

Published at www.GSBaptistChurch.com/theology/th804report.epub or [.pdf](#) or [.odt](#)

ADVANCED SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IV TH804
WRITTEN REPORT

A Written Report Presented to the Faculty
of Louisiana Baptist University

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for
Doctorate of Philosophy in Theological Studies

By
Edward Rice
June, 2014

Table of Contents

<u>TH 804 Notes on the Writing Assignment</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Critique of Chafer's Volume IV Ecclesiology and Eschatology Introduction.....</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>A Critique of Dr. Chafer's Ecclesiology.....</u>	<u>3</u>
Chafer's Systematic Error.....	4
Chafer's Ecclesiology.....	7
Chafer's Error In Denominationalism	12
Clarifying the Corporate Body.....	14
Dr. Chafer's Poisonous Root.....	14
<u>A Critique of Dr. Chafer's Eschatology.....</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>SPECIFIC BIBLIOGRAPHY for this report.....</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY for all reports.....</u>	<u>26</u>

TH 804 Notes on the Writing Assignment

Assignment Sheet

TH803 ADVANCED SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY - III

TEXT: *Systematic Theology* (Vol. 4), by Lewis Sperry Chafer, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications), 1976. ISBN: 0-8254-2340-6

NOTICE Louisiana Baptist Theological Seminary makes every effort to utilize the best available textbooks for each course offered. However, this does not mean that LBTS endorses the entire content of every textbook used.

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXT: Select two other conservative systematic Theology works of the student's choice for reading and comparison on the subjects covered in the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this course is to challenge the student to launch into an advanced study of theological definitions, terms and concepts as required in the ten disciplines of systematic theology and specifically in this course the study of Ecclesiology and Eschatology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- (1) Read Lewis S. Chafer's volume 4 p.3-251 for "Ecclesiology" and p.255-439 for "Eschatology" and also read carefully the corresponding sections in the two supplemental textbooks you have chosen for understanding, marking listings, Scriptures, and helpful information in each book which you might wish to quickly locate for completing the following requirements for this course.
- (2) From each chapter of Chafer's book and merging the corresponding material from your two supplemental books, prepare a detailed outline or discussion on each chapter with a full explanation of the terms involved. Show the page number and inclusive Scriptures for each point as appropriate. Always feel free to disagree with the authors, but be sure you verify from Scripture why you believe your position has more merit. Your chapter outlines will be graded as if they were to be used for training others. You should have a minimum of twenty-five pages of notes for this course.
- (3) After completing the assignments of this course forward your course materials to LBTS.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: spettey@lbu.edu

or Louisiana Baptist University, 6301 Westport Avenue, Shreveport, Louisiana 71129.

I have used the following supplemental theology textbooks for this course:

Bancroft, Emery H., *Elemental Theology*, 1932, Baptist Bible Seminary, 1945, 1960, Zondervan 1977.

Cambron, Mark G. *Bible Doctrines*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 1954.

Dollar, George W., *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, Bob Jones University Press, 1973.

Hodge, Charles. *Systematic Theology: Volume I-IV*. Charles Scribner & Company, 1871, Hardback- Grand Rapids, Mich., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1940.

Critique of Chafer's Volume IV Ecclesiology and Eschatology Introduction

A review of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's Ecclesiology and Eschatology in Volume IV of his Systematic Theology must begin with a review and documentation of his three most critical and systematic flaws. His whole Systematic Theology is seriously flawed in its organization, in its doctrines, and in its communication. Dr. Chafer's Ecclesiology is profoundly effected by all these shortcomings, but his Eschatology represents, at least, baby steps away from the flawed doctrine of Protestants, their Reformed Theology, and John Calvin's Covenant Theology.

Dr. Chafer has a very verbose and inept communication method. His work is laden with run-on passive voice sentences. His commentary drones on for pages without significant content, and it takes careful scrutiny to discern his main point. This may be a purposeful style. Pleasing 70 + denominations at Dallas Theological Seminary is easier when some of them do not know exactly what you are saying. It is not, however, a competent way to write a systematic theology.

The doctrines of Dr. Chafer must be drawn out of his verbose commentary. As was stated in critique of his volume on Soteriology, it is easier to draw doctrine out of the Holy Bible than to draw it out of Chafer's voluminous effort. It is doubtless more accurate to do so as well. Again, trying to capture a doctrine agreed to by 70+ denominations is an undue challenge. None the less, this critique will address his doctrines on Ecclesiology and Eschatology, especially as they differ from Bible Doctrine.

The most profound flaw in Dr. Chafer's Systematic Theology is his lacking

organization and lack of a system in what he considers systematic. This profoundly effects each volume and each doctrine of his work. Here, in Volume 4 of his work, this lack annuls his presentation of a Biblical Ecclesiology and a Biblical, dispensational, premillennial Eschatology.

When one sets out to write a Systematic Theology they must organize every revealed doctrine in the Holy Bible. To some extent every man is a theologian because he organizes, in some fashion, what he knows about God. In that organization he distinguishes which parts he believes. Hopefully that is done consciously. Making such organization systematic entails a considerable effort and focused purpose. To do a systematic analysis each substantial part of a system is partitioned and isolated into a separate subsystem which is carefully defined and understood. Then all the systems are analyzed in concert to understand the larger system.

In a Systematic Theology, in a volume on Ecclesiology and Eschatology, those topics would be partitioned and isolated and therein carefully and Biblically defined. Dr. Chafer's Volume IV has none of that.

A Critique of Dr. Chafer's Ecclesiology

Dr. Chafer's Ecclesiology section begins with his attempt to divide angels from Gentiles and Jews from Christians. This snafu occurred because Dr. Chafer wants to hold on to John Calvin's election of Christians, but reject John's Covenant Theology where Elect Christians replace God's Elect Nation, Israel. Calvin brought into Reformed Theology this old Roman Catholic Replacement Theology. Dr. Chafer is intent on advancing Dispensational Theology, but refuses to disbar, or deny, or even define its

archenemy Covenant Theology. This dilemma results in a volume on Ecclesiology intent on differentiating between Jew and Christian and Gentile. This is very awkward and not normally a concern of Ecclesiology at all.

Chafer's Systematic Error

Chafer's Volume IV of Systematic Theology, containing 250 pages on Ecclesiology, includes material not related to that topic at all. Such inexcusable organization is the result of both an overall poor organizing practice and an inadequate definition of a Systematic Theology in general. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer contends that a Systematic theology is "The collecting, systematically arranging, comparing, exhibiting, and defending of all facts concerning God and His works from any and every source."¹ This author stated previous that in making such a brash definition Chafer unwittingly puts philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato, and Roman Catholics such as Saint Augustine and Saint Aquinas, and Protestants who persecuted Baptist, men such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, on equal grounds with Holy Scripture. In writing his seven or eight volumes on Systematic Theology he repeatedly makes this blunder.

A Systematic Theology is not to be an unabridged rendition of everything ever believed about God, as Chafer has boasted. It is to be a systematic organization of each truth that God has revealed in his inerrant, infallible record. Truths that are then given systematic analysis wherein they can debunk the theoretical conjectures of previous philosophers and theologians.

In his Ecclesiology Dr. Chafer needs both a strong organization of the truth about

¹ from www.ChristianBook.com book promotion accessed Dec 2013

the Church and the Church age, and then a relentless attack of the Reformed Theologian's Covenant Theology, Replacement Theology, and Catholicism of the Church. Chafer's lacking organization and discipline make such a success unachievable. Chafer's unsystematic system and flawed organization of material brings about a very flawed doctrine. A flawed doctrine which it conceals in exaggerated verbosity.

Previous theologies have been built as if theology were a science. Dr. Chafer falls into the same trap. A scientific method starts with a hypothesis which it twists and refines with experiment until it holds enough merit to advance to a theory. Theologians have considered theories reliable enough to place in their science based systematic theologies. In the scientific method, after a theory receives more extensive testing and refinement, it becomes a law. As an engineer this author loves and respects the scientific method. Kepler used it expertly to derive the laws of planetary motion. As a theologian this author insists that the scientific method has no place in deriving the "Thus saith the LORD" kind of truth which a true theologian is looking for. .

Pilot asked Jesus "What is Truth?" In my statistics class I taught that truth is discovered by four primary means, only one has proven reliable. Philosophy says "I think therefore I am." In their field one thinks, reasons, deduces and believes, expecting he has therein discovered truth. Then, in the turn of the last century scientists formalized the scientific method, and used it in founding natural laws operating in our universe. In this method a hypothesis is tested, refined, and observed into a theory, which is tested, refined, and observed into a natural law. Leading theologians pounced on this, and considered theology as the chief of the sciences. They filled their Systematic Theology

books with theories that they documented into laws expecting that they had discovered the truths about God. But science is only an able tool to lead and surmise the truth about natural laws, not supernatural laws.

Statistics had an ugly beginning. It had trouble overcoming its nemesis, "Figures don't lie, but liars figure." The surveys and studies, the analysis and presentation of averages and standard deviations could surely lead to truth. But consider how statisticians and politicians readily misleads people into some grandiose untruths. Know that philosophy and science do the same misleading. For statistics, a majority believing something does not make it a truth. For philosophy one need only mention Christian Science founder Mary Baker Glover Eddy's idea that this world is only in the mind. And we have come to where science has, with no evidence, elevated the spontaneous generation of life to a theory, and even settled on the insane idea that "survival of the fittest" had changed beagle dogs into Clydesdale horses, and lizards into bald eagles. Ergo these forms of discriminating truth have their notable flaws.

The forth method of discerning truth is the "Thus saith the LORD" method. This is not the religious method. Indeed religions source of their truth is generally some ugly combination of the previous three mentions. Even in Dr. Chafer's Systematic Theology this "Thus saith the LORD" method to often takes a back seat to religion and survey. One would expect a section on Ecclesiology would begin with God's notable definition of the Church and its formation. Instead Dr. Chafer first philosophizes about angels, Jews, Gentiles and Christians. He then gives the scientific method a spin and presents theories that have been advanced. Chafer then presents a statistical survey of who believes what.

Organizing theology systematically requires that a baseline of truth be established up front. That base line must proceed with a "Thus saith the LORD" as its sole source. The other methods are fraught with blunder.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer has purposed to "collect and systematically arrange, compare, exhibit and defend all facts concerning God and his works from any and every source." Systematically such an approach is theological malpractice. His lack of organizing thoughts and direction is serious, but his total miss-organizing the "system" in systematic, coupled with his strong reliance on extra Biblical sources make this volume, and his previous three, inexcusable.

Chafer's Ecclesiology

Ecclesiology is the doctrine of the *ecclesia*, translated to English as the *Church*.. The origin of the word *Church* comes from the Greek word *kuriakos*, meaning "the Lord's house." The English definition was extended some to make it capture the full concept of Christ's *Ecclesia*. It had to capture that the *Ecclesia* is "a called out and assembled body of believers," i.e. believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Three integral parts of this basic definition need to be emphasized. The Church is "called out", it is "assembled", and it is "a body". Failure to organize an Ecclesiology around this heart beat is a failure indeed. Dr. Chafer exhibits that failure.

I am remiss to effectively critique Dr. Chafer's section on Ecclesiology because of its misdirected or total lack of organization. This critique of Dr. Chafer's volume will expeditiously draw out from his work what should have been said in a logical pursuit of a systematic Ecclesiology.

In his second and seventh chapters on the Church, Dr. Chafer makes a noticeable effort in clarifying the long time confused definition. But in these two chapters he speaks of the church as an organism, and the church as an organization. With this classification Chafer attempts to separate the church catholic/universal and the church local. He rightly discerns that a poor distinction between universal-catholic and local "has wrought confusion and damage to an immeasurable degree."² He then worsens the confusion. Dr. Chafer never clarifies that the Holy Bible has not catholic church..

Recall that Chafer is leaning and hobnobbing neoevangelical in every sense of the word. When fundamentalists drew a clear line and took a staunch separatist position against the apostate church, the neoevangelical determined that stay in/with the apostate church to "change them from within." Christ said we were to be "in the world but not of the world," but when it comes to apostasy, he demanded complete separation from it (2Cor 6:14-18³). The neoevangelical decided, on purpose, to be in the apostasy but not of the apostasy, and that thwarts every attempt they have made for its reformation. Chafer knows the truth about the Catholic Church. He words the dilemma of the reformers who would not recover the truth about this catholic organization being a local organization. But Chafer will not confront the ugly distortion of truth. Chafer allows the 70+ denominations he is pursuing to wallow around in some concept of a catholic church which is "invisible," but universal, which is catholic, but no longer "Roman Catholic."

² Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology Volume IV*, Dallas Seminary Press, 1948., 36

³ 2Cor 6:14-18 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

However, his "organized" church, his catholic church, is NOT local, NOT independent, NOT autonomous, and NOT Biblical.

The truth that the reformers would not recover out of the early church is, "there is no universal, catholic, or umbrella church which holds together all believers." Chafer panders on about an organism and an organization, but he refuses to uncover the whole truth, insisting rather that he keep a foot hold within the apostate organization; truly leaning neoevangelical to the core.

The fundamental truth is that every New Testament, pre-Roman church was independent and autonomous. There was no other church or head church, denomination, counsel or organization, which usurped dictatorial authority over any other local body of believers. Even the apostles would not use their authority to dictate their will, and their will was indeed the foundation stone of truth. After Paul took and circumcised Timothy, Dr. Luke records, "And as they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem." (Acts 16:4) That is as strong as it gets in the Scriptures. When Rome set up its universal, catholic church it not only issued its own decrees, it used Roman Empire swords to enforce their dictates.

Paul clarifies the organization which Dr. Chafer tries to divide into two different entities. In Ephesians he states clearly "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the house hold of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple

in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph 2:19-22)

In this Scripture the body of believers is referred to as the temple and habitation of God and not the Holy, Catholic, Universal Church. And the apostles are shown to be the foundation stones upon which this temple stands. This image is so pervading that in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, a book, as you recall, which Martin Luther and John Calvin et al. wanted to tear from the Holy Scriptures and cast into a monastery trash can⁴. The Revelation shows us a temple where God tabernacles with man and "The foundations of the wall of the city, were garnished with ... " (Rev 21:18-20) sure enough, twelve precious stones representing the twelve (count them 12) apostles that are indeed foundations. (Rev 21:14) This Revelation, while we are examining the foundation truths which Reformers refused, depicts this city, called the Bride , the Lamb's wife, as having twelve gates which are the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, (21:12) "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." (21:22) Recall, once more, that Romanism, Protestantism, and the Reformed Theology which flowed from them both, purposely castigated the twelve gates of this city to pretend that the holy catholic church was the replacement for the nation of Israel. Their theology, which threw a disparaging eye on the Revelation of Jesus Christ, established an organization, the holy Catholic church, which, they indoctrinated, would usher in the kingdom age of Christ here on earth.

In this larger understanding of the systematic error inside of the Roman Catholic

⁴ Do not miss the irony here, as the Vatacanus and Sinaticanus manuscripts from Alexandria Egypt were puled from the monastery trash cans and made the mainstay of the Modernist's New Testament textss.

Church, an error carried out of the mother church by her protestors and reformers, one can see the enormity of Reformed Theology's error in both Ecclesiology and Eschatology. The task for a critique of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's Systematic Theology, should capture how much of this error he understood, and exactly what he did about it in 2000+ pages of expose'. Dr. Chafer's meanderings about an organized church and an organism called church do not bode well for a direct confrontation with this apostasy of catholicness. It is his blind neoevangelical leanings/tolerance which prevents Dr. Chafer from exposing the apostasy in this catholic church concept. It is ripe with the cliché 'Don't let doctrine divide us, let the spirit unite us.' The spirit in that trite saying, however, is not the spirit of truth. The concept that one universal catholic church, visible or invisible, unites and organizes all believers into one body is hatched from the pits of a Roman hell. Protestants protested the Roman Catholic concept of salvation by penance. They protested the exaltation of a Roman priesthood. They even protested the motherhood of the Roman Catholic Church. When their protesting forced their severance from the Roman Catholic Church, their battle cry was for salvation by grace alone. Even then, they carried with them a little baptismal regeneration, some infant baptism, extensive exaltation of clergy, and all the catholicness of the church. When they reformed theology, it was Roman Catholic Covenant Theology, and it included a holy catholic church. Their version of the holy catholic church could no longer be called Roman, so in desperation for its root they called it "The invisible church." Before this novel ecumenical solution to the contradiction of a catholic church, the Church of England assumed the role of being the true catholic church; then so did the Lutherans, then so did the Presbyterians, then, alas, so did the next Protestant Denomination. An ecumenical solution to this dilemma finally

'evolved' out of this competition of catholicness they concluded that the catholic church was an invisible body of believers, the "invisible church."

How is it that Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer could write 251 pages on Ecclesiology and never address this catholic church issue? Quite simply, a neoevangelical cannot rock the boat or use reproof. They are attempting to stand in the midst of an apostate church, they cannot kick at a cardinal doctrine of the Protestant religion. So Dr. Chafer defends a catholic "organization."

Chafer's Error In Denominationalism

A doctrine rooted in Romanism and connected to the catholic church phenomena is Denominationalism. A denomination is a collection of lesser churches organized under the headship of a greater church or greater authority. One church controlling what another church practices or believes is not found in the Bible, nor in New Testament Churches, until the Roman Empire established it as her means of controlling.

Rome dictated that there would be one catholic church, and they at Rome would be its head. Denominationalism was hatched by Rome. Prior, all churches were independent, autonomous bodies of baptized believers. After Rome devised and constructed denominational control, autonomous, independent, believer baptizing bodies were called Donatists, Paulicians, Waldensians,... et al., and heretics of Roman control. They still existed, and were present when Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin finally had their fill of Romanism. We are still here today. Baptists are the original non-denominationals. It is curious how Dr. Chafer tip-toes through the consternation of denominational divisions.

The fact remains that no denomination can possibly be correct, nor Biblical. Any group which attempts to usurp an authority on another, violates the autonomous independence of that other. Every denominational structure that fell out of the Roman Empire and its propensity to control local churches is inherently wicked and in its core, evil.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer is blind/silent to this truth, and tries to reconcile denominational evil with his own rationalizing of "facts". "The fact remains," says Chafer, "that both declarations are true... We are not divided, and, we are sore oppressed by schisms rent asunder." Chafer's rationalizing continues, "The true Church is not divided, nor could it be; yet the visible church is a broken and shattered attempt at the manifestation of a Scriptural ideal."⁵ Chafer's 251 pages of Ecclesiology is an unmitigated rationalism which purports both a visible and invisible church, an organized and organism church, a universal and denominational church, a catholic and a fractured church. As a neoevangelical sympathizer Lewis Sperry Chafer is sunk right up to his chin in the apostate church he set out to refute. His whole Systematic Theology, all seven volumes, and particularly this volume on Ecclesiology, is refute with verbose rationalization which keeps him from clarifying the truth. Here his rationalization about the catholic church being invisible and the visible church being denominational clarifies that Dr. Chafer is so buried in the apostasy that he can no longer see the truth. There is no catholic church in the inerrant, infallible, verbally inspired Word of God, and in that Holy Writ, every denomination which strives to usurp authority over Christ's autonomous, locally assembled body of believer is inherently evil.

5 Ibid. 37

Clarifying the Corporate Body

With that striking clarity stated, it needs consideration that Scriptures do, on occasion, make reference to all believers, Jews, Gentiles, bond, or free, being immersed (baptized) into one body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many,, are as one body, so also is Christ" (1Cor 12:12) This corporate reference to believers is mitigated in the clear definition of an ecclesia. This clear mitigation is worded well by Baptist Theologians Dr. Emery Bancroft and Dr. Mark Cambron. Bancroft states, "The church as an organism includes all regenerate believers gathered out of the world between the first and second advents of Christ, while as an organization it includes local believers united for service of Christ in any given assembly."⁶ Dr. Cambron clarifies that the word "church" is used for A) A Local Assembly (church), B) Local Assemblies (churches), C) The Body of Living Believers (unnumbered), and D) The Complete Body of Christ.⁷ As Bancroft and Cambron rightly divide the word of truth, they allow no venue for a universal catholic church, Roman nor Protestant. Nor do they allow for a denominational existence in any form.

Dr. Chafer's Poisonous Root

Dr. Chafer's Catholic Church with Denominational Divides is a poisonous root which renders his whole Ecclesiology of little doctrinal value. The rationalizations that he imagines in this section, illustrate the ever present danger of mixing with apostasy, rather than separating from it. Such is the plight of the neoevangelical who purposefully rejected the staunch separatist position of the early Fundamentalist. When trying to

6 Emery H. Bancroft, *Elemental Theology*, 1932, Baptist Bible Seminary, 1945, 60, Zondervan, 307

7 Mark G. Cambron, *Bible Doctrines*, 1954, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 214-215

appease 70+ denominations, Chafer is "conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backward, justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." (Isa 59:13b-14)

Some would contend that Lewis Sperry Chafer was not neoevangelical leaning, and Dallas Theological Seminary was indeed Fundamental. I must let George W. Dollar, Professor of Church History at Bob Jones University answer for that. In his 1973 book "A History of Fundamentalism in America", he states, "Alumni of Dallas Seminary would raise the old claim that all is sound and Fundamental there, although such known sympathizers with New Evangelicalism as H.G. Hendricks, H.W. Robinson, G.W. Peters, and R.H. Seume serve on the faculty... Each year an array of speakers who travel with New Evangelicals mold the mind of students to a middle-of-the-road position. These speakers have included R.A. Cook, Arnold T. Olsen, H.T. Armerding, Clark Pinnock, F.A. Schaeffer, Carl Henry, Clyde Taylor, and Ted Engstrom."⁸ Dr. Dollar also clarifies succinctly, "That the new evangelical strategy must be one of infiltration and not separation. In addition, he (New Evangelical Harold Ockenga, President of Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California⁹) named the new evangelical forces as the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), Fuller Seminar, Billy Graham, and *Christianity Today*... In 1960 Ockenga wrote: 'my personal concern as the originator of the New

⁸ George W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, 1973, Bob Jones University Press, 209

⁹ Harold John Ockenga (1905-1985) was an American evangelical leader, a Congregational minister, and one of the co-founders of Fuller Theological Seminary. Harold John Ockenga (June 6, 1905 – February 8, 1985) was a leading figure of mid-20th-century American Evangelicalism, part of the reform movement known as "Neo-Evangelicalism". A Congregational minister, Ockenga served for many years as pastor of Park Street Church in Boston, Massachusetts. He was also a prolific author on biblical, theological, and devotional topics. Ockenga helped to found the Fuller Theological Seminary and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, as well as the National Association of Evangelicals. from http://www.theopedia.com/Harold_Ockenga accessed 15 June 2014

Evangelicalism has been to stir the interest of Evangelical Christianity in meeting the societal problems through content of Biblical Christianity. This is the tradition of Calvin, Luther, and Knox.' "¹⁰ Dollar goes on to clarify that Charles J. Woodbridge, a Fuller Seminary faculty member who left in protest to Ockenga's new direction, called this new and dangerous direction, "a theological and moral compromise of the deadliest sort. Such a threat is it that the sharpest language must be used to expose its threat and insidious danger... Neo Evangelicalism advocates toleration of error. It it following the downward path of accommodation to error, cooperation with error contamination by error, and ultimate capitulation to error."¹¹

It is reiterated here that Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of Dallas Theological Seminary in 1924, does not use the sharpest language and does not expose the error of the 70+ denomination that he is -pandering to. He is the epitome of neoevangelicalism as herein defined.

A final note of the dangers and growth of Protestant-NeoEvangelicals and their Reformed Theology is from the May, 2014 Ancient Baptist Press Bulletin, which states:

"Following his Strange Fire Conference John MacArthur recently said, 'The resurgence of Reformed Theology... is the greatest revival in the history of the church, clearly.' This should cause all Bible-believing Baptists to take notice. While independent Baptists are busy planting churches, the Calvinist/Reformed system is finding its way into the libraries of our young pastors and then into their pulpits. This requires a Biblical response. As Laurence Vance has said, "The final

¹⁰ Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, 204

¹¹ Ibid. 205

authority for a Calvinist is not the Bible at all, it is Reformed Theology."¹²

Chafer's Ecclesiology and dabbling in Reformed Theology is embryo to the neoevangelical sympathies found in Dr. John Walvoord, his successor at Dallas Theological Seminar. Dr. Chafer's tip-toeing and coddling to John Calvin's election of saints, Presbyterian Denominationalism, and Reformed Theology's Covenant Theology made him unable to sound the trumpet of truth when it came to Ecclesiology.

It is distressing that even as I type this report the the Chosen People Ministries reported that "The Presbyterian Church USA recently approved an initiative to divest stock holdings in companies allegedly profiting from Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories."¹³ This comes from the 221st General Assembly of the PCUSA held last week (June 2014) in Detroit. It is herein clear, when the PCUSA votes 310 to 303 to oppose Israel's presence in the Promised Land, that Calvin's Covenant Theology is still alive and well inside the Reformed Theology of the Presbyterian Church.

12 Pastor James Alter, Ancient Baptist Press Bulletin 5/15/2014, 137 W Edgewood St., Sidney, OH 45365
13 June Newsletter Mitch Glaser, President, Chosen People Ministries, <http://chosenpeople.com>

A Critique of Dr. Chafer's Eschatology

If there was an area where Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer's premillennial, dispensational position could over power Reformed Theology's shortcomings, it would be in his Eschatology. The Covenant Theology of John Calvin, the Presbyterian Church, and the Roman Catholic Church, could finally take its proper position in the theological trash can. The Replacement Theology of the Roman Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church and John Calvin, could finally hold its justified label of Apostasy¹⁴ Alas, however, it has already been shown that Dr. Chafer is, in his heart, leaning into neoevangelicalism and not truly a militant Fundamentalist. Otherwise he would engage in rebuke, reproof, and separation from the certain apostasy found in these theologies, and more particularly the Presbyterian Church which he targeted for *correction*, instead of *reproof*.

Dr. Chafer does cite the total ignorance of Protestant Theologians where Biblical prophecy is involved. Without calling it gross, he points to the negligence of Dr. Charles Hodge, Dr. B.B. Warfield, and Dr. R.L. Dabney.¹⁵ The root cause of the gross negligence of these protestant theologians when it comes to Bible prophecy, is their subtle acceptance of the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine of Replacement Theology and John Calvin's doctrine of Covenant Theology. It is subtle because in all their writings they never detail what John Calvin's Covenant Theology is all about, and never, ever broach the grotesque error of Replacement Theology, which is wholly encapsulated in Covenant Theology. Albeit the Presbyterian Denomination, which was Chafer's primary target, is by no means subtle in its acceptance of Calvin and rejection of premillennialism. These

¹⁴ www.wiktionary.org s.f. *Apostasy* The ancient criminal offense of heresy or non-belief in religion. (Herein used that definition includes non-belief in the inerrant, infallible, plenary, verbally inspired Holy Bible, rather than non-belief in mere religion.)

¹⁵ Chafer, Systematic Theology, Volume IV, 255-256

theologians "have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the works of unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with mans voice forbade the madness of the prophet." (2Pet 2:15-16) Dr. Charles Hodge is an intellectual giant. Perhaps dwarfing Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, and certainly dwarfing this author, even as much as Balaam's ass was dwarfed by the prophet that rode him. But when a rebuke is in order the dumb should speak out. Dr. Chafer did not, at least he did not with enough force (militantism) to curb the 70+ denominations which frequent Dallas Theological Seminary.

Dr. Chafer attempted to champion the premillennial position in a Presbyterian Denomination which rejected it. Champions cannot tip-toe. His section on Eschatology, the doctrine of last things, tip-toes through seven important facts. 1. "The neglect of the prophetic Scriptures on the part of theologians is all but complete."¹⁶ Implicit here is that Chafer is referencing Protestant, non-Baptist theologians. George Dollar cites a host of stalwarts of Fundamentalism, all of which are premillennial. Perhaps they fall short of Chafer's definition or circle of *theologians*.

2. "It is a common practice with some theologians to brand *chiliasm*¹⁷ as a modern theory... Reformers did not restore all features of doctrine... they retained the Romish notion that the Church is the Kingdom, fulfilling the Davidic covenant, and appointed to conquer the world by bringing it under the authority of the church."¹⁸ Although Chafer does not say it out loud, this is in the doctrine of Covenant Theology, and Replacement

16 Ibid., 255

17 Chafer uses this Greek word *Chiliasm*, Greek for 1,000, to soft shoe the brazen literalness of a millennial reign of Christ, a millennial reign which is preceded by his 2nd Advent, i.e. premillennialism.

18 Ibid., 257

Theology. Both contest the literal 1,000 year millennial reign of Christ on the throne of David from the city of Jerusalem, on the hills of Zion, clearly referenced in Psalm chapter two. Any, and every denomination holds to some aspect of this error in its denominational control of churches. The error is wholly engulfed in John Calvin's doctrine.

3. "What is declared in Scriptures respecting prophecy is as credible as those portions which are historical. The language is no more complex, nor is the truth any more veiled." Also "(The prophetic message) is dependent upon language - simple terms known to all - for its conveyance... let the Bible's simple prophetic terminology bear the message that it naturally conveys"¹⁹ Although Dr. Chafer, again, does not say it out loud, this is his argument against the Romish and Reformed use of the allegorical method. The mainstay of Covenant Theology, ergo Reformed Theology, is its use of the allegorical method of hermeneutics. Any denomination or religion, for that matter, which maintains a clergy class, does so on the premise that commoners, often called laity, are not equip to interpret the secret allegorical communiques of Scripture. Rome took this separation of their clergy so serious that laity caught reading or memorizing their Bibles were burned with their Bibles. Protestants only occasionally took this murderous tactic, but they endorsed all of the clergy class vs laity class principles, and promote it still today, even in Dallas Theological Seminary's 70+ denominations.

4. "The Scripture presents but one system of truth... The word of God does not lend itself as support to postmillennial, amillennial,... schemes of interpretation."²⁰ This partial quote was extracted from Chafer's verbose explanation which, perhaps, was meant

¹⁹ Ibid., 258 and 259

²⁰ Ibid., 261

to communicate that several competing interpretations cannot exist together. Elsewhere in his verbose effort, it is surmised that he holds to a premillennial position.

5. "No decrees of councils; no ordinances of synods; no 'standard' of doctrines; no creed or confession, is to be urged as authority in forming the opinions of men... What is based on the authority of apostles and prophets is true, and always true, and only true."²¹ This would have been an excellent place for Dr. Chafer to emphasize the infallible, inerrant, plenary, verbally inspired Word of God, but, alas, he does not.

6. "The whole Bible is harmonized only by the (literal millennial reign of Christ for 1,000 year, with a premillennial second advent) interpretation." Chafer continues, "(The Reformers) were Augustinian in their doctrine and gave no support to the idea of a millennium prior to the second advent."²² Again, it was necessary to trim Chafer's verbose mannerisms and detail what he meant to say for his Greek code word *chiliasm*.

7. There is no denomination which holds a premillennial doctrine.²³

With those seven truths delineated in his 1947 publication of *Eschatology*, my thesis that Dr. Chafer had more Neoevangelicalism in his heart than he had Fundamentalism in his heart needs to be reiterated. Such a thesis does have its crux in Chafer's desire to move the denominations, particularly the Presbyterian denomination, to an acceptance of the Biblical premillennial position, and his failure to accomplish this desire.

Make no mistake, Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer was a fundamentalist. The song leader

21 Ibid., 262

22 Ibid.267 and 278

23 Ibid., 282-283

under C.I. Scofield became a gifted teacher for the newly formed World's Christian Fundamentals Association (WCFA) and in 1924 his Evangelical Theological College became Dallas Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas, a fundamental seminary.²⁴ Evangelicals became Neoevangelicals when they scoffed at the Fundamental Separatist position and refused the Fundamentalists' militant attitude. Dr. Chafer never scoffed, but he never separated either. Dr. Chafer never mocked militantism, but he never became one, and he never camped with any.

Instead of rationalizing with these seven truths, Dr. Chafer could have very well rebuked and reproved. A reproof is in order when protestant/reformed theologians 1) reject Biblical prophecy, 2) reject premillennialism, 3) hold to Roman Catholic allegorical methods which elevate clergy in priestly garb, 4) advance amillennialism/postmillennialism, 5) reject the Bible as a sole inerrant infallible source, 6) reject the literal millennial reign of Christ on the throne of David from the Hills of Zion, substituting the Catholic Church in its stead. and 7) advance their apostasy with denominational controls. That is Chafer's list with bluntness and some measure of militantism.

One cannot say that had Dr. Chafer been a militant, separatist fundamental that he would have met more success. Protestants are no more likely to leave their reformed theology than any king was likely to leave "the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin."²⁵ There is a time to "answer a fool according to his folly, (Prov 26:4-5) and Dr. Chafer did not step up to the plate. Instead he settled in among them, he waxed

²⁴ Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, 160

²⁵ 1Ki 14:16, 15:26, 15:34, 16:13, 16:26, 21:22, 22:52, 2Ki 3:3, 10:29, 10:31, 13:2, 14:24, 15:9, 15:18, 15:24, 15:28, 23:15

just as scholarly as they, and he became a middle-of-the-road bridge which could conduct exploring minds into their ranks. The bridge is a one-way street. If one is to get back out of Reformed Theology's anti-whosoever will, anti-premillennialism, anti-Israel stance, Chafer's bridge will not lead the way.

In its day, the GARBC²⁶ was, for Baptists, as fundamental as one gets. Dallas Theological Seminary was not on their approved list of schools and the perpetual warning to students who would go there is telltale. "Students who go to Dallas Theological Seminary come out middle-of-the-road evangelicals, never to be Baptist again."²⁷ Their emphasis on "never" was so pronounced that a graduate of Dallas would "never" get a recommendation from GARBC when he candidated as a pastor. The GARBC used careful syntax to make sure they were perceived as an association, or fellowship, and not a denomination. However, their ability to excommunicate often made that distinction blurry, and they too, in time, fell into neoevangelicalism.

What can be said of Dr. Chafer's Eschatology can be said of all seven volumes of his Systematic Theology. He uses three tactics to tip-toe around in the apostasy where he finds himself encamped. He attempts to generalize and detail each theory and belief of all men from every source. This warms him to his apostate audience, and displays a scholarly flare. He then enters into a tirade of verbiage, using passive sentence structures and run on sentences. This allows that none in his audience really understands all he is saying, but their favorite beliefs are in there somewhere, so they keep reading. This is really an aged tactic of intimidation, and Dr. Chafer uses it with great subtlety. Lastly,

²⁶ General Association of Regular Baptist Churches

²⁷ Multiple sources from my childhood.

Chafer presents his truth as a gentle correction.

The difference between teaching and preaching, is in the level of the pressure for required change; teaching has none, preaching forces one to the very brink of a decision. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer was an exceptional teacher. But the protestant denominations do not need mixers, they need separators, they do not need smooth teachers, they need militant preachers. Although Dr. Chafer was listed as a fundamentalist, he was not a separator or a militant. That is a reasonable assessment of all seven volumes.

SPECIFIC BIBLIOGRAPHY for this report

The Holy Bible

Bancroft, Emery H., *Elemental Theology*, 1932, Baptist Bible Seminary, 1945, 1960, Zondervan 1977, [In 1932 Emery H. Bancroft became the first Dean of Baptist Bible Seminary, Johnson City, NY and published his text for his course *Elemental Theology*. In 1968 the Seminary relocated to Clark Summit PA. In 1970 this author attended Practical Bible Training School on the Johnson City campus and studied Bancroft's text. In 1999 – 2000 this author attended Baptist Bible Seminary to take Greek (NT502 and NT503) via a 3 hour commute from Hammondsport NY to Clark Summit PA, and was reintroduced to Bancroft's exceptional work.]

Cambron, Mark G. *Bible Doctrines*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 1954, [Independent Baptist, Professor, Tennessee Temple Bible School, 1954].

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Systematic Theology*. Dallas Seminary Press, 1948. [Lewis Sperry Chafer was an American theologian. He founded and served as the first president of Dallas Theological Seminary, and was an influential founding member of modern Christian Dispensationalism. Born: February 27, 1871, Rock Creek, Died: August 22, 1952, Seattle, Education: Oberlin College, Wheaton College. For my Doctorate of Philosophy in Theological Studies through LBTS, I was tasked to analyze all six volumes of his Systematic Theology]

Dollar, George W., *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, Bob Jones University Press, 1973.

Hodge, Charles. *Systematic Theology: Volume I-IV*. Charles Scribner & Company, 1871, Hardback- Grand Rapids, Mich., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1940, Christian Classics Ethereal Library, <http://www.ccel.org>, public domain. [The Internet Archive www.archive.org/details/systematictheolo01hodg], [Charles Hodge, 1797-1878, Presbyterian Minister, Princeton Theologian].

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY for all reports

The Holy Bible

Bancroft, Emery H., *Elemental Theology*, 1932, Baptist Bible Seminary, 1945, 1960, Zondervan 1977, [In 1932 Emery H. Bancroft became the first Dean of Baptist Bible Seminary, Johnson City, NY and published his text for his course *Elemental Theology*. In 1968 the Seminary relocated to Clark Summit PA. In 1970 this author attended Practical Bible Training School on the Johnson City campus and studied Bancroft's text. In 1999 – 2000 this author attended Baptist Bible Seminary to take Greek (NT502 and NT503) via a 3 hour commute from Hammondsport NY to Clark Summit PA, and was reintroduced to Bancroft's exceptional work.]

Cambron, Mark G. *Bible Doctrines*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 1954, [Independent Baptist, Professor, Tennessee Temple Bible School, 1954].

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Systematic Theology*. Dallas Seminary Press, 1948. [Lewis Sperry Chafer was an American theologian. He founded and served as the first president of Dallas Theological Seminary, and was an influential founding member of modern Christian Dispensationalism. Born: February 27, 1871, Rock Creek, Died: August 22, 1952, Seattle, Education: Oberlin College, Wheaton College. For my Doctorate of Philosophy in Theological Studies through LBTS, I was tasked to analyze all six volumes of his Systematic Theology]

Satan, 1909, Free ebooks - Project Gutenberg, 2004, <http://www.gutenberg.org> accessed 06/01/2013

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

Dollar, George W., *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, Bob Jones University Press, 1973.

Gausson, L. *Theopneustia – The plenary Inspiration of The Holy Scriptures deduced from Internal Evidence, and the Testimonies of Nature, History and Science*. David Scott's translation, Chicago, The Bible Institute Colportage ASS'N., 1840.

Geisler, Norman L, *Systematic Theology in One Volume*, Bethany House, 2002, 3, 4, 5, 11 [Geisler, also a neoevangelical, sharply contrasts with Lewis Sperry Chafer in that Geisler 1) admits what he is, neoevangelical, 2) admits what he is attempting, a compilation of evangelical theologies, 3) shows superb organization and structure of thought, 4) contains depth, and 5) is a masterful

communicator. This author cannot endorse all that Geisler believes to be true, but can endorse that he seems to capture all that has been believed by conservative evangelicals.]

Hodge, Charles. *Systematic Theology: Volume I-IV*. Charles Scribner & Company, 1871, Hardback- Grand Rapids, Mich., Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1940, Christian Classics Ethereal Library, <http://www.ccel.org>, public domain. [The Internet Archive www.archive.org/details/systematictheolo01hodg], [Charles Hodge, 1797-1878, Presbyterian Minister, Princeton Theologian].

Larkin, Clarence. *The Spirit World*, Published by the Clarence Larkin Estate, 1921, Cosimo, 2005

Miley, John. *Systematic Theology* Vol. 1 & 2. The Internet Archive <http://www.archive.org/details/systematictheolo01mile>, [John Miley (1813-1895, Methodist Theologian)].

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

Schofield, C. I.. *Prophecy Made Plain*. Photolithoprinted by Grand Rapids Book Manufacturers, Grand Rapids, MI, 1967.

Shedd, William G. T.. *Dogmatic Theology*. Roosevelt Professor of Systematic Theology in Union Theological Seminary, New York, Charles Scribner & Sons, 1888. [The Internet Archive www.archive.org/details/dogmatictheology01sheduoft], [William G.T. Shedd, 1820-1894, Old School Presbyterian & Reformed Theologian].

Strong, Augustus H.. *Systematic Theology: Three Volumes in 1*. Philadelphia, Valley Forge PA, The Judson Press, 1907, 35th printing 1993. [Augustus H. Strong, 1836-1921, American Baptist Pastor & Theologian].

Thiessen, Henry Clarence. *Lectures in Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949. [Henry Clarence Thiessen, ? -1947, President of Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary, later renamed John MacArthur's The Master's College].

Lectures in Systematic Theology. Revised by Vernon D. Doerksen, Grand Rapids, Mich., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006.

Waite, D.A.. *Defending the King James Bible*. The Bible For Today Press, 2002.