

Deceptive Implications

Like other recent evangelical innovations, Open Theism has faltered through its use of errant hermeneutical principles. It has adopted a wrong view of general revelation, has allowed preunderstanding to produce a subjectively biased understanding of various texts, has used 1 John 4:8 as an interpretive center for the whole of Scripture, and has followed a discourse analysis approach that fails to take into account the contexts of various statements.

Open Theism views the sovereignty of God as limited, an inadequate view that is especially prominent in the way its advocates handle Romans 9–11. A careful tracing of the reasoning of Romans 9 in particular reveals that the open-theistic view that God has surrendered some of His sovereignty is totally unbiblical...

“Open Theism” is one of several innovations that have come to the forefront among evangelicals in recent years. All such innovations have a common thread, that of falling into the pattern of new hermeneutical principles that have become the norm among many evangelicals in about the last twenty years...

Open Theism runs counter to grammatical-historical principles in a number of ways, but most basic to the system is its assumption that “all truth is God’s truth.” This common saying is a hypothesis that repeatedly weaves itself into the system’s discussions of God...

...the assumption that “all truth is God’s truth” is full of deceptive implications... [I] will briefly point to four shortcomings of this widely cited, unbiblical foundation for biblical interpretation:

(1) First, though all truth is God's truth, truth exists in varying degrees of certitude. We can never be absolutely sure about any conclusions derived from study of a secular discipline such as philosophy.

(2) Though all truth is God's truth, all truth does not rest on the same authority. Truth resting upon God's revelation in the Bible certainly rests on a higher authority than alleged truth unearthed by human research.

(3) Though all truth is God's truth, all truth does not fall on receptive ears...

(4) "All truth is God's truth" derives from wrong assumptions about the range of general revelation. Information and discoveries originating in secular fields do not belong in the category of God's revealed truth. The scope of general revelation covers only a limited field of information about God.

(Robert L. Thomas, The Hermeneutics of "Open Theism," TMSJ 12/2 (Fall 2001) 179-203; paragraph structure modified)