

Foreword by John M. Frame

EDITED BY

John DelHousaye • John J. Hughes • Jeff T. Purswell



SCRIPTURE

and the

PEOPLE

of

GOD

ESSAYS IN HONOR OF WAYNE GRUEDEM



Scripture and the People of God

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Edited by John DelHousaye,
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Scripture and the People of God: Essays in Honor of Wayne Grudem
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Published by Crossway
1300 Crescent Street
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

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Cover design: Jordan Singer

First printing 2018

Printed in the United States of America

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Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-4335-5857-3

ePub ISBN: 978-1-4335-5860-3

PDF ISBN: 978-1-4335-5858-0

Mobipocket ISBN: 978-1-4335-5859-7

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Grudem, Wayne A., honoree. | DelHousaye, John, editor.
Title: Scripture and the people of God: essays in honor of Wayne Grudem / edited by John DelHousaye, John J. Hughes, and Jeff T. Purswell; foreword by John M. Frame.
Description: Wheaton: Crossway, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2018035155 (print) | LCCN 2018038215 (ebook) | ISBN 9781433558580 (pdf) | ISBN 9781433558597 (mobi) | ISBN 9781433558603 (epub) | ISBN 9781433558573 (hc)
Subjects: LCSH: Bible—Criticism, interpretation, etc.
Classification: LCC BS511.3 (ebook) | LCC BS511.3 .S369 2018 (print) | DDC 220.6—dc23
LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018035155>

Crossway is a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

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15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple;
the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is pure,
enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the LORD is clean,
enduring forever;
the rules of the LORD are true,
and righteous altogether.
More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey
and drippings of the honeycomb.
Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

Psalm 19:7–11

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Tribute to Wayne Grudem

Lane T. Dennis

It is a privilege for me to add my voice to the authors of this book in tribute to Wayne Grudem. Like each of the contributors, I too have a long relationship with Wayne—one that has given me an enormous appreciation for the man and his ministry.

This volume has been appropriately titled *Scripture and the People of God*, as faithfulness to Scripture has been at the heart of all of Wayne's work throughout his life. I often think of Wayne as uniquely exemplifying the apostle Paul's admonition to Timothy to "guard the deposit entrusted to you" (1 Tim. 6:20).

First, it is a great privilege to have Wayne as a founding member of the Translation Oversight Committee (TOC) for the English Standard Version of the Bible and to benefit from Wayne's invaluable contribution on the TOC. What precious memories we have of working together in remarkable unity among the fourteen TOC members—seeking to render every word and phrase as transparently and faithfully as the Lord would enable. Thus we give all glory to God alone for the ESV, "with ongoing wonder that our God should ever have entrusted to us so momentous a task" (as the ESV preface concludes).

Second, I would mention the creation of the *ESV Study Bible* (ESVSB). I remember well how my wife, Ebeth, and I sought the Lord's leading for the best person to be entrusted with the enormous theological and spiritual responsibility of serving as general editor for the *ESVSB*. Having worked together with Wayne on the translation

of the ESV Bible, and given his invaluable *Systematic Theology*, we were convinced that Wayne was the person that the Lord had uniquely equipped and called for this purpose—a call that Wayne graciously accepted after much prayer. Again we give all glory to God for what he has accomplished—for the provision of Wayne, for the provision of the ninety-five contributors who created the *ESVSB* under Wayne’s general editorship, and now to see the Lord’s extraordinary hand of blessing on the publication and distribution of the *ESVSB* in more than seventy countries worldwide.

Lastly, I would mention the recent publication of Wayne’s *Christian Ethics* (just a few days ago as of this writing). *Christian Ethics* beautifully represents Wayne’s lifelong calling to apply Scripture to “the people of God” in all of life.

It is with much joy and delight, then, that Ebeth and I express our great appreciation to Wayne and Margaret Grudem—for their dear friendship, their faithfulness to God’s Word and the gospel, and the tremendous legacy that Wayne has provided throughout his life of teaching, writing, mentoring, and ministry. We would not be surprised to hear Wayne rejoicing with the apostle Paul: “I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. . . . By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you” (2 Tim. 1:12, 14).

Foreword

John M. Frame

I have written elsewhere¹ about the exciting period 1964–1974, when Westminster Theological Seminary experienced a major theological transition. From 1961 to 1964, I had studied under the “old faculty,” the “boys” that J. Gresham Machen had brought with him when he left Princeton in 1929 to found Westminster. Those boys—John Murray, Cornelius Van Til, Ned B. Stonehouse, and Paul Woolley, joined later by several others, including Edward J. Young, Meredith G. Kline, and Edmund P. Clowney—gave the school a formidable reputation for scholarship and consistent Reformed orthodoxy. But in the late sixties and early seventies, deaths, retirements, and other departures necessitated replacements. As a teacher, I joined a group of new professors, including Jay E. Adams, C. John Miller, D. Clair Davis, Raymond B. Dillard, and later Harvie M. Conn.

And God also brought to Westminster during this time a group of students with remarkable theological gifts, many of whom would go on to write significant theological works and join the faculties of Westminster and other schools, becoming leaders in various fields of evangelical theology. In that group were William Edgar, James Hurley, David Clowney, Willem VanGemerén, Moisés Silva, Alan Groves,

1. John Frame, *Theology of My Life: A Theological and Apologetic Memoir* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2017), 88–122; Frame, foreword to *Redeeming the Life of the Mind: Essays in Honor of Vern Poythress*, ed. John M. Frame, Wayne Grudem, and John J. Hughes (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017); Frame, “Backgrounds to My Thought,” in *Speaking the Truth in Love: The Theology of John M. Frame*, ed. John J. Hughes (Phillipsburg, NJ, P&R, 2009), 9–30.

Susan Foh, Dennis Johnson, Greg Bahnsen, Paul Wells, Tiina Allik, John Hughes, Vern Poythress, and Wayne Grudem, whom we honor in this volume.

Westminster had been known not only for its high level of scholarship and Reformed orthodoxy but also for its creativity—creativity, of course, within the bounds of orthodoxy. The Westminster faculty was committed to the church’s creeds and the Reformed confessions; but it had never been content with simply repeating and emphasizing those formulations. Rather, faculty members had a strong motivation toward rethinking their tradition—in order both to apply it to new questions and to verify its biblical basis. That was true of the Old Princeton tradition: one thinks, for example, of the development by the Hodges and Warfield of the church’s doctrine of biblical authority and inerrancy. At Westminster, Murray’s systematic theology, unlike many previous Reformed syntheses, was focused almost entirely on the exegesis of biblical texts, with minimal (though expert when necessary) interaction with the history of doctrine. Stonehouse and Young, like Machen, dug deep into Scripture to respond in depth to the objections of modern critics of biblical teaching. Kline developed original responses to exegetical issues, such as the “framework hypothesis” in Genesis 1–2. Clowney built on the “redemptive-historical” emphasis of Geerhardus Vos to develop a view of preaching that sought above all to preach Christ from all the Bible. Van Til rejected the dominant apologetic traditions of the church, seeking a more biblical way of defending the faith. Jay Adams, similarly, rejected the traditional accommodation of Christian counseling to secular psychology, developing a new system of “nouthetic” or “biblical” counseling. Harvie Conn insisted on the importance of “contextualization” in missions: presenting biblical truth in the language of those to whom the gospel comes. C. John Miller insisted on evangelism with a deep understanding of grace, overcoming the self-defensiveness of the church’s “ingrown” traditions. And Vern Poythress and John Frame became known for something called “perspectivalism,” the habit of looking at theological questions from many different angles. The pattern was this: at Old Princeton and Westminster there was a special passion to dig more deeply into what Scripture says, together with a creative independence from past historical formulations.

Of this group, Wayne Grudem may be the best known to the theological public, because of his wonderful *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*.² This best-selling, influential volume is often described as representative of the conservative Reformed tradition. But, like the other theologians I have mentioned, Grudem is far more than a mere representative. He too is an original thinker of the first order.

After his studies at Harvard and Westminster, Grudem earned his doctorate in New Testament at Cambridge University under C. F. D. Moule, writing a dissertation on the nature of prophecy in the New Testament, especially 1 Corinthians.³ In his argument, he rejected the Reformed tradition of “cessationism,” the view that God had removed the gift of prophecy from the church at the end of the apostolic age. But he nevertheless defended the Reformed understanding of the sufficiency of Scripture, by making a sharp distinction between the authority of scriptural revelation and the authority of New Testament (and contemporary) prophecy. Prophecy in the Old Testament, he argued, was identical with God’s own word and therefore of ultimate and permanent authority for the church. But prophecy in the New Testament consisted of less authoritative utterances, lacking the ultimacy and permanence of the biblical canon. Therefore in Grudem’s view, as in traditional Reformed theology, Scripture alone is our final authority, inerrant and infallible, a suitable starting point for the development of Christian doctrine.

His *Systematic Theology*, then, incorporates his highly unusual view of prophecy, together with an emphasis on *sola Scriptura*, an intention (no less than John Murray’s) to derive all doctrinal conclusions from biblical exegesis. His argument gives a certain level of support for the charismatic movement while insisting on a rigorous exegetical basis for all his theological positions. His view of prophecy is certainly creative, while his view of biblical sufficiency is deeply conservative.

At other points as well, Grudem differs from traditional Reformed thinking while basing his ideas on a deep study of Scripture. He

2. Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994. Grudem has also published portions and abbreviations of this volume, with applications of its teaching to different topics.

3. For a revised version of his dissertation, see Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000).

advocates believer's baptism and premillennialism—views never entirely absent from the Reformed tradition, but not typical of it.

But he has also put a huge effort into defending a very traditional Reformed and evangelical view: that the relation of men and women in the church is “complementarian” rather than “egalitarian.” With John Piper, Grudem edited *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*.⁴ This book of essays argues comprehensively that although men and women are equal in dignity before God, the Scriptures do not prescribe for them identical roles in the family, society, and church. So Grudem opposes the evangelical feminists' movement to open the church's offices to women.

In the course of this debate, Grudem entered the controversy as to whether the term *kephalē* (translated “head”), used to describe the relation of husband to wife in 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23, means “authority over” or “source.” He argued the first alternative from a remarkably comprehensive examination of the term and the literature about it.⁵

So Grudem's concern with the theology of gender entailed a concern with Bible translations. His book with Vern Poythress *The Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy: Muting the Masculinity of God's Words*⁶ and their later *The TNIV and the Gender-Neutral Bible Controversy*⁷ argued that some recent translations have distorted the biblical text to make it support egalitarianism. He and Poythress worked with the team of translators that produced and edited the English Standard Version,⁸ an “essentially literal” translation of Scripture that seeks to avoid theological, philosophical, and political bias, including gender ideology.

More recently, Grudem, who was an economics major at Harvard, has produced works in the economic and political spheres: *Politics*—

4. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991. See also Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An Analysis of Over One Hundred Disputed Questions* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012). Grudem is also a cofounder of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, which promotes the complementarian position.

5. Wayne Grudem, “Does Κεφαλή (‘Head’) Mean ‘Source’ or ‘Authority Over’ in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples,” *TJ* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 38–59. Grudem updated and supplemented his article in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. Wayne Grudem and John Piper (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991), appendix I, 425–68.

6. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000.

7. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2004.

8. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001, and in many editions since. From 2005 to 2008, Grudem served as general editor of the *ESV Study Bible*.

*according to the Bible: A Comprehensive Resource for Understanding Modern Political Issues in Light of Scripture*⁹ and (with Barry Asmus) *The Poverty of Nations: A Sustainable Solution*.¹⁰ These books do not mark any departure from Grudem's general theological emphasis or his direct engagement with the Bible. Indeed, these arguments for Christian political engagement reinforce his commitment to the Reformed tradition, as in Puritanism and Dutch neo-Calvinism.¹¹ In the 2016 election, Grudem was a supporter of Donald Trump, with qualifications.

There has been controversy between Grudem and some other writers about the doctrine of the Trinity.¹² The church confesses that there is one God in three persons, and that Scripture names those persons as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Scripture is clear both as to God's oneness and as to the deity of the three persons, but beyond those affirmations much is mysterious. It is not immediately obvious how God can be both one and three, or how a "person" of God is different from other persons or from the singular divine nature. Traditional theology confesses that the three persons may be distinguished from one another by their "personal properties": the Father is unbegotten, eternally generates the Son, and eternally sends forth the Spirit; the Son is eternally begotten and eternally sends forth the Spirit; the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son.¹³ But it is unclear what these personal properties tell us about the persons beyond the names Father, Son, and Spirit, and, if the properties are more than elaborations of these names, how their meanings can be established from Scripture.

Clearly there are differences among the three persons beyond those implied by their personal properties. It was the Son who became incarnate, not the Father or the Holy Spirit. And this fact was not an accident. In God's plan nothing is inappropriate, and so there evidently

9. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

10. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013.

11. Some Reformed theologians press Luther's "two kingdoms" distinction to argue that Scripture deals only with salvation from sin and not with politics or the general culture. Grudem, of course, is on the other side of this debate. His writings contain the best resolution of the controversy, showing how there are in Scripture solutions for specific social issues.

12. This controversy goes back to the formulations of Grudem's *Systematic Theology* and his differences with evangelical feminism, but it was reignited at the 2016 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society.

13. Whether the Spirit proceeds from the Father *and* the Son (*filioque*) or proceeds only from the Father is disputed between the Eastern and the Western churches. My formulation of the personal properties reflects the Western understanding.

was a reason why only the Son became incarnate.¹⁴ So the history of redemption reveals to us some truths about the eternal distinctions between the Trinitarian persons, however difficult it may be for us to understand them.

In Grudem's *Systematic Theology*, he maintains that although the three persons are equal in their being, deity, nature, power, and glory, there are some differences in "role" among them,¹⁵ differences that exist through all eternity. Particularly, Grudem stresses that the Father has the distinctive role of being supreme authority, so that even the Son and the Spirit are eternally subordinate to the Father's eternal plan.

Other theologians, particularly evangelical feminists, have taken issue with Grudem here as elsewhere. Evangelical feminists have invoked the equality of the persons of the Trinity as a model for egalitarian marriage among human beings, and they have charged Grudem (wrongly, in my view) with holding to a subordinationism like that of the heretic Arius.¹⁶ The 2016 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society featured a number of lectures on the Trinity, and the views of Grudem and Bruce Ware (who holds essentially the same position) came up for scrutiny.

For the details of the controversy, consult the essay by Bruce Ware in this volume. For what it's worth, I would argue the following: (1) It is wrong for either side to use the classic doctrine of the Trinity as a model for human marriage. A biblical view of marriage ought to focus not on the doctrine of the Trinity, difficult as that is to formulate, but on the passages of Scripture that address human marriage specifically, such as Genesis 1:24 and Ephesians 5:22–33. (2) It is misleading to speak of "subordination" of the Son to the Father, since the Arian controversy gave that term a specific meaning that is hard to avoid and confusing to introduce into other contexts. And (3) it is nevertheless quite legitimate for theologians to venture beyond the classic creedal statements, seeking better to understand the distinctions among the persons of the Trinity from the roles they play in the history of redemption.

14. To cite a statement Einstein made in a different context, "God does not throw dice" (Letter to Max Born, December 4, 1926, in *The Born-Einstein Letters*, trans. Irene Born [New York: Walker and Company, 1971]).

15. Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 248–52.

16. In my view, it was a mistake on Grudem's part to use the term "subordination" here, even in his highly qualified way ("functional," not "ontological" subordination), since theological critics often attend to words without paying due attention to their contexts and qualifications.

In summary, I see Wayne Grudem as an excellent representative of the Westminster tradition in theology. He exhibits the Old Princeton/Westminster passion to honor the authority and inerrancy of Scripture, and to bring all theological controversies directly to Scripture for their resolution.¹⁷ At the same time, like many representatives of Old Princeton and Westminster, he is not bound by tradition but applies the Bible creatively to many areas of human life.

Alongside my theological admiration of him, I would express thanks to God for Wayne Grudem's friendship over many years and the example of his Christian life. The essay in this volume by his son Elliot testifies to Wayne Grudem's love of worship and praise. And his love of God motivates him to be gracious to his colleagues as well. He has always been willing to support the work of other evangelical theologians.¹⁸ He gladly acknowledged his debt to a number of us on the dedication page of his *Systematic Theology*. Later, he wrote an article for my own Festschrift,¹⁹ even though, as it turned out, we held different positions on the topic he chose to write on. When I published my own *Systematic Theology*²⁰ after many years of recommending Grudem's,²¹ I would not have asked him to recommend mine; but P&R's editor did, and Wayne was willing to give my book a gracious endorsement.

Though Grudem is now afflicted with Parkinson's disease, he maintains an active work schedule and continues to bless the church and the world with the riches of God's Word. I hope that this Festschrift brings much further honor to his distinguished career and to the Lord Jesus whom he serves.

17. Grudem is knowledgeable and appreciative of the creeds and catechisms of the church. But his son Elliott Grudem, in this volume, explains interestingly why his father had his son memorize Scripture rather than catechism questions.

18. He has been a very active member of the Evangelical Theological Society for many years and served as president of the organization in 1999.

19. Wayne Grudem, "Why It Is Never Right to Lie: An Example of John Frame's Influence on My Approach to Ethics," in Hughes, *Speaking the Truth in Love*, 778–801. When Grudem began the article, he had the impression that his position on lying was the same as mine. After reading my *Doctrine of the Christian Life* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2008) he realized that I had changed my position and we were in different camps! To Grudem's credit, however, he stuck by his guns and presented at great length and in great depth what he believed the Scriptures taught. I still disagree with him on this matter, but I deeply respect his allegiance to Scripture as he understands it.

20. John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013).

21. In fact, I still recommend it. The two books have some different features and serve different purposes. Grudem's is more complete than mine in many areas, and I love the study materials he places after each chapter. The hymns and memory passages and points of personal application he cites are immensely valuable.

Preface

John Calvin once referred to Holy Scripture as “God’s scepter.”¹ This evocative metaphor captures much of both the nature and function of God’s written Word. Because God’s Word originates with him, it partakes of his holy character. It carries his authority. It is the instrument of his rule in our lives. From it we learn his character, his plans, his purposes, and his will. As those who have come under God’s saving reign through Christ, we are to treasure it, meditate upon it, view the world and all of life in light of it, and honor and obey it with all our hearts and in every area of our lives.

For those who know Wayne Grudem, this understanding of and posture toward the Bible will sound familiar. If there is a common factor that underlies Wayne’s varied interests, unifies his academic pursuits, and governs his methodology, surely it is his unswerving allegiance to Scripture’s authority and his resolve to bring Scripture’s truth to bear upon all of life. The title of this book—*Scripture and the People of God*—alludes to the intersection between God’s Word and God’s people, which has animated Wayne’s productive career as a theologian, teacher, and author, and marked his life as a husband, father, friend, and follower of Christ.

A devotion to the Bible was instilled in Wayne from his earliest years. Wayne Arden Grudem was born on February 11, 1948, in Chipewewa Falls, Wisconsin, the oldest of three sons born to Arden and Jean (née Shedy) Grudem. Although he prayed with his mother to receive Christ at age twelve, he now sees evidence of his conversion at a much

1. The phrase comes from his “Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France,” in John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 12.

earlier age, perhaps four or five. In the dedication to his *Systematic Theology*, he notes, “My parents . . . taught me to believe the Bible, to trust in God, and to speak and write clearly.” He also credits the influence of “A. Kenneth Ham, my Baptist pastor, who awakened in me a love for systematic theology by teaching a class on Christian doctrine when I was thirteen years old, and who taught me by example to believe every word of Scripture.” The blessings of a Christian home and a solid church proved formative for Wayne’s future calling as a teacher of God’s Word.

Wayne’s love for biblical truth did not stifle but rather fueled a wide range of interests. An early fascination with politics led him to study economics at Harvard University, topics to which he has recently returned in his writing.² While he was at Harvard, his plans for law school were changed as a result of sitting under the preaching of Harold John Ockenga at Park Street Church in Boston. He was now on a course to serve the church with his gifts, and during his undergraduate years he was active (along with Vern Poythress) in the leadership of the Harvard-Radcliffe Christian Fellowship and the Collegiate Club at Park Street Church. Between his sophomore and junior years, he served as a summer intern for Harald Bredeesen at the First Christian Reformed Church in Mount Vernon, New York, an experience that greatly strengthened his convictions concerning the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in ministry.

It was also during his Harvard years, on June 6, 1969, that he married Margaret White, whom he had known since middle school. Wayne and Margaret have three sons—Elliot (married Kacey), Oliver (married Sarah), and Alexander (married Lauren)—and three grandchildren.

After college Wayne and Margaret moved to California, where he would attend Fuller Theological Seminary. However, because of Fuller’s evolving position on the doctrine of Scripture, he soon transferred to Westminster Theological Seminary, from which he graduated in 1973. His training at WTS had the single greatest impact upon his understanding of the Bible and theology, particularly through the teaching of Edmund Clowney and John Frame, along with his friendship with Vern Poythress, who was a student at WTS at the same time.

2. Wayne Grudem, *Politics according to the Bible: A Comprehensive Resource for Understanding Modern Political Issues in Light of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010); Wayne Grudem and Barry Asmus, *The Poverty of Nations: A Sustainable Solution* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013).

Wayne pursued doctoral work in New Testament studies at Cambridge University, England, under the supervision of C. F. D. Moule. One can detect in his dissertation, “The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians,” the melding of a number of his interests: theological formulation based on rigorous exegesis, with a concern for the church to be empowered by the work of the Holy Spirit.³

Wayne’s teaching career began when he left England for Bethel College in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he taught from 1977 to 1981. In 1981, he moved to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, where he would teach, write, and influence a generation of pastors and Christian leaders for the next twenty years. It was during his time at Trinity that Wayne gained prominence as one of the leading evangelical theologians in the English-speaking world. Beginning as a New Testament professor (during which time he produced a commentary on 1 Peter), he transitioned to the department of biblical and systematic theology in 1987.⁴ This bridge between disciplines illuminates the exegetical emphasis in Wayne’s theological methodology, most prominently exhibited in his *Systematic Theology*, a widely acclaimed and best-selling theology text.⁵ The approach of the book, which stresses clarity and application to life, also illustrates his unflagging desire to make biblical teaching accessible to as many people as possible, regardless of their background or training.

Beyond his teaching and writing, Wayne also exerted much influence during these years through his energetic leadership in the evangelical world. In 1987, along with John Piper, he helped to found the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. CBMW produced “The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood,” which has become the classic theological articulation of “complementarianism,” the view that men and women are created equal before God in dignity and worth, and designed to complement each other in differing roles that together glorify him. Three years later, Piper and

3. Published as Wayne Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1982). A popularized and expanded version of his dissertation appeared under the title *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988); rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000).

4. Wayne Grudem, *The First Epistle of Peter*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988).

5. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994).

Grudem edited *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, which provided extensive biblical and theological foundations for the complementarian position.⁶ Wayne has also been active in the Evangelical Theological Society, serving as its president in 1999.

Perhaps the most enduring expression of Wayne's commitment to Scripture is his involvement with the English Standard Version (ESV) translation of the Bible, published in 2001 by Crossway. Wayne was involved in the original conception of the ESV as an updating and revision of the Revised Standard Version (RSV). He then participated in the process of revision and translation as a (continuing) member of the ESV Translation Oversight Committee, and later served as general editor of the *ESV Study Bible*.⁷ In these ways Wayne has been a driving force behind a translation that is used by denominations, organizations, pastors, and Christians throughout the world.

Since 2001, Wayne has served as research professor of theology and biblical studies at Phoenix Seminary in Arizona. This transition was prompted by the hope that the desert climate would provide relief for Margaret's fibromyalgia. Although the move came as a surprise to many, Wayne's decision was wholly consistent with his allegiance to Christ, love for Margaret, and submission to Scripture (specifically in this case, Eph. 5:28).⁸ His recently published *Christian Ethics*, a natural extension of his burden to connect God's Word with people's lives—and thus an appropriate bookend to *Systematic Theology*—will no doubt help countless others to apply Scripture to their daily lives in ways that are pleasing to God.⁹

As this brief survey illustrates, *Scripture and the People of God* is a title most befitting a book honoring Wayne's life and ministry. The book explores various dimensions of this topic, including the nature of Scripture, its reception, its translation, its use in doctrinal formula-

6. John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991). See also Grudem, ed., *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002); Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An Analysis of More Than One Hundred Disputed Questions* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2004; repr., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

7. *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008).

8. Wayne's description of this decision can be found in Wayne Grudem, "Upon Leaving: Thoughts on Marriage and Ministry," *Trinity* (Summer 2001), <http://www.waynegrudem.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Upon-Leaving-Thoughts-on-Marriage-Ministry.pdf>.

9. Wayne Grudem, *Christian Ethics: An Introduction to Biblical Moral Reasoning* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018).

tion, and its application to life and ministry. The essays are organized around three disciplines to which Wayne has made significant contributions: biblical studies, systematic theology, and pastoral ministry. The contributors are Wayne's colleagues, his former students, a former teacher, and his oldest son—all of them his friends.

Each of the editors of this book has his own experience of Wayne's biblically infused life and ministry. John Hughes was a fellow classmate of Wayne's at both WTS and Cambridge. Jeff Purswell was a student of Wayne's at TEDS and served as his teaching assistant from 1995 to 1997. John DelHousaye has been a colleague of Wayne's at Phoenix Seminary since they both joined the faculty in 2001. We are each marked by Wayne's example, indebted to him for his support, and enriched by his friendship. It is therefore our joy and honor to present this book to Wayne in celebration of his seventieth birthday. Wayne, we are deeply grateful to God for you, and we pray that you and Margaret will experience much joy together in the future and more years of fruitful ministry as you continue to serve God's people with God's Word. We conclude as you yourself closed the preface to your *Systematic Theology*: "Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory" (Ps. 115:1).

Jeff T. Purswell
John DelHousaye
John J. Hughes

Acknowledgments

It has been our pleasure to work with so many of Wayne's friends to produce this Festschrift as a tribute to him.

To this volume's many contributors, we express our thanks for their labors and contributions in Wayne's honor.

We would like to thank Corinne Bellars for creating the bibliography of Wayne's published writings.

We also would like to thank Justin Taylor at Crossway for supporting this project, for encouraging us, and for his gracious flexibility with the deadline.

Finally, we would like to thank Crossway's Thom Notaro for the professional copyediting skills he has brought to our project.

May our Trinitarian God be glorified by this book.

John DelHousaye
John J. Hughes
Jeff T. Purswell

Abbreviations

ASV	American Standard Version
BDAG	Walter Bauer, Frederick William Danker, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> , 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000)
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
Bruce, CPE	F. F. Bruce, <i>The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians</i> , NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984)
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CSB	Christian Standard Bible
EBC	The Expositor's Bible Commentary
ESV	English Standard Version
Fee, GEP	Gordon D. Fee, <i>God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul</i> (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994)
GNT	Good News Translation
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
JB	Jerusalem Bible
JBMW	<i>Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KJV	King James Version

LXX	Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament)
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NEB	New English Bible
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDNTT	<i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i> , ed. Colin Brown, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975–1978)
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NKJV	New King James Version
NLT	New Living Translation
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
UBS	United Bible Societies Greek New Testament
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

PART 1



*SYSTEMATIC
THEOLOGY*

The Word of God and the People of God

*The Mutual Relationship between
Scripture and the Church*

Gregg R. Allison

I love Wayne Grudem. As an incoming seminary student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, I took “suicide” Greek under his instruction in the summer of 1982. (Remember: Wayne began his teaching career in New Testament, the discipline in which he earned his doctorate from Cambridge.) Each day at noon, after four hours of class, Wayne would lead us in jogging for exercise while he quizzed us about our Greek paradigms, conjugations, and vocabulary. He rewarded Gummy Bears to students who did well—with Greek, not running. I took Wayne for several other classes during my three years of study, including Advanced Greek Exegesis, which featured seven weeks out of a total of ten on 1 Peter 1:3–9 as he familiarized us with grammar and syntax, the Greek of the early church fathers, the use of classical resources, and more.

After graduating with the MDiv and spending nearly four years working with Cru in Switzerland, I returned to TEDS with Wayne's encouragement and pursued a PhD in systematic theology. He supervised my dissertation on the perspicuity of Scripture, a doctrine and posture that I learned from and perceived in him. After completion of my doctorate, I joined the faculty of Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon. Shortly into my tenure there, I received a call from Wayne asking me if I saw a need for a book that would cover everything that his *Systematic Theology* volume does not—the historical development of those doctrines. The enthusiasm I expressed for the idea was met by this response: "Great, because you are going to write it!" Thirteen years later my *Historical Theology* was released as a complementary volume to Wayne's *Systematic Theology*. I am indebted to him for that opportunity.

From that first class until today, and for many years in the future if God so wills, I am thankful for Wayne's friendship. I am pleased to honor him by offering this chapter in the Festschrift dedicated to him.

Particularly because of Wayne's devotion to the Word of God and his involvement in several evangelical churches, I will look at the mutual relationship between the doctrine of Scripture and the doctrine of the church. My thesis is this: the triune God, through his mighty speech act of Scripture, the Word of God, reveals himself and his ways to the people whom he chooses, saves, and gathers into his church. Accordingly, there exists the strongest possible relationship between God, his Word, and his people.

Regarding my approach, I treat first the doctrine of Scripture. Specifically, I acquaint readers with (or review) speech act theory and demonstrate how viewing Scripture as divine speech act helps to emphasize the intimate relationship between God and his Word. Indeed, Scripture is Trinitarian communicative agency for the purpose of saving the people of God. Framing Scripture as Trinitarian communicative agency expressed as divine speech act has important implications for the doctrine of Scripture, which I treat briefly in regard to inerrancy, authority, sufficiency, and transformative power.

Second, I address the doctrine of the church. After defining the concept, I present Scripture as God's Word to his church in terms of inaugurating and standing at the center of the church. I then explore four implications of this point in regard to four identity markers of

the church: as formed by the Word of God, the church is doxological, logocentric, confessional, and missional.

The Doctrine of Scripture

In his *Systematic Theology*, Wayne presents the doctrine of God-breathed, canonical Scripture under the attributes of authority, inerrancy, clarity, necessity, and sufficiency.¹ With this framework as background, I will consider the doctrine of Scripture from the perspective of speech act theory and Trinitarian communicative agency.

Scripture as Divine Speech Act

Let me first offer a brief introduction to (or review of) speech act theory: Every human utterance or communicative expression in social contexts consists of three aspects:² (1) A *locution*, or what is communicated (the content of the communication). For example, “Jesus Christ is coming again” addresses the return of the Lord. (2) An *illocution*, or the force with which the utterance is communicated (the type of communication). Speech act theory acknowledges some version of the following six illocutions: assertion, command, promise, declaration, exclamation, and warning. For example, “Jesus Christ is coming again” can be a promise or a warning. (3) A *perlocution*, or the intended or expected response on the part of the hearer (the anticipated or desired effect of the communication). With respect to the six illocutions, the perlocutionary effects are: for an assertion, acknowledgment or belief; for a command, obedience; for a promise, trust; for a declaration, a new state of affairs (e.g., “I now pronounce you husband and wife” joins a man and a woman in marriage); for an exclamation, joy or fear; and for a warning, action or avoidance. For example, “Jesus Christ is coming again” as a promise is intended to evoke hopeful trust in the Lord’s return (e.g., John 14:1–3), but as a warning its goal is to stimulate attentiveness (e.g., Matt. 24:36–44).³

1. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity Press; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), chaps. 2–8.

2. The original advocates of speech act theory were John Austin and John Searle (J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962]; John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974]; Searle, *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986]).

3. For further discussion, see Gregg R. Allison, “Speech Act Theory and Its Implications for the Doctrine of the Inerrancy/Infallibility of Scripture,” *Philosophia Christi* 18, no. (Spring 1995):1–23.

For several decades, theologians have sought to wed the doctrine of Scripture with speech act theory.⁴ A key benefit of this approach is to underscore the fact that as human beings do things with words (beyond asserting, people promise, command, and so on), similarly God does things with his Word (beyond asserting, God promises, commands, and so on). Accordingly, speech act theory emphasizes the divine agency associated with the many-faceted utterances of Scripture: God himself is the agent who communicates through his Word, and God does more than merely state things, that is, make propositional statements.⁵ Timothy Ward concisely expresses the nature of the relationship between God and his Word, Scripture, as divine speech act: “The words of the Bible are a significant aspect of *God’s action* in the world.”⁶ God does things with words.

We may take divine commands and promises as illustrations of the close relationship of God with his Word: to obey God’s words is to obey God, and to disobey God’s words is to disobey God; to trust God’s words is to trust God, and to mistrust God’s words is to mistrust God. Again, as Ward underscores, “God has *invested* himself in his words, or . . . God has so *identified* himself with his words that whatever someone does to God’s words . . . they do directly to God himself.”⁷

In the rest of our discussion, I will consider Scripture as divine speech act.

Scripture as Trinitarian Communicative Agency

Building upon this idea, John Webster (along with others) encourages us to view Scripture as Trinitarian communicative agency for the pur-

4. Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse. Philosophical Reflections on the Claim That God Speaks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Kevin Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998); Anthony C. Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992); Richard S. Briggs, *Words in Action: Speech Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation* (London: T&T Clark, 2001); Timothy Ward, *Word and Supplement: Speech Acts, Biblical Texts, and the Sufficiency of Scripture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

5. This affirmation should not be (mis)understood to be a criticism of the traditional evangelical insistence on the propositional nature of divine revelation. Propositions are (1) one type of speech act, in this essay referred to as *assertions*, in contrast with promises, commands, and more; and (2) the content of all types of communication, in this essay referred to as *locutions*. As I use “propositional statements” here, it is in the sense of propositions of the first kind. God does more than just communicate propositions. At the same time, I affirm the propositional nature of revelation; that is, revelation is not only personal in nature but also propositional in the second sense.

6. Timothy Ward, *Words of Life: Scripture as the Living and Active Word of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 12.

7. Ward, *Words of Life*, 27.

pose of saving his people.⁸ The triune God, Scripture as his Word or divine speech act, and his people are mutually related. I will treat each of these three elements in turn.

God is the author of Scripture: its origin is divine as the Holy Spirit moved the biblical authors so that their very words are the product of his creative breath (2 Tim. 3:16–17; 2 Pet. 1:19–21). As divinely authored speech act, Scripture communicates and effects whatsoever God wills to accomplish. Broadly speaking, a crucial aspect of this divine intention may be called salvation (more specific effects will be presented later): “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for *it is the power of God for salvation* to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16–17).⁹ God effects salvation through his Word. More broadly still, God accomplishes the entirety of his eternal purpose or plan through his Word:

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but *it shall accomplish that which I purpose,*
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
(Isa. 55:10–11)

In summary, Scripture’s origin, effect (salvation), and end are divine.

The divine authorship of Scripture is shorthand for the fact that Scripture is Trinitarian communication: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit work inseparably to author the Word of God.¹⁰ In the Gospel of John, Jesus presents the Trinitarian structure of divine revelation. Jesus affirms, “I do nothing on my own authority, but *speak just as the*

8. John Webster, *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Approach*, Current Issues in Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), chap. 1.

9. In the context of Paul’s letter to the Romans, the referent of “the gospel” is the oral message of the good news of Jesus Christ. By extension, “the gospel” refers to the written message at the core of the New Testament. Since this New Testament was completed and added to the canon of Scripture, the church has known the gospel through these writings and has communicated it to people in accordance with this written formulation. This clarification applies to the other biblical passages cited in the following discussion.

10. For a discussion of the inseparable operations of the triune God, see Adonis Vidu, “Trinitarian Inseparable Operations and the Incarnation,” *Journal of Analytic Theology* 4 (May 2016): 106–27.

Father taught me" (8:28). Again: "For I have not spoken on my own authority, but *the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak*. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, *I say as the Father has told me*" (12:49–50). Thus, the Father speaks, the Son hears, and the Son speaks what he has heard from the Father. To this communicative action, Jesus adds the Holy Spirit, whom he promises to the disciples:

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but *whatever he hears he will speak*, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for *he will take what is mine and declare it to you*. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that *he will take what is mine and declare it to you*. (16:13–15)

Thus, the Father speaks and the Son hears; the Son speaks and the Holy Spirit hears; the Holy Spirit speaks and the apostles hear. This Trinitarian revelation is then communicated to the people of God, first through the apostles' oral teaching, then eventually through their written words, now our New Testament (1 Cor. 2:10–3:4; 2 Thess. 2:15).¹¹

Thus, Scripture is Trinitarian communicative agency for the purpose of saving the people of God. Several specific examples of the divine saving activity through Scripture are the following: God *calls* his elect people to salvation through his Word: "God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this *he called you through our gospel*, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 2:13–14). Additionally, *conviction of sin* comes through the Word of God, as illustrated by the response of Peter's listeners to his gospel message on the day of Pentecost: "Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37; for the Spirit's role in convictions of sin, see John 16:7–11).

Moreover, God brings about the *regeneration* of his people through his Word: "You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of

11. Regarding the importance of the oral transmission of the teachings of the apostles, Papias offered: "Besides, if any man ever came who had been a follower of the elders [apostles], I would enquire about the sayings of the elders [apostles]; what Andrew said, or Peter, or Philip, or Thomas or James or John or Matthew or any other of the Lord's disciples. . . . For I did not consider that I got so much profit from the contents of books [collections of Jesus's sayings, or the Gospels] as from the utterances of a living and abiding voice" (Papias, *Expositions of the Oracles of the Lord*, 3.39.1, in Eusebius, *Historiae ecclesiasticae*, ed. and trans. G. A. Williamson [New York: Dorset, 1984]).

imperishable, *through the living and abiding word of God*. . . . And *this word is the good news that was preached to you*" (1 Pet. 1:22–25). As a result of their regeneration, people respond with *conversion*, which involves both repentance and faith. *Repentance* from sin comes through the Word of God; for example, the Ephesians confessed their pagan practices, to the extent of burning their books of magic arts, as prompted by "the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:18–20). So also with *faith*: "So *faith* comes from hearing, and hearing *through the word of Christ*" (Rom. 10:17). God's ongoing work of *sanctification* is directly tied to the Word of God, in accordance with Jesus's prayer, "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17). *Assurance of salvation* is given through the Word (1 John 5:11–13; for the Spirit's role, see Rom. 8:16).

In summary, God saves his people from distress through his Word:

Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
He sent out his word and healed them,
and delivered them from their destruction. (Ps. 107:19–20)

The people's response to the saving speech act of the triune God includes harkening to the divine call summoning them to salvation, begging the Lord for mercy, repenting from their sins and believing in Jesus Christ, yielding to his transformative work in their lives, believing the promise of assurance, and walking faithfully with God as his power protects them. In other words, God's people respond to his rescuing word by fleeing to him for salvation.

Accordingly, the triune God authored and now communicates his Word for the purpose of saving his people. The human response to Scripture should correspond to its divine origin, effect, and end. Webster insists that the church must always acknowledge Scripture and its reception to be subservient to the self-revelation of the triune God.¹² Scripture as the divine speech act is the means by which God reveals himself and his ways. In his speech act the triune God savingly engages

12. Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 6. Webster's concern is that the doctrine of Scripture becomes loosed from its proper moorings (as part of the doctrine of God, as well as the other theological loci) and floats about independently and hence improperly, for example, at the beginning of systematic theology, taking on the job of providing epistemological warrant for doctrines, that is, the *principium cognoscendi* in the realm of impartial reason (pp. 12–13).

his people through assertions, commands, promises, exclamations, declarations, and warnings, and their response must be fitting to this inscripturated Trinitarian communication.

In the rest of our discussion, I will consider Scripture as Trinitarian communicative agency.

Implications for the Doctrine of Scripture

Though space precludes me from developing fully the following areas, locating the doctrine of Scripture in its proper context has many implications for the attributes of Scripture that Wayne rehearses in his *Systematic Theology*. Four attributes of Scripture will serve as examples: inerrancy, authority, sufficiency, and power.

1. *The inerrancy of Scripture.* Jesus, as the one who hears and speaks the words of the Father, (at least) implies truthfulness for those words: “He [the Father] who sent me is *true*, and I declare to the world *what I have heard from him*,” such that Jesus could say “[I] told you *the truth that I heard from God*” (John 8:26, 40; cf. 7:18). Furthermore, Jesus’s promise to his disciples focuses on the truth-oriented Holy Spirit: “When the Spirit of truth comes, *he will guide you into all the truth*, for he will not speak on his own authority, but *whatever he hears he will speak*, and he will declare to you the things that are to come” (John 16:13; cf. 15:26). John, the writer of the Gospel, was one of the recipients of the truth-telling Spirit of truth and, appropriately, concludes his testimony, “This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that *his testimony is true*” (John 21:24). Thus, the triune God is the true God, which means his revelation is true as well: The words the Father speaks and the Son hears are true words. The words the Son hears and speaks are true words. The words the Holy Spirit hears and speaks are true words. The words the apostles hear and speak are true words. And the words the people of God read and heed are the true words of Scripture. As Jesus himself expressed, “Your word is truth” (John 17:17).¹³

13. Of course, this discussion does not engage with the phenomenon of the human authorship of Scripture and its impact on the inerrancy of Scripture. For an extended treatment, see Henri A. G. Blocher, “God and the Scripture Writers: The Question of Double Authorship,” in *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 497–541.

2. *The authority of Scripture.* I have written elsewhere:

The authority of Scripture is its property whereby it possesses the prerogative to command what God's people are to believe, do, and be, and to prohibit what they are not to believe, do, and be. It is a subset of divine authority in general, the right that God possesses to establish laws, give orders, demand obedience, determine belief, and more.¹⁴

As already noted in the Gospel of John, Jesus links the transmission of the words of God with the respective economic authority of the triune persons: The Father, possessing paternal authority (as expressed in his sending the Son), speaks to the Son who in turn acknowledges, "I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me" (John 8:28; cf. 12:49; 14:10). Moreover, the Son, possessing sonship authority (as expressed in his sending, together with the Father, the Holy Spirit), explains that the Spirit "will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come" (John 16:13; cf. 15:26). Thus, the authority of the triune God—from the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit—grounds the authority of the Word of God. And thus, as noted above, to obey God's words is to obey God; to disobey God's words is to disobey God.¹⁵

3. *The sufficiency of Scripture.* Sufficiency is an attribute of Scripture whereby it provides everything that nonbelievers need to be saved and everything that believers need to please God fully. Such sufficiency is grounded properly in the sufficiency of God himself: as the completely self-sufficient and infinitely resourceful God, he alone is all that people need, whether they are non-Christians who need God to save them or Christians who need God to instruct, guide, equip, rebuke, and empower them.

Controversy surrounds this characteristic of Scripture, as illustrated by the debate over its sufficiency for providing care for people.¹⁶

14. Gregg R. Allison, *50 Core Truths of the Christian Faith: A Guide to Understanding and Teaching Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2018), 24.

15. For recent evangelical treatments of biblical authority, see: Carson, *Enduring Authority*; Kevin Vanhoozer, *Biblical Authority after Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2016), especially chap. 3.

16. Eric L. Johnson, ed., *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010); Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert, eds., *Counseling the Hard Cases: True Stories Illustrating the Sufficiency of God's Resources in Scripture* (Nashville: B&H, 2015).

To oversimplify the issue, some proponents of the absolute sufficiency of Scripture reject, or at least question the advisability of, medical intervention and/or extrabiblical resources in cases of depression and personality disorders such as narcissism.¹⁷ Their point: Scripture is sufficient for people who suffer from depression and are plagued by narcissistic personality disorder. On the other side of the debate are those who support the use of medication and extrabiblical resources to deal with such suffering. Their point: Scripture is sufficient for salvation and holy living, but not for all matters of physical and emotional distress.

By linking the sufficiency of Scripture and the self-sufficient, infinitely resourceful God, a way forward may be offered. Again, to oversimplify the issue, Scripture is sufficient for the salvation of non-believers and the godly living of believers so that they may fully please God. Moreover, this sufficiency is materially complete, for so-called “healthy” people as well as for people suffering from depression and personality disorders. However, the all-sufficiency of God, by which he has provided for the discovery and development of medical aid and extrabiblical resources for depression and narcissistic personality disorder, supplies relief from such suffering. Importantly, Scripture continues to be sufficient for people who avail themselves of such relief. They find themselves in a new state in which their depression and narcissism are moderated medically and through extrabiblical resources, and Scripture is materially sufficient for them in this new condition.¹⁸

4. *The transformative power of Scripture.* “The transformative power of Scripture is the multifaceted effect that God, its author, brings about through his Word.”¹⁹ This power is not the magical effect of the mere (written or spoken) words of Scripture. Sadly, superstitious

17. By “extrabiblical resources” I do not necessarily mean counseling that relies on resources from secular psychology, therapies, systems, and approaches. Rather, it stands in contrast with views of counseling that define it as assistance provided by one person with a particular focus on, and expertise in, Scripture to another person seeking wisdom from the Bible.

18. My friend and former colleague Eric Johnson has written two important books on soul care: *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007); and *God and Soul Care: The Therapeutic Resources of the Christian Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2017). Heath Lambert has written a theological book on biblical counseling from a standpoint quite different from that of Eric Johnson: Heath Lambert, *A Theology for Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundation of Counseling Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016).

19. Allison, *50 Core Truths*, 47.

Christians may view the Bible as a type of talisman bringing them luck or warding off evil. Moreover, this power is not humanly influenced in the sense of *quid pro quo*. Tragically, misguided Christians are caught up in the notion that if they just read their Bible and pray (that is, engage in daily devotions), then God will—indeed, must—bless them. They have done their part, so they expect God to do his part, per some kind of *tit-for-tat* arrangement. Accordingly, God’s power becomes activated by human devotion, prayer, faith, fruitfulness, and so on; it is a humanly influenced power.

Furthermore, the transformative power of Scripture is not contingency destroying. Regretfully, well-meaning Christians may consider divine power to function in such a way that it minimizes or even destroys human response in terms of decisions and actions. But Scripture as divine speech act includes (in most cases) a perlocutionary aspect, an expected, appropriate response to him. God declares, and praise is voiced. He commands, and obedience is prompted. God promises, and faith is ignited. He affirms, and sound doctrine is confessed. God warns, and danger is avoided. He rebukes, and repentance is enacted. God corrects, and plans are changed. These contingent powers—the so-called “secondary causes”—are (in most cases) important and real factors in what transpires between God and his people. Indeed, his transformative power operating in their lives engages their faith, obedience, thanksgiving, and other human responses. Though God may will, and indeed sometimes chooses, to operate above and beyond these secondary causes, such miraculous interventions are not the norm. As Webster avers, “Talk of God’s action does not compete with, suspend or obliterate talk of creaturely activity. Rather, it *specifies* or *determines* the character of creaturely activity.”²⁰ God’s transformative power expressed through his Word evokes and demands responsive human decisions and actions that are fitting for the particular kind of divine speech act.

In summary, the triune God, through his mighty speech act of Scripture, the Word of God, reveals himself and his ways to his people. This Trinitarian communicative agency has particular reference to those whom God has chosen, saved, and gathered into his church.

20. Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 92.

The Doctrine of the Church

In his *Systematic Theology*, Wayne presents ecclesiology under the topics of the nature, marks, and purpose of the church; its purity, unity, and power (church discipline); church government; the means of grace; the ordinances or sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper; worship; and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.²¹

Definition of the Church

I am building on my book *Sojourners and Strangers* and the definition of the church offered in it:

The church is the people of God who have been saved through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and have been incorporated into his body through baptism with the Holy Spirit. It consists of two interrelated elements: the universal church is the fellowship of all Christians that extends from the day of Pentecost until the second coming, incorporating both the deceased believers who are presently in heaven and the living believers from all over the world. This universal church becomes manifested in local churches characterized by being doxological [oriented to the *doxa*, or glory of God], logocentric [centered on the Word of God, in two senses: the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, and the inspired Word, Scripture], pneumadynamic [Spirit-activated], covenantal [gathered as members in new covenant relationship with God and in covenantal relationship with each other], confessional [united by both personal confession of faith in Christ and common confession of the historic Christian faith], missional [the body of divinely called and divinely sent ministers proclaiming the gospel and advancing the kingdom of God], and spatio-temporal/eschatological [here, yet not here; already, but not yet]. Local churches are led by pastors (also called elders) and served by deacons [and deaconesses], possess and pursue purity and unity, exercise church discipline, develop strong connections with other churches, and celebrate the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Equipped by the Holy Spirit with spiritual gifts for ministry, these communities regularly gather to worship the triune God, proclaim his Word, engage non-Christians with the gospel,

21. Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, chaps. 44–53.

disciple their members, care for people through prayer and giving, and stand both for and against the world.²²

This definition of the church will be presupposed throughout the following discussion.

Scripture as God's Word to His Church

As I have underscored, God's operation through his Word is directed toward his people. This Trinitarian communicative agency, as divine speech act, forms the people of God as it effectively calls, convicts of sin, regenerates, prompts repentance and faith, sanctifies, grants assurance of salvation—as it effects salvation of those whom God has elected. Importantly, the formation of God's people does not have reference to them as individuals only, for the Word of God also forms them into the corporate, gathered people of God, the church. The Word both inaugurates and stands at the center of the church.

Indeed, the Word gave birth to the church, not vice versa. This position stands opposed to Roman Catholic theology's insistence that the church preceded Scripture; reasons for this view include Petrine authority (based on a misunderstanding of Matt. 16:13–20), the Christ-church interconnection (an axiom of Roman Catholic theology), and the claim (not backed by history) that the church was the determiner of the New Testament canon.²³ This position also stands opposed to the notion that the church generated itself. As Webster underscores, "Scripture is not the word of the church; the church is the church of the word. . . . The church exists in the space which is made by the Word. Accordingly, it is not a self-generated assembly."²⁴

Two considerations provide the foundation for the view that Scripture inaugurated the church and not vice versa. First, Jewish Scripture was already in existence prior to the church (remember, the definition of the church places its beginning on the day of Pentecost),²⁵ and it was from this Scripture that the church arose. As (what Christians now

22. Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 29–30.

23. For discussion of these and other topics, see Gregg R. Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice: An Evangelical Assessment* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015).

24. Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 44.

25. On this point, Wayne and I disagree, in that he defines the church as "the community of all true believers for all time" (*Systematic Theology*, 853). See my *Sojourners and Strangers* (chap. 2) for arguments for placing the inauguration of the church at Pentecost.

call) the Old Testament pointed to and anticipated the coming of Jesus the Messiah, so also it pointed to and anticipated the inauguration of Messiah's people, the church. For example, Peter's confession of the identity of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God," summed up the Old Testament's hope of God's intervention through the second Adam / Son of Man / Son of God, precisely in line with the Father's revelation to Peter (Matt. 16:16–17). On the foundation of Peter and his confession, Jesus promises "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). This church is composed of the "brothers" of the One who, as "founder of their salvation, perfect[ed] through suffering," says about God (quoting Ps. 22:22),

I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.
(Heb. 2:10–12)

Jesus taught and preached Hebrew Scripture, explaining that he himself is its fulfillment (Luke 4:16–21; John 5:37–47). Jesus's disciples, in turn, grounded their apostolic message on the Old Testament by quoting it, paraphrasing it, summarizing it, and alluding to it. From this ancient Scripture arose the church of Jesus Christ.

Second, the church is a covenantal people; specifically, it is the church of the new covenant. Like all biblical covenants, the new covenant was unilaterally established by God and is structured by a covenant document. In the case of the church, this document consists of two "covenants" or "testaments": from the outset of the church, the Old Testament and, through the addition of the apostolic writings later on, the New Testament. Though the completed covenant document required decades to expand in terms of its inspired writings and centuries to be collected in terms of its canon, it existed as the authoritative foundation for the church from the moment that community came into existence as the new covenant people of God. The inauguration of the church came about through the Word of God.

At the center of the church stands the Word of God, especially as it is preached. Indeed, Protestant churches are characterized by two historical marks, one of which is the preached Word. (The second is the proper administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.) As the Reformers sought to locate the true church in the midst

of the false church of the sixteenth century, they agreed with the four traditional attributes of the church: “We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church” (Apostles’ Creed). At the same time, they considered the manifestation of the church in their day—the Roman Catholic Church—to have become so perverted in nature and derelict in ministry that it had forfeited the right to be called a church. For Martin Luther and John Calvin, the true church could be recognized by two marks, with the first being the Word of God. According to Luther, “Wherever this word is preached, believed, professed, and lived, do not doubt that the true, holy, catholic church must be there.”²⁶ Calvin expressed something similar: “Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard . . . there, it is not to be doubted, a church of God exists.”²⁷

Both expressions of this first mark of the true church recall our earlier discussion of Scripture as divine speech act. When pastors rightly preach the Word of God, their preaching has the three elements of a speech act: locution, illocution, and perlocution. For Luther, the perlocutions are summarized as belief, profession, and godly conduct: orthodoxy, orthoconfession, and orthopraxis. Certainly, these perlocutions are what Calvin simply referred to as “purely hearing” the purely preached Word. The preached Word of God, as the speech act of pastors, engages the church as assertion, command, promise, declaration, exclamation, or warning, with the corresponding prompt or demand for belief, obedience, trust, a new state of affairs, joy or fear, or action or avoidance.

The Word of God inaugurates and stands at the center of the church.

Implications for the Doctrine of the Church

Though space precludes me from developing fully the following areas, I draw implications for the church’s essence as doxological, logocentric, confessional, and missional.²⁸

First, the church is *doxological*, or oriented to the glory of God. The Word of God is central to this doxological orientation, especially

26. Martin Luther, *On the Councils of the Church*, in *Church and Ministry*, vol. 41 of *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, 55 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1955–1986), 150.

27. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 4.1.9.

28. The following discussion is taken from Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, chaps. 3 and 4.

as that characteristic relates to the church's worship. In the first place, the Word qualifies the people of God as genuine worshipers. In his conversation with the woman of Samaria, Jesus clarified, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father." He then rebuked both the false worship of the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim ("You worship what you do not know") and the proper but soon-to-be-obsolete worship of the Jews in the temple in Jerusalem ("we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews"). Proleptically, he added, "But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:21–24). Genuine worshipers are qualified to engage in genuine worship by living in the realm of "spirit and truth," (1) born again of the Holy Spirit so as to exist in "spirit" rather than in "flesh" (John 3:6), and (2) embracing the "truth," which has reference to Jesus, who is "the truth" (John 14:6), and (importantly for our discussion) embracing the Word of God ("your word is truth," John 17:17). The church is to engage in worship according to the way that God himself establishes, and he specifically directs his people how to ascribe glory to him in worship through his instruction in his Word.²⁹

The Word of God orients the doxological church to the glory of God.

Second, the church is *logocentric*, or centered on the Word of God. This stands against the contemporary trend among evangelical churches to hold captive Scripture and twist it to promote their sub-Christian agendas—churches that endorse the prosperity gospel, churches that market their own brand, churches that advocate seriously compromised positions on critical moral issues, and more. I have noted elsewhere that the logocentricity of the church confronts such domestication of Scripture, as Scripture

stands over the disobedience, faithlessness, pride, underdevelopment, legalism, selfishness, xenophobia, lethargy, and other sins of the church and its members. Appropriately, the Bible is "our adversary"; it always confronts with existential demands for ref-

29. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 424–33.

ormation. As John Webster notes, “Scripture is as much a destabilizing feature of the church as it is a factor in its cohesion and continuity.”³⁰

Certainly, the church gathers around the Word of God and finds its unity in it. At the same time, the Word rebukes the church for its many sins. “As the church is confronted by the Word of God, it should be ‘destabilized’ and then repent of such sins and embrace the way of godliness.”³¹

The Word of God is the heart of the logocentric church.

Third, the church is *confessional*, or united by common confession of the historic Christian faith. That is, when it gathers together, the church not only acknowledges but also publically professes “the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3), the sound doctrine it has always and everywhere believed. The Word of God itself encourages such common confession, as exemplified in the following snippet from an early creed that Paul highlights:

Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory. (1 Tim. 3:16)³²

From its articulation of its early “rule of faith” and “canon of truth,” through its formulation of its orthodox creeds (e.g., Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, Chalcedonian Creed, Apostles’ Creed), to Protestant churches distinguishing their beliefs from those of the Roman Catholic Church through the construction of the Protestant statements of faith (e.g., Augsburg Confession, the Formula of Concord, the Belgic Confession, the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the London [Baptist] Confession of Faith), the church has historically confessed its faith. Importantly, these creeds

30. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 115. The citation is from Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 46.

31. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 116.

32. Other examples of the New Testament’s incorporation of (parts of) early church confessions include Phil. 2:5–11 and 1 Cor. 15:3–6 (or 7).

and confessions are grounded on the Word of God and express in summary form its affirmations on the cardinal doctrines—the Trinity, the deity and humanity of Christ, the gospel, salvation—that the church is bound to believe.

The Word of God directs the profession of the confessional church.

Fourth, the church is *missional*, or the body of divinely called and divinely sent ministers proclaiming the gospel and advancing the kingdom of God. Jesus himself addressed the missional nature of his church in his instruction to his disciple: “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (John 20:21). As we read in the book of Acts, the Spirit-filled disciples carried out their mission by proclaiming the gospel, giving birth to scores of new churches. Thus, they began to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus (Matt. 28:19–20). Specifically, the mission of the church is the “ministry” or “message” (Gr. *logos*, or “word”) of reconciliation.

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:18–20)

The church expresses its missional character by proclaiming the Word of God in an ever-expanding movement (Acts 1:8), which saves the elect people of God and forms them into new churches, and the missional cycle continues.

The Word of God produces and propels the missional church.

Conclusion

The thesis of this chapter, in tribute to Wayne Grudem, is that the triune God, through his mighty speech act of Scripture, the Word of God, reveals himself and his ways to the people whom he chooses, saves, and gathers into his church. Accordingly, there exists the strongest possible relationship between God, his Word, and his people.

From the divine aspect of this relationship, the letter to the Hebrews underscores that “the word of God is living and active, sharper than

any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). Scripture, as Trinitarian communicative agency, effectively accomplishes the divine purpose, uninterruptedly and infallibly (Isa. 55:10–11). From the human side of this relationship, we may be tempted to despair as disobedience, faithlessness, rebellion, lukewarmness, self-centeredness, and many more failings continue to grip the church. But this persistent sinful state (from which one day the church will be delivered!) should never be blamed on a failure of Scripture. As Ward emphasizes, the words of Scripture do not obscure a relationship with God; on the contrary, God communicates with his human creatures by means of his Word as divine speech act given to save and gather his people into the church.³³ As the church, which is “‘worded’ all the way down,”³⁴ let us give greater heed to the Word of God “as to a lamp shining in a dark place” (2 Pet. 1:19).

33. Ward, *Words of Life*, 31–32.

34. Michael S. Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 44.



19 Essays Honoring a Life Committed to the Truth of God's Word

“If there is a common factor that underlies Wayne’s varied interests, unifies his academic pursuits, and governs his methodology, surely it is his unswerving allegiance to Scripture’s authority and his resolve to bring Scripture’s truth to bear upon all of life. The title of this book alludes to the intersection between God’s Word and God’s people, which has animated Wayne’s productive career as a theologian, teacher, and author, and marked his life as a husband, father, friend, and follower of Christ.”

—From the Preface

