

## **MRBC Doctrinal Positions.**

(Use for training purposes for the development of Elders-Pastors (1 Tim.3/Tit.1), for ordination examination, 'testing the spirits' (1 Jn. 4), and for 'equipping the saints' (Eph. 4), and for 'training up a child' (Pro. 22:6))

- **Prolegomena/Bibliology. Theology. Christology. Pneumatology. Anthropology. Hamartiology. Soteriology. Ecclesiology. Angelology. Eschatology.**

This is the general order of how the Bible communicates Truth/God's Will (God's desire and God's design).

**My Goal:** My aim with this is to strength/equip you with as much truth as possible. I understand you will not fully grasp all of this at first glance. It takes consistency and training. But we must do this. Over the course of time, this Truth will transform your life and it will help God work through your personality to be a witness for Christ.

### **Introduction.**

When we are talking about 'theology', we are basically referring to two categories of disciplines that help give us a sound view of God. Those two categories are **Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology**. (They are not to be chosen one for the other, they are mutually supportive)

Biblical Theology by way of practice is searching the Bible for everything it has to say about a give topic.

Systematic Theology is taking a single topic and isolating it with everything the Bible has to say about that topic.

Both of these disciplines are based off Exegesis. Exegesis, as called Hermeneutics, is the science of Bible interpretation. **Exegesis vs. Eisegesis** (Pulling out the meaning, putting in the meaning)

All sound theology is based on sound interpretation.

Further, sound interpretation is for the purpose of sound application. Knowing must lead to doing. Therefore, both Biblical and Systematic Theology are fundamental to loving God because they inherently lead to know who God is and what God has intended for us to be and do.

They should not by any means be avoided, they should be embraced and wrestled through with all of their challenges; from learning uncommon terms to going through spiritual dry spells with lack of clear understanding and application.

I try to engage with a new systematic theology each year. My purpose for doing this is to broaden my scope of understanding of God within the Biblical framework of how God has revealed Himself.

### **Recommendations.**

For a good singular source that is easy to read and understand I recommend;

***Biblical Doctrine by MacArthur and Mayhue***

Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem  
***Systematic Theology by Robert Culver***  
***Knowing God by J.I. Packer***

**For more advanced reading.**

Christian Institutes by John Calvin  
Systematic Theology by Cornelius Van Til  
Elenctic Theology by Francis Turretin (Titus 1:9, 'exhort and **refute** with sound doctrine)  
***Dogmatic Theology by William Shedd***

My reason for sharing these is because they will help you guard from error and they will give you a concise resource to answer difficult questions that might not be immediately apparent in the text of Scripture.

In my experience, almost all conflicts in life, the Christian faith, and the church come down to topics of '**life and doctrine.**' If it is not a topic of life and doctrine then it is a topic of personal preference and as loving Christians we should yield our preferences in humility to others.

But matters of '**life and doctrine**' are made clear, absolute, and certain by God in Scripture and those are convictions that we cannot budge or change. Therefore, it gives us more flexibility to live the Christian life in liberty when we know what is essential and what is not relevant.

**1. Prolegomena (First Things). Bibliology.**

Pro- "before", lego 'to say' - to say beforehand or in advance.

**a. Nature of Truth.**

Pilate presented the rhetorical question at Christ's trial, '**What is truth?**' **John 18**

Pilate represents the cosmopolitan outlook of our age. Flippant with what is important, defiant in what is relevant to the moment, and casual about what is in his charge to resolve. Pilate's behavior should somewhere, in the soul of the Christian inspire some type of pity, resentment, disgust or any negative emotion that shows how little regard Pilate shows for integrity. Pilate has a low level of Character and all character that is of any value is founded on truth.

Jesus states that He has come to '**testify to the Truth.**' **John 18**

So in regard to the Truth, we could say that the totality of Jesus Christ ministry is a testimony of what is truth. **But true about what?** Did Jesus teach the truths about mathematics, or the truths about the laws of physics? No. Why not? Because those matters for the purpose of the Gospel are not relevant to the purpose that God sent Jesus to the earth. The Truth that Jesus is referring to is with regard to the truth of our salvation.

The truth that Jesus is referring to in John 18 is the Kingdom of God/Heaven, His Deity, The plan of salvation, the forgiveness of sins, the future millennial reign of Christ.

The truth is, a person can get their multiplication tables wrong and never take physics class and still go to heaven. But further, there is a type of truth, for example, the law of thermodynamics or math or gravity, that is truth, but it has nothing to do with personal salvation. So there is a **philosophical truth**, which is important to know as a Pastor and even a Christian, but it is not essential to salvation. That **philosophical truth** will be useful in engaging in personal conversation with people who are not Christians or confused ones.

But does the Bible refer to this philosophical and propositional truth in ways that do not apply to salvation as well? Yes.

**‘dishonest/unjust scales are an abomination to the Lord’ Prov. 11:1**

Scales are a matter of weighing things out in a marketplace or a court system. So it seems obvious that it was understood a true measurement and a false measurement. Weights and measures/US economy.

**‘Solomon’s builders’ 1 Kings 5:18**

Clearly people understood the principles of truth in measurements and building great structures.

But the trouble is that right angles don’t make us right before God. Philosophical truth, for example Plato, Aristotle and Socrates might have discovered the Laws of Logic, but that doesn’t mean they invented them.

Laws of Logic.

**Aspects/Attributes of Truth.**

1. **Truth is Absolute, Complete, Unchanging, Perfect, Sufficient.**
2. **Truth IS NOT subjective, relative.**

**Truth in Theology, Truth the Trinity.**

**The Bible tells us that God is true.**

‘God is not a man, that He should lie’ Num. 23:19

‘Let God be true and every man a liar’ Rom. 3:4

‘God cannot lie’ Tit. 1:2

‘It is impossible for God to lie’ Heb. 6:18

**The Bible identifies Jesus Christ as the Truth.**

‘In Him was the fullness of deity’ Col. 2:9

‘He was full of grace and truth’ John 1

‘I am the way, the TRUTH, and the life’ John 14:6

Jesus teaching in John 8 ‘you will know the truth’ - direct connection between Jesus, His Word, Truth, and being ‘set free’

**The Bible identifies the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth.**

‘The Spirit of truth will guide you into all truth’ John 16

**Jerusalem, the City of Truth.**

In Zechariah in the Millennial Reign of Christ, Jerusalem is known as the City of Truth.

**Truth in Philosophy. Epistemology. 'Episteme' - Knowledge. Q:** How does anyone know that anything is true. Acts 17, The Philosophers on Mars Hill - 'To An Unknown God' - God is knowable.

**Propositional Truth.** Truth is objective and knowable. Truth is not abstract, subjective. Correspondence Theory of Truth - corresponds to reality and visible circumstances. Coherence Theory of Truth - coheres to a persons total set of propositions for their life/belief system.

**Worldview problems.** A view of the Truth determines how a person is going to view the world around them and their interactions with the world.

**False views of Truth.**

**Relativism.** Truth is relative to that person. Ex. Find your truth.

**Modernism.** Is there really any truth out there to be found?

**Postmodernism.** There is not truth. Simply do what is best for you. Creates a culture of narcissist and selfish people.

**Laws of Logic and Logical Fallacies.**

**The Law of Non-contradiction, the Law of the Excluded Middle, and the Law of Identity**

- a. **A=A**
- b. **A does not = A and B**
- c. **A does not = B**

**How does this apply in real life?**

**Ex. 1** A boy is born a boy and a boy does not become a girl and a boy cannot be both a boy and a girl and a girl cannot be a boy. This is illogical and obviously untrue.

**Not going to address logical fallacies** here but simply; False premises lead to false conclusions and true premises only lead to true conclusions is they are maintained.

**b. Nature of Revelation.**

The Bible and Theology knows of two types of Revelation; **Natural and Special.**

**Natural Revelation** is seen by natural means that are worked by God. Namely, nature. All created things of God.

Psalm 19:3-4

Rom. 1:18-25,10:18

Acts 14:17;17:23-31

**Special Revelation.**

**4 special ways** that God has revealed Himself, which are each outlined by examples in the Bible.

1. Direct acts. God intervening in human history. The book of Genesis is a great example.
2. Dreams and Visions. God intervening in the subconscious mind of a person giving insight and direction. Joseph is a great example.
3. Christ's incarnation. The arrival of Christ is the greatest single revelation of God.
4. Scripture. The only way we have available to us to consistently find and agree with God's will.

We see examples of each of these in Scripture.

### **c. Inerrancy, Inspiration, Nature of Scripture.**

#### **Inerrancy.**

'The Scripture cannot be broken' John 10:35

The Scripture Cannot Be Broken, John MacArthur - The Chicago Statement.

Inerrancy means that the Bible is without errors. It is free, when properly interpreted from anything that is untrue or contrary to facts.

2 Pet. 1:20-21 'know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.'

'Thus says the LORD' -throughout the OT

Jesus affirmed inerrancy in the smallest details 'not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished' Matt. 5:18

#### **Textual Criticism.**

Liberal scholars, especially since the Enlightenment have attempted to discredit the veracity of Scripture. The common argument is that we do not have copies of the original autographs. Inerrancy refers to the autographs, which we actually do not have copies of originals. However, textual critics possess a 99% accuracy to the original. The Bible has been the most textually scrutinized book in human history.

One of the prime works of Satan is to discredit Scripture and those who deliver its Truths.

Inerrancy does not require perfect grammar and spelling in its transmission of the Truth.

#### **Inerrancy and Inspiration are natural companions because they come from the same source; God**

**Inspiration.** Verbal, Plenary Inspiration (Complete and Absolute).

Through God's Spirit, He inspired every word penned by the human authors of Scripture. This doctrine refers to the act of God to inspire the human author, by work of the Holy Spirit, to work through that individual personality.

**2 Tim. 3:16 'all scripture is breathed out by God'**

What is important to understand is that the human authors were superintended by the Holy Spirit to write within the language and historical context of their time and to communicate through Divine Inspiration.

#### **What was Jesus Christ's view of the Inspiration of Scripture?**

**Jesus affirmed the historicity of figures from the OT**, affirmed places and events from the OT, and affirmed authorship of OT books. Jesus clearly showed the importance of the OT in relation to the Christian faith. Much of His teaching was based in OT law, history, wisdom and prophecy.

**Jesus pre-authenticated the NT by**; claiming His words were the Father's words (Jn. 8:26-28), promised the Apostles additional revelation (Matt. 16:16, Jn. 13:12-38)

## **Nature of Scripture.**

Inerrant, Inspired, Authoritative, Sufficient.

The Scripture is sufficient and authoritative to rule our lives and it is because it is inerrant and inspired. The only thing that stands is what is to be interpreted as commands to obey.

The point of Scripture is to know God. The point of knowing God is to know His desire and design for our life and to live according to His will. This is a primary motivation of knowing Theology/God.

## **2. Theology Proper (Doctrine of God). The Trinity.**

- a. God the Father.
- b. Christology.
- c. Pneumatology.

## **3. Angelology (Angels and Demons)**

## **4. Anthropology/Hamartiology (Mankind and Sin)**

## **5. Soteriology**

## **6. Ecclesiology**

## **7. Missiology**

## **8. Eschatology**

## **9. Open Questions**

## **Modern Concerns.**

Emergent Church.

Progressivism.

Egalitarianism.

Openness Theology.s

Dispensational/Covenant Theology

Church Models.

Spiritual Gifts/Cessationism/Miracles.

## **General Bible Knowledge.**

## **English Bible & Key Issues from Church History.**

## **Ministry Issues.**

- Church leadership/pastoral roles
- Missions and the Local Church
- Gender issues.
- Divorce and Remarriage.
- Worship styles/missions contextualization
- Philosophy of Church Planting
- Preaching/teaching issues

## **Bio. David Belcher**

### **Family and Church background.**

I was born into a Christian family; the youngest of three brothers. I grew up attending a Christian church with sound Bible teaching. I came to faith in Jesus Christ at 4 years old and was disciplined by both my church and family. I attended Wednesday's service, which was mostly Awana's program. On Sunday's we attended Sunday school, Sunday service, and Sunday evening service.

I do understand that a person is not saved because of family heritage and not saved because of church attendance. I understand that a person is not saved because of Bible knowledge. I understand that salvation is a matter of conviction of sin, turning from sin, placing my faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin, submitting to Jesus' Lordship over my life, and letting the Holy Spirit guide my life from keeping me from sin and temptation and growing in godliness and a Holy life.

I believe that my salvation was won and secured by Jesus Christ on the cross and He has called me to live a life of obedience to Him.

I have continued attending church since then growing as a disciple of Christ.

### **Educational Background.**

I graduated from Marshall University with an undergraduate degree in Business and Economics. From there I was commissioned into the US Army and served as an Infantry Officer.

My theological education started at Talbot Seminary and graduated with an M.A. in Christian Apologetics. That program's curriculum was 50% of the MDIV curriculum and I began training in that program. After becoming away of some of the liberal drift of BIOLA and Talbot, I made the decision to transfer to the Master's Seminary this past year and am going to continue pursuing an MDIV through that seminary.

### **Career Background.**

I served as an Infantry Officer from 2004 to 2015. I served on two deployments to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Once leaving the service I worked in business management before being called into ministry in 2017.

### **Ministry Background.**

In 2017, I was called into ministry after having served in various leadership roles in my local church. Prior to serving as a pastor, I had led our churches men's discipleship, children's church, and even preached on occasion. I was serving the church in a variety of capacities from cleaning the church, caring for widows through snow removal and lawn care, and leading the county jail ministry.

I was asked to take the lead on the revitalization of a church in Chelan, Wa. that was nearly 90 years old but only had 6 attenders. In 2017, I began attending this church and became the Lead Pastor. From 2017 to 2023 that church experienced significant growth. Growing from 6

attenders to nearly 70 members and over 200 regular attenders. Church giving increased dramatically and the church staff grew from 1 to 7 personnel. During this time I led many new converts to Christ and through the public profession of faith in water baptism. I also conducted baby dedications, weddings, funerals, and regular pastoral counseling.

In fall of 2023, I was fired from that Lead Pastor position. The Superintendent of the PNW AG, Don Ross, claimed that I was guilty of 'ethical violations' and movement away from AG doctrine. (It is fine with me to share more details about this situation, but if that is unnecessary, I won't say any more). Concurrently with this event, I was leading an Elder Training Program with about 10 men from that church. During that time, some of those men saw that as an opportunity to grab for power in the local church, some saw it as a means to avoid Biblical resolution, and 3 saw it as an opportunity to stand against many of the godless, unbiblical stances of the AG.

As a result, the Elders started Mission Ridge Bible Church and called me to fill that role as Pastor. That started in November 2023. The church has witnessed similar growth as the previous church did and experienced great confirmation through attendance, doctrinal agreement, unified Christian fellowship, and provision that could only have come from God's working. As a true church plant, we are working hard to connect all of the facets of a NT church as seen in the Scripture.

Our aim is to lead people to the Lord Jesus Christ, to see souls saved, and shepherd those souls for the sake of Christ. It is our aim to hold to the fundamentals of a NT church as seen in the Bible.