Elenctic Theology: Bibliology

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*Contemporary Challenges to Scripture*

## General Considerations

### Reduction of the Absolute Authority of Scripture

#### The goal of studying bibliology in the context of Reformation Protestantism is to establish the Bible as God’s inspired, inerrant, clear, sufficient, written, propositional revelation to man that is the final and ultimate authority on all it addresses.

#### Unfortunately, there are multiple contemporary challenges to the authority of the Bible as the supreme authority on all that it addresses.

#### These challenges result in either:

##### The Dilution of the Authority of Scripture, or

##### The Rejection of the Authority of Scripture.

#### *Sola Scriptura*

##### *Sola Scriptura* means the Sixty-Six Books of the Protestant Canon of Scripture are both necessary and sufficient for all matters pertaining to the Christian life.

##### They are the supreme and final authority on all matters they address (*Sola Scriptura).*

##### The writings of the church fathers, creeds and confessions, and a ministerial use of philosophy can be helpful in the task of doing systematic theology, but they are secondary authorities.

#### If someone is going to teach false doctrine, he must place another authority over the Scriptures.

#### If you were a heretic, cult leader, or false prophet and wanted to reduce the authority of Scripture, what would you do?

### Types of Challenges to Scripture

#### **Worldview Challenges** See also the SACC Worldview & Revelation Syllabus

##### ***Atheism***

##### ***Agnosticism***

##### ***Skepticism***

##### ***Pantheism***

##### ***Panentheism***

##### ***Polytheism***

##### ***Dualism***

##### ***Unitarianism***

##### ***Deism***

##### ***Other Isms?***

#### **Epistemological Challenges**

##### ***Skepticism***

##### ***Postmodernism & the Emergent Church***

#### **Challenges in Theological Method: Multiple Source Approaches**

##### ***Roman Catholicism & Eastern Orthodoxy***

###### There are three equal authorities:

Scripture

Tradition

Magisterium

###### Problem?

##### ***General Revelation or Natural Theology***

###### Both are God’s Revelation, but which is to govern?

###### Two Books Theory and *Sola Scriptura*

##### ***Magisterial Use of Philosophy or Psychology***

##### ***Addition of “New Scripture”***

###### Christian Science

###### Mormonism

###### Problem: Alleged “New Light” governs the “Old Light”

#### **Challenges in Exegesis & Interpretation of Scripture**

##### ***False Interpretations of Scripture Disguised as Translations***

###### The New World Translation (Jehovah’s Witnesses)

###### The Joseph Smith Inspired Version (Mormonism)

###### How does this relate to translation theories?

##### ***Authoritative “Interpretation” of the Scriptures that Clearly Rejects its Plain Meaning***

###### *Subjective* – “Revelation Knowledge” & the Word of Faith Movement

###### *Objective* – *Eisegesis*

###### Intentional Eisegesis

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###### Negligent Eisegesis

#### **Challenges to the Inspiration of Scripture**

##### ***Destructive Higher Criticism***

###### Old Testament: Documentary Hypothesis

###### New Testament: Q Source

##### ***Miscellaneous False Views of Inspiration (See SACC Inspiration Syllabus)***

###### Intuitive View

###### Mystical View

###### Neo-Orthodox View

###### Conceptual View

###### Fallible Inspiration View

###### Dynamic/Partial Inspiration View

###### Degrees of Inspiration View

##### ***Alleged Errancy of the Scriptures & Bible Difficulties***

###### Neo-Evangelical “Infallibility”

###### Propositional Inerrancy

###### Bart Ehrman, *et al.*

#### **Challenges to the Canonicity of Scripture**

##### ***Alleged Missing Books – Mormonism***

##### ***Wrong Canon – e.g., Gnostic Tradition***

##### ***Additional Books in the Canon***

###### Mormonism

###### Islam

###### Roman Catholicism

#### **Challenges to the Preservation or Transmission of Scripture: Textual Criticism Issues**

##### ***Allegedly too many variants to be reliable (Bart Ehrman)***

##### ***Explicit Claims of Irremediable Corruption of the Scriptures (Mormonism, et al.)***

#### **Challenges to the Translation of Scripture**

##### ***Interpretations Disguised as Translations (See also above)***

###### The New World Translation (Jehovah’s Witnesses)

###### The Joseph Smith Inspired Version (Mormonism)

##### ***Translations from Translations?***

###### An English Translation based on the Latin Vulgate (e.g., Douay–Rheims Bible)

###### Others?

##### ***Are translations of the Bible also inspired Scripture even though they are not in the original languages?***