

GOD
HAS
SPOKEN

A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

GERALD BRAY

 **CROSSWAY**
WHEATON, ILLINOIS

BT
21, 8
B73
2014

God Has Spoken: A History of Christian Theology

Copyright © 2014 by Gerald Bray

Published by Crossway

1300 Crescent Street
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher, except as provided for by USA copyright law.

Cover design: Erik Maldre

First printing 2014

Printed in the United States of America

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (*The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway. 2011 Text Edition. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NASB are from *The New American Standard Bible*®. Copyright © The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

All emphases in Scripture quotations have been added by the author.

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-4335-2694-7

ePub ISBN: 978-1-4335-2697-8

PDF ISBN: 978-1-4335-2695-4

Mobipocket ISBN: 978-1-4335-2696-1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Bray, Gerald Lewis.

God has spoken : a history of Christian theology /

Gerald Bray.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4335-2694-7 (hc)

1. Theology, Doctrinal—History. I. Title.

BT21.3.B73 2014

230.09—dc23

2013047241

Crossway is a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

SH 24 23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14
15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

Preface 13

PART ONE

The Israelite Legacy

1 *Christianity and Judaism* 27

 The Parting of the Ways

 Christianity and the Hebrew Canon of Scripture

 Christianity and Jewish Biblical Interpretation

 Christianity and the Prehistory of Israel

 The Christian Interpretation of Israel's History

2 *A Shared Inheritance* 68

 God Is One

 The Divine Act of Creation

 The Image of God in Man

 The Nature of Sin and Evil

 Election and Redemption

PART TWO

The Person of the Father

3 *God as Father* 99

 Judaism and the Fatherhood of God

 Non-Jewish Conceptions of Divine Fatherhood

 Jesus and His Father

 The Father as the Principle of Divinity

 The Unbegotten and Almighty God-in-Himself

 The Father and the Creator

4 *The Father and His Children* 133

 A New Relationship with God

 A New Understanding of Scripture

PART THREE

The Work of the Father

5	<i>The Reconciliation of the World</i>	151
	The Work of the Father from a Jewish Perspective	
	The Work of the Father from a Gentile Perspective	
	The Christian Doctrine of Creation	
6	<i>Providence and Predestination</i>	175
	The Image and Likeness of God	
	The Call to Holiness	
7	<i>The Work of the Father and the Trinity.</i>	188
	The Father and His Creation	
	The Divine Hierarchy	
	The Eclipse of the Father	

PART FOUR

The Person of the Son

8	<i>The Challenge of the Incarnation.</i>	211
	The Church Confronts the Roman World	
	Jesus and His Contemporaries	
	Jesus in Early Christian Teaching	
	Adoptianism	
9	<i>The Son of God</i>	232
	Arianism	
	The Way to Nicea	
	The Aftermath of Nicea	
	A New Departure in Christology	
	The Triumph of Athanasius	
	The Trinitarian Synthesis	
10	<i>The Christian Theological Vocabulary</i>	293
	Hebrew, Greek, and Latin	
	What Is God?	
	What Is God Like?	
	Who Is God?	
11	<i>The Son of Man</i>	323
	The Divine Word in Human Flesh	
	Nestorianism	

The Chalcedonian Definition
 The Definition of Humanity
 The Will of Christ
 The Portrait of Christ
 Retrospect and Prospect

PART FIVE

The Work of the Son

12	<i>The Body of Christ</i>	405
	The Man from Heaven	
	The Water and the Blood	
	The Likeness of Sinful Flesh	
	The Second Adam	
13	<i>The Death of Christ</i>	434
	The Only Sacrifice for Sin	
	The Cost of Reconciliation	
	The Centrality of the Lord's Supper	
	The Memorial of Christ's Sacrifice	
	The Sacramental System	
	The Invention of Purgatory	
	The Justification of Sinners	
	The Glory of the Cross	
	Prophet, Priest, and King	
14	<i>The Coming of Christ's Kingdom</i>	542
	The Eternal Reign of Christ	
	The Crisis of Authority	
	The Heavenly Kingdom	
	The New Covenant	

PART SIX

The Person of the Holy Spirit

15	<i>The Forgotten Person of the Trinity?</i>	607
	The Road Less Traveled	
	The Spirit of God in the Bible	
	The Paraclete and Personhood	
	The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Creeds	

16	<i>Spirit of the Father, Spirit of the Son</i>	637
	Double Procession?	
	Augustine and the Holy Spirit	
	The Origins of Controversy	
	Anselm and the Holy Spirit	
	The Course of the Controversy	
	The Parting of East and West	
	The <i>Filioque</i> Question Today	

PART SEVEN

The Work of the Holy Spirit

17	<i>The Presence of God</i>	723
	From Glory to Glory	
	The Indwelling Power of God	
18	<i>The Inspiration of Holy Scripture</i>	736
	The Prophetic Word of God	
	The Rule of Faith	
	The Handbook of the Christian Life	
19	<i>The Preservation of the Church</i>	764
	The Mind of Christ	
	The Wisdom of the Ages	
	The Source of Truth	
20	<i>The Pathway to Heaven</i>	803
	Angels and Archangels	
	The Peace That Passes Understanding	
	The Imitation of Christ	
21	<i>The Mystical Body of Christ</i>	836
	The Gift of Righteousness	
	The True Church	
	Life in the Spirit	
	The Scope of the Covenant	
	The Extent of Christ's Atonement	
	The Assurance of Salvation	
	The Fellowship of the Spirit	
	The Devoted Life	
	The Pentecostal Mission	

PART EIGHT

One God in Three Persons

22	<i>The Classical Doctrine of God</i>	985
	The Patristic Synthesis	
	The God of the Philosophers	
	The Reformation Breakthrough	
	The Emergence of Unitarianism	
23	<i>The Eclipse of Theology</i>	1021
	The Cult of Reason	
	The Reconstruction of Theology	
	The Crisis of Authority: Roman Catholicism	
	The Crisis of Authority: Protestantism	
	The Crisis of Authority: Eastern Orthodoxy	
24	<i>The Trinitarian Revival</i>	1147
	The Protestant World	
	The Roman Catholic Church	
	The Eastern Orthodox Tradition	
25	<i>The Challenge of God Today</i>	1205
	A Suffering God?	
	The Credibility of Theology	
	Where Are We Now?	
	Chronological List of Persons.	1226
	Chronological List of Events	1234
	General Index	1237
	Scripture Index	1257

Did Irenaeus believe that everyone would be saved? No. At first sight it might seem logical that if every human being has perished because of the sin of the first Adam, so every human being ought to be saved by the obedience of the second. It would even have been possible for him to quote the apostle Paul in his defense if he had chosen to say that.¹⁵ Instead, he was very clear about the fate reserved for the wicked:

God has prepared darkness suitable for those who oppose the light, and he has afflicted those who refuse to obey him with an appropriate punishment. . . . He has prepared eternal fire for the Devil, who is the chief of the apostates, and for those who revolted with him.¹⁶

Reconciling God's foreknowledge with human freedom is ultimately impossible within the limited sphere of human perception, so it would be most unfair to blame Irenaeus for having failed to do so. What matters is that he allowed for both God's controlling power and man's responsibility for the choices he makes, and that he sought to reconcile them by using the concept of the image and likeness of God. In Irenaeus's view, it was because Adam possessed that image that he was free to make the choice he did. Interestingly, that awareness shifts the mystery of the fall from the mind of God to the mind of man. The question is not so much why God created a human being, knowing that he was going to disobey him, as why the man so created chose to exercise his freedom in a way that effectively killed it. What God did was consistent with his nature, but what Adam did was not. It is not the divine plan that is incomprehensible but the human response to it, and it was this that Irenaeus wanted the Gnostics to see.

Once that principle was established, the pattern of salvation became clear. God could not ignore what man had done to himself, nor could he accept that his purpose for his creation could be thwarted by human sin. For Irenaeus, recapitulation was the obvious answer, because only the eternal image and likeness of the Father could put right the disobedience of Adam, the temporal image of the eternal. As long as the image and likeness of God in man were interpreted in this way, the solution to human sin proposed by Irenaeus would dominate Christian theological thought.¹⁷ It was only when Augustine of Hippo (354–430) proposed that the image of God in man was the image of the Trinity and not of the Father through the Son that a new approach to the

¹⁵ He could have interpreted 1 Cor. 15:22 ("As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive") in this way, but significantly, he did not do so.

¹⁶ Irenaeus of Lyon, *Adversus omnes haereses* 4.40.1.

¹⁷ See, for example, Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* 2.5, who says essentially the same thing.