

WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN NEEDS TO KNOW

Lesson 33

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN THEOLOGY

Study 1: The Continuing Battle for the Bible

[TEACHERS: This is more material than you could possibly teach in a 30-35 minute lesson. So, do not try to cover it all; do your best!]

I. Introduction

A. Opener

Everyone has a belief system, and all belief systems rest on authority, which make them true or false, depending on the authenticity of the authority.

That is, everyone has a set of ideas and notions by which they interpret the world they experience, and the correctness of these beliefs stands or falls on whether or not the authority behind them is true or false.

CS Lewis was one of the greatest and most visible Christians of the 20th century. However, earlier in life, he was an atheist. What opened CS Lewis to Jesus Christ was the gradual realization that his authority for *not* believing was too weak.

In 1917, Lewis met Nevill Coghill at Oxford University. Lewis later wrote that Coghill was “clearly the most intelligent and best informed man in the class.” The truths with which Coghill confronted Lewis combined with those he had read and heard about from other Christians, to create what Lewis called “a wider disturbance which was now threatening my whole earlier outlook (worldview).”

Lewis read the works of a Scottish Christian, George Macdonald, and was impacted by the authority of holiness he saw there. He read *Paradise Lost*, by John Milton, and got to know another Oxford Christian, J.R.R. Tolkien, who would write *The Lord of the Rings*.

Lewis was a scholar of English literature. The deeper he researched, it became clear to him that the writers he respected most for their depth and understanding were all

Christians, like Milton, G.K. Chesterton and the English poet Spenser. But other authors, like H.G. Wells and Voltaire, Lewis found, in his words, “a little thin,” and “too simple.”

As Lewis began to see the weakness of the authority supporting his atheism, he began a spiritual journey that would lead him ultimately to Christ.

B. Main points in this study—

- 1. A belief system stands or falls on the foundations of the authority that underlies it.**
- 2. The Bible is the foundation of Christian belief, and is under continual assault from those who desire to undermine Christ’s message and His followers.**

II. Information-Background

A. The contemporary concern

Dr. James Packer writes: “The problem of authority is the most fundamental problem that the Christian Church faces. This is because Christianity is built on truth ...”¹

Paul was concerned about the basis of authority, and wrote this in Galatians 1:8-- *But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*

That is, if Paul himself lost his mind and began preaching a message not resting on the authority of the truth he had already declared—or if even what seemed a “messenger (angel) from heaven” gave a message different from the truth, a demented Paul or that “messenger” should have the disfavor or wrath of God upon them.

This demonstrates how important it is that we have the right source and foundation for the authority for what we believe.

¹ JA Packer, *Fundamentalism and the Word of God*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958, page 42.

B. How scriptures develop

1. Immanent to Transcendent sources

“Immanent” means that which is near, and refers to our human level of experience and understanding.

“Transcendent” refers to that which is outside and above human beings, and our experience and understanding.

Some belief systems seek to arrive at an understanding of the transcendent by starting with human experience

Pure Buddhism, for example, is basically atheistic or agnostic (though there are some forms of Buddhism that believe in gods and spiritual beings)

The authority for Buddhism arises from human experience, and therefore salvation is described as “enlightenment,” or “illumination.”

The perception of the transcendent is framed entirely in the context of human experience.

2. Transcendent to Immanent sources

There are three religious systems especially that claim their scriptures came from transcendent revelation: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

That is, the base of authority is not from the immanent, not from human experience, but from outside the human, from God Himself.

Therefore, in these revelatory systems, the understanding of the immanent is framed in the context of the transcendent, rather than vice-versa.

The core question for the belief systems claiming transcendent authority is this: *Which transcendent authority: God through the Holy Spirit, or Satan disguising himself as an angel of light?*

Jesus told us how to distinguish the true and the false: Matt 7:15-20

"Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor

figs from thistles, are they? 17 "So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. 19 " Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 "So then, you will know them by their fruits." NASU

III. Instruction

A. Crises in thought and belief about the authority of the Bible

1. Rationalism: Scripture as literature

a) *The meaning and origin of rationalism*

The Renaissance in Europe began about the 11th century AD, and was an intellectual and artistic movement to recover the ancient classics of Greece and Rome.

The Renaissance gave way to the Enlightenment in the 18th century, when rationalism became the driving force.

Rationalism was the idea that anything that could not be subjected to human reason and conformed to it should be questioned or rejected.

A new form of biblical hermeneutics (interpretation) arose that was based on the idea that the Bible should be treated as any other form of literature, and analyzed and understood within the framework of human reason.

b) *The impact on Biblical interpretation and authority*

Johann Salomo Semler (1725-91) is regarded by some as the "father of German rationalism"

Semler was intent on battling the idea of the supernatural, and thus wanted to strip the Bible of supernatural elements

"It was said that Semler 'made use of his chair [as a professor at Halle] and his pen to undermine the very foundations of Christianity.' According to Semler, the whole revelation must be brought to the bar of human reason and the cultured mind must relieve itself of any obligations to believe anything in the Bible that appears 'unreasonable.' Semler's contribution to the destructive criticism of the Bible was his 'accommodation theory,' which declared that our Lord and His

Apostles accommodated themselves to the prejudices, the errors and the superstitions of their time." ²

If Semler was the "father of German rationalism," then Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), another German academic, is regarded by some as the "father of modern theology."

He pushed for a methodology of biblical interpretation that would be founded on rationalistic tools and approaches.

Schleiermacher introduced the idea of "theology as science."

"The result was the study of theology for theology's sake. Theologian Edward Farley, of the Vanderbilt Divinity School, believes this approach has led to 'the fundamental flaw in clergy education today... the fragmentation of theological studies.'" ³

c) *The work of Semler, Schleiermacher, and other rationalists laid the foundations for theological liberalism and its reductionist views of biblical authority in the 20th century.*

2. Reductionism: Scripture as broad principle but not necessarily factual

a) *Meaning of reductionism:*

- (1) To reduce something is to make it less than what it is
- (2) Positivism and the crisis of meaning have led to a reductionist view of biblical authority in our time.

Another movement arose in Germany in the 1920s that would impact contemporary views on biblical interpretation in our time.

This new movement focused on the logical analysis of science, and was called "logical positivism."

² If the Foundations Be Destroyed. Trinitarian Bible Society Article No. 14, p. 1.

³ Cited in Wallace Henley, *Globequake: Living in the Unshakeable Kingdom While the World Falls Apart*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2012, p.117.

Anything that could not be proved true or false is meaningless and nonsensical according to this view.

Only statements regarding mathematics, logic, and natural sciences have meaning

Metaphysics, religion and ethics are without true meaning because they are not verifiable through the scientific method, according to logical positivism.

The impact on biblical authority has been severe: Positivism would assert that it is a collection of meaningless claims and fantasies, not to be taken seriously. This has resulted in contemporary times in a marginalization of the Bible and the attempt to confine it to a narrow sphere.

University of Chicago theology professor Langdon Gilkey: "Of course it is possible that the question of the reality of God may be answered in relation to our hearing of the biblical word—but then that "word-event" becomes a category in philosophical theology and not merely in hermeneutics. That is to say, "word-event" becomes the argued basis for our assurance that we have here met something real we must call "God"—and such an argument has infinitely transcended the hermeneutical question of interpretation into the philosophical-theological question of what ultimate reality is.

"One result of this change of theological concentration will be a separation for the next few years between biblical studies and theological concerns. No longer can the theologian or biblical scholar merely appeal to the "biblical view" as an assumed *theological* authority, since the questions of whether there be a revelation or a revealer at all are the ones he must deal with. And it surely begs *these* questions to cite only what the Bible says about them! This may seem to take the zip out of biblical studies—but a goodly number of eminent scholars will welcome for a while this cooler atmosphere in which to do their work."

Therefore, the major impact of positivism on biblical authority has been to move the interpretation of Scripture into the philosophical and relative rather than the factual and absolute.

(3) Deconstructionism is another contemporary approach to hermeneutics resulting in a reductionist view of biblical authority.

Jacque Derrida, a French philosopher (1930-2004), expanded the concept of positivism into a "theory of deconstruction" : not only are theological concepts meaningless, but are merely the means of constructing a "reality" that does not exist.

So, according to deconstruction, “the Bible is merely a book written by men who were locked in their own culture, experiences, and language. Thus, the Biblical authors were writing about their own subjective experiences, not communicating objective or eternal truths about God and humanity. Therefore, when someone reads the Bible today, he or she brings a personal interpretive grid to the text.”⁴

b) Reductionist forms and examples

(1) 20th century liberalism (modernism):

Reductionism led, in the early 20th century, to the development of theological liberalism that would continue to characterize the mainline churches in our time, and lead to their decline.

Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969), pastor of New York’s Riverside Church was one of the most famous preachers of his day and defender of “modernism,” the movement that believed rationalist methods should guide biblical hermeneutics.

Fosdick defended the modernist idea in a famous sermon, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?”

The Bible is not the literal Word of God, he taught, but an unfolding of God’s intention. Fosdick’s modernism would prefigure contemporary movements like process theology, which sees everything, including God and His truth in a continual mode of development.

(2) Neo-orthodoxy

Neo-orthodoxy was another outcome of biblical reductionism.

This movement centers on the nature of biblical inspiration. Rather than *being* the Word of God, the Bible *contains* “words” of God. Therefore, the tools of rationalist literary criticism are essential to ferret out God’s true “words” embedded in scriptural texts.

This has led, for example, to the “Jesus Seminar,” a group of theological academics who attempt to distinguish Jesus’ authentic sayings in the Gospels from those inserted later by copyists.

Neo-orthodoxy was at the heart of the Southern Baptist “battle of the Bible” in the 1970s and 1980s. Conservatives, including our pastor, who was president of the Southern Baptist Convention during part of that era, were concerned that neo-orthodoxy had penetrated

⁴ <http://www.allaboutworldview.org/postmodern-theology-and-the-theory-of-deconstruction-faq.htm>

Southern Baptist seminaries and other institutions. The concern was that this would take the SBC into the direction of the fading mainline denominations.

Judge Paul Pressler, a member of our church, was a prime leader in confronting the challenge of neo-orthodoxy in the SBC.

3. Romanticism: Scripture as narrative is a primary contemporary trend (post-modernism)

Contemporary culture is often described as “post-modern.” Modernism was the idea that the scientific method should guide all intellectual processes and movements, including theology. Post-modernism, arising in the 1960s, found this too severe and mechanical. Human emotions and “spirituality” needed to be in focus. To some extent this was a return to the romanticism and idealism of the late 19th century Victorian period up to the stark confrontation of World War 1.

Romanticism, as applied to the Bible was itself reductionist.

Some would argue that today’s approach to hermeneutics emerged from the thought of German philosopher and mathematician Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), and the philosophical method known as phenomenology.

Husserl rejected positivism, and believed that knowledge comes by experience. Therefore the subjective element of human understanding is vital for arriving at reality and authenticity.

Husserl reached back into the thought of French philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650) whose statement; “I think, therefore I am” is at the heart of phenomenology. The idea is that truth is measured on the basis of human awareness and subjective cognition, involving thought and emotions.

Therefore: “The story of modern hermeneutics begins with Edmund Husserl and his phenomenological approach. Following "Descartes' dream" of absolute certainty in knowing, Husserl focused on things as they show themselves. The philosophy of this movement was to "let things appear as they are" or to refrain from reading our presuppositions into a text. The purpose of Husserl's "phenomenological reduction" is to focus on what is immediate to experience, "Everything not 'immanent' to consciousness must be rigorously excluded. “ In this approach the meaning of the text has been fixed by the language and exists in an "idealist" sense.”⁵

⁵ <http://www.xenos.org/essays/litthry3.htm>

A major outcome in contemporary hermeneutics is the concept of the Bible primarily as “narrative.” While there are positive implications (“narrative” for example, would stress the importance of the whole of the Bible in making sense of the parts), there is a reductionist element. Narrative hermeneutics sometimes veers too close to neo-orthodoxy in the implication that the “meta-narrative” or the over-arching theme that is the sum total of the components.

Rather than the Bible being a book of enduring truths that provide practical guidance for our lives in all eras, narrative theologians would say it is a sweeping story of God’s actions in history to restore the world to Himself, and is remarkably consistent in the telling of that epic.

Narrative theology is important in the current debate over sexual lifestyles. If the Bible is not so much a book whose principles are to be applied in every era, but rather the meta-story of God’s attempts to reconcile humanity to Himself, then many of its precepts and prohibitions can be set aside as not relevant for our existential moment.

B. Contemporary culture and the need for unwavering commitment to biblical authority

1. As we will see when we study contemporary ecclesiology issues, the Church must see herself ministering in a ‘Roman’ world, but with respect to biblical authority, we are seeking to bear witness in a ‘Greek’ world.

2. What this means

a) The ‘Roman world’ means modern Western culture has returned to beliefs and behaviorism that characterized Roman paganism

b) With respect to the ‘Greek world’ contemporary culture has returned to relativism and “tolerance” as the highest values

(1) This was addressed by the Apostle Paul when he spoke to the Athenian philosophers:

Acts 17:22-31

Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.

23 "For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

24 " The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;

25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;

26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,

27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

29 "Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

30 "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

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(2) Paul's message has many implications for biblical authority and hermeneutics today:

- Rather than subjective speculation ("phenomenology") we must practice assertion: "what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim (announce) to you."
- God and His truth are objective and ultimate, not subjective and provincial in time and space, meaning ever-unfolding and changing with culture
- On the authority of God and His unchanging truth, all not in alignment with that objective reality will have to face judgment

- Now is the time to examine oneself on the basis of that authoritative ultimate reality, and turn away from all that brings misalignment with God’s absolute truth, and turn to Him

IV. Interaction-Application

In October 1978, 200 prominent evangelical leaders assembled in Chicago in a meeting sponsored by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy. They issued their conclusions about biblical authority and hermeneutics in the “Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy.”

In our confused and chaotic culture, we must continue stand with the summary conclusions of the Chicago Statement:

1. God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.
2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms, obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.
3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.
4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.
5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

(The whole Chicago Statement is appended here for reference):

**THE CHICAGO STATEMENT
ON BIBLICAL INERRANCY**

Preface

The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian Church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are called to show the reality of their discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our Master. Recognition of the total truth and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture is essential to a full grasp and adequate confession of its authority.

The following Statement affirms this inerrancy of Scripture afresh, making clear our understanding of it and warning against its denial. We are persuaded that to deny it is to set aside the witness of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit and to refuse that submission to the claims of God's own Word which marks true Christian faith. We see it as our timely duty to make this affirmation in the face of current lapses from the truth of inerrancy among our fellow Christians and misunderstanding of this doctrine in the world at large.

This Statement consists of three parts: a Summary Statement, Articles of Affirmation and Denial, and an accompanying Exposition*. It has been prepared in the course of a three-day consultation in Chicago. Those who have signed the Summary Statement and the Articles wish to affirm their own conviction as to the inerrancy of Scripture and to encourage and challenge one another and all Christians to growing appreciation and understanding of this doctrine. We acknowledge the limitations of a document prepared in a brief, intensive conference and do not propose that this Statement be given creedal weight. Yet we rejoice in the deepening of our own convictions through our discussions together, and we pray that the Statement we have signed may be used to the glory of our God toward a new reformation of the Church in its faith, life, and mission.

We offer this Statement in a spirit, not of contention, but of humility and love, which we purpose by God's grace to maintain in any future dialogue arising out of what we have said. We gladly acknowledge that many who deny the inerrancy of Scripture do not display the consequences of this denial in the rest of their belief and behavior, and we are conscious that we who confess this doctrine often deny it in life by failing to bring our thoughts and deeds, our traditions and habits, into true subjection to the divine Word.

We invite response to this statement from any who see reason to amend its affirmations about Scripture by the light of Scripture itself, under whose infallible authority we stand as we speak. We claim no personal infallibility for the witness we bear, and for any help which enables us to strengthen this testimony to God's Word we shall be grateful.

* The Exposition is not printed here but can be obtained by writing us at the Oakland office: ICBI / P.O. Box 13261 / Oakland, CA 94661 / (415)-339-1064.

A SHORT STATEMENT

1. God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.

2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms, obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.

3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.

4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.

5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

ARTICLES OF AFFIRMATION AND DENIAL

Article I

We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.

We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source.

Article II

We affirm that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture.

We deny that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.

Article III

We affirm that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.

We deny that the Bible is merely a witness to revelation, or only becomes revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.

Article IV

We affirm that God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means of revelation.

We deny that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God's work of inspiration.

Article V

We affirm that God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures was progressive.

We deny that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.

Article VI

We affirm that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.

We deny that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.

Article VII

We affirm that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.

We deny that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.

Article VIII

We affirm that God in His Work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.

We deny that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.

Article IX

We affirm that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write.

We deny that the finitude or fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God's Word.

Article X

We affirm that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.

We deny that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

Article XI

We affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.

We deny that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.

Article XII

We affirm that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.

We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.

Article XIII

We affirm the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.

We deny that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

Article XIV

We affirm the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

We deny that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth claims of the Bible.

Article XV

We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.

We deny that Jesus' teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.

Article XVI

We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history.

We deny that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by Scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.

Article XVII

We affirm that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word.

We deny that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture.

Article XVIII

We affirm that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

We deny the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.

Article XIX

We affirm that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

We deny that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without grave consequences both to the individual and to the Church.

