Introduction

It is time to address the most egregious doctrinal errors currently predominant in the Western Christian churches including the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran churches, the Reformed churches, and many other protestant denominations and independent churches. The 16th century Protestant Reformation purified the doctrine of justification. That was a good start, but the reformed church is always reforming. The Western churches are indeed reformed to one extent or another. This includes the Roman Catholic Church.

It occurred to me many years ago that someone needs to produce a study of the traditional doctrines of the Trinity and the dual nature of Jesus Christ from an examination of relevant texts within the New Testament. The complexities of these doctrines have always seemed to me to be out of character with the usual clarity of the New Testament writers. The doctrine of the Trinity has a long history of being problematic for both trinitarian theologians and lay Christians. Traditional literature on the subject inevitably takes refuge in the assertion of the sublime mystery of the doctrine. This concept of mystery is misplaced. Surely many mysteries are presented in the scriptures, but the alleged mystery of the doctrine of the Trinity is notably different from other biblical mysteries because it arises out of the theoretical nature of the doctrine. This doctrine does not come directly from the text of scripture. The absence of an explicit origin in scripture makes the doctrine substandard.

This study is not another unitarian approach which denies the preexistent divinity of Christ Jesus and the divinity and separate personhood of the Holy Spirit. The present study is completely different from the unitarian approach of which numerous examples have been produced both historically and recently. I hope this theology thrills your heart. I want the Holy Spirit to illuminate the way of faith for you. He is the Spirit of truth. He has helped me to write this study. You will be the judge of that.

The purpose of this study is to put both the doctrine of God and the doctrine of Christ on a straightforward scriptural footing, free from theory and the consequent problems that arise. Then, out of straightforwardly scriptural understandings of God and Christ, practical matters of faith will be addressed, such as resisting temptation and other spiritual practices that are vital to Christians for pursuing their fellowship with the Father, with the Lord, and with the Spirit. My intent is that readers throughout the entire Church will benefit from the studies presented here.

The doctrinal paradigm shift which we are pursuing is not like a paradigm shift in science. In a scientific paradigm shift, science moves into uncharted territory. We are not doing that. We are simply trying to recover the original understandings of God and Christ in the apostolic churches, based on the apostolic writings. Our new doctrinal paradigm is therefore old.

I am a retired high school science teacher with training in theological studies as well. I have been a member of evangelical/conservative/mainline churches since my young-adult years and have taught Sunday school for many years as well as serving as an elder in the Presbyterian Church, USA during my years as a science teacher. The studies in this work have arisen over a long period of time, extending right up to the present. A confluence of many factors has occurred. It would be hard to give an orderly account now of exactly how the material came into being since some of the writing occurred decades ago. At least I can list some of the factors that led me to write the material. The chapter titled “The Lion” certainly arose out of the seminary classes that I took as a young adult, as did my essential views of the Christ (Philippian) Hymn. I also attended an excellent retreat quite a long time ago near Winter Park, Colorado, which provided another stream of

influence. I attended a Sunday school class years ago led by a professor from McCormick Seminary in Chicago that focused on the discipline of *lectio divina*-- a form of prayer, either individual or communal, based on readings in scripture. The short chapter on prayer shows how my spiritual life was reenergized at that time. My own struggle with sin has provided the impetus to write about the spiritual practice of resisting temptation as well as several of the other topics, including the chapter titled “On Spiritual Practices.”

Academic theologians and ordained ministers of the word, and others too, may tend to look down upon doctrinal theses with which they disagree, and they may look down on the author who is not an ordained minister of the word or an academic theologian. I point out that all believers must be theologians, good ones, and all believers have the Spirit of God who gifts them. I point out also that all academic theologians, and all ministers of the word, and all believers too, have the obligation to purify their doctrine. I have this obligation. I have waited for decades for academic theologians or ministers of the word, or anyone else, to address the central doctrines which I have addressed in the present work. No comprehensive study has come forth, so I have done what I can see authentically and accurately myself. This study is intended to be a service to the entire Church worldwide. My doctrinal theses are based on the straightforward exegesis of scripture. Readers should judge this for themselves.

Scholars need to recognize something fundamental: The scriptures, both OT and NT, were addressed largely to common readers/listeners who did not possess great knowledge or well-developed literary skills. The authors clearly took this into account and wrote with the understanding that their readers would approach the texts in a straightforward manner. This does not simply mean a literal manner. It means taking a common approach to interpreting literature. I am a proponent of straightforward exegesis. The significant subjective lens through which the readers of the texts looked, and which the writers assumed, was the lens of faith.

© 2025, 2026 Brad Goral. All rights reserved.