

28 Hamartiology
May 5 Ketchup
12 Final Examination

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY

A. A. Hodge, chs. I, III, VI, VII

I. Definition of theology

- A. Theos –“God”
Logos –“word, study, science”
Hence, “the study of God”.
- B. Augustine: theology is: “rational discussion respecting the deity.” The Greek word “theologos” (theologian) “one who speaks of divine things.”
- C. Hodge: “science of the facts of divine revelation.”
- D. Berkhof: “systematized knowledge of God in his various relations to the universe.... Theology is the effect which the divine revelation, embodied in Scripture, produces in the sphere of systematic thought. Theology is the fruit of the reflection of the church on the truth revealed in the Word of God.”

II. Questions concerning theology

- A. What is theology? Is it a science?
Christian theology is the prayerful study of God’s Word.
- B. What part does reason play in theology?
Christian theology bases its findings on revealed material (the Bible); its object is arrived at by both “scientific” (inductive study) and “nonscientific” methods (prayer, Christian experience, etc.). (JAB)
- C. Does theology yield absolute truth?
Can infallible divine revelation plus fallible human reason yield absolute truth?
Note “Analogy of Faith”: Scripture is harmonious, allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture
- D. Should theology be refined or even redefined?
We see God’s perfect Word through a dark glass, so we continue to search out these things: “reformed and always reforming.”
- E. Why should we study theology?
 - 1. Our need to search the scriptures: message of life (Acts 17; John 5:39)
 - 2. Enable us to keep the faith (Jude 3)
 - 3. Enable us to stand for what we believe (2Tim 3:17)
 - 4. Be defenders of the faith (against heresy)
 - 5. Edify others with the word of truth (Hebrews 5)
 - 6. Appreciate God’s plan and prepare for heaven (every day and over a life-time)
 - 7. Grow in our salvation (Eph. 4:13; II Peter 1:3,4)
...His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature,
 - 8. Enable us to know conscience-liberating truth (John 8:36; 2Tim 3:16)
 - 9. Provide order in study (Luke 1:1-4)
 - 10. Theology used in building blocks.
(Note: some use the expression “do theology”. Armchair theologians need to

beware of limiting theology to an academic setting only (I Cor. 1,2).

- F. What are the ultimate goals of studying and using theology?
1. To glorify God
 2. To study to show yourself approved
 3. To live what you study (Eph 4, Col 3: “conformed to the image of His Son”)
 4. To draw close to God.

III. Biblical examples of Theology

A. The books of Job, Ecclesiastes, Genesis, the gospels, Romans, (the whole Bible).

B. Jerusalem Council articulating God’s plan from the Scriptures –Acts 15

C. Theology is doctrine (a set of doctrines received from God’s messengers, apostles and prophets, that the church is to believe).

1. Rom 6:17, “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.”
2. Rom. 16:17, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”
3. Eph.4:14, “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”
4. I Tim. 1:3, 10, “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou might charge some that they teach no other doctrine, *** and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;”
5. I Tim 3:8-10; 4:6,13-16; 5:17
4:6, “...nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.”
5:17, “Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.”
6. II Tim.3:10, 16, “But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience...All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”
7. II Tim. 4:2-3
8. Titus 2:1,7, “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:” “In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.”
9. II John 9, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”

IV. Sources of Theology

Theologians over the centuries have found several sources for their theology.

- A. Reason –logical deductions from stated premises, (filtered by feelings, intuition, experience). St. Anselm and the ontological argument for the existence of God. n.b., Decartes’ “I think, therefore I am.”
A.A. Hodge observes, “Consciousness is the fundamental ground of all knowledge. It gives us immediately the knowledge of self as existing and as the subject of certain attributes, and the agent in certain forms of activity. These souls and all their attributes must be accounted for. ***Therefore the human soul must have been created, and its Creator must have attributes superior to his work” (pp. 41,42).
- B. Church authority –God reveals his truth to the leaders of the Church (Roman Catholic Church).
- C. General revelation –God’s character and nature seen in creation.
- D. Special revelation –the Bible, God’s direct revelation to man.

V. Theology in the Creeds (Are they important?)

Using the Creeds of the Church to study theology is called the dogmatic approach. These successive creeds through history reflect growth in the Church with respect to theology.

Official creeds are a reflection by the Church overall and not just the individuals of the church.

- A. Creeds of the ancient church
 1. Apostles’ Creed –second to sixth century
 2. Nicene Creed –A.D. 325, Council of Nicea, enlarged in 381 at Constantinople
 3. Athanasian Creed –fifth to eighth century
 4. Chalcedon –A.D. 451, Christ is one Person with two natures, “without mixture, change, division, separation”
- B. Many other creeds came out of the Reformation period

VI Divisions of systematic theology

- A. Doctrine of God
- B. Revelation
- C. Creation, providence
- D. Anthropology
- E. Hamartiology

- F. Soteriology
- G. Ecclesiology
- H. Eschatology
- I. Ethics
- J. Apologetics

CHAPTER 2 REVELATION

A. A.A. Hodge, chs. IV, V

I. The Nature of Revelation

A. The word “revelation” carries with it the idea of unveiling something not known before. In the theological sense, it denotes God revealing His character, purpose, and will to His creation. This manifestation of God is something that He initiates, not something that men themselves find.

The greatest attribute of God is His love for mankind. Not only did God create us in His image, but out of His infinite mercy and compassion He chose to reveal (disclose) Himself to us. The Psalmist wrote:

“When I consider thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psalm 8:3-4).

Isaiah also wrote concerning God’s revelation:

“For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite” (Isaiah 57:15).

Revelation: “Humanity discovers God only as He chooses to make Himself known. More than just the providing of information about who God is and what He does, revelation is encounter with God and thus has a redemptive purpose” (*Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 784).

Note: Although the Scriptures are the revelation of God, we must not lose sight of the fact that the events that the Bible describes actually took place. Sacred history reveals God’s will and His relation to mankind; this sacred history is recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

B.B. Warfield: “The religion of the Bible is a frankly supernatural religion. By this is not meant merely that, according to it, all men, as creatures, live, move and have their being in God. It is meant that, according to it, God has intervened extraordinarily, in the course of the sinful world’s development, for the salvation of men otherwise lost. In Eden, the Lord God had been present with sinless man in such a sense as to form a distinct element in his social environment. This intimate association was broken up by the Fall. But God did not therefore withdraw Himself from concerning with men. Rather, He began at once a series of interventions in human history by means of which man might be rescued from his sin and, despite it, brought to the end destined for him.”

II. Revelation through Covenants

A. What interventions is Warfield speaking of? How does God reveal Himself to His people? By means of Covenants. Setting aside, for now, God’s “general” revelation found in creation and in providential acts, let us turn to God’s “special” revelation found in His use of covenants.

John Battle: “A remarkable thing about the way God has revealed Himself to us is that He has never given us esoteric lectures about His person to satisfy our intellectual curiosity, but He always has addressed us in the context of our responsibilities to Him and His promises or threats to us. In other words, His revelation has come to us in the form of covenant.”

W.C.F. 7:1: “The distance between God and the creature is so great that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto Him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of Him, as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God’s part, which He hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.”

B. Covenants

1. of Redemption within the Trinity
2. of Grace
3. of Works
4. Adamic
5. Noahic
6. Abrahamic
7. Mosaic
8. Davidic
9. New

C. Covenants: promissory revelations of God to preserve and bless His image-bearers by His dwelling among them

(For a good discussion of the theological and biblical covenants see O. P. Robertson’s, *The Christ of the Covenants*)

1. Covenant of works (covenant of creation) made with Adam (Gen.1:28-30; 2:15-17; Hos 6:7). The Lord God (second person of the Trinity) revealed Himself to Adam and Eve walking in the Garden of Eden.
2. Covenant of grace – When the man and woman broke the covenant, the Lord God came looking for them, proclaiming His gracious covenant (Gen 3:15,21) whereby Adam’s family would be restored by the “Seed of the Woman.” Whenever tragedy occurred God would speak. Immediately God intervened to begin the redemption process.
The Seed → A Race (Shemite) → An Heir (Abraham) → A Nation (Israel) → The Kingly tribe (Judah – Gen.49:10-12) → The Kingly Family (David) → The Seed of Abraham and David (Jesus – Matt.1:1) → The Gospel to the world (Gen. 12:3).
3. Covenant of Preservation (Noahic –the flood) –The human race needed to be preserved from self-destruction and through divine judgment. God renewed His covenant with Noah (Gen 6:18; 9:1-2,7), and instituted capital punishment for those that would destroy His image-bearers (9:5-6). Because of the sin of Ham and his son, Canaan, the seed would come through Shem’s line (Gen. 9:18-27).

4. Covenant of Promise (Abraham, following the tower of Babel) –People on earth tried to build a tower to heaven but God divided them into 70 nations. The covenant came to Abraham, through him these nations would be blessed (the gospel –Gen.12:3). The nations would come to God the way He wanted them to. Abraham was going to be made into a great nation, and inheritance was given to him. See Gen. 12:1-7; 15:1-19; 17:1-14; 22:15-18 for a progression of the covenant revelation.
5. Covenant of Law (Mosaic) –The time had come for this nation of Israel to receive its inheritance. This nation was a holy nation to God and needed to be governed by God’s law. The great prophet was predicted (Deut 18), and the sacrificial system was codified to show God’s people the need for atonement. A primitive pattern of worship was instituted –God would dwell among them in the Tabernacle. God spoke the words of the Covenant to the people, but they could not endure it (Exo 19:3–20:21).
6. Covenant of the Kingdom (Davidic) –God formally establishes how He will rule among His people –by His king (II Sam. 7:1-17); contrast I Sam. 8:4-9.
7. New Covenant –is an over-arching combination of all prior covenants and goes beyond them. The seed of the woman, of Shem, of Abraham, of Judah, of David is fulfilled in Christ. He is the greatest revelation—God in the flesh.

III. The Revelation of the Incarnation

- A. Christ the Creator– Gen.1:3; Jn. 1:1-5, esp. v. 3
- B. Christ the Shekinah (dwelling) glory
Jn 1:14, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”
- C. Christ the ladder to Heaven– Jn 1:47-51; Gen. 28:10-18
- D. How did Christ reveal the Father? His person, teaching, and works.
 1. His person
 - a. Jn. 14:8-11
 - b. Jn. 8:49-59
 - c. Jn. 1:15-18 (“The only begotten God has revealed Him.”)
 2. His teaching
 - a. Matt. 7:28-29
 - b. Matt. 22:41-46
 - c. Luke 13:17
 - d. Jn. 7:14-17
 3. His works

- a. Matt. 8:5-13
- b. Matt.8:23-26
- c. Jn. 2:18-22
- d. Jn. 5:16-21
- e. Jn. 9
- f. Jn.11:17-27
- g. Jn.10:15-18

IV. Christ's Final Revelation

- A. Rev. 1:1-3, 9-20
- B. Rev. 19:11-21

Note: God's general revelation in creation is the basis for man's accountability (Rom 1:19,20), but His revelation through covenants is the means whereby we come to know his plan of salvation.

V. Modes of God's Revelation

Heb. 1:1– “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son.”

- A. Direct speech
 - 1. Gen. 1:28-30, 2:16-17– to Adam
 - 2. Gen 4:6-16– to Cain
 - 3. Gen. 6:13-21, 9:1-7– to Noah
 - 4. Gen. 12:1-3– to Abraham
 - 5. Ex. 33:11– to Moses
 - 6. I Sam. 3:1-10– to Samuel (note vs. 1)
 - 7. Mt. 3:17– to Jesus
- B. Theophanies (the angel of the Lord = second person of the Trinity)
 - 1. Gen. 18– to Abraham
 - 2. Gen.32:22-30– to Jacob
 - 3. Exo 3– to Moses
 - 4. Josh. 5:13-15– to Joshua
 - 5. Jud. 6:11-23– to Gideon
 - 6. Jud. 13:3-23– Samson's parents
- C. Dreams
 - 1. Gen. 37:5-11– Joseph
 - 2. Gen. 41 - Pharaoh
 - 3. Dan. 2,4– Nebuchadnezzar
 - 4. Dan. 7:1– Daniel
 - 5. Matt. 1:20– Joseph (4 dreams)
- D. Trances and visions
 - 1. Isa. 6:1– Isaiah

2. Ezek. 1:1; 37:1ff.– Ezekiel
3. Acts 10:9-16– Peter
4. Acts 9– Paul
5. Rev 1:9-18, 4:1-22– John on Patmos and in heaven

E. Angels

1. Gen. 18– Abraham
2. Dan. 9:21-27– Daniel
3. Luke 1:11-20, 26-38– Zechariah and Mary
4. Luke 24:5-8– the woman at Jesus' tomb
5. Acts 12:7-10– Peter
6. Acts 10:1-6– Cornelius

F. The priests

1. Ex. 28:30– Urim and Thummim (Num. 27:21, I Sam, 28:5,6, Deut 33:8).
2. Num. 5:11-31– test for a woman accused of infidelity

G. Prophets– many examples in the Bible of men and women who spoke the word of God through prophecy.

H. Acts of God's Providence

I. The Lord Jesus Christ

1. Jn. 1:14, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”
2. Col. 1:15– “He is the image of the invisible God.”
3. Heb 1:3– “God... has spoken to us through His Son”

J. The Bible.

CHAPTER 3 SCRIPTURE AS REVELATION

It is obvious from the last chapter that God has spoken to mankind in many different ways. The things that God said and the events that surround them are documented in the Scriptures. But what about the Scriptures themselves—are they the Word of God?

Many “so-called” Bible scholars have leveled attacks against this claim, saying that the Scriptures are not the Word of God. Because of these attacks, many, once sound, biblical churches have fallen by the wayside.

It is apparent that this doctrine is of major importance. Every true Christian should believe that the Bible is the Word of God. But in what way are the Scriptures the Word of God?

Many parts of the Bible quote God’s statements directly. Examples of this can be found in the Pentateuch, the Prophets, etc.

The Lord Jesus (God incarnate) is also quoted directly in the N.T. All these portions are the Word of God. But what about other parts of the Bible, such as the Historical books (Joshua, Judges, I, II Samuel, I, II Kings, Esther, etc.), or the Wisdom books (Job, Psalms, Song of Solomon)?

To answer this question it is necessary to look at the testimony that the Bible gives concerning its origin. A perfect example of this witness is II Timothy 3:16, “All Scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”

This chapter will examine the biblical testimony and the claims that the Bible gives concerning itself.

I. O.T. Witness to Itself

A. Authoritative expressions

1. “Thus says the Lord,” “The Lord spoke,” seen over 2000 times.
2. “The word of the Lord” 20 times in Isaiah.
3. “The word of the Lord came unto me” many times in Jer. and Ezekiel.

- B. Preservation of books –God commanded Moses to place the stone tablets inside the ark of the covenant, and the rest of the books beside the ark (See Ez. 40:20, Deut. 31:24-26, I Kings 8:9, II Chron. 34:14). If these books were not the Word of God, would God have allowed them in the ark and in the Holy of Holies?
Joshua and Samuel wrote covenant texts for the people –Jos. 24:25,26; I Sam, 10:25.

C. O.T. (Torah) authority and blessing

1. Deut. 17:18-20, “And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.”

2. Deut. 31:9-13
3. Josh 1:8, “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”
4. II Kings 14:6, “But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.”
5. II Kings 23:1-3
6. Neh. 1:7-9
7. Neh. 8:1-10
8. Neh.13:1-3, “On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever; because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing. Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.”

D. O.T. Prophets– authoritative

1. II Kings 17:13, “Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.”
2. Neh. 9:29-30
3. Dan 9:2,5-6,10
4. Zech. 7:12, “Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.”

II. N.T. Witness to the O.T.

- A. Throughout the N.T. the writers quoted the O.T. to prove the point they were trying to make. The O.T. was the Bible of the early church. When they quoted the O.T. it was considered the final word.
These quotations are introduced by the words, God says, the Holy Spirit says, the Scripture says, or it is written.

1. Heb. 1:5,13
2. Heb 3:7; 4:7
3. The book of Romans uses the O.T. from beginning to end.
4. Acts 28:23-25; 17:10-13; 15:13-18; 13:47; 2

This is ample testimony that the early church believed the Scriptures to be the Word of God.

B. Other passages that show the N.T.'s attitude toward the O.T.

1. II Tim. 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."
2. II Peter 1:19-20, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation."

III. What Jesus believed Concerning the O.T. (Also the N.T.).

The Lord Jesus is the most important witness to the Scripture. As the Second Person of the Trinity and the Prophet of all prophets, what He says is the absolute truth and must be heeded by every professing Christian. His attitude toward Scripture should be ours.

*(This portion of notes taken from Dr. Battle.)

A. Historical references

Throughout the Gospel accounts, the Lord Jesus used the entire OT to teach. It is interesting to study the range of the OT narratives used by Jesus. In fact, all OT history can be traced in His teaching.

Gen 1:27	Mt. 19:4	created male and female
Gen 2:24	Mt. 19:5-6	leave parents, cleave to wife

Note: Critics of the Bible believe that Genesis was taken from different sources ("E" in Gen 1 and "J" in Gen 2). Jesus said, "Have you not read?" taking them as coming from one source. Verse 6 shows that Jesus believed that this was the Word of God.

Gen. 4	Mt. 23:35	blood of Abel to blood of Zechariah
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Note: Our OT begins with Genesis and ends with Malachi, but the Hebrew Bible of Jesus' day began with Genesis and ended with II Chronicles, where the narrative of Zechariah ben Jehoiada is found. Jesus is telling the Pharisees that they are guilty of all the blood shed in the entire OT period. This also demonstrates that Jesus believed in His canon of Scriptures and that God was the author of it.

Gen. 6-9	Mt. 24:38	Noah and the flood
Gen. 19	Mt. 11:23	Sodom's destruction
Gen 19:26	Lk. 17:31-32	Lot's wife
Gen 22	Jn. 8:56	Abraham saw Jesus' day
Ex. 3:6	Mk 12:26	Moses and the bush
Ex. 16:15	Jn. 6:49	manna in the wilderness

Ex. 20:12	Mk. 7:10	Moses said to honor parents
Num. 21:9	Jn. 3:14	Serpent in wilderness
I Sam. 21:6	Mt. 12:3	David ate consecrated bread
I Kings 4	Mt. 6:29	Solomon in his glory
I Kings 10	Mt. 12:42	Queen of Sheba and Solomon
I Kings 17	Lk. 4:25	Elijah comes to the widow
II Kings 5	Lk. 4:27	Naaman the leper cleansed
Jonah 1:17	Mt. 12:40	Jonah in the fish for 3 days
Jonah 3:5-10	Mt. 12:41	Ninevites repent after Jonah's preaching
II Chron 24:21	Lk. 11:51	Zechariah killed in the temple

These examples demonstrate how our Lord felt about the Scriptures. He not only believed them, but He used them in His own teaching. Many of the illustrations above were miraculous in nature. Jesus believed that all of them actually took place just as the Bible says. If our Lord had this opinion of the Word should we claim something different?

B. Other evidences showing Jesus' views on the Scriptures.

1. Jesus continually pointed to the text with such expressions as, "It is written" or "Have you not read." The Greek word for "It is written" demonstrates something that continues on with a result, in this case something that is established forever.
2. When Jesus was tempted, He used the Scriptures as His defense and strength. In the book of Ephesians, Paul calls the Word "the Sword of the Spirit."
3. Mk. 7:9-13 The Scriptures had such lasting and binding authority, that Jesus was concerned that the traditions of men set aside God's command.
4. Lk. 10:25-28 Jesus believed the Scriptures show the way to eternal life.
5. Mt. 22:29 The Scriptures are the standard for doctrine.
6. Mt. 5:18 None of the Law will disappear until everything is accomplished.
7. Jn. 10:34-35 Scripture cannot be broken.
8. Lk 24:25-27; 44; Jn 5: 44-46 Jesus used the Word to teach the disciples concerning Himself.
9. Jesus viewed the circumstances in his life as fulfilling Scripture.
 - a. Mk. 14:49 his arrest
 - b. Jn. 13:18 Judas' betrayal
 - c. Jn. 17:12 Judas' being lost
 - d. Mt. 26:31 the sheep scattered (future)

Jesus believed the Scriptures so much that in some cases He did or said things so that the Scriptures would be fulfilled (Mt. 26:24; Jn. 19: 28).

III. The Authority of the NT

A. Epistles

1. Col.4:16, “And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.”
2. I Thess. 2:13, “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”
3. II Thess. 3:14, “And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.”

B. NT cited as sacred scripture

1. 2 Peter 3:15,16, “...our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.”
2. 1Tim 5:18 cites Deut 25:4 and Luke 10:7 as scripture
“For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.'”

CHAPTER 4 DEFINITION OF INSPIRATION

I. The Claim of Inspiration

The doctrine of Inspiration is derived from verses throughout both Testaments. However, II Tim. 3:16 is probably one of the plainest; “All Scripture is inspired by God...”. The Greek here means “God breathed.” Thus, this passage teaches that the Bible is a direct product of God’s creative breath that is breathed out.

The 1901 ASV of 2 Timothy 3:16 is not a good translation, leading to the understanding that the canon in its entirety may not be inspired: “Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness.”

While the Scriptures are inspired, individual writers are not necessarily so. The apostle Peter was greatly in error when Paul publicly rebuked him, and yet the books that carry his name are God-inspired (2 Pet. 1:19-21). The Roman doctrine of papal infallibility is not based on Scripture: 1 Cor. 5:9 indicates that Paul wrote other church epistles that apparently were not inspired.

II. Holistic Nature of Inspiration

God inspired Scripture by using all the circumstances surrounding the men that would write for Him.

- A. Preparation of the writers
 - 1. Their birth and circumstances
 - 2. Their training
 - 3. Their character
 - 4. Their conversion, sanctification
 - 5. Their ministry
 - 6. Their circumstances of writing

God used all these things in the inspiration process. So many examples of this can be found in the Bible: Moses (Acts 7:20-22), Joshua (preparation examples in Exodus), Samuel (miraculous birth), David the psalmist (circumstances in his life led to many Psalms), Solomon (asked for wisdom), Ezekiel the priest, Daniel (Dan. 1:3-5 being exiled, he wrote on God’s sovereignty), Ezra the scribe (Ezra 7:6), Paul (thoroughly trained at the feet of Gamaliel, Acts 22:2-4).

- B. Men moved to write

Not only did God guide the training of these men, but He also gave them the occasion for writing. Many of Paul’s epistles were written out of deep concern for the churches. David wanted Israel to praise God, so he was moved to write the Psalms. John wrote that people might believe in Jesus. Luke wrote to strengthen a friend in the things he had been taught, etc. (Lk. 1:1-4).

The Lord did not overpower the wills of the men who wrote Holy Scripture. Rather, He

used their mind, will, and emotions to produce the word that He wanted. 2 Peter 1:21 states that the prophets were “moved along by the Holy Spirit.”

2 Peter 1:21, “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

The Greek word for “moved,” *pheromenoi*, is used in Acts 27:15 for a ship being “driven along” by a great wind. In the same sense the writers of Scriptures were directed and carried along by the wind of the Holy Spirit.

III. Truths of Inspiration

A. Inspiration is plenary and verbal

1. Plenary– full, complete, entire: all Scripture is God’s word.
2. Verbal– every word of Scripture is inspired by God, not just the thoughts.

B. Inspiration only refers to the original autographs. The KJV, NIV, NASB, etc. are not inspired, although the WCF refers to our vulgar versions as “infallible.”

C. Defined: “Inspiration is a special act of the Holy Spirit by which he guided the writers of the books of the Scriptures, so that their words should convey the thought he wished conveyed, should bear a proper relationship to the thought of other inspired books, and should be kept free from errors of fact, doctrine, and judgment.”

IV. Inadequate definitions of inspiration

A. Ordinary inspiration– the Bible is put on the same level as Shakespeare. The popular definition of inspiration.

B. Limited inspiration– parts of the Bible are inspired while others are not.

C. Graded inspiration– some parts are more inspired than others: Eusebius of Caesarea and Roman Catholic Church.

D. Dynamic inspiration– the thoughts are inspired, but the words are not (Karl Barth).

E. Moral inspiration– the Bible is inspired in sections that deal with religion and doctrine, but other areas dealing with science and history are not inspired (Dan Fuller, et.al.)

F. Dictated inspiration– God dictated the words to stenographers with little or no human input.

V. Proofs for verbal inspiration

- A. Matt 5:18, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."
- B. 1 Cor. 2:13, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."
- C. Gal. 3:16, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

CHAPTER 5 THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE

I. Definition of Canon

- A. Origin— our word “canon” can be traced back through Latin to Greek back to Hebrew. Both the Hebrew “*qaneh*” and the Greek “*kanon*” mean a “reed or rod” used in measuring. Hence the Canon is our rule (standard) of faith and practice. The Greek Church father Origen (fl. 220) used the word to denote what we call the rule of faith. The idea of list or index was derived by the marks on a measuring rod.
- B. Biblical use— originally the term “Canon” did not mean a list of books. In the NT the word means “limit, area, rule, principle.” In 2 Cor. 10:13-16, Paul uses the word to mean “limit” and in Gal. 6:16 “rule or principle.”

II. OT Canon

A. Biblical references

- 1. Luke 24:44, “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.”

The Hebrew Bible was divided into three parts: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. Jesus alluded to the third section by using the principle book in that section, the Psalms.

- 2. Luke 11:51, “51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.”

Matt 23:45, “That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.”

Genesis is the first book in the Hebrew Bible and 2 Chronicles is the last. In Jesus’ day there was a set Jewish canon.

- B. Synod of Jamnia (A.D. 90)— this was a Jewish synod which was held in order to discuss among other things, the Jewish canon. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Esther were debated for various reasons, but were all upheld as canonical. Other books which are in the Apocrypha were rejected as non-canonical.

An important note on Jamnia. The books that were acknowledge were already accepted by the Jews, while those they refused were never included in the first place.

- C. Philo— a learned Alexandrian Jew who was a contemporary with our Lord, knew of and accepted the Hebrew canon. Because he was from Alexandria, he read from the LXX which contained the Apocrypha. He did not regard these writings as

canon. The apocrypha was placed with the Hebrew canon because of the price of scrolls and books, not because it was considered as equal with the Scriptures. We cannot be certain which books Philo included in his canon because he does not list them, but he does support the idea that there was a valid Hebrew canon at the time of Jesus.

- D. Josephus—a Palestinian Jew who was born about the time of Jesus’ death. He wrote many things in Greek, but in his “Letter against Apion,” a Semitic writer from Alexandria, he lists the Jewish canon that parallels our modern canon in content although not in order and structure (22 OT books).
- E. Melito— (=earliest Christian list) bishop of Sardis A.D. 170 obtained a list while traveling through Syria. In a letter to a friend he shared the list, which included all of our books except Esther.
- F. Origen (A.D. 185-254)— greatest Bible scholar of the Greek fathers also gives 22 books.
- G. Athanasius— bishop of Alexandria gave a list of the canon in his Easter letter A.D. 367; also gave 22 books, Esther not included in his list. He also gives another list of non-canonical books which are good reading.
- H. Jerome (A.D. 347-420)— greatest textual scholar of the Latin fathers. He witnesses to the OT Canon. He states that the Jews arranged the books to correspond to the Hebrew alphabet.

III. NT Canon

The NT canon is distinguished by the authority of the apostles. The NT writings were either written by apostles or by apostolic men. Because the apostles were eye witnesses of Jesus’ ministry, death, and resurrection, and because of the promise made to them by Jesus, their writings are authoritative and, thus, canonical.

A. The need of a NT canon

1. While the apostles were still alive there was no real need of written accounts of the Lord’s work. But it became evident that gospels were necessary to keep the original apostolic doctrine.
2. After the gospel of John was written, the four gospels were gathered together, and so were the epistles of Paul.
3. Marcion— (about A.D. 140) Gnostic teacher from Asia Minor came to Rome and introduced heretical teaching. Because he rejected that Jesus came in the flesh, he created his own canon. He hated anything Jewish, so he rejected all gospels but Luke (a Gentile) and all the epistles except 10 of Paul’s (the only faithful apostle) letters (1,2 Timothy and Titus not included). He doctored Luke’s gospel so that it did not have the genealogy, the birth, baptism, and temptation of Jesus.

4. Persecution (A.D. 303)– this final persecution intended to destroy all the sacred books of the Christians. Christians forced to know which books they should die for.

B. Evidence of the NT Canon

1. Irenaeus (fl. 140 A.D.)– bishop of Lyons in Gaul; his writings attest to the canon
2. Muratorian canon– named after L.A. Muratori who discovered and published it in 1740. Written against Marcion.
3. Justin Martyr (ca. A.D. 150)– says the memoirs of the apostles were read in Christian gatherings together with the writings of the prophets.
4. Origen (A.D. 230)– gives a NT list; Hebrews, 2 Peter, 2-3 John, James, Jude, The Epistle of Barnabas, Hermas, and the Didache were disputed by some.
5. Eusebius (early fourth century)– James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2-3 John were disputed by some but recognized by the majority.
6. Athanasius– Festal letter written at Easter of 367 recognizes all of our 27 books.
7. Jerome and Augustine list the same
8. Council of Hippo in A.D. 393 listed the 27 NT books.

CHAPTER 6 INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY PROPER

A. A. Hodge, ch. VIII

I. Beliefs concerning God or gods

- A. Atheism– there is no God or supernatural being at all. The universe consists of matter and energy. Nothing should be worshipped.
- B. Agnosticism– the existence or non-existence of any divine being is impossible to determine. The ultimate cause (God) and the essential nature of things are unknown and unknowable to human beings. Human knowledge is limited to experience. Therefore, we are not responsible to worship any supposed god.
- C. Pantheism– God is the transcendent reality of which the material universe and man are only manifestations. It involves a denial of God’s personality and identifies God with nature.
- D. Dynamism– God is an impersonal life-force or energy pervading the universe and directing all events.
- E. Polytheism– there are many gods who should be worshipped. Each of these gods has supernatural power and controls part of the universe.
- F. Animism– (polytheistic in nature) nature is filled with personal spirits which cause the various natural events. They believe that all natural objects and even the universe has a soul. The souls can exist separate from their material bodies.
- G. Henotheism– there are many gods, but the worshiper selects one god to be his deity. This god is superior to the other gods.
- H. Idolatry– the spirits of gods either dwell in or can be reached through objects that have been made by man.
- I. Dualism– there are two gods over the universe, which are equal in power, and yet are opposed to each other.
- J. Deism– there is only one God. This God set the creation of the universe in motion and then has allowed it to continue without interference.
- K. Monotheism– there is only one God. This God has personality and has an active role in the universe. This God must be worshipped.
- L. Limited Theism– there is one God who is active in the universe. While he is supernatural, he is not infinite. There are limits to his power or time.
- M. Christian Theism– there is one God who has revealed himself to man by Jesus Christ and his inspired word. He exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

II. Biblical assumptions of Theology Proper

In this portion of our class we will assume that God exists and that the Bible is his revelation to man. The arguments for the existence of God are dealt with in Theology V, “Apologetics and Ethics.” While the Scriptures do not try to prove the existence of God, they present his attributes and give a unified picture of God.

III. Definition of God

- A. Westminster Shorter Catechism # 4, “God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.”

According to the records of the time this definition came to the lips of the youngest member of the Assembly while he was praying (probably George Gillespie).

- B. Westminster Larger Catechism, “God is a Spirit, in and of himself infinite in being, glory, blessedness, and perfection; all-sufficient, eternal, unchangeable, incomprehensible, every where present, almighty, knowing all things, most wise, most holy, most just, most merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”

- C. For more detailed explanation see Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 2.

CHAPTER 7 GOD IS SPIRIT

I. Essence of being a spirit

- A. Definition– both Bible words, Hebrew “*ruah*,” and Greek “*pneuma*” mean “moving air or wind, breath, an invisible power (angels), the presence of God (life source), or a human spirit.
- B. In John 4:24 (2 Cor. 3:17) Jesus describes God as spirit (see also Acts 7:49; 17:28; Ps. 139:7-12; Dt. 4:12-24).
- C. JAB, “Spirituality indicates that God exists apart from physical material. He has no body, and can exist even when the universe does not exist.”

II. God as personality

- A. God as spirit is more than an active force, he has personality. John 4:24 also gives insight into this proposition. Jesus describes God as the Father who seeks people to worship him in spirit and in truth.
- B. Person– “A being capable of self-consciousness and self-determination, a being to whom the pronouns, ‘I, thou, and he’ can be meaningfully applied.” (Buswell). To be a person one must demonstrate knowledge, will, and emotion. Through the Scriptures, God has revealed all three of these characteristics in perfection.
- C. Summary: see Charles Hodge (Gross’ edition, pp. 138-139, for good summary)
- D. The many uses of pronouns in the Bible (I, you, etc.) and the different names of God (YHWH especially) show that God is a person.
- E. He is identified as the “living God,” being set apart from the non-existent gods of the heathen nations (Dan. 6:26-27; Dt. 5:26; Ps. 84:2; Isa. 44:6-20)
“you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;” –1Thess 1:10
- F. God is also active in the affairs of men by the works of creation and providence. This also shows that God is more than a blind, impersonal force (Gen. 50:20; 24:12-27; Ps. 19:1; 92:4-5)
- G. The KNOWLEDGE of God
 - 1. 1 Sam. 2:3, “Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.”
 - 2. Isa. 40:12-14, “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?”

3. Isa. 55:8-9, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
4. Matt. 10:29-30, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."
5. Ps. 139:1-4, 6, 17-18
6. Pro. 3:19-20, "The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew."
7. Rom. 11:33-36

H. The WILL of God

1. Ps. 143:10, "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness."
2. Isa. 53:10, "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand."
3. Mt. 6:10, "your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."
4. Rom. 12:2, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
5. Eph. 5:17, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."
6. 1 Jn. 5:14, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."
7. Rev. 4:11, "11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

I. God's EMOTIONS

1. Dt. 5:9, "Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."
2. Eph. 4:30, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."
3. Ps. 5:5, "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity."
4. Ps. 103:13, " Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him."

5. Ps. 145:8, “The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.”

CHAPTER 8

GOD’S NON-COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

God’s non-communicable (absolute) attributes are those which the Godhead alone possesses. The Shorter Catechism describes God as “infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being...”

I. Self-existence of God

- A. Jn. 5:26, “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.”
- B. Acts 17:25, “Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.”
- C. Ex. 3:14, “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”
- D. Jn. 8:58, “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”

II. The oneness of God (unity of the Godhead)

- A. Dt. 6:4-5, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”
- B. Isa. 44:6-8, “Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.”
- C. Jn. 10:30, “I and my Father are one.”
- D. 1 Cor. 8:4, “As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.”

III. God’s Infinity– There are no limits to God in any of his attributes

- A. Thought– Ps. 40:5, “Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order

unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.”

- B. Righteousness and salvation– Ps. 71:15, “My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.”
- C. Forgiveness– Ps. 103:12, “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”
- D. Understanding– Ps. 147:5, “Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.”
- E. Mercy and faithfulness– Ps. 89:2, 27:10, “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.”

IV. The Immensity of God (omnipresence)

- A. 1 Kings 8:27, 30, “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.”
- B. Ps. 139:7-10
- C. Jer. 23:23-24
- D. Acts 7:48-49, “Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?”
- E. Acts 17:27-28, “That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.”
- G. Amos 9:1-4

Compare these passages with those verses that seem to indicate that God moves from one place to another (Gen. 11:5; 18:20-21). God chooses a special manifestation in heaven, and the verses in Genesis show God’s special attention or concern over something.

V. Eternality of God

Time and space are dimensions of our universe. With God there is no time or space, but he chooses to manifest himself to us in our time/space existence.

- A. Ps. 90:2, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”

- B. Hab. 1:12, “Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction.”
- C. Jn 1:1-3
- D. Jn. 17:5
- E. Ps. 102:25-27, “Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.”

VI. God’s Immutability (his unchangeableness)

Hodge: “God is absolutely immutable in his essence and attribute. He can neither increase nor decrease. He is subject to no process of development, or of self-evolution. His knowledge and power can never be greater or less. He can never be wiser or holier, or more righteous or more merciful than He ever has been and ever must be. He is no less immutable in his plans and purposes.”

- A. Ex. 3:14, “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”
- B. Ps. 102:25-27
- C. Ps. 33:11, “The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.”
- D. Isa. 46:9-10
- E. Heb. 13:8, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”
- F. James 1:17, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

What about those passages that speak of God changing his mind or repenting (Gen. 6:6-7; 1 Sam.. 15:10-11; Jer. 18:8)? What actually takes place is a change in God’s outward providence, not in his eternal plan. Such change is dependent on a change in his creatures (Jonah 3:9-10).

CHAPTER 9 GOD'S COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

God's communicable attributes are those which he shares to some extent with mankind. The WSC answer states, "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." The last six attributes are God's communicable qualities.

I. God's Knowledge and Wisdom

- A. Job 26:6, "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering."
- B. Job 37:16, "Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?"
- C. Heb. 4:13, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
- D. Jude 24-25 "...to the only wise God, our Savior..."

II. God's Power

God's power is his ability to transform his will into reality.

- A. Gen. 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."
- B. Gen. 17:1, "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."
- C. Job 42:2, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."
- E. Jer. 10:12-13

There are certain things God cannot do. He cannot be unfaithful, sin, lie, be tempted by evil, nor tempt any person (2 Tim. 2:13; Tit. 1:2; James 1:13).

III. God's Holiness

God's holiness is a separation in character from all that is impure.

- A. Lev. 11:44-45, "For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."

- B. 1 Sam. 2:2, "There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God."
- C. Ps. 96:9, "O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth."
- D. Lk. 1:49, "For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name."

IV. God's Justice

- A. Ex. 34:7, "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."
- B. Dt. 32:4, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."
- C. Neh. 9:32-33
- D. Zeph. 3:5, "The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame."
- E. Lk. 18:7-8

V. God's Goodness

- A. Ex. 33:19, "And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."
- B. Ps. 23:6, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."
- C. Ps. 27:13, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living."
- D. Rom. 2:4, "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
- E. Gal. 5:22, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."

VI. The Truth of God

- A. 2 Chr. 15:3, "Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law."

- B. Ps. 119:160, “Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever.”
- C. Mt. 22:16, “And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.”
- D. Jn. 15:26, “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.”
- E. 1 Jn. 5:20, “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”

CHAPTER 10 GOD AS A TRINITY

A. A. Hodge, ch. IX

I. Creedal Formulations

There are several creedal-like statements in the NT (such as Mt. 28:19) which are trinitarian in nature. Outside the NT the church fathers quote from baptismal and other creedal statements that were current in their times; these include statements from Ignatius, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Novatian, Origen, Eusebius, and others (see Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* 2:11-41).

The Trinitarian form of these early statements of faith is maintained in the earliest ecumenical creed, the Apostles' Creed, in all its various forms:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell [grave]; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Universal Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

The creeds of the four great ecumenical councils build upon this base, with a careful framing of the Trinitarian doctrine developing through the fires of controversy and heresy. The Nicene Creed (AD 325), as revised at Constantinople in 381, is similar to the Apostles' Creed in using the persons of the Trinity as its outline. This creed was produced in reaction to the heresy of Arianism, hence it emphasizes the deity of Christ.

The final ecumenical form of the creed was produced by the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451. Because of the heresies of Nestorianism (Christ having an incomplete humanity) and Monophysitism (Eutychianism: Christ having only one nature), this creed emphasizes the person of God the Son, with his essential deity and essential humanity as two complete natures combined in one person.

The Westminster Standards provide a precise and Scriptural description of the Trinity:

W.C. 2:3: "In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son."

S.C. 6: "There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory"

L.C. 9: "There be three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one true, eternal God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; although distinguished by their personal properties."

L.C. 10: "It is proper to the Father to beget the Son, and to the Son to be begotten of the Father, and to the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and the Son from all eternity."

L.C. 11: "The scriptures manifest that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father, ascribing unto them such names, attributes, works, and worship, as are proper to God only."

II. Unity/Simplicity of God

The doctrine of **divine simplicity** says that God is without parts. Divine simplicity is rooted in the doctrine of the unity of God and teaches that the being of God is identical to the attributes of God. God is not a composite being of his individual attributes, as if each attribute can be abstracted from his being. Rather, such characteristics as omnipresence, goodness, truth, eternity, etc., are identical to his being, not qualities that make up his being.

God is an absolute unity. There is one God, who is referred to often in the singular. Hence, all the persons of the Trinity form one God, of the same essence. They must, therefore, share the same attributes from all eternity. (For a thorough discussion see A.A. Hodge, *Confession of Faith*, pp. 57-59.)

The deity and close interrelation of the three persons of the godhead is taught in both testaments. These following NT passages show a distinction of persons in the Godhead, yet also reveal a common identity within the persons of the Trinity in acting as one God.

Jn. 10:30 (Father and Son)

“I and my Father are one.”

Rom. 8:9 (Son and Holy Spirit)

“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.”

1 Cor. 2:11 (Father and Holy Spirit)

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”

1 Cor. 3:16 (Father and Holy Spirit)

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

III. Diversity in the Godhead

Not only is there a complete unity within the Godhead, there is also a diversity or distinctness within the Trinity. An interesting point is the use of the word *elohim* in the OT. *Elohim* has a plural ending, but it is used to represent a single God. Although there are others plausible grammatical explanations for the use of the plural ending, the use of the word *elohim* agrees with the doctrine of the Trinity.

There are also verses in the OT that can be interpreted as presenting the Godhead as taking counsel together:

Gen. 1:26, “...Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...”

Gen. 3:22. “...Behold, the man is become as one of us...”

Gen. 11:7, “...let us go down, and there confound their language...”

Gen. 35:7, “God appeared (plural verb) to him...”

Isa. 6:8, “...Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?...”

A. Scriptural Proof for the Diversity of the Godhead in the OT

1. Ps. 45:6-7, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed you with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

2. Ps. 110:1, “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”
3. Pro. 30:4, “Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?”
4. Jer. 23:5-6, “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”
5. Dan. 7:13-14, “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
6. Isa. 63:9-10, “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.”

B. Scriptural proof for the diversity in the Godhead from the NT

1. Mt. 3:16-17, “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” See also Jn. 1:32-34
2. Mt. 28:19, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”
3. 1 Cor. 12:4-6, “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.”
4. 2 Cor. 13:14, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.”
5. Lk. 1:35, “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

NOT 1 John 5:7 of TR...

IV. The Deity of God the Son

A. Divine names ascribed to the Son

1. Isa. 9:6, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”
2. Isa. 40:3 quoted in Mk. 1:3, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” Calls Jesus YHWH.
3. Jn. 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was

God.”

Rendering the word *theos* as “a god” is incorrect. Other places in the NT use the same construction and it always means “God”:

Mk. 12:27, “He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.”

Lk. 20:38, “For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.”

Jn. 8:54, “Jesus answered, If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God.”

Phil. 2:13, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure.”

4. Mt. 1:22-23, “Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”
5. Jn. 8:58, “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.” See Ex. 3:14
6. Rom. 9:5, “Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.”
7. 2 Peter 1:1, “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Grandville-Sharp rule
8. Rev. 19:16, “And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

B. Divine attributes

1. Pre-existence– Jn 8:58

Jn. 17:5, “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

2. Eternity– Jn. 17:5

Rev. 1:8, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

Rev. 22:13, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”

3. Immutability

Heb. 1:10-12, “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”

Heb. 13:8, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

4. Omniscience

Mt. 11:27, “All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”

Jn. 2:24-25, “But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”

Rev. 2:23, “And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”

5. Equality with God

Phil. 2:6, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with

God.”

C. Divine Works

1. Creation Jn. 1:1-10; Col.1:16-17
2. Providence and preservation. Col. 1:17; Heb 1:3; Jn. 10:28
3. Final judgement Mt. 25:31-32; Jn. 5:22; II Cor. 5:10
4. Giving eternal life Jn. 10:28
5. Resurrection Jn. 11:25-26
6. Sending the Holy Spirit Jn. 16:7
7. Sanctification Eph. 5:25-27

D. Divine Worship

1. People and angels commanded to worship Him — Jn. 5:23; I Cor. 1:2; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 1:5-6; 5:11-12
2. Jesus received worship that belongs only to God. Nowhere in these passages does Jesus rebuke anyone or command them not to worship Him (see also Rev. 22:8-9 for contrast)
3. Benedictions and salutations also include the Son and the Holy Spirit (II Cor. 13:14; II Pet. 1:1-2)

V. God the Holy Spirit

The same line of argument used to show the deity of God the Son can be used to demonstrate the deity of the Holy Spirit. However, it may be helpful first to demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is actually a separate person from God the Father. The Bible not only distinguishes the two in the places where the Trinity is named (as Mt. 28:19), but it attributes personality to the Holy Spirit directly, and it attributes to the Holy Spirit in particular the characteristics of personality: intelligence, volition, and emotion.

The Holy Spirit is referred to by the use of personal pronouns (“I, you, he”). He is active; he speaks (Jn. 15:26; 16:13-14; Acts 13:2; 1 Tim. 4:1); he speaks especially in Scripture (cf. many references in which God’s Spirit speaks, or citations from the Spirit, as Mt. 22:43 or Heb. 3:7). He enters into relations with us as Christians, indwelling us (Rom. 8:9) and distributing gifts to us. He possesses intelligence (Rom. 8:26-27), volition (1 Cor. 12:11), and emotion (Eph. 4:30).

Once it is determined that the Holy Spirit is a person, it can be shown that he possesses divinity using the same procedure as that used for God the Son. He possesses divine names or titles, divine attribute, performs divine works, and receives divine worship.

(For further study, see not only Bickersteth’s *The Trinity*, but also his work, *The Holy Spirit*; also see the classic work on the Holy Spirit by the Puritan John Owen; Charles Hodge has an excellent discussion *Systematic Theology* 1, ch. 8.)

A. The Holy Spirit is a person and not an “it.”

1. He speaks to us– Jn. 16:13; Acts 1:16; 8:29; 19:19; 11:12; 13:2; 16:6 and many others.

2. He indwells us and we have communion with him– I Cor. 3:16; II Cor. 13:14
3. He prays for us– Rom. 8:26
4. He possesses intelligence– Rom. 8:26-27
5. He has a will– I Cor. 12:11
6. He has emotion, he can be grieved– Eph. 4:30
7. He can be lied to– Acts 5:3-4,9
8. He can be sinned against– Mk. 3:22-30

B. Divine titles

1. The Holy Spirit is Yahweh– Isa. 6:8-9 and Acts 28:25-26; Jer. 31:33, Heb. 10:15-16
2. Called God– Acts 5:3-4
Note that the title “Spirit of God” does not imply any inferiority to God. Rather, it indicates equality with God, just as a spirit of a human is the essence of that person (cf. 1 Cor. 2:10-11).
3. Spirit of God is equal with God– I Cor. 2:10-11

C. Divine Attributes

1. Omniscience– I Cor 2:10-11
2. Omnipresence– Ps 139:7
3. Omnipotent– Lk. 1:35, Rom. 8:11

D. Divine Works

1. Creation– Job 26:13; Ps 104:30
2. Miracles– I Cor. 12:9-11
3. Regeneration– John 3:6; Titus 3:5

VI. Offices of the Trinity (Taken from JAB’s notes)

While the persons of the Trinity are consubstantial and equal in power and glory, each person within the Trinity has diverse functions in terms of revealing God. This diversity leads to our understanding of an “economic” subordination within the Godhead. This inter-relation appears to be eternal.

The Scriptures consistently set forth an order of office.

1 Cor. 8:6, “For us there is but one God, the Father, from (εκ) whom all things came and for (εις) unto) whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through (δια) whom all things came and through (δια) whom we live.”

Eph. 2:18, “For through (δια) him [Christ] we both [Jew and Gentiles] have access to (προς) the Father by (εν, by means of) one Spirit.”

The Greek prepositions in these verses are interesting, as they point to such a distinction in function. The Father is the source and goal of all things (εκ, and εις or προς); the Son is the agent by which the Father’s will is performed (δια); the Holy Spirit is the means by which the Father and the Son accomplish the Father’s will (εν). As the verses quoted earlier demonstrate, this same arrangement is evident in all of God’s works, including creation, providence, and

redemption.

The **Father**, as the title suggests, is seen as the person who originates, plans, and purposes what the Godhead will do. He eternally generates the Son, and commissions him to do his will (Jn. 10:18; 17:3). The entire structure of the covenant of redemption, from which all the biblical covenants spring, is based on this relation between the Father and the Son. The Father sends the Holy Spirit to do his will in carrying out his various purposes (Gen. 1:2; Ex. 31:3; 35:31; Num. 11:17-29; Jud. 3:10; Job 33:4; Ps. 51:11; Isa. 11:2; 40:13; 42:1-5; Lk. 11:13; Jn. 14:16,26; Acts 2:17, etc.).

The **Son** is eternally generated from the Father, but this does not mean that he had a beginning, for he is eternal. He never did not have the title of Son of God, and is seen doing the will of his Father, even when His own (human) will recoiled at what lay before him (Jn . 12:23, 27-28; cf. the Garden of Gethsemane, Mt. 26:39, 42, 44, and parallels in Mk. and Lk.). John's gospel especially shows us how Jesus said that he was doing what the Father commanded, both in his teaching (Jn. 8:28; 12:50; 15:15; 17:8) and in his life and sacrifice (Jn. 5:36; 10:17-18; 14:31; 17:4).

This subordination of the Son to the Father does not mean that Jesus is less than his Father (as Jn. 14:28 might suggest), but rather that Jesus in his subordinate role and in his estate of humiliation (as in Phil. 2:5-8) voluntarily assumes an office of less authority than his Father. A parallel might be that of a husband to his wife (cr. Eph. 5); while the husband is the head of the wife and the wife obeys her husband, they are equal before God in essence, importance, and glory.

The **Holy Spirit** is pictured in Scripture as the one who does the will of the Father and the Son, and who seeks to glorify them. Charles Hodge calls him "the executive of the Godhead: (*Systematic Theology* 1:529). He proceeds from the Father (see verses above), and from the Son (Jn. 15:26; cf. Gal. 4:6, :the Spirit of his Son;; N.B. The *filioque* controversy). Theologians are careful to distinguish the term "generation," referring to the Son's relation to the Father, from the term "procession," referring to the Spirit's relation to the Father and the Son.

This economy of relation in the Trinity is the basis of God's love and eternal fellowship with himself. When he created humans in his own image, he created them male and female (Gen. 1:26). The fellowship we enjoy pictures the fellowship God enjoys in the Trinity, and the subordination of office God has ordained for humans is a picture of that subordination we see revealed in the Trinity.

CHAPTER 11 CREATION

The character and nature of God is discussed under the category of his attributes. What he does, especially in regard to our universe, is described as his decrees. God's decree is sovereign and all-encompassing.

The decrees of God include two major categories: creation and providence. Creation is the bringing into existence of the universe; providence is his sovereign government of the universe. In this chapter we will discuss creation.

I. Creedal Statement

The Apostles' Creed begins, "I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth." God's creating the universe is the first statement said about his activity. This statement is repeated in the other ancient creeds.

The Westminster standards have a fuller discussion of the theology of creation. The catechisms relate the creation to the free exercise of God's will.

WLC 14 How doth God execute his decrees?

A. God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will.

WSC 8 How doth God execute his decrees?

A. God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence.

All three symbols describe the scope of God's work of creation:

WCF 4.1 It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.

WLC 15 What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is that wherein God did in the beginning, by the word of his power, make of nothing the world, and all things therein, for himself, within the space of six days, and all very good.

WSC 9 What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is, God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

Only the Larger Catechism specifically mentions the creation of angels:

WLC 16 How did God create angels?

A. God created all the angels spirit, immortal, holy, excelling in knowledge, mighty in power, to execute his commandments, and to praise his name, yet subject to change.

All three symbols of the Westminster standards include statements on the creation of human beings, but this subject will be studied more in detail in a different course.

James B. Green, *A Harmony of the Westminster Standards* (pp. 35-36) offers the following questions to clarify the standards' teaching on creation. He says that in the standards "we find the best answer anywhere to be found to the following questions:"

“1. How did the world come to be?

The answers which have been given to this question may best be given in this order:

- a. The world is a chance formation: atomistic, materialistic, monistic.
- b. Conscious formation: platonic, dualistic. Matter as well as mind is eternal. God, who is mind, took matter in hand and formed the best world He could out of it.
- c. Voluntary yet unconscious emanation: pantheistic, monistic, practically atheistic.
- d. Conscious, purposeful creation: monistic (before creation, dualistic after creation); Mosaic, theistic, Christian.

“2. Who created (or made) the world?

“3. How did He make it?

“4. Why did He Make it?

‘For Himself.’ (Larger Catechism)

Mark the attributes glorified in creation. (Confession)

Note the classification of things made.”

II. Scriptural support

The Scriptures cited in the Westminster standards, along with some others, certainly teach the doctrine of divine creation:

Gen. 1:1-3, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness [was] upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”

The rest of the chapter continues the story of God’s creation of the world and its creatures. God speaks and it is done. In the text it appears to be miraculous and sudden.

Ex. 20:11, “For [in] six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them [is], and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

The six days in view are the six days of Gen. 1. This passage seems to rule out the gap theory, since all things were created within the six days, even the angels in heaven (Gen. 1:1).

Ps. 104:24, “O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.”

Jer. 10:11-12, “Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, [even] they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.”

Eph. 1:11, “ In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:”

(All creation is thus the work of God, following his own will.)

Jn. 1:2-3, “The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

I Cor. 8:6, “But to us [there is but] one God, the Father, of whom [are] all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom [are] all things, and we by him.”

Heb. 1:3, “ Who being the brightness of [his] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;”

Note how in both Colossians and Hebrews, Jesus is spoken of as not only the creator, but as also the sustainer of all the world.

Heb. 11:3, “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

Rev 4:11 (song of the twenty-four elders to God the Father),

As shown above, the Scriptures teach that all three members of the Trinity were active in the creation. A.A. Hodge has assembled the following list (*Confession of Faith*, p. 82):

God in general — Gen. 1:1, 26

the Father — I Cor. 8:6

the Father through the Son — Heb. 1:2

the Father through the Spirit — Ps. 104:30

the Son — Jn. 1:2-3

the Holy Spirit — Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4

(Psa 104:30 and Job 33:4 may also refer to the Spirit’s working in giving new life under God’s providence.)

III. Creation *ex nihilo*

Scriptures teach that before God created the universe he existed:

Ps. 90:2, “2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”

Jn. 17:5, 24, “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

Thus God pre-dates existing matter. It is hard for us to comprehend this truth, since time itself is a part of our universe. In our thought patterns “before time began” is an oxymoron. Yet the Bible speaks in these terms, no doubt accommodating itself to our language and popular thought. In some way, God’s existence transcends time, so that we can speak of Him existing “before,” as well as “beyond” our universe, while still acting in our universe.

Since God existed before the creation, creation originally must have been from nothing (nothing besides God’s thought). This is creation *ex nihilo* (“out of nothing”). This original creation has been termed *creatio prima* (“first creation”); the later forming of the original material into other forms (e.g., making Adam from dust) is then termed *creatio secunda* (“second creation”). What brought the original creation into existence was not some rearrangement of previously existing matter or energy, but a direct act of the will of God.

Ps. 33:6, “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”

Ps. 148:1-6, “Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun

and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.”

Some have sought to strengthen the Scriptural evidence for creation *ex nihilo* by asserting that the Hebrew and Greek terms for “create” (*bara’* and *ktizo*) stand for creation from nothing, while the words for “make” (*asah* and *poieo*) stand for forming from pre-existing matter. The problem with this argument is that, while it frequently follows biblical usage, there are places where the terms are used interchangeably.

examples of interchangeability:

Gen 1:26-27 — man; make in v. 26; create in v. 27

Gen 1:21, 25 — create whales, make beasts

Gen 1:20-21 — create, waters bring forth

Gen 2:2-4 — work he made, “created to make”

Gen 5:1 — man: created, made

Isa 43:7 — create, form, make

Isa 45:18 — create heavens; form, make, establish, create earth

“God is said to have created the world, and also to be the maker of the heavens and the earth. Plants and animals are said to be created, although formed out of the dust of the earth.” (C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology* 1:558)

Perhaps it is best said that the words for “create” do imply the making of something entirely new, whether out of pre-existing materials or out of nothing.

Two NT passages seem to teach explicitly that creation IS *ex nihilo*:

- Rom. 4:17, “...God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;”

Some take this reference to teach that God “calls” the non-existent things by bringing them forth into existence—i.e., creating them. Others understood this verse as does Chs. Hodge:

“*To call* may here be taken in the sense of commanding, controlling by a word. The passage then expresses the highest idea of omnipotence. The actual and the possible are equally subject to his will; the non-existing, the merely possible, is as much obedient to Him as the actually existing” (*Systematic Theology* 1:560-561).

In either case, the power of God over matter is absolute, and its creation would be *ex nihilo*.

- Heb. 11:3, “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

An interesting textual note is that the Western text of another passage specifically teaches creation *ex nihilo*: “...because you created all things, and through your will they were not, and they were created” (Rev. 4:11 in Codex Bezae [D]).

Modern theoretical physics and cosmology are wrestling with this same question. The prevailing theory teaches that at the Big Bang the universe came into existence from nothing; it exploded from nothingness, through a split instant when the whole universe was smaller than an atom, and on to its present size. The Roman Catholic Church has accepted this explanation, with God being the one who caused the Big Bang; this is also the view of many Protestants. However, there is a new problem for this view. Such books as Stephen Hawking’s *A Brief History of Time* have popularized the idea that the Big Bang could have happened without any

cause; hence, while God possibly caused the Big Bang, it is not necessary to believe he did so.

The subsequent development of the universe along its present pattern has also caused much discussion, with some physicists (e.g., Paul Davies) seeing evidence of design and the guiding influence of at least some kind of god. This subject comes under the study of apologetics and evidences.

IV. Purpose of Creation

All God's decrees are designed "for his own glory" (S.C. 7). This includes the creation. The creation not only glorifies the wisdom and power of God by its very existence, but also provides a platform for the display of his attributes in his works of providence, especially in his work of redemption.

Scriptures teach that the creation reveals God's existence, power, wisdom, and glory. It provides an answer to false religion and to unbelief.

Ps. 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."

Ps. 96:4-5, "For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens."

Ps. 147:4-5, "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite."

Isa. 40:25-26, "25 To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth."

Rom. 1:20, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

Since God is glorified when his existence and attributes are employed in activity and are demonstrated, the creation results in glorifying God.

God was pleased with his creation — Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31

Isa. 43:6-7, "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."

Rev. 4:11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

As has been noted already, the primary purpose of the creation is not the happiness or even the holiness of God's creatures, but the manifestation of the glory of God himself.

V. Time of Creation

This subject is filled with technical arguments and difficulties from various disciplines, and deserves a more detailed study than is possible in a course of this nature. However, systematic theology does have an interest in this question, since the various views do have theological assumptions and related conclusions. Only a survey of these views from a theological and

biblical perspective will be possible here.

A. Non-historical theories of the creation account

1. Framework hypothesis– Genesis simply gives in poetic form the totality, extent, and grandeur of creation, without reference to the actual order of events. The Bible is a work of faith, not a source of scientific explanation.
2. Revelatory-day hypothesis– God revealed to Moses in seven days what he did at creation. The actual order and duration of creation is not discussed in the Bible.

Both these views depend upon scientific theories and investigations for our understanding of the time of creation, and consider the Bible to be of no use in these questions, other than to assert that God in his sovereignty is responsible for the universe. Many theistic evolutionists hold to these views.

A criticism of these views would be that they deny the teaching value and perspicuity of Scripture. The Bible seems to present a simple, straightforward account of creation. To state that this account bears no relation to the actual events would seem to deny that the Bible is actually a revelation from God.

B. Extended time views

1. Day-age theory – each day of creation is a period of activity extending longer than one literal day.
2. Intermittent-day theory– creation took place over billions of years. The days, however, were literal twenty-four hour days, which were separated from each other by long periods of time.

C. Gap theory – There is a time gap between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2. During this gap a pre-Adamic race that accounts for the fossil record existed. This pre-Adamic race was judged and destroyed by God who started creation from scratch in Gen. 1:2. This view was popularized by the Old Scofield Bible. For a critique, see *Unformed and Unfilled*.

D. Normal creation day interpretation

God created the universe in literal, consecutive days, resting on the seventh day. This view is faithful to the biblical evidence. Recently, evangelical Christians have come back to this view with the scientific support of institutions like the Creation Research Institute that promotes “Scientific Creationism.”

E. Perspective on this controversy

“As Christians we must maintain our allegiance to the Bible, even when current opinion is against it; this is true in all areas, including history and science.

Time and again God has given evidences and encouragements to his people that this faith is not misplaced. On the other hand, we must be willing to correct faulty interpretations of the Bible, as many churchmen had to do after the demise of the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. The early Princeton theologians may have been hasty to adopt the geologic ages as fact, but they still exercised and advised caution before changing a biblical interpretation.”

–Dr. John Battle

CHAPTER 12 GOD'S DECREES AND PROVIDENCE

God's decrees include his determination of all his actions, and thereby all the events that occur. It includes his decrees to create, and then to govern all that happens in his creation. The last chapter dealt with creation; this one will deal with his continuing government of creation—his providence. The attribute of God especially relating to his decrees and providence is his sovereignty, based on his omniscience, omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness.

I. Confessional Statements

The ancient creeds emphasized God as the Creator more than his sovereign government over creation. Later creeds, especially in the Reformed tradition, emphasized these Scriptural truths.

WCF. 3:1, "God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

3:2, Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions, yet hath He not decreed anything because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions."

WLC 12 What are the decrees of God?

- A. God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will, whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men.

WSC 7 What are the decrees of God?

- A. The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

The Westminster standards also deal with the doctrine of providence in particular.

WCF 5.1-3, " God the great Creator of all things doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by His most wise and holy providence, according to His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will, to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.

Although, in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably, and infallibly; yet, by the same providence, He ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.

God, in His ordinary providence, maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at His pleasure."

WLC 18 What are the works of providence?

- A. God's works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures; ordering them, and all their actions, to his own glory.

II. General Scriptural Statements

The Scriptures assert that God has determined all things and that he controls all things that occur.

Job 23:13 (words of Job), “But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.”

Ps. 33:11, “The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.”

Ps. 103:19, “The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.”

Note: The kingdom of God’s sovereignty, as in this passage, is to be distinguished from the mediatorial or messianic kingdom, which is promised to the Messiah as a result of his fulfillment of the terms of the covenant of redemption. Most “kingdom” passages in the Bible are speaking of that messianic kingdom; those passages which speak of the general kingdom of God’s sovereignty can be determined by the context.

Ps. 135:6 (examples follow from both nature and human history), “Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep place.”

Isa. 28:29, “This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.”

Acts 15:17b-18, “That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”

Rom 8:28, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Rom 11:36, “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

Eph. 1:11, “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”

III. The realms of God’s sovereignty

Not only is God sovereign in general, but he is sovereign in all the various areas of existence in particular. Many passages teach this about the various areas:

A. Sovereign over nature

Gen. 6-9 (the universal flood and all its accompanying events).

Ex. 7-11 (the plagues of Egypt)

Job 36:5-13 (the entire passage shows God’s control over the various activities of nature)

Ps. 104:10-30 (God’s control of the weather, the plants, the animals, and the physical activity of man)

Ps. 135:5-7, “For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.

Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.”

Ps. 147:8-9, “Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth,

who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.”

Ps. 147:15-18 (control of the weather), “He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.”

Jonah [cr. God’s sovereign control over the great fish (1:17), the plant (4:6), and the worm (4:7)]

cf. Gospel accounts of Jesus’ power over weather, the sea, and the fish

Rev. 6-19 (the great plagues on the earth and its inhabitants in the last days)

B. Sovereign over trivial events, or so-called “chance events”

I Kings 22:23, 34, “Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee. And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.”

Prov. 16:33, “The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.”

Mt. 10:29, “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.”

C. Sovereign over circumstances and affairs of individuals of nations

I Sam. 2:6-8 (Hannah’s prayer), “The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD’S, and he hath set the world upon them.”

Job 12:23-24 (words of Job), “He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again. He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.”

Prov. 16:9, “A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.”

Isa. 10:5-19 (God’s using Assyria to judge Israel, and then his destroying Assyria for their pride and idolatry)

Lam. 2:17 (speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians), “The LORD hath done that which he had devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old: he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.”

Dan. 2:21, “And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.”

Dan 4:34-35 (declaration of Nebuchadnezzar), “And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding

returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

Jn. 19:11 (Jesus to Pontius Pilate), "Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

Acts 17:24, 26, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

Ja. 4:13-15 (recognition that God controls all aspects of our lives; thus we do not presume on the future), "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."

D. Sovereign over free actions of people

Ex. 12:36, "And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians."

II Sam 17:14, "And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom."

Ps. 33:15, (the Lord) "He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works."

Prov. 19:21, "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand."

Prov. 21:1, "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

Rom. 9:17-18 (quoting Ex. 9:16), "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

E. Sovereign over moral actions of his creatures

Sinful actions

Gen. 45:5-8, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."

Gen. 50:20, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to

bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.”

Ex. 9:16 (“hardening” Pharaoh’s heart, to show his glory over Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt; same expression used frequently in the Exodus narrative), “And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.”

II Sam 24:1, “And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.”

Note: I Chronicles states that Satan tempted David to sin, while II Samuel says that God led David to do it, as a judgment against Israel. We conclude, therefore, that God is sovereign over even the sinful activities of Satan. God did not tempt David to sin, but he controlled Satan’s sinful intention to tempt David so that David sinned in a particular way, which God had determined.

Acts 2:23, “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

Acts 3:17-18, “And now, brethren, I know that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.”

Acts 4:27-28, “For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”

It is important to realize that while God is sovereign over all events, even sinful events, the actual sin arises in the heart of the free moral creature. God cannot sin, nor can he tempt his creatures to sin (James 1:13-15).

Good Actions

Ps. 119:35-37, “Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.”

II Cor. 12:7-10 (God gave Paul a thorn in the flesh in order to further his sanctification), “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”

Gal. 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

Eph. 2:10, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Php. 1:6, “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

Php. 2:13, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

IV. Means of God's providence

God is absolute in his sovereignty. He does not depend on any action of his creatures in order to determine what he will do. His will is not conditional.

On the other hand, God does act through means. The Confession speaks of “the liberty or contingency of second causes,” and that his decrees can “fall out” from second causes “either necessarily, freely, or contingently.” That is to say, events he has determined may be brought about by what we would call “ordinary means.” There are various levels of these means:

Necessarily — the event follows as a matter of necessary consequence or law. A rock falls because of gravity. Jonah's vine dies because the worm attacked it. Rains fall because of the ongoing water cycle.

Freely — the event follows as a matter of free choice under a given set of circumstances. Paul's thorn in the flesh results in his being humble before God and fellow Christians (a less spiritual person might react to the same circumstance in a totally different way). Pharaoh decides to break his word to Moses (an honest pharaoh would have kept his promise; remember that even though God hardened his heart, Pharaoh acted freely). During the same evangelistic meeting some are converted and others are not.

Contingently — the event depends upon another event before it can occur. Paul's travel plans depend on the absence of certain obstacles (e.g., Jews plotting to kill him, prevention by the Holy Spirit, stormy season at sea). All “if...then” statements in the Bible (including covenant formulations) point to the results as being contingent events, depending upon the actions of second causes.

In spite of the normal use of means in God's providence, he often uses direct action of his will to carry out his purpose. This is the case with creation itself, and with miracles. Christian theism (unlike deism) maintains that God does intervene in his created order to perform miracles, acts which contradict the ordinary physical laws or processes he has put in place. These miracles are evidences of his existence and attributes. There are numerous great miracles in the OT, used to bring his people into existence, preserve them, and teach them of the Lord. The “signs” in John's gospel reveal Jesus' character and mission. The “signs of the apostles” were given to confirm their authority and teaching. In the spiritual realm, the workings of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification are direct activities of God which affect our world every day.

CHAPTER 13 THE NATURE OF MAN

A. A. Hodge, chs. XVII, XV

I. The Origin of Man

The Bible clearly teaches that there is a unity in all mankind. Adam was the first man and his wife Eve was the mother of all living (Gen. 3:20). The Bible does not try to explain how the different races came about; it just presents the fact that all men descend from Adam (see Acts 17:26). The Scriptures that present the doctrine of original sin also indicate that Adam is the Father of all (Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:21-22).

II. Man's self knowledge

- A. What is Man?
- B. Modern anthropology seeks to know man
 - 1. In relation to self (psychology)
 - 2. In relation to others (sociology)
 - 3. In relation to the universe (philosophy)
- C. Reformed theology asserts that self knowledge is possible, but only through the knowledge of God.

III. Man in God's Image

- A. Scripture passages
 - 1. Asserting God's image in man
 - Gen 1:26-27, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."
 - Gen 5:1, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;"
 - Gen. 9:6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."
 - 1 Cor. 11:7, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man."
 - Jas. 3:9, "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God."
 - 2. Showing effects of the fall related to God's image in man

Rom. 1:21, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
 Rom. 1:23, "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."
 Eph. 4:18, "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

3. Showing a restored image of God

Rom. 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."
 Eph. 4:24, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."
 Col. 3:10, "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

B. Conclusions regarding God's image in man

1. Man as unity is in the image of God
 - Body and soul
 - Male and female
2. Fallen sinners are in God's image
 - Esp., Gen. 9:6 and Jas. 3:9
3. The image of God is not Adam's knowledge, righteousness, and holiness
4. The renewed man is a new man, in Christ's image, in a different way from Adam's original estate
 - Cf. 1 Cor. 15:49, "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

The redeemed Christian is thus in a higher position than Adam was.

IV. Man as Body and Soul

A. Scriptural terms

1. Describing the body
 - Heb., basar, flesh
 - Greek = soma, Σομα, body
 - sarx, Σαρξ, flesh
2. Describing the soul or spirit
 - Heb., nephesh, soul; Greek = psyche, Ψυχη, soul

Heb., ruah, spirit; Greek = pneuma, Πνευμα, spirit

B. Distinction of body and soul

1. Creation order in Gen. 2

Body formed; afterwards creative breath; man a *nephesh chayyah*.

2. Body distinguished from spirit in death

Gen 3:19, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

1 Sam. 28:13-20 = Samuel's spirit and desperate Saul

Ecc. 12:7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it"

Mt. 10:28. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Lk. 23:43. "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Acts 7:59, "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

2 Cor. 5:1-4, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Phil 1:23-24, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

Jas 2:26, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

2 Pet. 1:13-14, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."

Rev. 6:9, "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held."

B. Unity of body and soul in man: Man created as body and soul together

Gen. 5:1-2, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."

The soul of man can exist without the body temporarily, but as such is incomplete and "naked" — 2 Cor. 5:2-4

WSC 37 What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

A. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united in Christ, do rest in their graves, till the resurrection.

D. Trichotomy

1. Definition

Derived from Pythagoras and Plato and most Greek and Roman philosophers, who contributed to the NT word usage (A. A. Hodge, *Outlines*, 299).

Belief that man has three constituent elements: body (σῶμα), soul (ψυχή), and spirit (πνεῦμα),

Body — purely material

Soul — understanding, feeling, sensibility

Spirit — reason, will, conscience

2. Passages used to defend trichotomy

1 Thess. 5:23, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your complete spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Heb. 4:12, “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

3. Contrary passages showing soul and spirit can be used interchangeably

a. Soul used for characteristics of spirit

Lost, Mt. 10:28; 16:26 (forfeits soul)

Sins, Lev. 4:2 (cf. Ez. 18, soul that sins)

Is saved, 1 Pet. 1:9

Is purified, 1 Pet. 1:22

Hopes, Heb. 6:19

Loves God, Mt. 22:37 (listed between heart and mind)

Praises God, Lk. 1:46-47 (parallel to spirit)

b. Soul used as synonym for self or person

1 Pet. 3:20, “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”

c. Spirit used for characteristics of soul

Jas. 2:26, “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

Ecc. 3:21, “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?”

d. Both soul and spirit used for deceased persons

Acts 2:27, 31, “Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.”

Rev. 6:9, “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.”

Rev. 20:4, “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

Spirits — Lk. 24:37, 39, “But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”

Heb. 12:23, “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.”

4. Connotations of the words

While soul and spirit refer to the same essence in man’s nature, viz. his immaterial part, usage shows they carry different connotations.

Soul — man’s spirit viewed as residing/operating in man

Spirit — man’s spirit viewed as belonging and responding to God

5. Proper interpretation of passages

Heb. 4:12 — “dividing within,” “cutting apart (one thing, not two)” = a merismus, μερισμος (figure of speech for “dividing” 2x, here and Heb. 2:4; more often uses related forms that carry the same idea)

1 Thess. 5:23 — cf. Mk. 13:30; “periphrasis for the whole man” (Hodge); “It is in accord with usage of Scripture to employ an accumulation of terms to express completeness.” (Murray)

V. Origin of the Soul

A. Three theories

1. Realism — all souls actually present in human nature, which then found in Adam
2. Traducianism (traducere = Lat. for “lead across;” “inherit,” “root, vinebranch for propagation” — souls and bodies together derived from the parents
3. Creationism — bodies from the parents, souls created directly by God at conception

B. Relative unimportance of question

cf. A. A. Hodge, *Outlines* 351

Related to more important doctrines of imputed and original sin, and moral question of God’s justice. Great diversity among theologians.

Traducianists think the question is vital to the virgin birth.

C. Realism

Main argument: where is God’s justice in condemning non-participants in Adam’s sin?

D. Traducianism

Main theological arguments:

- (1) completed work of creation
- (2) natural mode for imputation and original sin/corruption (Psa 51:5)

E. Creationism

Maintains important assertions

- the soul is indivisible (vs. realism)
- individual souls not numerically united (vs. realism)
- Christ not tainted with sin

Main theological arguments

- (1) Christ's spirit truly human, yet sinless
- (2) imputation of sin not through natural descent, but federal representation—thus parallel with Christ's righteousness (Rom. 5:12-19)

VI. Man's Spiritual State before the Fall

WCF 4.2, "After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after His own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Beside this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures." (Cf. Also LC 17, SC 10)

A. Knowledge, righteousness, and holiness

Not a state of neutrality (Pelagian idea: "ability limits obligation"). Older Reformed theologians contrast "accidental image of God," with its moral uprightness, with the "essential image of God," which cannot be lost. Before fall man was in harmony: reason, will, affections, appetites, soul, body. Opposed to Roman Catholic doctrine of soul-body conflict, requiring supernatural gift of original righteousness.

Evidence for original righteousness:

- 1) man created "very good," Gen. 1:31
- 2) God made man "upright," Eccl 7:29
- 3) moral image of God reflected in renewed man — Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10
— "the new man" = "according to God"

B. Law of God written in their hearts and power to fulfill it

1. Evidence of moral law in Gen. 1-3

- a. 1st table: worship of God, communion with God, respect for nature, Sabbath
- b. 2nd table: family, marriage, property stewardship, truth, envy

2. Conscience in fallen man, Rom. 2:14-15 (one possible interpretation)

C. Subject to fall

Evident from the case : Gen. 2:16-17; cf. 3:6

Classic progression : *posse peccare*
 non posse non peccare
 posse non peccare
 non posse peccare

First category = pre-fall Adam
Second = sinner
Third = saint in this life
Fourth = glorified saint

CHAPTER 14 THE COVENANT OF WORKS

I. The Westminster Standards

A. Westminster Confession 7:1-2

“The distance between God and the creature is so great that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of him, as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God’s part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.

“The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.”

B. Westminster Larger Catechism 20

“The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was, the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth, putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself, instituting the Sabbath, entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.”

C. Westminster Shorter Catechism 12

“When God created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of god and evil, upon pain of death.”

II. Parties

A. God and Adam, Gen. 2:15-17

B. Adam represented all humankind

1 Cor. 15:21-22, “For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”

Rom. 5:12-19

III. Condition: Obedience

Jas 2:10, “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.”

“Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” Gen. 2:16

IV. Promise of life (not explicit)

A. Eternal life denied because of sin, Gen. 3:22

B. Threat of death for disobedience, Gen. 2:17

C. Penalty of death contrasted to life, Rom. 5:12-19

V. Threat of death

- A. Gen. 2:17
- B. Eve adds a little, Gen. 3:3-4

VI. Practical considerations from the estate of Adam under the Covenant of Works

- A. Work is suitable for sinless and glorified creatures, Gen. 2:15
- B. Man has dominion over creatures, not vice-versa, Gen. 1:28
- C. Marriage is for help
 - 1. “a suitable helper” – Gen. 2:18, 20
 - 2. a chaste marriage – Gen. 2:22-25
 - 3. Marriage is good and holy
Heb. 13:4 “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled.”
- D. Man is to rest, Gen. 2:2-3

VII. Practical considerations from the failure of Adam from Gen. 3:6

- A. “Saw that the tree was good for food” – lust of the flesh
- B. “Saw...that it was pleasant to the eyes” – lust of the eyes
- C. “Saw that...it was...a tree desirable to make one wise – pride of life

1 John 2:15-16, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world.”

Conclusion

At the moment that Adam and Eve took their eyes off of God and looked toward the world, the love for it sprang up in them. Adam was not able to fulfill the Covenant of Works, but our Lord Jesus Christ was. He obeyed perfectly, and, by doing so, he gave us eternal life that was depicted in the garden with the tree of life and the direct presence of God.

CHAPTER 15 FREE AGENCY and the FALL

I. Definition of free agency

A. Confessional statements

WCF 9.1-2, “God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined, to good or evil. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which was good and well-pleasing to God; but yet, mutably, so that he might fall from it.”

LC 21 & SC 13, “Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will...”

B. The nature and the will

The will is that part of the human mind which determines what the person will do. It makes these decisions from two bases:

1. Its understanding of the situation—the person’s knowledge
2. Its reading of the person’s natural inclinations and priorities—the person’s nature.

When we say the will is free, we mean that the will is free to express the person’s nature. We do not mean that the will is free to choose what is right. The will is not forced to act contrary to the person’s nature—that is what we mean by free will.

Actually, the will is bound to the person’s nature. Only an insane person makes decisions unrelated to his nature and knowledge.

C. Necessary distinctions

1. Liberty (= freedom from outside constraint) vs. ability (=freedom from internal compulsion) (see A.A. Hodge, *Outlines*, 289)

2. Alternate choice (not a moral choice, but choosing among sinful choices) vs. contrary choice (a moral choice, choosing between good and evil)

II. Conflicting views about free agency

A. Materialism

all choice ultimately the result of mechanical, chemical, economic, social environment (ctr. Adam’s environment)

B. Fatalism (Islam)

A divine force determines all things, apart from human responsibility

C. Arminianism

The will can operate independently of one’s nature; sometimes called the doctrine of contingency (see A. A. Hodge, *Outlines*, 293, #28)

D. Calvinism

The will is free to follow one's nature

“The will is not determined by any law of necessity; it is not independent, indifferent, or self-determined, but is always determined by the preceding state of mind; so that a man is free so long as his volitions are the conscious expression of his own mind; or so long as his activity is determined and controlled by his reason and feelings.” (Hodge II, 288)

This is the case in all four states:

- a. before the fall
- b. after the fall
- c. after conversion
- d. in the eternal state

E. Human nature

“The habitus of the person, the whole complex of desires, of motives, propensions, principles.” –John Murray

The Bible refers to the nature often as the “heart”:

Prov. 4:23

Mt. 12:34-35

Mk. 7:21-23

III. Theological arguments for Calvinist position

A. Divine foreknowledge

Foreknown events are certain to occur

B. Divine foreordination

“There is no difficulty attending the doctrine of foreordination which does not attach to that of foreknowledge. The latter supposes the certainty of free acts, and the former secures their certainty.” (Hodge II, 301)

C. Divine providence

“Foreknowledge supposes certainty; foreordination determines it; and providence effects it. ... If God cannot effectually control the acts of free agents there can be no prophecy, no prayer, no thanksgiving, no promises, no security of salvation, no certainty whether in the end God or Satan is to be triumphant, whether heaven or hell is to be the consummation.” (Ibid.)

D. Divine regeneration

God effectually produces repentance and faith

IV. Important relationship with free agency

A. Liberty and certainty

God works through our hearts, not against them. To a large extent a mystery.

B. Liberty and responsibility

Responsibility required of all moral creatures. Liberty required for a creature to be responsible, if he is to be judged for what he actually is.

V. Adam's fall into sin

A. Adam's liberty

WCF 6.1, "Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin, God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory." (cf. Romans 5:20-21).

There was liberty of contrary choice before the fall, and there was no internal compulsion to sin. Environment ideal for obedience. Is consent required for representation? (Would we have done better?)

B. The source of temptation

1. Gen. 3:1, the serpent

an animal, vv. 1, 14

used by Satan, Rev. 12:9

fall of Satan from being a holy angel, 2 Pet. 2:4

origin of Satan's fall = pride, 1 Tim. 3:6

not good to use Isa. 14:3-23 (taunt against king of Babylon) and Ezek. 28:11-19 (lament for king of Tyre) out of context and apply to Satan.

appearing to Eve in form of serpent:

overpowering to appear as an angel, 2 Cor. 11:14

suspicious to appear as human

as an animal: non-threatening, yet intriguing ("crafty")

probably in some way upright, Gen. 3:14

C. The temptation of Eve, Gen 3:1-6

More details given than with Adam's temptation –more instructive

1. Satan questions God's word, v. 1

appeals to desire for autonomy

2. Eve's reply (only words of Eve recorded before the fall), vv. 2-3

recognizes God's provision

inaccurately quotes prohibitions

does not distinguish the two named trees

tightens the prohibition ("must not touch it")

lessens certainty of punishment (leaves out "surely")

3. Satan contradicts God, vv. 4-5

Direct contradiction of God's strong prohibition. Sinful motives attributed to God (denies sovereignty, goodness, and justice; accuses him of keeping his supremacy by suppressing his creatures).

4. Eve's desire, v. 6

natural desire ("good for food, pleasing to the eye")

sinful desire ("desirable for gaining wisdom")

cf. 1 Jn 2:16 KJV, NASB, “lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life”

5. Eve’s fall into sin, v. 6
Sin for herself: “She took some and she ate it”
Immediate sinful nature, became tempter for Adam: “She also gave some to her husband, who was with her.”
6. Nature of Eve’s fall – deceived by Satan
2 Cor. 11:3, “Just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”
1 Tim. 2:14, “Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.”

D. The temptation of Adam, Gen. 3:6

Eve a stronger tempter than the serpent
sinned deliberately, was not deceived (1 Tim. 2:14)
his motive not stated (cf. Milton love for Eve)
consequence of his obedience – perhaps his seed continued some other way.

VI. Immediate consequences of Adam’s fall, 3:7-24

WCF 6.2, “By this sin, they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body.”

Cf. the general results of sin for mankind, WC 6:6, LC 27-29, SC 19

A. Human guilt and alienation

1. Marriage relation disrupted; self-conscious vanity, v. 7
2. Alienation from God, vv. 8-10
3. Note God’s seeking man, his initiative in the whole salvation process, vv. 8-9, 21
4. Refusal to accept guilt, vv. 11-13

B. Judgment on the serpent, vv. 14-15

physical judgment on serpents

verse 15, the “Protoevangelium”

Term used	Literal	Historical	Christological
You:	Serpent	Satan	serpent
Woman:	Eve	Eve	Eve
Your offspring:	snakes	unholy line	Satan
Her offspring:	people	godly line	Christ

cf. Rom. 16:20, and Gal. 3:16

C. Judgment on the woman

1. Increased difficulty in conception and labor
 - NIV, “your pains in childbearing”
 - possibly as in the NASB marg., “your pain and your conception”
 - (increased number of children
 - difficult labor
 - ‘etsev*, same as v. 17, “painful toil”
 - cf. Ps. 127:2; Prov. 10:22; 14:23
2. Desire and dependence on husband
 - “your desire,” *tesshuqah* (emotional dependence)
 - cf. Gen. 4:7, dependence
 - Song 7:10 (Heb., v. 11), emotional dependence
3. Domination by husband
 - mashal*, have dominion over, different from terms in Gen. 1:28
 - more difficult with sinful husband (cf. 1 Pet. 3:1, 5-6)

D. Judgment on the man, vv. 17-19

1. Adam’s sin = regarding wife more than God, v. 17
2. The ground cursed
 - not new kinds of plants, but new proportions of them
 - the natural world now awaits redemption (Rom. 8:19-23)
3. Increased painful labor to survive and provide for his family
 - less desirable food, v. 18b
4. Physical death, v. 19

E. God’s provision for man

1. Garments of skin, v. 21
 - new relationship to animals
 - perhaps the first sacrifice
2. Expulsion from the garden, vv. 22-24
 - reason: unsanctified immortality, v. 22
 - cherubim, high ranking angels, cf. Ez. 10
 - actually, a favor to man, Acts 17:26-27
 - additional teaching indicated, cf. Gen. 4:3-4, 7
3. Initial glimpses of faith from Adam and Eve
 - Adam (3:20)
 - Eve (4:1)

CHAPTER 16 NATURE OF SIN

I. Biblical terms

The following are some of the many biblical terms for sin:

Significant OT terms:

- chatah* (*chatta'th*), sin, moral failure
 - Jd. 20:16, sling and not miss
 - 1 Sam. 12:23, sin by failing to pray for you
 - Ps. 32:1, whose sin is covered
- '*awon*, iniquity, crookedness
 - Gen. 15:16, iniquity of Amorites
 - Ps. 32:32, Lord imputes not iniquity
- pasha'*, transgression, rebellion
 - 1 Kg. 12:19, (political)
 - Isa. 1:2, they rebelled
 - Ps. 51:13, I will teach transgressors

All three OT terms: Ps. 32:1-2, "Blessed is he whose transgressions (*pasha'*) are forgiven, whose sins (*chata'ah*) are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin (*'awon*) the Lord does not count against him."

Significant NT terms:

- hamartia* – *hamartano*, sin (similar to *chata'*)
 - Rom. 3:23, all have sinned, come short
- poneros*, evil, iniquity (similar to '*awon*)
 - Jn. 3:19, men loved darkness, because their deeds were evil
- parabaino*, transgress, break a law (similar to *pasha'*)
 - Mt. 5:2-3, transgress the tradition...transgress the commandment
- parabasis*, transgression

Related NT words:

- adikia*, unrighteousness
- anomia*, lawlessness
- kakos*, bad, evil
- opheilema*, debt
- parakuo*, disobey

II. Scriptural evidence concerning the nature of sin

A. Sin a condition or disposition of the heart

- Ps. 51:5, a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me
- Jer. 17:9, heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure
- Mt. 7:17-18, good and evil fruit from corresponding trees
- Mt. 15:19, sins come from the heart

Rom. 7:7-25, Paul's internal struggle with sin in the heart

- B. Sin includes thoughts and affections
 - Ex. 20:17, not covet
 - Lev. 18:17, not hate
 - Mt. 5:27-28, not lust
- C. Sin includes outward acts
 - Mt. 18:21, brother sin against me
 - Jn. 3:19, deeds are evil
 - Rom. 7:19, the evil which I do
- D. Sin includes omission of doing right
 - 1 Sam. 12:23, sin by ceasing to pray for you
 - Ja. 4:17, know to do good and do it – to him it is sin
- E. Sin need not be conscious
 - Lev. 5:14-19, sins unintentionally...even though he does not know it, he is guilty
 - Ps. 19:12, secret faults
 - Ps. 139:24, see is there be any wicked way in me
- F. Sin can be directed against oneself or others
 - Pr. 6:32, destroys his own soul
 - Pr. 8:35-36, does violence to his own soul
 - 2 Kg. 14:24, Jeroboam...made Israel sin
 - Mt. 6:12, our debtors
 - Mt. 18:21, my brother sin against me
- G. But all sin is directed primarily against God
 - Pr. 8:35, he that sins against me
 - 1 Sam. 12:23, sin against the Lord
 - Gen. 20:6, Abimelech withheld from sinning against God
 - Gen. 39:9, Joseph to Potiphar's wife
 - 2 Sam. 12:13-14, David's sin; cf. Ps. 51:4, "against you, you only have I sinned
 - Lk. 15:18, sinned against heaven
 - 1 Cor. 8:12, you sin against Christ (cause brother to fall)
- H. Sin reveals pride against God and rebellion against his law
 - Dan. 4:30, Nebuchadnezzar
 - 2 Cor. 5:15, not henceforth living themselves
 - 2 Thess. 2:3-4, Antichrist
 - 1 Tim. 3:6, Satan
 - 1 John 3:4, "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness (*anomia*)"

III. Inadequate philosophical views of sin

Outline of Hodge II, 130-149

- A. Dualistic view
 - Held in various forms by Gnostics, Marcionites, Manichaeans

- Two forces: spirit and sinful matter
 - Removes evil from sovereignty of God
 - Ethical consequences: asceticism, or indulgence
- B. Sin as limitation of being
- Spinoza, F. C. Baur, Carlyle, tendencies in Augustine
 - Since God is the absolute existence, non-existence is evil
 - Denies goodness of finite things in universe, results in pantheism
 - Results in ignoring moral laws
- C. Leibnitz's theory of privation
- Effort of theist to allow coexistence of perfect God with evil in the universe
 - Since this is the best possible universe, sin must be unavoidable
 - Since God the only effective agent, sin not his work: must be what he has not done; no efficient cause needed
 - Makes sin necessary, and God the author of sin
- D. Theory of necessary antagonism
- Universe formed by separation between good and evil; good requires evil; thus evil cannot be blameworthy
- E. Sin as self-consciousness
- Schleiermacher
 - Complicated view; good summary & evaluation in Hodge II, 138-140
 - Sin is the God-consciousness being partly replaced by the self-consciousness in spiritually-dual man.
 - Denies a personal God; sin a subjective apprehension, not a moral evil
- F. Sin as sensuousness
- Evident in Manichaeism, Romanism
 - Man a duality, body and spirit; if bodily desires overcome spiritual desire, result is sin
 - Does not adequately explain body as good, or sin as spiritual
- G. Sin as selfishness
- Not self-love, but undue preference of one's own happiness over that of the common good.
 - Universal good or happiness replaces God's glory as the chief end of man.
 - Sin made to contribute to happiness
 - Replaces God's law with subjectivism – problem of Epicurus

IV. Earlier theological approaches to the nature of sin

- A. Early church writers general, sometimes inconsistent
- B. Pelagius and Augustine

Pelagius: Ability limits obligation. "Sin, therefore, consists only in the deliberate choice of evil. It presupposes knowledge of what is evil, as well as the full power of choosing or rejecting it." Hodge 2:153

Augustine's reply: two levels – philosophic (temporary impact), and religious (permanent impact)

Philosophically – evil is negation of being. A helpful definition in his argument against the Manichaeans, who said sin a substance. Yet Augustine stronger than III.B above: sin a voluntary, moral evil, deficient in its conformity to God's standard.

Religiously – Guilt and pollution evident to his conscience

Guilt and pollution includes affections, feelings, emotions; absence of right affections

This guilt and pollution result of voluntary act of the will – true for himself, for all others, for Adam.

C. Roman Catholic teaching

Ambivalent: some Augustinian, some semi-Pelagian.

Decrees of Council of Trent ruled out the strongest positions on both sides.

V. Protestant doctrine of the nature of sin

A. Sin is a real evil

Not an illusion, a deficiency, a limitation, or a necessary side of good.

B. Sin is a specific evil

Sin is of a different nature than are its consequences: disease, calamity, death

C. Sin is a moral evil

A violation of God's moral nature and government

1. It is wrong, contrary to the "ought;" it is not something simply unwise, or inexpedient, or hurtful, or painful, or calamitous, or unfortunate.
2. It is a violation of law; God's moral law is the extension of his moral perfection into creation. Love must be defined by law.
3. God's law is pervasive; applies to deeds, words, thoughts, intents of heart.
4. Sin involves both pollution and guilt

CHAPTER 17 EFFECTS OF SIN

I. Immediate effects of sin on humanity

WC 6:6, LC 27-29

WSC 19 What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. All mankind by their fall lost communion with God,¹ are under his wrath and curse,² and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.³

¹Gen. 3:8, 10, 24.

²Eph. 2:2, 3; Gal. 3:10.

³Lam. 3:39; Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41, 46.

: Alienation, guilt, misery, wrath of God, death

– see discussion in ch. 15, section VI

II. Spread of sin to all mankind

Isa. 53:6, all have gone astray

Isa. 64:6, all righteous deeds as filthy rags

Rom. 3:19, whole world guilty before God

Gal. 3:22. Scriptures conclude all under sin

Jas. 3:2, in many things we all offend

1 Jn. 1:8, if we say we have no sin

1 Jn. 5:19, whole world lies in wickedness

only exception – Jesus Christ, the only sinless human

WSC 16 Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.¹

¹Gen. 2:16, 17; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22

III. Original sin

A. Definition

WSC 18 Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate wherein man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin,¹ the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin;² together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.³

¹Rom. 5:12, 1 Cor 15:22

²Rom. 5:6; Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 8:7, 8; Gen. 6:5; Rom. 3:10-20; Psa 51:5; 58:3

³James 1:14, 15; Matt. 15:19.

Sinfulness consists in original guilt for Adam's first sin, and in original corruption of nature, inherited through parents. Earlier reformers (e.g., Calvin), held to inherited depravity alone. Later reformers, both guilt and depravity (Westminster standards).

B. Scriptural evidence

Gen. 8:21, every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood

Ps. 51:5, a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my conceived me.

Ps. 58:3, from the womb they (the wicked) are wayward.

Pro. 22:15, folly bound up in the heart of a child.

Eph. 2:3, by nature children of wrath.

IV. Definition of imputation

A. Scriptural meaning of the term impute

Heb. *chashav*, think, account, regard, reckon

Gen. 15:6, he credit it to him (Abram) as righteousness.

Lev. 7:18; Num. 18:27, 30, guilt or sacrifices credited.

2 Sam. 19:19 (Heb. 20), Shimei – not hold me guilty.

Jb. 18:11, he counts me among his enemies.

Jb. 41:19 (Heb. 27), leviathan – iron he treats like straw

Ps. 32:2, whose sin the Lord does not count against him

Ps. 106:31, it was credited to him (Phinehas) as righteousness

Pro. 27:14, blessings...will be taken as a curse

Grk. *logizomai*, count, account, regard, reckon

Lk. 22:37, he was numbered with the transgressors

Rom. 2:26, regarded as though they were circumcised

Rom. 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24, "credited, count" – sins and righteousness.

Rom. 6:11, count yourselves dead to sin

Rom. 8:36, we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered

Rom. 9:8, regarded as Abraham's offspring

1 Cor. 4:1, regard us as servants of Christ

2 Cor. 5:19, not counting men's sins against them

2 Cor. 10:2, people who think we live by the standards of this world.

Gal. 3:6 (and Rom. 4:3ff; Jas. 2:23), Abraham...it was credited to him as righteousness (quoting Gen. 15:6)

2 Tim. 4:16, may it not be held against them.

Grk. *ellogeo*, charge to account

Rom. 5:13, sin is not taken into account when there is no law.

Phlm. 18, charge it to me.

Note – both good or bad may be imputed, and the thing imputed may or may not be consistent with the person's previous or present character. Impute is not the same as infuse, but refers to the person's [legal] standing in the mind of another.

B. Theological definition of imputation

1. Imputation of sin

God officially recognizes us as sinful and guilty, with a judicial obligation to satisfy divine justice. The basis of this imputation is not stated by the term itself. It might be the actual sinfulness of the person, or the person's guilt derived from the sin of his representative.
2. Imputation of righteousness

God officially recognizes his people as righteous, with a judicial right to his promised blessings. The basis of this imputation is the righteousness and substitutionary atonement of Christ.

V. Origin of imputed sin

- A. Imputation limited to human race, not for angels
- B. Adam's sin is pictured in Scripture as the source of sinfulness and guilt for the human race (Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:21-22).
- C. Sinfulness and guilt begins at conception, and is universal – evidence of its origin with Adam's sin
- D. The principle of solidarity of the race is familiar throughout Scripture, with examples in families, tribes, nations.
- E. Romans 5:12-19 especially emphasizes Adam's responsibility for imputed sin.
 - v. 12, through one man
 - v. 14, death results from Adam
 - v. 15, the trespass of the one man
 - v. 16, one man's sin ... one sin
 - v. 17, the trespass of the one man ... death reigned through that one man
 - v. 18, one trespass
 - v. 19, disobedience of the one man

VI. Nature of Mankind's union with Adam

- A. Realistic union
 1. Definition

Adam included all human nature within himself. Each person now is an individualized part of human nature. Each person thus was present with Adam, took part in his sin, and is guilty for that participation. This view seeks to defend God's justice and shield him from charge of arbitrary justice.
 2. Difficulties
 - a. Still a problem for arbitrariness, since persons not individualized in Adam, not able to decide individually.
 - b. Was Jesus' human nature present in Adam? If so, it would share his pollution and guilt.
 - c. Does not follow parallel between Adam and Christ in Rom. 5 and 1 Cor. 15. We were not actually crucified with Jesus.

B. Seminal union

1. Definition

Adam is the natural root of mankind, thus it is natural that his sin would be passed down to his descendants. This is the view of Augustine and Calvin.

WCF 6.3, "They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation."

2. Difficulties

- a. For arbitrariness, same difficulty as realistic view.
- b. Other sins of Adam and of ancestors not imputed to posterity

C. Representative union

1. Definition

Also called federalism. Adam was mankind's representative in the covenant of works. By God's ordination, his descendants to share his blessing or guilt. Applied to the probationary period only. God's judgment on Adam's sin includes two parts: (1) guilt for that particular sin imputed to all descendants, (2) polluted nature transmitted to all descendants. This is the view of more recent Reformed writers.

2. Main difficulty

Must wrestle with the arbitrariness accusation. But note verses such as Dt. 24:26; 2 Chron. 25:4. Compare other verse, such as Ex. 34:7; Num. 14:18; Dt. 5:9.

3. Advantages

- a. Closest view to parallel between Adam and Christ, especially in Rom. 5:12-19
- b. Explains why each individual guilty for only his own sins and for sin of Adam (not of other ancestors)

VII. Nature of imputation

A. Imputation of pollution and its resulting guilt

General agreement among Reformed theologians on fact of this imputation.

Some disagreement on mode of this imputation:

Creationists – imputed individually after creation of soul, as judgment for sin of Adam.

Traducianists – imputed mediately through pollution of parents, the whole process being a judgment for sin of Adam, as well as a natural consequence.

B. Imputation of guilt for Adam's first sin

Considerable difference of opinion on this point

1. Mediate imputation

Individuals held responsible and guilty for their own pollution and sin. The corrupt nature derived from Adam is the grounds for God's condemnation

2. Immediate imputation

Individuals held responsible and guilty for original sin of Adam as their representative, and in addition for their consequent corrupt nature,

pollution, and sin. Their corruption is actually a judgment against them for Adam's sin.

A traducianist can hold to either of the views. The creationist, however, has to hold to the immediate imputation of Adam's sin.

3. Teaching of Rom. 5:12-19

- a. Death and condemnation, result of one man, Adam
- b. Men constituted sinners
- c. Emphasis on death without personal sin (cf. children)
- d. Parallel to Christ: our justification rests on his act of righteousness, not our own infused righteousness.

VIII. Total inability

WCF 9.3 Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation;¹ so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good,² and dead in sin,³ is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.⁴

¹Rom. 5:6; Rom. 8:7; John 15:5.

²Rom. 3:10, 12.

³Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13.

⁴John 6:44, 65; Eph. 2:2, 3, 4, 5; 1 Cor. 2:14; Tit. 3:3, 4, 5.

WC 6:4, LC 25, SC 18

A. Total inability, or total depravity, does not mean that the person is as bad as he can possibly be. Rather, it means that his entire person is affected and defiled by sin. All aspects of his life—heart, mind, will, body—are corrupted by sin. He is not able to desire genuinely to come to God or to do good works. The apparently good works he may do are actually undertaken for wrong motives, not for the glory of God.

B. The will's relation to the nature

C. Biblical support for the bondage of the will in the state of sin

(cf. Erasmus, who wrote the *Freedom of the Will* against Luther's views; and Luther's reply, the *Bondage of the Will*.)

Jn. 6:44, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."
(*helko*, "draw, drag, draw out [a sword]")

Rom. 3:10-12, "As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.'"

Rom. 5:6, "When we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly."

Rom. 8:7-8, "Because the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God."

1 Cor. 2:14, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Eph. 2:1-3, “You were dead in transgressions and sins, . . . gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts (lit. the things willed of the flesh and of the mind). Like the rest, we were by nature (phusei) objects of wrath.”

D. Objections to the doctrine of inability

1. Difficult to reconcile with commands of God; shouldn't they presuppose human ability? (cf. Jn. 10:25-26)
2. Inconsistent with the use of means
3. Encourages delay and hinders evangelistic spirit

John Murray, in *The Imputation of Adam's Sin*, concludes that “this doctrine does not hinder evangelism. One of the greatest hindrances to the spread of the gospel is the lack of it. It is only on the presupposition of total depravity and complete human impotence that the full glory and power of the gospel can be declared.”