Scripture Paper

Assignment 2-1 for ST5534 Systematic Theology 1

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From this weeks video we talked briefly about the six stages that make up the doctrine of scripture. Within the reading Erickson mainly focuses on the first two stages of that doctrine, which are revelation and inspiration. Revelation and inspiration are very big topics and deal with how we interact with God, which is why so much time is focused on them with in this weeks reading. Erickson starts off with revelation and even more specifically general revelation, which consists of three main points nature, history and the over all design of the human being.

General revelation as stated previously deals with three main points that Erickson talks about including how God reveals himself in creation, how He reveals Himself throughout history and how He reveals Himself within human beings. Erickson talks about another kind of revelation as well which is known as special revelation and deals with how God reveals Himself in a deeper way such as entering into covenantal relationships with humans. Erickson uses Hebrews 1:1-2 as one of his examples of special revelation which states “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.”[[1]](#footnote-1) Erickson then transitions into preserving the revelations through inspiration, which Erickson explains, “while revelation and inspiration are usually thought of together, it is possible to have one without the other.”[[2]](#footnote-2) Erickson backs this point up in scripture by using John 21:25, which says “Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”[[3]](#footnote-3) John is stating in this passage according to Erickson that there was revelation without inspiration.

Erickson covers two other topics as well including inerrancy and authority, which fall under inspiration. Inerrancy is defined by Erickson as the Bible being fully truthful in all of its teachings. Authority of the Bible is that it posses the right to tell us “what we are to believe and how we are to live.”[[4]](#footnote-4) Erickson leaves off on those main points with scriptural doctrine but it is interesting to note that looking into Grudem’s Systematic Theology book I see a different approach taken. Grudem walks through 8 chapters on the doctrine of the word of God, which includes “looking at all the different forms of the word, the canon, authority, inerrancy, clarity, necessity and sufficiency.”[[5]](#footnote-5) Erickson and Grudem both agree in most areas including revelation although they use different terms to describe them. One way that these two resources contrast is that I am not seeing special revelation expanded on very well in Wayne Grudems version of the doctrine of scripture. I do not believe that either of the authors would say the others work is invalid but they would probably say that they just took different approaches. Erickson felt it important to sit on revelation and inspiration so he could zone in on some very important topics that many might not give much thought to and leaves out canon, preservation, translation and interpretation.

1. The MacArthur Study Bible, English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Christian Theology 3rd Edition, Millard J. Erickson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The MacArthur Study Bible, English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Christian Theology 3rd Edition, Millard J. Erickson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)