Thiessen is misled by ecumenical modernist scholars to think that it is 'ASSURANCE' instead of 'SUBSTANCE' and 'CONVICTION ' instead of 'EVIDENCE' Shame on Thiessen for not knowing or noting the differences herein.

7.What does Thiessen present as a definition of faith?

Ans pg 356 Although Thiessen uses several arguments to establish that Heb 11 does not meet the strict requirements to be a 'definition' of faith, neither he, nor any of his sources, could improve upon what God gave for a definition. So many teachers have mimicked the scholarly line that Heb 11 is not technically a definition, that few have examined it as a definition. It fully qualifies and is by holy inspiration far superior to any definition attempted by the scholars and 'theologians' who insist it is inadequate. IT seems Theologians, scholars, and seminaries are forever teaching about the Bible, but never teaching the Bible. Modernist English translations ever eager to substantiate their 69,000 major deviations from the public domain KJV, all butcher the 'definition' but “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” is indeed the only definition of faith and it is amply, amplified by the remainder of the chapter. How is it that Thiessen attempts to teach about faith without leaning on the inspired wisdom found in this chapter? It is almost criminal.

8. How does Thiessen's use of an ecumenical modernist translation tarnish his argument for an emotional element of faith?

Ans pg 358 Twice Thiessen uses an ecumenical modernist translation of 'stumbleth' when the Bible says 'he is offended.' There is significant difference between a physical accidental

stumbling, and a mental emotional offending. The former lacks ability to differentiate a 'belief in' and a belief of' while the latter is altogether appropriate, ... and altogether accurate Scripture as well.

Q&A From Chapter 30 Justification and Regeneration pg 362-369

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 362-369 (r)

1. In treating the 5 operations of 'so great salvation' as 'subjects that pertain to salvation' rather than operations of salvation, how does Thiessen violate his initial advancement that these are instantaneous and not chronological?

Ans pg 362 In treating the 5 operations of 'so great salvation' as subjects that pertain to salvation Thiessen muddies the very important fact that these operation occur instantaneously and simultaneously by saying “conversion is followed by justification .” This statement evidences that he does not see nor understand the importance of this detail.

2. What does Thiessen claim as the glory of the Protestant Reformation?

Ans pg 362 Thiessen claims the glory of the Protestant Reformation is its restoration of the doctrine of justification back to a Scriptural position. But he quickly acknowledges that the reformers did not grasp the other 4 aspects of salvation nor the doctrine of sanctification. Another reminder that the reformers were fine as far as they went, but did not go far enough. Thiessen seems to remain ignorant that there were believers that were ever estranged from 'The Holy Church' that had never lost the doctrine of justification, ergo all his hopes and glories are in the Protestant Reformers and a Reformed Augustinian Theology.

3. What are the three “things involved in justification”?

Ans pg 363 The things involved in justification are 1) the remission of the penalty of sin, 2) the restoration to favor and 3) the imputation of righteousness.

4. How did Catholicism intermix justification and sanctification and how do believers delineate them?

Ans pg 364 “The Roman Catholics define justification as the remission of sin and infusion of new habits of grace.” Thus justification is treated as a subjective experience, and not as an objective relationship. ... Reformers insisted that justification is something different from sanctification; that the former is a declarative act, setting forth the sinner's relation to the law and justice of God, the latter an efficient act changing the inward character of the sinner.

5. “How can man be just with God?” give Thiessen's four methodologies.

Ans pg 364-366 Thiessen points out that the method of justification is 1) not by works of the law (Rom 3:20); 2) justification is by the Grace of God (Titus 2:5,7) (although he leaves off Mercy as Calvinist always do) 3) it is by 'the Blood of Christ' (Rom 5:9); and 4) It is by faith (Rom 3:26-30)

6. How could a theologian write about justification and not contrast Rom 4:1-4 with James 2:24?

Ans pg 365 NOT A true theologian with a open Bible could not write about justification without contrasting Romans 4:2-3 “For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” with James 2 “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” This long standing 'contrast' (called out by some as 'conflict' or even 'contradiction') is a long standing horror to Protestants and Reformed Theologians. It is not

surprising that Thiessen does not address it or even breath about it. It is easily resolved with the understanding that in Romans 4, God is addressing the declarative act that saves us, while in James 2 He is addressing the changes that will accompany a saved individual. Justification is defined both as a declarative act and as a substantiating of a statement or thing, Romans uses the former, James the latter.

7. How is it clarified that faith is the condition of our justification , not the meritorious ground of it?

Abs pg 366 Clarifying that faith is the condition of our justification not the meritorious ground of it, Thiessen quotes Hodge “We are not justified on account of our faith, considered as a virtuous or holy act or state of mind... Faith is the condition of our justification “ and goes on to clarify “it is not 'for' faith that we are justified, but 'by' faith. Faith is not the price of justification, but the means of appropriating it.” pg 366

8. Reformed Augustinian Theologians who do not think of man as body soul and spirit, cannot comprehend 'quickenning' and use instead 'regeneration;' contrast the two.

Ans pg 369 The Bible says “and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins:” ... “And so it is written The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” (Eph 2, 1Cor 15) While 'regeneration', used only twice in the Bible (Matt 19:28 and Tit 3:5), speaks of the new birth in man, 'quickenning' used 14 times in the OT and 11 times in the NT, speaks expressly of the new life put into man wherein his spirit is made alive at conversion. Thiessen and his reformed theology cronies, not believing that man is body, soul AND spirit, cannot comprehend nor even acknowledge that “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken

your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom 8:11) (cf John 5:21, 6:23, Rom 4:17, 8:11, 1Cor 15:36, 45, Eph 2:1, 5, Col 2:13, 1Pet 3:18)

Q&A From Chapter 31 Union With Christ and Adoption pg 370-376

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 370-376 (r)

1. What are 4 analogies related to the union of the believer with Christ?

Ans pg 370 Earthly relationships provide analogies of the union of the believer with Christ.

These include 1) union of a building with its foundation; 2) the union between husband and wife; 3) the union between the vine and the branches; 4) the union between head and body; and 5) the union between Adam and his descendants.

2. Give 7 verses which puts the believer “in” Christ.

Ans pg 370 John 14:20, Rom 6:11, 8:1, 2Cor 5:17, Eph 1:4, 2:13, Col 2:9-10 ... Joh 14:20 “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” Ro 6:11 “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Ro 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” 2Co 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” Eph 1:4 “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Eph 2:13 “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” Col 2:9 “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Col 2:10 “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”

3. Thiessen never addresses the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, instead how does he mix this up with the union of Christ?

Ans pg 370 When a Reformed Theologian refuses plain Scripture about the spirit of man, the bias that he is only body and soul impacts much of his understanding of soteriology. Thiessen does not even address the indwelling of the Holy Spirit but uses some of these key verses to establish the union with Christ instead. These verses speak of being indwelt by the spirit of God. “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” (Rom 8:9-10) “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” (John 14:20) “... yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” (Gal 2:20) “Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory;” (Col 1:27) But Thiessen mixes them in with his analysis of our union with Christ.

4. Bias is an ugly thing in theology; how does Thiessen get it all over the method of our union with Christ?

Ans pg 372 Although Thiessen approaches some of the operations that occur at conversion, his premeditated bias to hold to Origen and St. Augustine philosophy whereby God chose before the foundation of the world the individuals that would be saved, taints his every outlook and investigation of soteriology. His lack of consideration for the indwelling Spirit of God stems from his tenacious grip on the dichotomy of man instead of the Biblical trichotomy, and that error stems from his refusal to accept the plenary inerrancy of Scripture. (Thiessen contends that 1Then 5:23 documents what “Paul seems to think” (pg 227) rather than what God regards as inerrant infallible verbally inspired truth.) Thiessen's hold to philosophy and rejection of

inerrancy prevents his exploration of the Biblical truth of 'quickenning' and restricts him to examination of 'regeneration' instead. And now without one time mentioning our baptism into the body of Christ (1Cor 12:13) or our baptism with the Holy Ghost (Luke 3:16) Thiessen has the audacity to say "Strange as it may seem, the Scriptures have little to say directly on this subject" of how this union between Christ and the Christian is established! Bias does indeed produce blindness. He goes on to say "This union originated in the purpose and plan of God. Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world" Eph 1:4 ASV (Read IN CONTEXT this verse says "According as" [NOT "Even as" ASC,ESV, NOT "Just as" NAS, and certainly NOT "For he" NIV] "He (God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ) who hath chosen us" (us believers NOT Abraham, Isaac, Jacob or any other OT saints who "having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for US, that they without US should not be made perfect", us believers NOT unbelievers who might someday believe, us believers NOT individuals on some fictitious Augustinian contrived 'election list' fictitiously made up before the foundation of the world!, BUT us believers who have received and are IN CHRIST, the ELECT ONE) (that is the ONLY 'us' that fits in this verse and are chosen) "before the foundation of the world,(in the Bible there are only 5 things chosen before the foundation of the world, and here it is believers who get into Christ, and NOT unbelievers who might, or OT saints who received not the promise) "that we" (the believers IN Christ, NOT unbelievers who are not yet in, NOR unregenerate ones on some fictitious 'election list') "should be holy and without blame before him (God the Father) in love."

In context and in English here, believers that are placed IN Christ were chosen to be holy, NOT that individuals would be so chosen to be placed IN Christ. Such a careful in context rendering of this verse is necessitated by the Bible's 'whosoever will may come' consideration, the free will responsible decision making attribute of man consideration, and the wholly errant Augustinian philosophy that God chose individuals for salvation and places them on some contrived 'election list' supposedly made up before the foundation of the world.

5. How could, and why would, Thiessen address our union with Christ without mention our baptism into the body of Christ?

Ans pg 370 NOT I have little idea.

6. While evidencing no knowledge of or reference to the epistle of 1John, God's dissertation on the consequence of our union with Christ, what does Thiessen list as these consequences?

Ans pg 372 While demonstrating no knowledge of or reference to God's dissertation on the consequences of our union with Christ detailed in 1John, Thiessen lists consequences of 1) the union with Christ means eternal security, 2) the union with Christ means fruitfulness, and 3) the union with Christ means endowment for service. These are things accomplished in the life of a believer but accrediting them just to the union with Christ is likely quite narrow and inconsiderate of his quickening, which more so ensures our eternal security, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which more so ensures produces fruit.

7. Is our adoption into the family of God a last place doctrine of Paul?

Ans pg 373 The marvelous revelation that we are adopted as sons of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ and accepted into the beloved is belittled and maligned by Thiessen with his horrible

opening sentence “The doctrine of adoption is purely Pauline, and we give it the last place” If indeed “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” then there is no “purely Pauline” doctrine and this doctrine of adoption is not at the bottom of my bucket!

8. List 4 ways that Thiessen horribly butchers the doctrine of adoption.

Ans pg 373-374 Thiessen attempts to systematically cover soteriology but mixes up operations that occur in 'so great salvation ' (Conversion, Justification, Quickening, Indwelling, and Baptism Into Christ) with results that are produced. Adoption is a result of salvation that he tries to include as an operation and in so doing he butchers this tremendous illustrative revelation of our new position. He first calls this a “purely Pauline” doctrine when it is indeed a Bible doctrine. Second he establishes that this must be a doctrine because a word for it occurs 5 times in a Greek NT. A doctrine is not systematically established based on the number and location of occurrences of some Greek word! This is shallow and non-systematic. Thirdly when this produced position is treated as an operation instead of a result, Thiessen attests that it (the adoption) produces “deliverance from the law” where in actuality our adoption is the result of His justification which more so delivers us from the law. Lastly he douses this tremendous doctrine of adoption, our new position in Christ, with his twisted Reformed Augustinian Theology he states “Before (God) ever began with the Hebrew race, yes, before creation, He predestined us to this position.” (pg 373) Thiessen and Reformed Theologians will always carry such bias into their Bible reading and rendering, and will never attain a truly systematic theology nor ever capture a doctrine of soteriology.

Q&A From Chapter 32 Sanctification pg 377-384

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 377-384 (r)

1. What three things does Thiessen determine to examine concerning our sanctification?

Ans pg 377 Thiessen covers sanctification as a “continuation of salvation” separate from the “beginning of salvation” and determines to examine 1) the definition of sanctification, 2) the time of sanctification and 3) the means of sanctification (pg 377)

2. What is the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia's definition of sanctification and Thiessen's broadening of it?

Ans pg 377-378 The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia's definition of sanctification is “The hallowing of the Christian believer by which he is freed from sin and enabled to realize the will of god in his life.” (pg 377) and Thiessen 'broadens' this definition as “a separation to God, and imputation of Christ as our holiness, purification from moral evil, and conformation to the image of Christ.”

3. What 4 things are in Christ 'made unto us' in 1 Cor 1:30?

Ans pg 378 “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us 1) wisdom, 2) and righteousness, 3) and sanctification , and 4) redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

4. Clarify the 4 'elaborations' of Thiessen's definition of sanctification.

Ans pg 378-379 Thiessen 'elaborates' 4 things from his broadened definition of sanctification .

1) Separation to God presupposes separation from fulfillment. 2) Christ is made unto us both righteousness and sanctification. 3) Purification from moral evil is, in reality, but another form of separation . And 4) Conformation to the image of Christ is the positive aspect of sanctification .

5. Clarify Thiessen's 3 time elements in sanctification.

Ans pg 380-383 Thiessen clarifies that sanctification is both an act and a process with three distinct time elements being: 1) The initial act of sanctification wherein the moment man believes on Christ he is 'sanctified' positionally. 2) A process of sanctification continues throughout life wherein “when the believer is wholly dedicated to God, process in sanctification is assured.” and there is 3) a complete and final sanctification when we see Christ.

6. Rather than degrade God's wording of “be ye perfect” how does Thiessen deal with errant teaching of “sinless perfection “?

And pg 381 Thiessen carefully retains our sinless perfection status without following after the errant doctrine of sinless perfection by clarifying that there is a positional perfection and a experiential sanctification where in we are being conformed to the image of Christ in an ongoing process.

7. How does Thiessen show three parts of our salvation to demonstrate a coming complete and final sanctification?

Ans pg 383 To demonstrate the coming complete and final sanctification Thiessen says “we have been saved from the guilt and penalty of sin, are being saved from the power of sin and will ultimately be saved from the very presence of sin, i.e. this is a complete and final sanctification.”

8. How does Phil 2:13 clarify the means of sanctification?

Ans pg 384 Thiessen clarifies that “there are two parties that have to do with man's sanctification, God and man,” but he and the Scripture makes it clear that Christ is the whole means of our sanctification via Phil 2:13 “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to

do of his good pleasure.” Although there are two parties involved, it is clear He alone is the means of our sanctification.

Q&A From Chapter 33 Perseverance pg 385 - 391

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 385 - 391 (r)

1. How does Thiessen's chapter title and opening argument tarnish the argument of eternal security?

Ans pg 385 Thiessen's title “Perseverance” and opening clause “The Scriptures teach that all who are by faith united to Christ, who have been justified by God's grace and regenerated by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but certainly persevere therein to the end” leads one to believe that eternal security is attained by the saints perseverance rather than God's endowment of eternal life. The picture comes to mind of a saint trying to hold onto his faith and thus “endure to the end,” when in actuality it is God who gave him his eternal life and is holding the saint in his eternal hand. Perseverance is just the wrong word.

2. How strange is it that Thiessen uses Isa 14:24 as a proof text for decrees, election and perseverance?

Ans pg 385 When you consider how very badly Thiessen took Isa 14:24 out of context to establish that God decreed everything that happens, ⁴ it is unfortunate that it is his lead in

⁴ Isa 14:24 “The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:” is used by Thiessen with no consideration of its context, i.e. finishing the sentence God says “That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.” making this a very specific application and not a reference to an eternal infinite plan that Thiessen is seeking.

argument to prove the eternal security of the believer which he has misnomered the perseverance of the saints. He also here implies that Job 23:13 “But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.” has some bearing on eternal security. He seems to think mans perseverance is directly tied to God's decrees and God's mind being made up and unchangable. How very twisted this reformed theology gets when it holds first and foremost to the election of individuals for their salvation.

3. What are Thiessen's 4 proofs for the doctrine of perseverance?

Ans pg 385 Thiessen's 4 proofs for the doctrine of perseverance are 1) The purposes of God, 2) the mediatorship of Christ, 3) God's continued ability to keep us, and lastly, finally, and as if leastly, 4) the nature of the change in the believer. In reality his last reason, the nature of the change in the believer, wherein he is given 'eternal life' and promised that he 'will never perish', is the only of the 4 that establishes the eternal security of the believer.

4. How does Thiessen allege the mediatorship of Christ provides proof of perseverance of the saints?

Ans pg 386 Thiessen aptly uses Romans 5:8-10 to establish that God will continue what he started. “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

5. In “The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination” what does Boettner call “perversity”, “error”, and “absurd”?

Ans pg 387 In “The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination” Boettner calls one saying 'that God could NOT take a falling away Christian out of the world, “perversity” and that God would permit His children to defeat His love and fall away he calles “error”, and “absurd.”

6. How does Boettner muck up the nature of the change in the believer with his leanings toward the dichotomy of man?

Ans pg 388 The quickening Spirit that quickens our spirit ensures that we will NEVER die, but that doctrine gets mucked up when one believes that man is only material and imaterial, as in body and soul, with no spirit. Boettner says “Regeneration is a radical and supernatural change of the inner nature, through which the soul is made spiritually alive, and the new life which is implanted in immortal.”(pg 388) Reformed Theologians, like Thiessen and Boettner use the regeneration of man rather than the quickening of man and they never really address the spirit that is in man because of their errant doctrine of the dichotomy of man.

7. What 4 objections to their doctrine of perseverance of the saints does Thiessen address?

Ans pg 388-391 Thiessen addresses 4 objections to his doctrine of perseverance; 1) Perseverance induces laxness and indolence; 2) Perseverance robs man of his freedom; 3) That Scripture teaches the opposite of perseverance , and 4) that there are to many warnings about the act of falling away.

8. Is it ironic that Thiessen defends perseverance from those contending for the free will of man?

Ans pg 389 It is not really ironic that Thiessen defends his doctrine of perseverance from those contending for the free will of man. It is ironic that he cannot see how Bible believers use the

free will of man to reject his doctrine of election of individual souls, yet they do understand eternal security while holding to that free will of man.

Q&A From Chapter 34 The Means of Grace

Fill-In and Short Answer Test: Please put short answers in complete sentences. pg 392-399 (r)

1. What are the two “institutions which God has ordained to be the ordinary channels of grace”?

Ans pg 392 Thiessen says that the Word of God and prayer “indicate those institutions which God has ordained to be the ordinary channels of grace.”

2. What is meant by “channels of grace”?

Ans pg 392 By 'channels of grace' Thiessen, via Hodge, means “the supernatural influences of the Holy Spirit to the souls of men.”

3. What 13 things are listed to characterize the Word of God and which one would you drop to make the count 12?

Ans pg 392-393 The Word of God is a 1) Hammer, 2) a Critic (trying to imply 'discerner' from Heb 4:12 but they dared not use a King James Bible word), 3) a Mirror, 4) a Laver, 5) a Seed, 6) the Sun, 7) the Rain & Snow, 8) a Food of Milk or Bread or Strong Meat, 9) Honey, 10) Gold, 11) a Lamp, 12) a Sword, 13) a Fire. Of these 13 I would drop Sidney Collett's 2nd one 'A Critic', as it was an ill attempt to delve into Heb 4:12 through a ecumenical modernist's Bible and capture a Greek word 'kritikos' only used one time in the Holy Bible.

4. What is the Word of God, this channel of grace, a 'Means To'?

Ans pg 399-394 In Thiessen's coverage the Word of God is a means to Salvation and a means to Sanctification, but I hope and expect this was not meant to be an all inclusive list.

5. Thiessen is trying to express the necessity of the breath of God on the spirit of man when he says “Though the Word has the 'requisite efficiency', the soul does not have the 'requisite susceptibility' until wrought upon by the Spirit of God”, what two ingredients are missing from his doctrine to word this dilemma.

Ans pg 393-394 Reformed theologians, and especially Thiessen, have painted themselves into a corner when it comes to explaining how the Word of God is the means of salvation and sanctification. How can Job 32:8 “But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” apply when they have denied that there is a spirit in man and they have limited the inspiration of God to some nonexistent original autographs? The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, from a babe Timothy knew “the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” and we are born again “not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” Thiessen and Reformed Theologians have only dried ink and lost original autographs and do not have the living, i.e 'quick' Heb 4:12, inspired, i.e. 'breathing breath' 2Tim 3:16, Job 32:8, Scriptures. No spirit and no living breathing Scriptures forbids their explaining or ever understanding how the breath of God can move on the spirit of man. I feel pretty bad for Thiessen in this chapter, he has made a real conundrum.

6. Prayer changes things. What are the 3 areas Thiessen tries to introduce about prayer and how does the second disembowel the other two?

Ans pg 395-397 Prayer changes things and Thiessen, holding his doctrine of decrees, must contend that it does not. He covers the nature of prayer, the relation of prayer to providence, and the method and manner of prayer, but his coverage of the second area disembowels the other

two. He tries to hide his conundrum in God's foreknowledge with the argument that "God foreknew what each man would do in respect to prayer, and embraced that fact in His foreordination." So prayer does not change things for the Reformed Theologian.

7. Prayer changes things and despite Thiessen's conundrum with his decrees of God what does he say of it in his introduction?

And pg 395 Before Thiessen paints prayer as immaterial because of his doctrine of decrees, he points out that "No one can read the Bible without being impressed with the large place given to prayer in its pages."

8. Prayer changes things. What does Thiessen list as the Scriptural method and manner of prayer?

Ans pg 397-399 The Scriptural method and manner of prayer includes consideration of 1) the addressee in prayer, 2) the posture in prayer, 3) the time spent in prayer, 4) the place of prayer, 5) decorum in prayer and 6) the condition of the heart in prayer. All this is great consideration but a Reformed Theologian who thinks everything is all decreed out, and that individuals are chosen and elect for salvation before the foundation of the world, is the very last person you should go to to learn about prayer that changes things.

Detailed Chapter Outlines – TH503 Systematic Theology III

Part VI Soteriology

Chapter 21 The Purpose, Plan, and Method of God

Chapter 22 The Person of Christ: Historical Views and Pre-Incarnation State

Chapter 23 The Person of Christ: The Humiliation of Christ

Chapter 24 The Person of Christ: The Two Natures and the Character of Christ

Chapter 25 The Work of Christ: His Death – Importance and Misinterpretation

Chapter 26 The Work of Christ: The Work of Christ: His Death – Its True Meaning and Extent

Chapter 27 The Work of Christ: His Resurrection and Ascension

Chapter 28 Election and Vocation

Chapter 29 Conversion

Chapter 30 Justification and Regeneration

Chapter 31 Union With Christ and Adoption

Chapter 32 Sanctification

Chapter 33 Perseverance

Chapter 34 The Means of Grace

Outlines of Chapter 21 The Purpose, Plan, and Method of God pg 275-282

pg 275-282 (r 199-205)

I. The Purpose of God

A. In Human Nature

1. a knowledge of God,
2. and of Sin
3. and of a needed sacrifice

B. In the Scripture

1. the law
2. and the prophets.

II. The Plan of God

A. The Revelation of God's Plan

1. the means by which salvation is to be provided
2. the objectives that are to be realized
3. the persons that are to benefit by it
4. the conditions on which it is to be available, and
5. the agents and means by which it is to be applied.

B. The Outline of God's Plan

1. Thiessen must needs include one of the 5 Presbyterian TULIP points.
2. According to Thiessen's "Salvation was provided ... more particularly for the elect, those who will believe on Christ and walk in his way."

3. This aligns with the Presbyterian TULIP model's 3rd point of Limiting the atonement for only 'the elect' and not having it available to 'the whosoever will' as the Bible clearly implies.

III. The Methods of God

A. Thiessen's threefold object of a preparation time for salvation is

1. to disclose to man the true nature of sin and the 'depth of depravity' to which he had fallen
2. to reveal mans powerlessness to save himself, and
3. to teach man that forgiveness and restoration are possible by substitutionary sacrifice.

B. In the Past: Thiessen, provides that the methods of God change and in the past there was an

1. Edinic Period, where the environment was most perfect, this aligns with C. I. Scofield's dispensation of innocence;
2. an Anti-Deluvian Period where conscience now became active, aligns with Scofield's dispensation of conscious;
3. a Post-Deluvian Period, wherein God asked Noah to institute human government, aligns with Scofield's 3rd dispensation of human government;
4. a Patriarchal period wherein God made a covenant with Abraham, which aligns with C. I. 's dispensation of Promise; and

5. a Period of Mosaic Law that Thiessen calls a covenant of works (taken directly from the old Reformed Covenant Theology) which aligns with Scofield's 5th dispensation of Law.
- C. In the Present :Thiessen then describes the present method of soteriology as the Church period,
1. (interestingly enough he avoids the use of the word grace, although the Covenant Theology leans on it heavily)
 2. this aligns with Scofield's 6th dispensation of Grace.
- D. In the Future: He then speaks of a future method in the Kingdom Period,
1. which aligns with the 7th and final dispensation of Scofield's notes, the Kingdom Age.
 2. Thus Thiessen seems to hold an interesting position striving to hold onto Reformed Theologies Calvinism, but departing from their Covenant Theology and embracing Dispensationalism

Outlines of Chapter 22 The Person of Christ: Historical Views and Pre-Incarnation State pg 283-288

- I. The Historical Views
 - A. The Ebionites: are from 2nd century Jewish believers who retain Mosaic ceremonies and as Nazareans and Judaizers they both deny Christs divine nature thinking it incompatible with monotheism.
 - B. The Gnostics: deny the reality of Christ's human body (Docetae) or deny his real body was material, or consider that Jesus and Christ were distinct (Cerinthians)

- C. The Arians: are followers of Arius, an Alexandria Egypt presbyter of 280 AD, who opinioned that Christ was the first of created beings, through whom all other things are made, ... including time..
- D. The Apollinarians: denied the integrity of the human nature of Christ because of the difficulty in conceiving how two complete natures can be united in one life and consciousness.
- E. The Nestorians: follow Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, deny the real union of the divine and human natures in Christ, implying a twofold personality in Christ, making him simply indwelt by God. Nestorius was deposed and banished in 431 AD.
- F. The Eutychians: followers of Eutyches who considered Christ so deified that it was not of the same human nature as our. Opposite of Nestorians.
- G. The Orthodox View: "In one person Jesus Christ there are two natures, a human nature and a divine nature, each in its completeness and integrity and these two natures are organically and indissolubly united, yet so that no third nature is formed thereby. ... Orthodox doctrine forbids us either to divide the person or to confound the natures."

II. The Pre-Incarnate Christ

- A. In the eternal past Christ was with God, and indeed he was God, and
- B. the term 'the Angel of Jehovah' "seems in the Old Testament with hardly more than a single exception, (Hag 1:13) to designate the pre-incarnate Logos, whose manifestation in angelic or human form foreshadowed His final coming in the flesh."

- C. Sixteen of these references are Gen 16:7-14, 22:11-18, 31:11,13, Exod 3:2-5, 14:19, 1Cor 10:4, Num 22:22-35, Jud 6:11-23, 13:2-25, 1Chron 21:15,18, 1Kings 19:5-7, 9-18, 2Kings 19:35, Zech 1:11, 3:1.

Outlines of Chapter 23 The Person of Christ: The Humiliation of Christ pg289-298

- I. The Reason for the Incarnation
 - A. To Confirm God's Promises
 - B. To Reveal the Father
 - C. To Become a Faithful High Priest
 - D. To Put Away Sin
 - E. To Destroy the Works of the Devil
 - F. To Give Us an Example of Holy Life
 - G. To prepare for the Second Advent
- II. The Nature of the Incarnation
 - A. He Emptied Himself
 - B. He was Made in the Likeness of Men

Outlines of Chapter 24 The Person of Christ: The Two Natures and the Character of Christ pg 299-311

- I. The Humanity of Christ
 - A. He Had a Human Birth
 - B. He Had a Human Development
 - C. He Had the Essential Elements of Human Nature
 - D. He Had Human Names

E. He Had the Sinless Infirmities of Human Nature

F. He is Repeatedly Called a “Man”

II. The Deity of Christ

III. The Two Natures in Christ

A. The Proof of Their Union

B. The Nature of Their Union

1. It is not Theanthropic

2. It is Personal

3. It included Human and Divine Qualities and Acts.

4. It Insures the Constant Presence of Both Humanity and Deity.

IV. The Character of Christ

A. He was Absolutely Holy

B. He had Genuine Love

C. He was Truly Humble

D. He was Thoroughly Meek

E. He was Perfectly Balanced

F. He lived a Life of Prayer

G. He was an Incessant Worker

Outlines of Chapter 25 The Work of Christ: His Death – Importance and Misinterpretation pg 312-320

I. The Importance of the Death of Christ pg 312

A. It is Foretold in the Old Testament

B. It is Prominent in the New Testament

- C. It is the Chief Purpose of the Incarnation
- D. It is the Fundamental Theme of the Gospel
- E. It is Essential to Christianity
- F. It is Essential to Our Salvation
- G. It is of Supreme Interest in Heaven

II. Misinterpretations of the Death of Christ pg 315

- A. The Accident Theory
- B. The Martyr Theory
- C. The Moral Influence Theory
- D. The Governmental Theory
- E. The Commercial Theory

Outlines of Chapter 26 The Work of Christ: The Work of Christ: His Death – Its True Meaning and Extent pg 321-330

I. The Meaning of Christ's Death pg321

- A. It is Vicarious
- B. It is Satisfaction
 - 1. It Satisfies the Justice of God.
 - 2. It Satisfies the Law of God.
 - 3. It is Involved in Atonement.
 - 4. It is Involved in Propitiation.
 - 5. It is Involved in Reconciliation.
- C. It is a Ransom

II. The Extent of Christ's Death pg329

- A. Christ Died for the Elect
- B. Christ Died for the Whole World

Outlines of Chapter 27 The Work of Christ: His Resurrection and Ascension pg 331-340

I. The Resurrection of Christ pg 331

A. The Importance of Christ's Resurrection

- 1. It is the Fundamental Doctrine of Christianity.
- 2. It has an Important Part in the Application of Salvation.
- 3. It is Important as a Polemic for Miracles.

B. The Nature of Christ's Resurrection

- 1. It Was an Actual Resurrection.
- 2. It Was a Bodily Resurrection.
- 3. It Was a Unique Resurrection.

C. The Credibility of Christ's Resurrection

- 1. The Argument from Testimony.
- 2. The Argument from Cause and Effect.
 - a) The Empty Tomb
 - b) The Lord's Day
 - c) The Christian Church

D. The Results of Christ's Resurrection

- 1. It Attests Christ's Deity.

2. It Assures of the Acceptance of Christ's Work.
3. It Has Made Christ Our High Priest.
4. It Provided for Many Additional Blessings.

II. The Ascension of Christ pg 338

- A. The Scriptures Teach the Ascension of Christ
- B. Objections to the Ascension of Christ

III. The Exaltation of Christ

A. Things Embraced in the Exaltation of Christ

1. He was Crowned with Glory and Honor.
2. His Receiving a Name That is Above Every Name.
3. His Enthronement at the Right Hand of the Father
4. His Appointment as Head of the Body, the Church
5. He serves it as High Priest.
6. Indeed All Things Have Been Put Under His Feet.

B. Results of the Ascension and Exaltation of Christ

1. He is now not merely in Heaven but present everywhere
2. He has led captivity captive.
3. He has entered upon his His priestly ministry in heaven..
4. He has bestowed spiritual gifts upon His own.
5. He has poured out His Spirit upon His people.

Outlines of Chapter 28 Election and Vocation pg 343-351

I. The Doctrine of Election

A. The Definition of Election

1. Election and Foreknowledge
2. Election and Predestination

B. The Proof of This View of Election

1. Because Election is Based on Foreknowledge
2. Because Christ died for All Men
3. Because of the Justice of God
4. Because It Inspires Missionary Activity

C. Objections to This View of Election

1. The Simpler Objections

- a) Certain men have been given to Christ
- b) Except the Father Draw him
- c) God works both to will and to do
- d) God chose Jacob rather than Esau

2. The More Difficult Objections

- a) As many as were ordained to eternal life believed
- b) Salvation originating in the choice of God and all of grace
- c) Repentance and Faith are the gift of God
- d) IF Predestination is not unconditional and complete then God's whole plan is suspect

II. The Doctrine of Vocation

- A. The Persons Called
- B. The Object of the Call
- C. The Means of the Call
 - 1. He calls through the Word directly
 - 2. He calls by His Spirit
 - 3. He calls through His Servents
 - 4. He calls by Providential Dealings

Outlines of Chapter 29 Conversion pg 352-361

- I. The Element of Repentance
 - A. The Importance of Repentance
 - B. The Meaning of Repentance
 - 1. The Intellectual Element
 - 2. The Emotional Element
 - 3. The Volitional Element
 - C. The Means of Repentance
- II. The Element of Faith
 - A. The Importance of Faith
 - B. The Meaning of Faith
 - 1. The Intellectual Element
 - 2. The Emotional Element
 - 3. The Voluntary Element

C. The Source of Faith

1. The Divine Side
2. The Human Side

D. The Results of Faith

1. Assurance
2. Good Works

Outlines of Chapter 30 Justification and Regeneration pg 362-369

I. The Doctrine of Justification pg 362

A. The Definition of Justification

1. The Remission of the Penalty
2. The Restoration to Favor
3. The Imputation of Righteousness

B. The Method of Justification

1. It is Not by Works of the Law
2. It is by the Grace of God
3. It is by the Blood of Christ.
4. It is by Faith

C. The Result of Justification

1. There is the remission of the penalty
2. There is the restoration to God's favor
3. There is the imputation of Christ's righteousness

4. There is heirship
5. There is being filled with the fruits of grace
6. Saved from wrath
7. Assured glorification

II. The Doctrine of Regeneration

A. The Meaning of Regeneration

B. The Necessity of Regeneration

C. The Means of Regeneration

1. The will of God
2. The Death and Resurrection of Christ
3. The Word of God
4. The Ministers of the Word
5. The Holy Spirit

D. The Results of Regeneration

1. Overcomes temptation
2. Different attitude
3. Certain Privileges
 - a) Supply of needs
 - b) revelation of the Fathers will
 - c) of Keeping
4. Heir of God and Jointheir with Jesus Christ

Outlines of Chapter 31 Union With Christ and Adoption pg 370-374

I. The Believer's Union with Christ

A. The Nature of This Union

1. The Scriptural representations
 - a) Believer is IN Christ
 - b) Christ is IN Believer
 - c) Christ and the Father is IN the Believer
 - d) Believer is partaking in Christ
 - e) Believer is partaker of the divine nature
 - f) Believer is one spirit with the Lord
2. The Negative Side: what the union is not.
3. The Positive Side: what this union is.
 - a) It is as spiritual union
 - b) It is a vital union
 - c) It is a complete union
 - d) It is an inscrutable union
 - e) It is a dissoluble

B. The Method of This Union

C. The Consequences of This Union

1. Eternal Security
2. Fruitfulness
3. Endowment for service

II. The Believer's Adoption

- A. The Definition of Adoption
- B. The Time of Adoption
 - 1. An act in eternity past
 - 2. At the time of believers accepting
 - 3. Fully realized at coming of Christ
- C. The Results of Adoption

Outlines of Chapter 32 Sanctification pg 377-384

- I. The Definition of Sanctification
 - A. Separation to God
 - B. Imputation of Christ as Our Holiness
 - C. Purification from Moral Evil
 - D. Conformation of the Image of Christ
- II. The Time of Sanctification
 - A. The Initial Act of Sanctification
 - B. The Process of Sanctification
 - C. Complete and Final Sanctification
- III. The Means of Sanctification

Outlines of Chapter 33 Perseverance pg 385-391

- I. Proof of the Doctrine
 - A. The Purpose of God

- B. The Mediatorship of Christ
- C. God's Continued Ability to Keep Us
- D. The Nature of the Change in the Believer

II. Objections to the Doctrine

- A. That It Induces Laxness and Indolence
 - 1. Laxness in Conduct
 - 2. Indolence in Service
- B. That It Robs Man of His Freedom
- C. That the Scriptures Teach the Contrary
- D. That There are Many Warnings

Outlines of Chapter 34 The Means of Grace pg 392-399

I. The Word of God pg 392

- A. It is a Means of Salvation
- B. It is a Means of Sanctification

II. Prayer

- A. The Nature of Prayer
- B. The Relation of Prayer to Providence
- C. The Method and Manner of Prayer
 - 1. The Addressee in Prayer
 - 2. The Posture in Prayer
 - 3. The Time of Prayer

4. The Place of Prayer
5. Decorum in Prayer
6. The Condition of the Heart

Appendix WHAT IS COVENANT THEOLOGY

J. Ligon Duncan

Covenant theology is the Gospel set in the context of God's eternal plan of communion with his people, and its historical outworking in the covenants of works and grace (as well as in the various progressive stages of the covenant of grace). Covenant theology explains the meaning of the death of Christ in light of the fullness of the biblical teaching on the divine covenants, undergirds our understanding of the nature and use of the sacraments, and provides the fullest possible explanation of the grounds of our assurance.

To put it another way, Covenant theology is the Bible's way of explaining and deepening our understanding of: (1) the atonement [the meaning of the death of Christ]; (2) assurance [the basis of our confidence of communion with God and enjoyment of his promises]; (3) the sacraments [signs and seals of God's covenant promises — what they are and how they work]; and (4) the continuity of redemptive history [the unified plan of God's salvation]. Covenant theology is also an hermeneutic, an approach to understanding the Scripture — an approach that attempts to biblically explain the unity of biblical revelation.

When Jesus wanted to explain the significance of His death to His disciples, He went to the doctrine of the covenants (see Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, 1 Corinthians 11). When God wanted to assure Abraham of the certainty of His word of promise, He went to the covenant (Genesis 12, 15, and 17). When God wanted to set apart His people, ingrain His work in their minds, tangibly reveal Himself in love and mercy, and confirm their future inheritance, He gave the covenant signs (Genesis 17, Exodus 12, 17, and 31, Matthew 28, Acts 2, Luke 22). When Luke wanted to show early Christians that Jesus' life and ministry were the fulfillment of God's ancient purposes for His chosen people, he went to the covenants and quoted Zacharias' prophecy which shows that believers in the very earliest days of 'the Jesus movement' understood Jesus and His messianic work as a fulfillment (not a 'Plan B') of God's covenant with Abraham (Luke 1:72-73). When the Psalmist and the author of Hebrews want to show how God's redemptive plan is ordered and on what basis it unfolds in history, they went to the covenants (see Psalm 78, 89, Hebrews 6-10).

Covenant theology is not a response to dispensationalism. It existed long before the rudiments of classical dispensationalism were brought together in the nineteenth century. Covenant theology is not an excuse for baptizing children, nor merely a convention to justify a particular approach to the sacraments (modern paedocommunionism and baptismal regenerationism). Covenant theology is not sectarian, but an ecumenical Reformed approach to understanding the Bible, developed in the wake of the magisterial Reformation, but with roots stretching back to the earliest days of catholic Christianity and historically appreciated in all the various branches of the Reformed community (Baptist, Congregationalist, Independent, Presbyterian, Anglican, and Reformed). Covenant theology cannot be reduced to serving merely as the justification for some particular view of children in the covenant (covenant successionism), or for a certain kind of eschatology, or for a specific philosophy of education (whether it be homeschooling or Christian schools or classical schools). Covenant theology is bigger than that. It is more important than that.

"The doctrine of the covenant lies at the root of all true theology. It has been said that he who well understands the distinction between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, is a master of divinity. I am persuaded that most of the mistakes which men make concerning the doctrines of Scripture, are based upon fundamental errors with regard to the covenant of law and of grace. May God grant us now the power to instruct, and you the grace to receive instruction on this vital subject." Who said this? C.H. Spurgeon — the great English Baptist preacher! Certainly a man beyond our suspicion of secretly purveying a Presbyterian view of the sacraments to the unsuspecting evangelical masses.

Covenant theology flows from the trinitarian life and work of God. God's covenant communion with us is modeled on and a reflection of the intra-trinitarian relationships. The shared life, the fellowship of the persons of the Holy Trinity, what theologians call *perichoresis* or *circumincessio*, is the archetype of the relationship the gracious covenant God shares with His elect and redeemed people. God's commitments in the eternal covenant of redemptive find space-time realization in the covenant of grace.

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from <http://www.fpcjackson.org/resources/apologetics/> accessed 20 Oct 2010

Appendix COVENANT THEOLOGY

From http://www.theopedia.com/Covenant_theology

Covenant Theology (or Federal theology) is a prominent feature in Protestant theology, especially in the Presbyterian and Reformed churches, and a similar form is found in Methodism and Reformed Baptist churches. This article primarily concerns Covenant Theology as held by the Presbyterian and Reformed churches, which use the covenant concept as an organizing principle for Christian theology and view the history of redemption under the framework of three overarching theological covenants: the Covenant of Redemption, the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. These three are called "theological covenants" because although not explicitly presented as covenants, they are, according to covenant theologians, implicit in the Bible.

In brief, Covenant Theology teaches that God has established two great covenants with mankind and a covenant within the Godhead to deal with how the other two relate. The first covenant in logical order, usually called the Covenant of Redemption, is the agreement within the Godhead that the Father would appoint his son Jesus to give up his life for mankind and that Jesus would do so (cf. Titus 1:1-3).

The second, called the Covenant of Works, was made in the Garden of Eden between God and Adam and promised life for obedience and death for disobedience. Adam disobeyed God and broke the covenant, and so the third covenant was made between God and all of mankind, who also fell with Adam according to Romans 5:12-21.

This third covenant, the Covenant of Grace, promised eternal blessing for belief in Christ and obedience to God's word. It is thus seen as the basis for all biblical covenants that God made individually with Noah, Abraham, and David, nationally with O.T. Israel as a people, and universally with man in the New Covenant. These individual covenants are called the "biblical covenants" because they are explicitly described as such in the Bible.

Covenant theology as a refinement of Reformed theology is evident among early Scottish theologians. For example, see *The Theology and Theologians of Scotland, Chiefly of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (1872) passage: "The old theology of Scotland might be emphatically described as a covenant theology."

From http://www.theopedia.com/Covenant_theology

Appendix REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

from http://www.theopedia.com/Replacement_theology

Replacement Theology or Supersessionism is the traditional Christian belief that Christianity is the fulfillment of Biblical Judaism, and therefore that Jews who deny that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah fall short of their calling as God's Chosen people.

Supersessionism, in its more radical form, maintains that the Jews are no longer considered to be God's Chosen people in any sense. This understanding is generally termed "replacement theology."

The traditional form of supersessionism does not theorize a replacement; instead it argues that Israel has been superseded only in the sense that the Church has been entrusted with the fulfillment of the promises of which Jewish Israel is the trustee. This belief has served not only as the explanation for why believers in Christ should not become Jews, but is also the reason that Jews are not exempted by the Christian churches, from the call of the Gospel to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation from sin and from the penalties due to sin.

In recent times, the doctrine of supersessionism has been blamed for mistreatment of the Jews in the past. Some liberal Protestant groups have therefore formally renounced supersessionism, affirming that Jews and other non-Christians have a valid way to find God within their own faith, which breaks from historic Protestant teaching. Dispensationalism affirms that salvation is only through faith in Christ, and that Jews fall short of obtaining the kingdom of the promised Messiah, unless they are converted to Christianity. However, in their view, a future mass conversion will result in the restoration of the nation Israel prior to the Millennium, apart from the church dispensation. This anticipation of a future role for the ethnic and geo-political nation of Israel in the plan of God, apart from the Church, is what is meant by some dispensationalists who style themselves as rejectors of "supersessionism" or "replacement theology", and thus they are using the terms in a way that is distinctive to their expectation of future events.

from http://www.theopedia.com/Replacement_theology accessed 20 Oct 2010

Appendix Covenant Theology Versus Dispensationalism

A Matter of Law Versus Grace

By Bob Nyberg

Volumes have been written explaining the teachings of both covenant theology and dispensationalism. This brief paper is not intended to define these systems of interpretation. In fact, it's assumed that the reader already understands the basic tenets of dispensationalism. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that covenant theology places the believer under Old Testament law.

A Bit of History

In order to understand the development of covenant theology, we need to take a brief look at church history.

Some covenant theologians would have us believe that their belief system was that of the founding fathers of the early church. They try to make a case that dispensationalism is a mere infant when compared to the grand old scheme of covenant theology. However, the truth of the matter is that systematized covenant theology is actually of recent origin. Cornelius Van Til, a covenant theologian, admits, "the idea of covenant theology has only in modern times been broadly conceived." Louis Berkhof, another covenant theologian, wrote, "In the early Church Fathers the covenant idea is not found at all." Dr. Ryrie points out:

It [covenant theology] was not the expressed doctrine of the early church. It was never taught by church leaders in the Middle Ages. It was not even mentioned by the primary leaders of the Reformation. Indeed, covenant theology as a system is only a little older than dispensationalism. That does not mean it is not biblical, but it does dispel the notion that covenant theology has been throughout all church history the ancient guardian of the truth that is only recently being sniped at by dispensationalism.

Covenant theology does not appear in the writings of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, or Melancthon... There were no references to covenant theology in any of the great confessions of faith until the Westminster Confession in 1647, and even then covenant theology was not as fully developed as it was later by Reformed theologians. The covenant (or federal) theory arose sporadically and apparently independently late in the sixteenth century.

Yet having said all this, much of the erroneous teachings of covenant theology can find its roots centuries earlier.

For the first three centuries the predominant belief of the early church was that Jesus Christ would literally return to the earth to reign for a thousand years. A number of historians have documented this belief of the early church Fathers. The evidence is indisputable. However, around 170 A.D. certain factors began to undermine the belief of Christ's literal return to establish a physical earthly kingdom.

The book of Revelation written by the Apostle John ends with the Lord Jesus declaring, "Behold, I come quickly (20:20)". About a hundred years had passed and this promise had yet to be fulfilled. Obviously, something was wrong! Some church leaders in Asia Minor decided to reject the book of Revelation from the canon of scripture. They may have reasoned that this supposed declaration by Jesus must somehow be false. In actuality there were a number of factors that influenced them in their decision to reject Revelation from the canon of scripture:

- o A certain group of Christians had taken their premillennial beliefs to an unhealthy extreme. Therefore anyone who believed that Jesus would return to establish a literal kingdom upon earth was viewed with suspicion.
- o Many early Christians taught that Christ would soon return and crush the Roman power that was ruling the empire. Some of the leaders of the early church felt that it would be better to sacrifice their premillennial belief rather than face more intense persecution.
- o There was also a strong anti-Semitic spirit in the eastern church. The thought of Christ regathering Israel to their land was an abomination to them.

o A new method of Biblical interpretation known as Alexandrian theology greatly changed the view of scripture. Origen (185-254) and other scholars in Alexandria developed a system of Biblical interpretation based on allegory. Origen and his contemporaries were greatly influenced by pagan Greek philosophy. They tried to integrate this into their theology. According to Greek philosophy all physical matter was inherently evil. Therefore the idea of a literal earthy, millennium with physical blessings could only be erroneous. This allegorical or spiritualizing method of interpretation allowed these theologians to read almost any meaning they desired into the Bible. Thus they were able to do away with a literal return of Christ to establish a physical earthly millennial kingdom.

All of these factors set the stage for the rejection of premillennialism. In the early days of his Christian faith Augustine (354-430) was premillennial. However, through time he abandoned the idea of a literal return of Christ to establish a physical kingdom on earth. He used this new allegorical method of interpretation to explain away the

literal return of Christ and thus amillennialism was born. In his book, *The City of God*, Augustine taught that the Universal Church is the Messianic Kingdom and that the millennium began with Christ's first coming. When the church lost the hope of the imminent return of Christ it plunged headlong into the dark ages. The seeds of false interpretation bore fruit giving rise to Roman Catholicism and a works-based religion. Augustine's amillennial teaching continued to be the standard view of organized Christendom until the 17th century. Occasionally premillennial groups challenged that doctrine through out the dark ages, but they were a small voice compared to the powerful Roman Catholic church.

On October 31, 1517 Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. One of the primary factors that caused him to break away from the Roman Catholic Church was his understanding of *Sola Fide*—the doctrine that man is justified by faith alone without works. Through Luther and the reformers, God restored the doctrine of salvation by grace back to His true church. The reformers understood grace in regard to salvation, but for Christian living they fell into the Galatian error of works. They knew that they couldn't keep the law in order to gain salvation, but the law became the rule for living the Christian life. Little did they realize that sanctification is also by grace.

When the reformers broke away from the Roman Catholic church, they carried a lot of baggage with them. Amillennialism was one such fetter that kept the church in bondage to the law.

You might be wondering, "how does a doctrine about the 'end times' affect the teaching of law and grace?" That's a good question. Augustine and his contemporaries faced a dilemma. It had been years since the Lord Jesus had said, "behold I come quickly." By doing away with the literal return of Christ for His church, Augustine no doubt felt that he was helping God out. After all, if there was no literal return of Christ and no literal millennium, then Christ could be reigning over His spiritual kingdom up in heaven. The literal promises given to Israel in the Old Testament could be spiritually applied to the church. However, applying those promises to the church came at a tremendously high cost. Attached to the promises given to Israel was also the Old Testament law. If the church is "spiritual Israel" then she must also keep the law—if not for salvation, then at least for Christian living.

Anytime man decides to help God out, he just makes trouble for himself. A good illustration of this is found in the account of Chronicles. When king David decided to bring the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem he put it on an ox-drawn cart. But in the law God specifically told Israel that priests were to carry the ark on poles. In 1 Chronicles 13:9-10 we read, "And when they came unto the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God." Uzza paid dearly for trying to help God out. His intentions may have been good, but the results of his efforts were devastating.

Proverbs gives us some very sobering advice about tampering with the Word of God: "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar [Prov 30:6]." Concerning the book of Revelation, the Lord Jesus Himself said, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and [from] the things which are written in this book [Rev 22:18-19]." In all of these warnings, nothing is said about those who would distort God's Word through allegorical interpretation. Augustine's intentions may have been noble when he tried to help God out. He may have felt that amillennialism could help to explain Jesus' statement in Revelation about His soon return, but the results of Augustine's efforts were devastating.

Throughout the Old Testament many so-called religious leaders opposed God's true prophets. Jeremiah predicted Judah's demise if she kept rebelling against the Lord. The religious elite of that day claimed that he was a traitor. They threw him into a cistern and left him there to die. False prophets opposed Jeremiah's predictions and the result was the Babylonian captivity. These false prophets didn't learn anything from this captivity. They continued to tamper with God's Word which ultimately resulted in 400 years of silence—the Old Testament equivalent of the dark ages.

I'm not equating Augustine with the false prophets of Jeremiah's day. Those false prophets knowingly distorted and opposed God's Word. I don't think that Augustine intentionally tried to distort God's Word. His intentions were noble. Like Uzza, he simply tried to give God a helping hand. Under the dispensation of the law, Uzza lost his life for his noble attempt. But Augustine lived in the dispensation of grace. He did not pay for his noble attempts with loss of life. Never-the-less, the church has paid dearly for Augustine's attempt to steady the solid foundation of Scripture. Just as Israel received her just rewards—400 years of silence—so too the church plunged head-long into the dark ages following Augustine's misguided efforts.

Israel's 400 silent years ended with the bright hope of the birth of Messiah and the promised Messianic Kingdom. But that hope soon dwindled with Israel's rejection of Messiah. The promise of the Messianic Kingdom was put on hold until Israel would be ready to accept her Messiah.

So too, the dark ages ended with the bright hope of the reformation and the rediscovered truth of salvation by grace. But that bright hope was tarnished by the snares of legalism that kept the reformers in bondage. When Martin Luther stepped away from the Roman Catholic church he drug with him the ball and chain of amillennialism's law-based teachings. The Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican reformers rejected premillennialism as being merely "Jewish opinions." They continued to maintain the amillennial view which the Roman Catholic church had adopted from Augustine. J.B. Stoney notes that:

In the Reformation there was, through grace, a great deliverance. The ground-work of Christianity was recovered; namely, justification by faith. But though this was recovered, it was not maintained that the old man was crucified on the Cross, and hence they only refused the exaction of popery, but considered the flesh as still before God. Refusing the exaction was right; but the retention of that on which the exaction could be made, the old man, was and is the weakness of the Reformation.

Miles Stanford also observes that:

The Lutheran Church is an example of ... little birth truth and no growth truth, resulting in legalism, lack of eternal security, and even a charismatic element as well as liberalism. In general, the Reformation-oriented Reformed Churches, with birth truth but little or no growth truth, also reflect this imbalance in their unscriptural application of "the law as the rule of life" for the believer.

Dr. William R. Newell pretty well sums it up when he wrote:

Almost all the theology of the various 'creeds of Christendom' date back to the Reformation, which went triumphantly to the end of Romans Five, and, so far as theological development or presentation of truth was concerned, stopped there.

The reformation brought back the truth of salvation by grace, but reverted to the law for living the Christian life. This law-grace paradox continued to plague the church until John Nelson Darby and his contemporaries came on the scene in the early 1800's. Darby adopted the literal, historical-grammatical method of Bible interpretation. As Darby studied God's Word in this light, the distinction between Israel and the church seemed to leap off the pages of Scripture before his eyes. He and his contemporaries took the truths of dispensationalism and put them into a more systematized form. God used this to restore to the church not only the imminent, premillennial return of Christ, but also the teachings of grace for living the Christian life.

During the time period between Luther and Darby, covenant theology came into being. Unfortunately, it reflected the "law-based" doctrine of Amillennialism.

Covenant theology was introduced to America primarily through the Puritans. Dispensational theology came to America primarily through Brethren teachers such as Darby and his contemporaries.

Covenant Theology and the Law

Dr. Renald Showers defines covenant theology "as a system... which attempts to develop the Bible's philosophy of history on the basis of two or three covenants. It represents the whole of Scripture and history as being covered by two or three covenants." Dr. Ryrie says:

Formal definitions of covenant theology are not easy to find even in the writings of covenant theologians. Most of the statements that pass for definitions are in fact descriptions or characterizations of the system. The article in Bakers Dictionary of Theology comes close to a definition when it says that covenant theology is distinguished by "the place it gives to the covenants" because it "represents the whole of Scripture as being covered by covenants: (1) the covenant of works, and (2) the covenant of grace." This is an accurate description of the covenant system. Covenant theology is a system of theology based on the two covenants of works and grace as governing categories for the understanding of the entire Bible.

In covenant theology the covenant of works is said to be an agreement between God and Adam promising life to Adam for perfect obedience and including death as the penalty for failure. But Adam sinned and thus mankind failed to meet the requirements of the covenant of works. Therefore, a second covenant, the covenant of grace, was brought into operation. Louis Berkhof defines it as "that gracious agreement between the offended God and the offending but elect sinner, in which God promises salvation through faith in Christ, and the sinner accepts this believingly, promising a life of faith and obedience."

Some Reformed theologians have introduced a third covenant, the covenant of redemption. It was made in eternity past and became the basis for the covenant of grace, just described, between God and the elect. This covenant of

redemption is supposed to be "the agreement between the Father, giving the Son as Head and Redeemer of the elect, and the Son, voluntarily taking the place of those whom the Father had given him." These two or three covenants become the core and bases of operation for covenant theology in its interpretation of the Scriptures.

Without trying to explain all the details of covenant theology I will simply say that it has many problems:

- o It begins by assuming two (or three) covenants that are never mentioned in Scripture.
- o It tries to unify scripture by saying that Biblical distinctions are merely different phases of the same Covenant of Grace. For example, Berkoff insists that the Mosaic Covenant is essentially the same as the Abrahamic Covenant. Yet, the apostle Paul asserts the distinctiveness of these two covenants in Galatians 3:18. Even a cursory reading of these two covenants reveals that the Abrahamic Covenant was unconditional whereas the Mosaic Covenant had many conditions attached.
- o It denies the distinctiveness of the gospel of grace and the gospel of the kingdom.
- o It denies the distinction between Israel and the Church.
- o It uses a double standard with regard to interpretation of Scripture. Covenant theologians use the historical-grammatical method of interpretation, except for passages concerning future events. When dealing with passages regarding the future of Israel or the kingdom of God they revert to Augustine's allegorical or spiritualizing method of interpretation.
- o It places the believer under the law.

This last point, in my opinion, is probably the most devastating blow against Christian doctrine and practice. The Galatian error of law and works has plagued the church from its very beginning. Covenant theology has only served to promote this error.

Previously, we noted that the Westminster Confession and the Puritans were two of the primary tools that advance covenant theology. Let's take a look at what one Puritan theologian had to say with regard to the Westminster Confession. Dr. R.L. Dabney [1820-1898], a well-known Southern Presbyterian [Covenant] theologian, brought out the difference between the Puritan's Westminster Standards, and the grace-stand of Luther and Calvin.

The cause of this error [the teaching of assurance of salvation] is no doubt that doctrine concerning faith which the first Reformers, as Luther and Calvin, were led to adopt from their opposition to the hateful and tyrannical teachings of Rome. These noble Reformers... asserted that the assurance of hope is of the essence of saving faith. Thus says Calvin in his Commentary on Romans, "My faith is a divine and scriptural belief that God has pardoned me and accepted me."

Calvin requires everyone to say, in substance, I believe fully that Christ has saved me. Amidst all Calvin's verbal variations, this is always his meaning; for he is consistent in his error... for as sure as truth is in history, Luther and Calvin did fall into this error, which the Reformed churches, led by the Westminster Confession of Faith, have since corrected. (Discussions of Robert L. Dabney, Vol. I, pp. 215-16)

According to Reformed, Puritan, covenant theology the idea of telling believers that they can know for sure they are saved is a grievous error. The covenant view of assurance is diametrically opposed to what Luther and Calvin taught. Can you know for sure that you are saved? Not according to Dabney, and his covenant friends. The end result is a gospel of works with NO assurance of salvation.

Yes, doctrine in one area will surely affect doctrine in all other areas. When you start mingling Israel and the Church you open yourself up to all kinds of errors. On the surface it might not seem like one's view of future events is important, but when you see the trouble it leads to, I'm inclined to think that it behooves us to avoid the "slough of covenant despond!"

Dispensational Theology and the Law

The traditional view of dispensational theology kept Israel separate from the church. It kept the law separate from grace. Yet, in recent years that distinction has become blurred. Small cracks were seen in the dispensational dike about 30 to 40 years ago. Walter C. Kaiser Jr., a non-dispensational theologian, observed:

Somewhere in the decade of the 1960s, one of the most significant developments in dispensationalism took place. It happened so quietly, but so swiftly, that it is difficult to document, even to this day. This is what changed the whole course of dispensationalism: the view that there were two new covenants, one for Israel and one for the church, was decisively dropped. The implications of such a move are enormous, as the events that followed duly testified.

The new covenant was made with "the house of Israel and the house of Judah," yet the church was obviously enjoying the benefits of this same covenant. They drank the "blood of the covenant" in the Lord's Supper, and they had "ministers of the new covenant."

But when Israel and the church were viewed as sharing one and the same covenant, the possibilities for major rapprochement between covenant theology and dispensationalism became immediately obvious. Moreover, that one factor ended the major roadblock in a key hermeneutical rule that dispensationalism had repeatedly stressed in the past: keep Israel's mail separate from the mail that was written for the church. Thus, 2 Chronicles 7:14 ("If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves..."), for example, did not need to be restricted, as had been taught, solely to Israel but could now be addressed to the whole church. On the same bases, the Sermon on the Mount was released from its future kingdom setting for use by the whole body of Christ now.

Today those cracks have turned into a virtual flood as a new brand of dispensational theology has come on the scene. Progressive dispensationalism (which is really regressive in nature) has continued to blur these Biblical distinctions even more. This new brand of dispensationalism is really a compromise between dispensational and covenant theology.

Within the dispensational ranks we have men like John MacArthur who claims to be a dispensationalist. On the one hand he says:

Dispensationalism is a fundamentally correct system of understanding God's program through the ages. Its chief element is a recognition that God's plan for Israel is not superseded by or swallowed up in His program for the church... And in that regard, I consider myself a traditional premillennial dispensationalist.

But on the other hand he states:

There is a tendency, however, for dispensationalists to get carried away with compartmentalizing truth to the point that they can make unbiblical distinctions. An almost obsessive desire to categorize everything neatly has led various dispensationalist interpreters to hard lines not only between the church and Israel, but also between salvation and discipleship, the church and the kingdom, Christ's preaching and the apostolic message, faith and repentance, and the age of law and the age of grace. The age of law/age of grace division in particular has wreaked havoc on dispensationalist theology and contributed to confusion about the doctrine of salvation.

It's no wonder that Dr. MacArthur advocates the works oriented gospel known as Lordship Salvation. He refuses to recognize the difference between the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of grace. He blurs the distinctions between Israel and the church... between law and grace... between discipleship and salvation. As you read through the writings of Dr. MacArthur, you will see that the majority of authors he quotes are Puritan, Covenant, Reformed theologians. His theology has definitely been tainted by the law. Dr. Newell rightly observed:

It is a harmful perversion of the truth of God to teach (as did the Puritan theologians) that while we are not to keep the law as a means of salvation, we are under it as a 'rule of life.' Let a Christian only confess, 'I am under the law,' and straightway Moses fastens his yoke upon him, despite all his protests that the law has lost its power. Men have to be delivered from the whole legal principle, from the entire sphere where law reigns, ere true liberty can be found.

There are numerous doctrines and practices that are eroding the foundations of dispensational theology. Men such as Dr. MacArthur and Dr. Charles Stanley would lead us to believe that as Christians we have no sin nature. They tell us that our problem lies in the fact we have residual bad habits that are left over from when we were sinners. By ignoring the sin nature in us, they are merely putting a "Band-Aid" over the real problem. They deal with symptoms and not the cause. They would try to utilize the law in order to keep the flesh under control. They resort to the world's system of "behavior modification" to deal with a spiritual problem. They leave Christians wallowing in Romans chapter 7 with no hope of reaching Romans chapter 8. Dr. MacArthur has followed the slippery path right behind his so-called progressive friends and the myriad of others who would mix law with grace.

One of the most depressing articles that I came across was an exposition of Romans chapter 7 written by A. W. Pink, a covenant theologian. According to him, Romans 7 is the normal Christian life. We can never hope to gain the victory found in Romans 8 during our lifetime. This is the hope that law-based religion holds out to you and me.

I've attempted to show the pitfalls and dangers of embracing a law tainted doctrine. Yet, even those of us who promote the teachings of grace have a morbid propensity to slip back into the law in our own Christian life. For instance, we receive a material blessing and begin to wonder what we did to deserve it. Or when something bad happens to us we wonder what evil we did to deserve it. We naturally think that somehow we must merit God's blessings. Or we think that our failures result in demerit in the eyes of God. This type of mentality comes from the law—not grace.

The way we treat each other also reveals our failure to understand and appropriate grace. Sometimes we feel that we should only give grace where grace is due. But grace that is deserved is not grace—it's merit. It's a good thing that God doesn't just give us grace when we deserve it. We'd be in big trouble if that were true!

When bank-tellers are taught to tell counterfeit money from real they are given genuine currency to handle. By knowing the real, they will be able to see the false. Only a solid understanding of grace will keep us from being ensnared in the tangled web of law-based covenant theology.

End Notes:

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- Bob Nyberg's Home Page <http://www.4himnet.com/bnyberg/dispensationalism01.html> accessed 20 Oct 2010

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