

# THE TRINITY REVIEW

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare [are] not fleshly but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And they will be ready to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. *2 Corinthians 10:3-6*

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## The Reformed Faith and the *Westminster Confession*

Gordon H. Clark

*Editor's note: This address was originally delivered in Weaverville, North Carolina, August 17, 1955. It was first printed in the second edition of God's Hammer: The Bible and Its Critics (1987 & 1995). Although written 55 years ago, the content of this address is very applicable to the church today. There are many presbyterian denominations that claim to subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) and Catechisms, but by the decisions of their general assemblies and presbyteries, and by their practice, these churches deny the system of doctrine taught in these standards. Witness the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's (OPC) 2003 General Assembly decision to exonerate John Kinnaird, after the Presbytery of Philadelphia had found him guilty of teaching the error of justification by faith and works. Additionally, the OPC's "Report of the Committee to Study the Views of Creation" presented to the 2004 General Assembly stated that widely divergent teachings on the nature and length of the days of creation in Genesis 1 all fall into the category of "literal" and "historical" interpretations; therefore, contradictory views of the days of creation can be held as orthodox within the OPC. Witness also the Northwest Presbytery of the Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC) and its recent report wherein it agrees with the OPC's decision to overturn Elder John Kinnaird's heresy charges. And most recently, witness the Pacific Northwest Presbytery (PNW) of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and its exoneration of Federal Visionist Peter Leithart, and its refrain that the PNW committee "does not judge*

*Dr. Leithart's views to be out of accord with the WCF." Do these churches and other churches that claim the Westminster Standards as the constitutional standards of their church truly subscribe to them, or merely pay lip service to them?*

By the invitation of *The Southern Presbyterian Journal* I have the privilege of addressing this distinguished and consecrated audience on the subject of "The Reformed Faith and the *Westminster Confession*." This title is not to be interpreted as introducing and exposition of the *Confession's* thirty-three chapters with their several articles. Nor does it announce an historical account of the Westminster Assembly and the later role of its creed. On the contrary, I propose to speak of the significance of the *Westminster Confession* as an existing document, a document to which ministers and churches subscribe as defining their policy and stating their reason for existence, a document that distinguishes Biblical Christianity from all other forms of thought and belief. Moreover I hope to indicate, all too briefly, its significance with reference to contemporary circumstances. For this purpose it seems best to divide the document into two parts, Chapter I and all the rest.

Chapter I of the *Westminster Confession* asserts that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God written. Its sixty-six books are all given by inspiration of God. The authority for which Holy Scripture ought to be believed and

obeyed depends wholly upon God, the author thereof. In these books the whole counsel of God for man's salvation is either expressly set down or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from its statements. Therefore, concludes Chapter I, the Supreme Judge, by whom all decrees of councils and doctrines of men are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other than the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures.

One day I stood beside a small lake in the Rocky Mountains of Wyoming. Water flowed out of the lake from both ends. The water that flowed out one end descended into stifling canyons and blistering deserts of Utah and Arizona; the water that flowed out the other end of this lake went through the fertile fields of the Midwest. I was standing on the great continental divide.

Metaphorically the first chapter of the *Westminster Confession* is a continental divide. Although the written Word of God has been the touchstone of pure doctrine in all ages, the twentieth century shows still more clearly that this chapter forms the great divide between two types of religion, or to make it of broader application, between two types of philosophy. Perhaps it would be plainer to say that the acceptance of the Bible as God's written revelation separates true Christianity from all other types of thought. In order to be specific and in order to face our immediate responsibilities, let us select two contemporary schools of philosophy, each of which in its own way contrasts sharply with the first chapter of our *Confession*.

### **Atheism**

The first of these two – and the more obviously anti-Christian movement – is variously called naturalism, secularism, or humanism. These names are simply more complimentary titles for what formerly was bluntly called atheism. The purpose of this meeting may not seem to call for a discussion of atheism; with its denial of God and therefore of revelation, naturalism may appear to be a philosophical development that the church can afford to ignore. But a church that ignores secular humanism is simply shutting its eyes to the situation around about and failing to maintain the first chapter of the *Confession* against all opponents. Unfortunately brevity is required, and therefore without any reference to Communism, the most blatant form of atheism, mention will be made only of certain political and certain educational events on the American scene.

In recent civil and public life there has developed an opposition to the practice of Christianity. According to reports by the National Association of Evangelicals, an adoption agency stamped "Psychologically Unfit" on the application papers of a wide-awake minister and his wife. A navy chaplain tells of attempts, successful attempts, to discharge active Christian young men as psychotic. In another public field, the city of Indianapolis refuses the use of its parks to Christian groups if they so much as intend to ask a blessing at mealtime or sing a hymn. Other groups may hold their programs, but Christian groups are discriminated against. Then again the released time program for religious instruction is the object for attack. The strategy of the humanist is to occupy the time and the attention of children to such an extent that they will have no opportunity to hear the Gospel. The public schools with their compulsory attendance are to be used for the inculcation of secularism. And those who oppose secularism and who want to give their children Christian instruction are branded as antisocial, undemocratic, and divisive. Such events are straws in the wind that show how the humanists are using government agencies to curtail religious liberty.

Behind these particular events stands the naturalistic philosophy that is taught – I mean, that is inculcated – in a number of America colleges and universities. Let it not be thought that professors are uniformly objective and indifferently teach all views alike; Secularism is actively forced upon the students. For example, consider the statement of Millard S. Everett, a professor in Roosevelt College, Chicago, quoted in *Philosophy in the Classroom*, page 27, by J.H. Melzer:

Our course is built and conducted along liberal lines. Moreover, we have not confused liberalism with indifferentism or neutrality on basic issues, but we have organized the course definitely for the purpose of increasing the student's acceptance of the scientific attitude, liberal and secular morality, and the democratic goal of liberty and equality. We...leave no doubt in the student's mind by the end of the term that we stand with the forces of democracy, science, and modern culture.

With this espousal of secularism in black and white, one can more easily give credence to the rumor that there are two universities which will not

knowingly graduate a student who is a fundamentalist.

From our benighted Christian viewpoint these humanists do not seem to have much understanding of the laws of logic. They take the principle of the separation of church and state and consider it reprehensible to use public school facilities for released time education. The American Civil Liberties Union will go to court against released time, but I have never heard of their opposing the use of tax money for anti-Christian instruction. They have never sued a university for teaching secularism. They will defend Communists; they will defend the publishers of obscene comic books; but when have they ever defended religious liberty or protested against the inculcation of humanism in tax-supported institutions? Consistency does not seem to be one of their virtues.

Christian opposition to humanism has ordinarily been ineffective politically and has often been worthless philosophically. In attacking a materialistic or mechanistic world view, Christians have sometimes pontificated that no one can believe the universe to be the result of chance. Unfortunately this is not true. There are many people who do so believe; and until Christian thinkers face the realities of the situation, improvement cannot reasonably be expected.

Not every minister, not every church, has a profitable occasion of combatting the sources of humanism. Only in exceptional cases can a minister come face to face with naturalistic professors and authors. Only rarely can a minister answer these men in print. There are some churches, situated in university towns, that have opportunities of working with students. It is to be hoped that they also have the equipment to be effective. Each of us should examine his own situation to see what his possibilities are. Most unfortunately, shortsightedness or selfishness sometimes produces a tragedy. There was one church in a university city whose minister wanted to work with the students. There was also a group of students willing to help him. The situation was ideal – but for one thing: The congregation could not see the university as a mission field, complained that their minister was neglecting them, and forced his resignation.

All the more honor to those congregations and pastors who take this part of their responsibilities seriously. And all honor to the few colleges that are Christian, not in name only, but in actual instruction.

And all honor to those who are founding Christian primary schools where God is not ignored or treated as unimportant or non-existent. The opportunity and responsibility of establishing Christian grade schools is one that I should like to urge upon you. But time and my subject forbid.

### ***Neo-Orthodoxy***

At the beginning of this paper I stated that the first chapter of the *Confession*, on divine revelation, is the great divide between two types of thought. On the one side of this divide stands naturalism, secularism, or humanism. But it does not stand alone. Also on the same side of the great divide is another system of thought. This system asserts, even vigorously asserts, the existence of God – at least some kind of god – and goes so far as to speak of revelation; but what it says about God and revelation is so opposed to the first chapter of the *Confession* that Christianity, far from welcoming its support, must regard it as a most subtle and deceptive enemy. I refer to what is often called Neo-orthodoxy.

The originator of Neo-orthodoxy was the Danish thinker Søren Kierkegaard. With his penetrating mind he saw that the Hegelian Absolute was not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. With his passionate nature he revolted against the stolid ecclesiastical formalism of his day. The Lutheran State church was dead. Some might describe the situation as dead orthodoxy. But Ludwig Feuerbach, Kierkegaard's contemporary, diagnosed the situation, not as dead orthodoxy, but as lively hypocrisy. The people went to church on Sunday and paid lip service to what they did not believe. They were not orthodox but pagan at heart. Yet the empty form remained. Against this deadly disease, Kierkegaard stressed passionate appropriation and personal decision. With biting sarcasm he flayed hypocrisy, contrasted the despised Christians of the first century with the respectable sham of nineteenth-century Europe, urged more emotion and less intellect, more suffering and less complacency, more subjectivity and less objectivity.

No doubt Kierkegaard was substantially correct in viewing the church as too formal, too Hegelian, too pagan. And no devout person can quarrel with the need of personal decision and appropriation. But, and this is the important point, if a person is to appropriate, there must be something to be appropriated. Kierkegaard and his present-day

followers, for all their talk about God and revelation, offer us little or nothing to appropriate. Kierkegaard himself said, "Christ did not propose any doctrine; he acted. He did not teach that there is redemption for men; he redeemed them." Now, it is true that Christ redeemed his elect; it is true that he acted; it is even true that his chief mission was not to teach; but it is untrue that Christ proposed no doctrines. Kierkegaard wrote a book called *Either-Or*, and he too often practiced such a principle. A better principle is Both-And. Christ both acted and he taught. Moreover, he especially commissioned his disciples to teach, to teach a great many doctrines found in *Romans*, *Corinthians*, and the rest of the New Testament.

Because Kierkegaard offers us nothing to appropriate and puts all his stress on the subjective feeling of appropriation, it makes no difference whether we worship God or idols. In his engaging literary style Kierkegaard describes two men: One is in a Lutheran church and entertains a true conception of God, but because he prays in a false spirit, he is in truth praying to an idol. The other man is in a heathen temple praying to idols, but since he prays with an infinite passion, he is in truth praying to God. Once again Kierkegaard acts on the principle of Either-Or instead of Both-And. Both the Lutheran who prays in a false spirit and the heathen who prays to idols are displeasing to God. Just because a heathen has some intense passionate experiences, it does not follow that he is worshiping the true God. But for Kierkegaard the truth is found in the inward How not in the external What. What a man worships makes no difference. It is his passion that counts. "An objective uncertainty," says Kierkegaard, "held fast in an appropriation process of the most passionate inwardness is the truth, the highest truth attainable for an existing individual.... If only the How of this relation is in truth, then the individual is in truth, even though he is thus related to untruth."

However peculiar this type of philosophy may be, contemporary Protestantism is largely dominated by it. The new-orthodox ministers may talk about God and revelation, but they do not have in mind the objective God and the objective revelation of the *Westminster Confession*. They do not believe that the Bible tells the truth. For example, Emil Brunner, who through his books and through his one-time position in Princeton Theological Seminary has become popular in the United States, is so far removed from the *Confession* that he holds neither the words of Scripture nor the thoughts of Scripture

to be truth. To quote: "All words have merely an instrumental significance. Not only the linguistic expressions but even the conceptual content is not the thing itself, but just its framework, its receptacle, and medium." A few pages later he continues, "God can...speak his word to a man even through false doctrine." God then reveals himself in falsehood and untruth. What a revelation!

This type of theology is to be explained partly as a reaction to the immanentism of Hegel, for whom God or the Absolute is nothing other than the unity of the total universe. For Hegel, without the world there could be no God. Kierkegaard, Brunner, and their disciples want a transcendent God. Either immanence, or transcendence; not both-and. By insisting on the transcendence of God, they are able to cloak themselves with the pseudo-piety of their infinite passion and to deceive many Christians who know little about German theology. They can quote Scripture: Of course it may be false, but it is still a revelation. For example, in exalting God above all human limitations they remind us that God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Therefore, they say, the divine mind is so far above our finite minds that there is not a single point of coincidence between his knowledge and ours. When a Calvinist attempts to reason with them logically, they disparagingly contrast human logic with divine paradox. God is Totally Other. He is never an object of our thought. In one ecclesiastical meeting I heard a minister say the human mind possesses no truth at all. And last year in Europe I visited a certain professor who asserted that we can have no absolute truth whatever. When he said that, I took a piece of paper and wrote on it, We can have no absolute truth whatever. I showed him the writing, the sentence – We can have no absolute truth whatever – then I asked, Is that sentence absolute truth? Do you not see that if the human mind can have no truth, it could not have the truth that it has no truth? If we know nothing, we could not know we know nothing. And if there is no point of coincidence between God's knowledge and ours, it rigorously follows, since God knows everything, that we know absolutely nothing.

With such skepticism, it is not surprising that their religion consists in a passionate inwardness that appropriates nothing objective. Unfortunately skepticism, particularly when discussed in such an academic tone as this address, does not provoke as passionate a reaction among the evangelically minded as it ought. But one ought to realize that

even the most gentle and innocuous skepticism is sufficient to defeat the Gospel. To speed the dissolution of Christianity, it is not necessary to say that we know a contrary philosophy is true; it is equally effective to say that we do not know anything is true. The Gospel is a message of positive content, and whether it is dogmatically denied or silenced makes little difference.

What is more unfortunate is that the skepticism of Neo-orthodoxy is especially insidious. Men who adopt the position of Kierkegaard and Brunner not only make use of terms such as God and revelation, but they also talk of sin and justification. Some of them might even preach a tolerably good sermon on imputed righteousness. This deceives simple-minded believers. When people hear the familiar words, they naturally assume that the familiar ideas are meant. They fail to see that the Neo-orthodox consider neither the words nor even the intellectual content to be the truth. Although the sermon may be on Adam and the Fall, the Neo-orthodox minister understands the words in a mythological sense. Adam is the myth by which we are stimulated to an infinite passion.

Although it is to be expected, it is still discouraging to see right-minded people deceived by this sort of talk. At the meeting of the World Council at Evanston, the European theologians supported the notion of an apocalyptic return of Christ. In contrast with the American theologians who place their hope in a future socialistic government, the talk of an apocalypse sounded refreshing; and the poorly informed, those who had not studied the history of German thought in the last century, congratulated themselves on signs of a return to Biblical thinking. In this vain imagination the evangelicals are completely deceived. They need to be alerted to the wiles of the devil.

But if it is unfortunate to be deceived, what can be said about the deceivers? Ever since Arius twisted Scriptural language to avoid the crushing arguments of Athanasius, unbelievers in the church have used Scriptural phraseology to disguise their underlying meaning. What a contrast with the policy of the Westminster divines. They spared no effort to make their statements clear, unambiguous, and completely honest. Their purpose was not to deceive or conceal, but to explain and clarify. And so carefully did they define their terms that it is almost impossible for a normal intelligence to mistake the meaning. Not only was the intellectual content plainly put forward, but it was made plain and intelligible by a careful attention to the words they chose.

The Reformers and their successors in the following century were honest; many of the ecclesiastical leaders of the present century are not. They take solemn ordination vows, subscribing to the *Westminster Confession*; but they do not believe it is the truth. Perjurers in the pulpit! What a tragedy for the people in the pews! And what a tragedy also for those ministers!

The late J. Gresham Machen was an honest man and a brilliant scholar. In 1925 he published a salutary volume entitled, *What is Faith?* Although he was not particularly concerned with Neo-orthodoxy at that time, his first chapter is an incisive attack on skepticism and anti-intellectualism. He stressed the truth, the objective truth of the Bible and the primacy of the intellect. Today, thirty years later, the book should be re-read, for Neo-orthodoxy is even more anti-intellectual than the old modernism. And if skepticism prevails, if there is no truth – no Gospel that the human mind can grasp – we might as well worship idols in a heathen temple.

### ***Arminianism and Calvinism***

On the other side of the continental divide, the water flows in the opposite direction. Instead of the stifling deserts of Arizona, the Mississippi Valley with its wheat and corn come into view. Here we have life and the fruits of the soil. However, not all the soil, not all the rivers on the east of the divide are equally fruitful. Had there been time today, it would have been possible to give an ample description of two rivers; but as it is, only an indication can be attempted. There is one stream which, accepting the Scripture as the only and infallible rule of faith and practice, does not accept all the other thirty-two chapters of the *Confession*. Though it may accept several, and be called broadly evangelical, it rejects chapter three and other chapters, which are definitely Calvinistic. The waters of this stream flow in the same general direction, and we rejoice that they eventually reach the same heavenly ocean; but they flow through stony ground with sparse vegetation, or sometimes they ooze through swamps where the vegetation is dense enough but unhealthy and useless. This stream in its rocky course babbles about faith and repentance being the cause instead of the result of regeneration; and it claims that its swampy “free will” can either block or render effective the almighty power of God. All there is time to say of this stream of thought is that its inconsistencies make it an easy prey to the attacks

of humanism. It cannot defend the principle of revelation because it has misunderstood the contents of revelation.

On the other hand, that blest river of salvation, flowing through the land of tall corn and sturdy cattle, is to be identified with the doctrines of the great Reformers. These men and their disciples in the following century studied out and wrote down the system of doctrine which the Presbyterian and Reformed churches still profess. The *Westminster Confession* is no abbreviated creed written by men of abbreviated faith. On the contrary it is the nearest approach men have yet made to a full statement of the whole counsel of God, which Paul did not fail to declare. The Westminster divines were the best Biblical scholars of their time and as a group have not been surpassed since. For a full five years or more they labored unremittingly to formulate their summary of what the Bible teaches. And so successful were they that their document is justly the basis of many denominations. The factual existence of the *Westminster Confession* testifies to several of these convictions of our spiritual forebears, and three of these convictions may serve as a conclusion to this talk.

First, our forefathers were convinced, the *Westminster Confession* asserts, and the Bible teaches that God has given us a written revelation. This revelation is the truth. As Christ himself said, "Your word is truth" (*John 17:17*). It is not a myth, it is not an allegory, it is no mere pointer to the truth, it is not an analogy of the truth; but it is literally and absolutely true.

Second, our forefathers were convinced and the Reformed Faith asserts that this truth can be known. God has created us in his image with the intellectual and logical powers of understanding. He has addressed to men an intelligible revelation; and he expects us to read it, to grasp its meaning, and to believe it. God is not Totally Other, nor is logic a human invention that distorts God's statements. If this were so, as the Neo-orthodox say, then it would follow, as the Neo-orthodox admit, that falsity would be as useful as truth in producing a passionate emotion. But the Bible expects us to appropriate a definite message.

Third, the Reformers believed that God's revelation can be formulated accurately. They were not enamored of ambiguity; they did not identify piety with a confused mind. They wanted to proclaim the

truth with the greatest possible clarity. And so ought we.

Dare we allow our Biblical heritage to be lost in a nebulous ecumenicity where belief has been reduced to the shortest possible doctrinal statement, in which peace is preserved by an all-embracing ambiguity? Or should we ponder the fact that when the Reformers preached the complete Biblical message in all its detail and with the greatest possible clarity, God granted the world its greatest spiritual awakening since the days of the apostles? May we not similarly expect astonishing blessings if we return with enthusiasm to all the doctrines of the *Westminster Confession*?

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### Letter to the Editor

May 8, 2007

Dear Dr. Robbins,

After reading and mulling over your article, "R. C. Sproul on Saving Faith," I contacted Ligonier Ministries and made inquiry as to their knowledge of you or your ministry. They responded in the affirmative. I made the offer to send a copy of the article, which was accepted.

I enclose a copy of the response I received. As you are aware, the subject of justification by faith has been much discussed and debated since the Reformation. Due to the multiplicity of perspectives, and not having inspired interpreters, it would be safe to say that there is both truth and error in every view.

To live with the saints above,

That will be glory. To live

Below with those we know;

That's another story!

Sincerely,

R. D.

R. C. Sproul's Response

May 4, 2007

Dear Mr. \_\_\_\_\_,

I have yet to read remarks by Robbins about my view of justification that are remotely accurate. Please read my book *Faith Alone*. At the time of Luther's protest, there were many godly Roman Catholic leaders who came to see the issue clearly and left the Roman Catholic Church.

Gerstner was not a "disciple" of Aquinas. Dr. Gerstner believed that had Aquinas lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, he probably would have agreed with Luther.

Robbins objects to the three-fold aspects of saving faith, which is not my invention but the Reformers. Robbins' mentor, Gordon Clark, disagreed philosophically with distinctions of the aspects of faith. Now Robbins argues that any other view is heretical.

I despair of ever getting a fair hearing from Robbins. I appreciate your writing and including Robbins' article.

Sincerely,

R. C. Sproul

RCS: km

Dr. Robbins' reply

May 23, 2007

Dear Mr. \_\_\_\_\_:

Thank you for sending me the copy of Mr. Sproul's letter.

I see that the letter was actually written by KM, Keith Mathison, who has also published a book attacking the Biblical doctrine of Scripture alone. As I said in my essay ["R. C. Sproul on Saving Faith"] Ligonier Ministries has been a purveyor of theological and philosophical error for years.

Sproul says that he has "yet to read remarks by Robbins about my view of justification that are remotely accurate." In my essay I quoted his entire essay, word for word. He can neither accuse me of twisting his words nor of quoting him out of context. The words are his. He neither corrects nor retracts them. Furthermore, I state that Sproul's views are "absolutely correct" on some points, yet he says that all my remarks are not even "remotely accurate."

In his letter Sproul says that, "many godly Roman Catholic leaders...came to see the issue clearly and left the Roman Catholic Church." But in his essay he says nothing about such conversions (note that the Roman Catholic leaders were "godly" before "Luther's protest"). Instead, Sproul wrote that "many of the godly leaders in the Roman Catholic Church were very upset...In other words, the Roman Catholic Church reacted fiercely..." In his essay Sproul says nothing about them agreeing with Luther. In his letter he simply ignores what he wrote in the essay and hopes you do not notice it.

Sproul denies that Gerstner was a "disciple" of Thomas Aquinas. In the May 1994 issue of *Tabletalk*, the magazine which Sproul edits, Gerstner called Thomas "one of Protestantism's greatest theologians." To deny Gerstner's great admiration for and agreement with Thomas, even on the subject of justification, is to attempt to rewrite history. I suggest you read Robert L. Reymond's essay on the subject, which we published in *The Trinity Review* in May 2001. It is available at our website.

Sproul says that the three-fold analysis of faith is the "invention...[of] the Reformers," thus admitting that it is not Biblical. His exact words are: "Robbins objects to the three-fold aspects of saving faith, which is not my invention but the Reformers." Of course I never said it was Sproul's invention. I said the opposite: I accused him of parroting a formula that he picked up somewhere, but not from the Bible. The Latin analysis of faith is not Biblical; it is an invention. It is neither explicitly taught in nor deduced from Scripture. It is a fiction.

Sproul says that, "Gordon Clark disagreed philosophically with the distinctions of the aspects of faith." He ignores that Clark based his view of faith

entirely on what Scripture says about it, exegeting scores of passages that speak of faith, something Sproul has had many opportunities to do and has never done. Clark argued in detail from Scripture. If the three-fold Latin analysis is not Biblical, it is wrong; and if a theologian persists in a false view after correction, as Sproul does, it is indeed heretical.

But I have another reason for replying to your letter, Mr. \_\_\_\_: to correct your concluding statement: “there is both truth and error in every view.”

In saying this, you show yourself to be an epistemological relativist, asserting that there is no black and white in theology, only shades of gray. Charitably, I suspect you say this because you are intellectually lazy and do not want to make the effort required to discern truth from error. It is much easier to simply regard all views as containing both truth and falsehood. You simply accept the “multiplicity of perspectives.”

This attitude is one manifestation of the anti-intellectualism of the age. Here it manifests itself in the notion that truth and error really are not that important. It is the notion that God won't send anyone to Hell for making a mistake in theology anyway. What he is looking for is sincerity. Unfortunately for this notion, Paul damns the church leaders in Galatia, who sincerely believed in God and in Jesus, for making a mistake on the doctrine of justification. In the OT God killed people for making theological mistakes.

The Bible condemns such an intellectually lazy attitude in no uncertain terms. How many times does Scripture command you, not to be deceived, to test every spirit, and to check statements made by even angels against Scripture? To accept views that you yourself say contain error is to accept error, and to advise others to do so is as well. You are required, Mr. \_\_\_\_, to believe the truth and not to believe falsehoods, to make the effort to discern one from the other, and to speak only the truth. I cannot see that you have obeyed any of these commands.

Of course, Sproul has not obeyed God either, refusing to test his opinions about faith against the

Scripture. So you are in famous company, and both your views are un-Biblical and therefore wrong.

Sincerely,

John W. Robbins

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## 2009 Christian Worldview Essay Contest

*God's Hammer: The Bible and Its Critics* is the topic of this year's essay contest. The contest is open to 17-23 year olds - details about the contest are available at The Trinity Foundation website ([www.trinityfoundation.org](http://www.trinityfoundation.org)). The book is normally \$10.95 plus shipping; but those ordering for the essay contest receive the special price of \$5 postage paid to addresses in the United States (foreign addresses need to pay shipping). To order the book, send your order to The Trinity Foundation, Post Office Box 68, Unicoi, Tennessee 37692, call 423.743.0199, or fax 423.743.2005. If ordering from the website, please indicate in the comment box that the book is being ordered for the essay contest.