

# On Biblical Theology

By

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*Teaching Notes* are Bible studies we taught before GraceLife Ministries began publishing articles online in 1995. Some were presented as sermons, others as group studies.

Our hope is that these older studies will be a blessing to you in your life and ministry. Please use them in any way God leads you.

These teaching notes are from a series of studies about **Biblical Theology**.

[These notes are from a study presented 45 years ago.]

Our subject for this study is Biblical Theology. We will be using the Bible, of course, along with scholarly works on the topic. We will look at two works in particular, followed by a list of other books you may be interested in reading.



## From Eternity to Eternity

Our first book is Erich Sauer's *From Eternity to Eternity: An Outline of Divine Purposes*. It was first published in German in 1950 under the title *Der göttliche Erlösungsplan von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit*. The English translation by G. H. Lang was published in 1954 by Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Sauer was born in Germany at the end of the 19th century and died in 1959 at the age of 60. He taught at a Bible School in Wiedenest for the last 20+ years of his life and wrote several books including *Dawn of World Redemption: A Survey of the History of Salvation in the Old Testament*, *In the Arena of Faith: A Call to the Consecrated Life*, *The Triumph of the Crucified: A Survey of Historical Revelation in the New Testament*, and *The King of the Earth, the High Calling of Man According to the Bible and Science*.

The main purpose of Sauer's book is to present the ways of God with men. The book is written in three parts –

1. The first deals with God's eternal plan of salvation
2. The second deals with the Bible as the record of God's eternal plan of salvation in the lives of men
3. The third deals with the coming Kingdom of God and the culmination of the eternal plans of God

In the first part of the book, Sauer deals with Heaven and earth in God's plan. He also presents thoughts on God's revelation of salvation to mankind, the mystery of Israel, and the history of the Temple of God. Sauer deals with God's plans through Christ at great length. He also writes about the Church and the Kingdom.

In the second part of the book, Sauer presents the case for verbal inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. Sauer uses logic, nature, harmony of the whole Scripture, uniformity of structure, and the words of Christ and the apostles to present his case.

The third part deals with various problems in understanding the prophecies of the coming Kingdom of God.

Here's an outline of the first chapter of the book to get an idea of how Sauer addresses the issue of Biblical Theology.

## **Heaven and Earth in God's Plan**

### I. The Eternal God

A. Before anything existed, God was

B. God is Three Persons and One God

C. God created all things and therefore all things belong to Him

### II. Christ's Salvation Center

A. God executes His plans through His Son

B. Christ is the center of all history

1. This was God's purpose from eternity

2. The cross of Christ is from all eternity

C. God has faithfully fulfilled all promises given to man

### III. The Starry World as the Background of the History of Salvation

A. God is far above man in power and knowledge

B. The Bible is above and free from human speculation

C. The cosmos and the heavenly host all play part in the history of man's salvation

D. The symbols of all creation – lion, ox, eagle, and man – declare that God is Lord of the universe

### IV. The Earth in the Universal Plan of God

A. The earth is the great stage upon which the acts of man's salvation are played



B. The earth has seen five stages of relationship so far \*

1. Creation of original earth
2. Entrance of sin
3. Further development
4. Paradise
5. Fall and current condition

C. The earth will be the great battleground in the war between God and the devil

D. God will complete His work for a perfection creation

E. The throne of God will rest on the earth forever

[\* “How far at the time that sin entered the universe the work of creation had progressed in detail the Biblical account does not particularize at full length. We do not know whether that early creation had reached the stage of a completed development, either as ‘first earth,’ or ‘light earth,’ or ‘primeval creation.’ Therefore, since full information as to conditions on that prehistoric and pre-human earth is not available, we speak

but quite generally upon that stage of earth's history." Eric Sauer  
Ch. 1]

## Progress of Doctrine

Our second book is Thomas Bernard's *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*. The book was based on the Bampton Lecture series Bernard preached at the University of Oxford. It was published in 1864 by Macmillan and Co. in London.

Bernard was born in 1815 and died in 1904. He was a pastor in the Anglican Church and was well-known for his grasp of Biblical Theology. Bernard also wrote *Before His Presence with a Song*, *The Central Teaching of Jesus Christ*, *Songs of the Holy Nativity* and *The Word and Sacraments*.

The main purpose of Bernard's *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament* is to show that the "New Testament itself exhibits a scheme of progressive doctrine, fashioned for permanent and universal use."

The book is the printing of eight lectures given by Bernard at Oxford University in 1864. The series of lectures shows a sequence of thought in the Gospels, Acts, the Epistles and Apocalypse. It also deals with the order in which they are placed.

Bernard points up the verbal inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. He deals with words spoken by Christ and the apostles. He shows the actions of Christ in revealing Himself throughout all of the New Testament.

## Comparing Texts

The subjects dealt with in Sauer's book are basically the eternity of God, the Trinity of God, the Son of God, the Creation of God, and the completion of the Plan of God.

Bernard's book is a careful presentation of the unfolding of God's Plan.

- Chapters 2 and 3 show Christ to be the center of God's plan of salvation. They also show Christ to be the great Revealer of God's plan.
- Chapters 4 and 5 deal with man's part in presenting Christ as the center of God's eternal plan. They are constantly guided by Christ through the Spirit. Now that God's redemption is completed, the message is to be heard throughout the world.
- Chapters 6 and 7 are the works of Christ with His Church. The Lord is the center of their lives, as is consistent with God's eternal plans.
- Chapter 8 deals with the pre-eminence of Christ, the great battle of God and Satan, and the restoration of the earth.

## Other Materials of Interest

*Christ – The Head of the Church*, Arno Weniger, Fundamental Baptist Congress of North America, 1968

*A Handbook of Christian Truth*, Harold Lindsell and Charles Woodbridge, Fleming R. Revell Co., 1953

*The Sovereignty of God*, Arthur Pink, Baker Book House, 1930

*Lectures on the Revelation*, H.A. Ironside, Loizeaux Brothers, 1919

*The Late Great Planet Earth*, Hal Lindsey, Zondervan, 1970

*The Coming Kingdom of Christ*, John R. Rice, Sword of the Lord, 1945

*Profiles of Prophecy*, S. Franklin Logsdon, Zondervan, 1970

*The Witness of the Stars*, E.W. Bullinger, Kregel Publications, 1967

*Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Henry Thiessen, Eerdmans Publishing, 1949

*God's Plan And You*, Paul Van Gorder, Radio Bible Class, 1974

*The God-Man*, Richard DeHaan, Radio Bible Class, 1970

*The Triune God*, Richard DeHaan, Radio Bible Class, 1967

*The Conflict of the Ages*, M.R. DeHaan, Radio Bible Class

*A King Is Born*, M.R. DeHaan, Radio Bible Class

## **The Eternal God**

I. God is eternal. Isaiah 57:15

A. He always was

B. He is

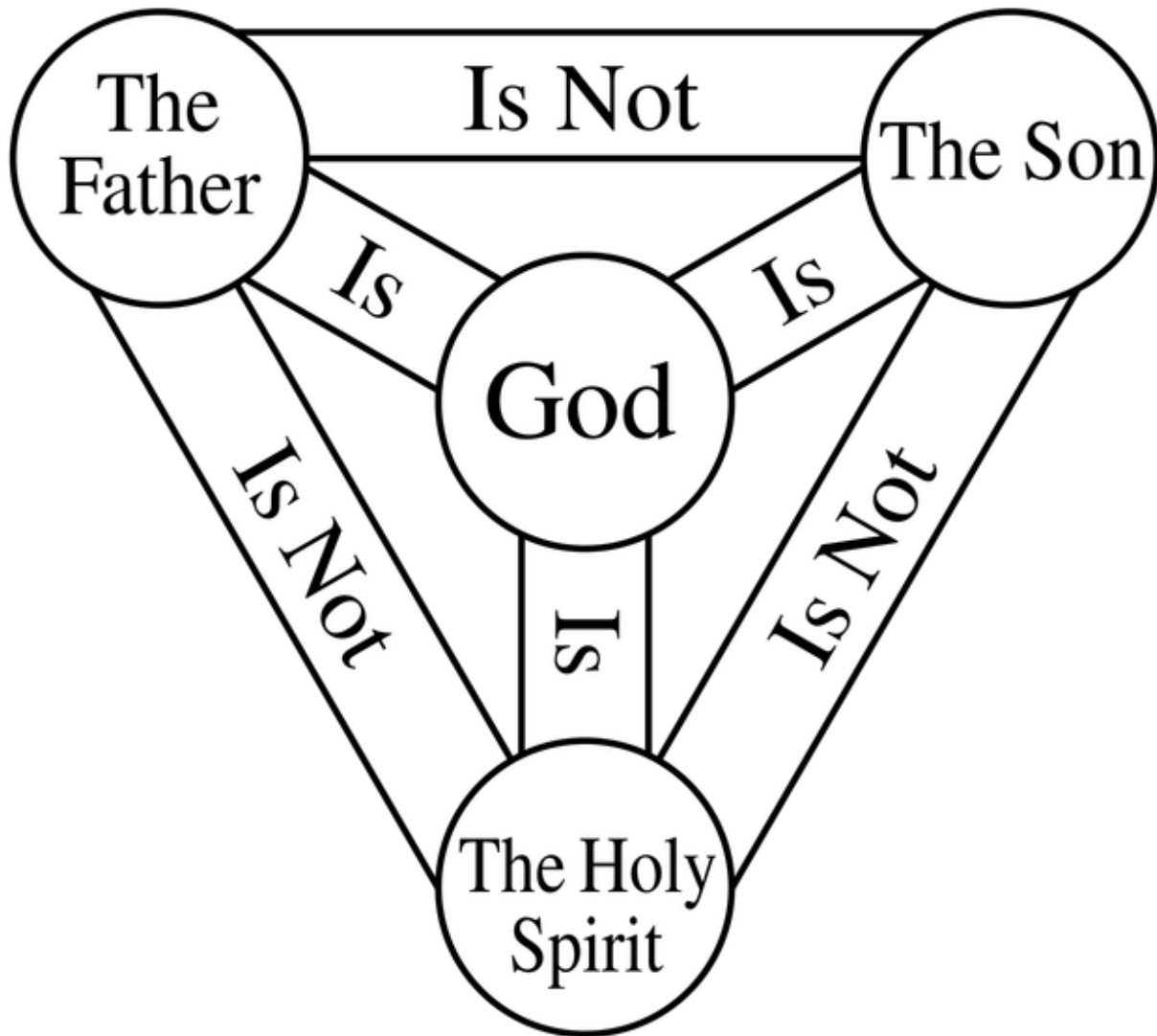
C. He always will be

II. God is Three and One. Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Peter 1:2

A. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

B. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are God





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### III. God is the Creator of all.

A. He created everything – Nehemiah 9:6

B. Everything was created for Him – Romans 11:36; Colossians 1:16

## Christ's Kingdom

We are using the text of two books to guide us in our study along with Scripture. They are –

1. Erich Sauer's *From Eternity to Eternity*
2. Thomas Bernard's *The Purpose of Doctrine in the New Testament*

We'll now compare their viewpoints on Christ's Kingdom.

### I. Two Viewpoints on Christ's Kingdom

A. The rule of Messiah will begin only at the setting up of His Kingdom in glory at His return in the End time.

B. The Davidic Kingship of Messiah began at the ascension and exaltation of the Divine Son of David to the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.

## II. Points of difference in the two viewpoints

A. The degree of this extension as regards what persons and lands are included .. to what extent Israel, to what extent the other nations.

B. The form of this rule, whether it will be only inward and spiritual or, in addition, visible and external, indeed, even historical and political.

C. The dating of this Davidic Kingship of the Son of David whether its commencement is to be placed at the ascension and Pentecost or only at the future parousias and epiphany.

## III. Explanation of the “throne of David”

A. It is not literal as regards the rule of the Messiah.

B. It does not mean just the earthly national political “State” over which David ruled.

#### IV. Christ's Kingdom will be of wider scope than David's

A. Christ is Lord of the Church, which is made up of millions from every nation.

B. The Millennial Reign will place Christ as ruler over all nations.

C. Christ will rule men on earth and saints raised from the dead and glorified.

#### V. How Christ will set up His Kingdom

A. The judgment upon and destruction of the sinful kingdom of Israel.

B. The visiting by God of the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name.

C. The return of the Lord.

D. The rebuilding and raising up of the tabernacle of David.

E. The conversion to God of the residue of men, in connection with this restoration of Israel.

VI. Prophecy backs up the view of an earthly reign

A. Acts 15:13-17

B. Amos 9:8-10

C. Romans 15:7-9, 12

D. Isaiah 55:3

VII. The two viewpoints not irreconcilable

A. The current dispensation brings in a certain sense of fulfillment of many prophecies of the old covenant.

B. The prophecies have often a double and threefold fulfillment.

C. Christ is ruling over the lives of believers today and there will come a day when He will establish an earthly reign over all men.

## VIII. The Decisive ground for expecting a Millennial Kingdom

A. The definite statements of the prophets concerning a future national reuniting of the two-tribes and ten-tribes kingdoms in the time of Messiah (Ezekiel 37:15-24; Hosea 1:11; Jeremiah 3:8; Zechariah 10:6)

B. The definite testimony of the prophets that in the time of Messiah, Israel will again dwell in the land of their fathers (Jeremiah 16:15), in their own land (Ezekiel 28:25), in this land (Jeremiah 32:41), into the land of Gilead and Lebanon (Zechariah 10:10).

C. The equally clear announcement that this will be effected only by its being associated with the glorious appearing of Messiah (Zechariah 14:4; Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 24:30; 26:24; Revelation 1:5) and with the inward renewing of Israel (Hosea 3:5; Isaiah 4:4; 11:9; Ezekiel 36:26; Zechariah 13:1).

D. The announcement that there would be a conversion and renewal of the other nations (Isaiah 2:3-4; 19:23-25; Zephaniah 3:9; Zechariah 14:9; Malachi 1:11).

E. The God-given inspired interpretation of the dream visions of the Book of Daniel.

F. The unmistakable answer of Jesus to His disciples (Acts 1:6-8).

G. The testimony of the Revelation (Revelation 19:11-21; 20:4-6, 9-11).



## The Apocalypse

In Bernard's lecture on the Revelation of Christ, written by the Apostle John, Bernard shows a connection between the progress of prophecy and the progress of doctrine.

Bernard breaks the lecture into two main points with the second having six parts. The second point deals somewhat with the future Kingdom of Christ. He points out the doctrinal position of the book as being a doctrine of consummation. His six parts under this point are –

1. A doctrine of the Cause of the consummation
2. A doctrine of the History of the consummation
3. A doctrine of the Coming of the Lord
4. A doctrine of Victory
5. A doctrine of Judgment
6. A doctrine of Restoration

This sixth part deals somewhat with the last chapter of the first text by Sauer. Bernard points out that there will be a perfect humanity and perfect society. The New Jerusalem will be a fulfillment of the ancient promises of God.

## **Practical Application**

### I. The Kingdom of David to be Restored

A. II Samuel 7:8-16

B. Psalm 89:27-37

C. Isaiah 11:1-2

D. Jeremiah 23:3-6

E. Jeremiah 33:14-17

## II. Jesus will rule on David's throne

Luke 1:30-33

## Other Available Study Materials

*Coming Events in Prophecy*, M.R. DeHaan, Zondervan, 1962  
(Chapters 22 & 23)

*Daniel*, Oliver Greene, The Gospel Hour, 1964 (Chapters 2, 7-9,  
11-12)

*Daniel The Prophet*, M.R. DeHaan, Zondervan, 1947 (Chapters 2,  
4, 7-9, 1-12)

*Revelation*, Lehman Strauss, Loizeaux Brothers, 1964 (pp  
329-344)

*The Revelation*, Oliver Greene, The Gospel Hour, 1963 (Chapters  
19 – 22)

*The True Messiah*, Richard DeHaan, Radio Bible Class, 1974

*This Same Jesus Is Coming Again*, M.R. DeHaan, Radio Bible  
Class, 1962

*God's Program for Israel*, Theodore Epp, Back To the Bible, 1968

*Earth's Coming Golden Age*, A.E. Logan, Georgia Bible Institute, 1973

*1,000*, Salem Kirban, 1973

*The Late Great Planet Earth*, Hal Lindsey, Zondervan, 1970

*Profiles of Prophecy*, Franklin Logsdon, Zondervan, 1970  
(Chapters 16 – 21)

*The Coming Kingdom of Christ*, John Rice, Sword of the Lord, 1945 (Chapter 8)

*Systematic Theology*, Henry C. Thiessen, Eerdmans Publishing, 1949 (Chapters 41 – 42, 45 – 47)

*The Olivet Discourse*, Carl Armerding, Dunham Publishing, 1955



## Present Complete Salvation in Christ

Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. Without Him there would be no hope, no life, no peace, no comfort. He is the great Prophet, Priest and King. He is the great Mediator between God and men.

This great salvation is a free gift of God. We are made heirs with Him. We've become part of the King's family and will reign with Him forever.

To fully experience victory and joy in our salvation, we must realize seven things:

1. We must accept and believe the fact that Christ has completely conquered our sin and given us eternal life
2. We must fully surrender to Christ
3. We must study the Word of God consistently
4. We must be faithful in little things
5. We must be regular in prayer
6. We must witness with courage and vigor
7. We must practice the presence of Christ in our lives

## **Personal Application**

The seven points are excellent points for daily living. These are things that I can remember each day throughout my ministry and family life.

Every morning when I awake I should remember that my faith is complete in Christ and I have nothing to worry about. I should begin each day by surrendering my life to God anew. never should a day pass that I do not spend time in the precious Word of God. I need to always remember that my main work on earth is to be faithful, whether the things be big or small. A prayer life is absolutely essential to a powerful life. We have been called to witness that which we have both seen and heard. I need to witness every day as I have opportunity. I must practice the present of Christ every day.



## Other Available Study Materials

*Christ Prophet, Priest & King*, Paul Van Gorder, Radio Bible Class, 1972

*The Biblical Faith of Baptists*, Volume III, Various Authors, Fundamental Baptist Congress of North America, 1968 (Chapter 14)

*On These We Stand*, William Bellshaw, Accent Books, 1968 (Chapters 3, 8 & 9)

*A Handbook of Christian Truths*, Harold Lindsell, Fleming Revell Co., 1953 (Chapters 17-40)

*Old Paths*, Dr. John Charles Ryle, James Clarke & Co., 1972 (Chapters 9 & 17)

*Absolute Surrender*, Andrew Murray, Moody Press, 1895, (Chapter 1)

*Systematic Theology*, Dr. Henry Thiessen, Eerdmans Publishing,  
1949, (Chapters 25-26)