Soteriology **Stephen Mansfield**

Outline [based on Erickson]

I. The Antecedent to Salvation: Predestination
   A. It is necessary because of sin.
   B. It results in salvation.
   C. It is undeserved.
   D. It is just.

II. The Beginning of Salvation: Subjective Aspects
   A. Effectual calling
   B. Conversion
      Repentance
      Faith
   C. Regeneration

III. The Beginning of Salvation: Objective Aspects
   A. Union with Christ
      Death and resurrection
   B. Justification
      Forensic righteousness
      Lingering consequences of sin

IV. The Continuation of Salvation
   A. Lingering consequences of sin
      Flesh-motivated behavior
      Guilt-feelings and shame
   B. Spiritual assurance of salvation
      The Spirit mystically unifies believers to Jesus.
      The Spirit rationally testifies to Jesus' salvation.
      The Spirit satisfies through Jesus' salvation.
      The Spirit comforts through Jesus' salvation.
   C. The believer's responsibility
      Understand, believe, and act consistently with Jesus' salvation.

V. The Completion of Salvation
   A. The Spirit's preservation of the saints
   B. Glorification

Credal Statement

- I believe God predestined some for salvation because of their sin (Matt 24:22; Rom 3:23; 6:23; cf. Mk 13:20), resulting in salvation (Rom 8:29-30; 2 Tim 2:10), by his undeserved favor (Rom 11:5-7; Eph 1:5, 11), and in harmony with his justice (Rom 8:33). I reject that sovereign predestination inherently nullifies believers' responsibility or incentive for evangelism. The assurance that God will save people from every tribe, and tongue, and nation should further embolden Christians to evangelize (Isa 6:8; Rom 1:6; Rev 7:9).
- I believe that salvation begins in the subjective experiences of God's effectual calling (Matt 22:14; John 6:44; Acts 16:14; Phil 2:13; 2 Tim 2:25), conversion consisting of repentance and faith (Mk 1:14-15; Acts 19:4; 20:21), and regeneration by the Spirit alone (Jn 3:3, 7; 2 Cor 5:17; 1 Pet 2:23). I believe that salvation also begins with the objective union with Christ's death and resurrection (Jn 15:5; Rom 6:3; Gal 2:20; 1 Cor 15:22; Col 1:18) and Christ's imputed righteousness (1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:8-9). However, I also believe that the consequences of sin linger even after salvation (Rom 7:14-24; Gal 5:19-21; Col 2:23).
- I believe that God progressively sanctifies believers because of the lingering consequences of sin including the flesh's egotistical motivations (Rom 10:2-3) and guilt-feelings (Heb 10:2). I believe God sanctifies believers through the Spirit's work of unifying them to Jesus (Gal 2:20; Eph 3:16-17), assuring them of Jesus' salvation (Jn 15:26; Gal 3:1-5; 1 Cor 13:2; 1 Jn 5:7), satisfying them through Jesus' salvation (Isa 44:3; Jn 4:14; 1 Cor 12:13), and comforting them through Jesus' salvation (Jn 14:15-18, 26; 16:13-14). However, I believe that believers are responsible for depending on the Spirit by understanding, believing, and acting consistently with Jesus' salvation (Jn 15:4-5; Gal 3:1, 5; 5:16-18).
- I believe that God will complete believers' salvation by the Spirit's preservation (Jn 10:27-30; Eph 1:13-14; Phil 1:6) and by glorification in the eschaton (Rom 8:18, 28; 1 Cor 13:12; 2 Cor 4:17; Jude 24-25).

Bibliography: **LBD** (Sanctification, water); EDBT (Flesh); **Erickson**, 823-911; **Grudem**, 273-281; **Fahim**, The Spirit and Renewal (Part 1): Definitive & Progressive Sanctification, 82-82; **Christ**, The Relationship between Justification and Sanctification in the Structure of Calvin's Soteriology: Toward a More Nuanced Approach, 209-210.

ANTHROPOLOGY Stephen Mansfield

Outline (Based on Erickson)

I. The Origin of Humanity
   - A. Creation
   - B. The nature of humanity as creatures
     - Dependent existence
     - Unity and distinction from other creatures
     - Unity with other humans
     - Limitations of humanity

II. The Image of God in the Human
   - A. The makeup of man
     - Moral
     - Relational
   - B. The function of man
     - Rulership
     - Stewardship

III. The Constitutional Nature of the Human
   - A. Material
     - Body
   - B. Immaterial
     - Conscience
     - Will
     - Mind

IV. The Personhood of All Humanity
   - A. All ethnicities
   - B. Both sexes
   - C. All economic statuses
   - D. All ages
   - E. The unborn
   - F. The unmarried

Creedal Statement

- I believe that God created man out of the dust of the ground by a direct and immediate act (Gen 2:7). I believe that God created the world in six literal, twenty-four hour days and rested on the seventh. I believe humanity's created nature means we are fundamentally dependent on God for existence. I believe a common Creator unifies us with the rest of creation, particularly to all mankind. I believe as creatures that we have inherent limitations that are not inherently evil.
- I believe that God created man in his image (Gen 1:26-27). I believe this image bearing nature includes a moral awareness (Gen 1:31; Rom 1:19-20) and relational ability with God and mankind (Gen 2:16, 18). I believe the image bearing nature also includes the responsibility to rule and steward God's creation (Gen 1:28-30, 2:5b; Ps 8:6-8).
- I believe that man is a dichotomy being comprised of both material and immaterial aspects. I believe the material body is, though separable from the immaterial, still a true part of a person as it will be resurrected (Rom 6:5-6). I believe the Bible speaks of the immaterial in an un-systematize-able way but can be observed as the conscience (Acts 24:16; Rom 2:15), will (Jn 8:44; Gal 5:17; Js 1:14), and mind (1 Cor 1:10; Eph 4:23).
- I believe that personhood is found in all humanity including all ethnicities (Mt 28:19-20; Rev 7:9), sexes and economic statuses (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:13), all ages (Lev 19:32; 1 Tim 5:1), the unborn (Ps 139:13-14; 119:73), and the unmarried (1 Cor 7:25-35).

Bibliography: ***EDBT*** (Image of God); ***NDBT*** (Race); **Grudem** (Bible Doctrines); **Erickson** (Christian Theology); **O'Connell** (Guard the Human Image for It Is the Image of God: Essays on Thomas Merton); **Klaasen** (Religion and Development: The Idea of Personhood for Social Change).

BIBLIOLOGY Stephen Mansfield

Outline

I. Divine Source
   A. Authority: The Bible reveals God's sovereign rule over creation.
      The Bible reveals God's will for man, not mankind's view of God.
      The Bible confirms its own authority but does not prove its own authority.
      The Bible is confirmed by the Spirit, not just mankind's reason.
      The Bible is culturally relevant but not culturally defined.
   B. Inspiration: God "breathed" the Scripture into existence.
      The Bible is divinely created, not merely personally inspiring or intuitionally provocative.
      The Bible is plenarily inspired but not by dictation.
   C. Inerrancy: The autographs were without out error.
      The Bible is scientifically accurate but not intended for exhaustive scientific analysis.
      The Bible is historically accurate but not intended for exhaustive historical analysis.
      The Bible expresses errors but does not endorse errors.

II. Human Reception
   A. Clarity: The Bible's message is clear.
      The Bible resonates with believers but not with unbelievers.
      The Bible is understandable to unbelievers but not submitted to by them.
   B. Necessity: The Bible, written or spoken, is essential to know:
      The gospel for salvation.
      The gospel for sanctification.
      The gospel for daily discernment.
   C. Sufficiency: The Bible contains everything needed for:
      Salvation.
      Pleasing God.

III. Redemptive Purpose
   A. Salvation: The Bible primarily emphasizes God's redemptive plan.
      The Bible reveals God's redemption of man from sin.
      The Bible uses God's redemption to liberate and regulate the believer's lifestyle.
   B. Damnation: The Bible uses God's redemption to repel the unbeliever.

Creedal Statement

- I believe that the Bible reveals God's will for mankind (2 Tim 3:16), because it claims to come from God (2 Pet 1:21), the Spirit confirms its divine origin (1 Cor 2:10-13), and it is relevant for all cultures at all times (Rom 15:4).
- I believe that every word of the Bible is inspired by God, being created by him and expressed through his choice of people (2 Pet 1:21; John 10:35). I reject that the Bible is inspired merely insofar as it is "inspiring." I reject that God dictated every word but instead chose to use the authors' personalities and backgrounds to write his message.
- I believe that the Bible's original autographs were completely without error (Ps 119:89; Matt 5;18). Literary devices that describe phenomena as they appear are not scientific errors. Edited histories that leave out details are not errors. Descriptions of error without endorsement of those errors are not errors themselves.
- I believe that the Bible clearly communicates how to be reconciled with God for those who truly desire to be (Ps 19:7; Mk 4:10-12). However, not all biblical teachings are easy to understand (2 Pet 3:15-16).
- I believe that the Bible is essential to know the gospel for salvation (Rom 10:14-15) and to grow in sanctification (Rom 10:17). I reject that the Bible must necessarily be read or quoted verbatim but may be explained or even paraphrased to result in salvation or sanctification (Acts 17:28-31; Rom 10:14-15). This is because intelligibility is more important than recitation (1 Cor 14:9).
- I believe that the Bible contains everything needed for salvation and living in light of salvation (2 Tim 3:16; cf. 2 Pet 1:3).
- I believe that the Bible primarily emphasizes the theme of God's redemption of sinful mankind (Gen 3:15; 12:3; 22:18; Num 21:9; 24:17; 2 Sam 7:12-2; 7:16; Isa 7:14; 9:6; 50:6; 52:13; 53:12; 61:1; Jer 23:5-6; Dan 7:13-14; 9:24-27; Mic 5:2; Zec 6:12; 9:9; 12:10; 13:7; Acts 13:27; Jn 5:39-47; Lk 24:25-27; 2 Tim 3:15). I believe the Bible uses God's redemption to liberate and regulate the believer's lifestyle (Rom 6:1-4; 10:1-4; 1 Cor 1:10-13; 2 Cor 5:14-15; Gal 3:1-5; Eph 4:1-3; Phil 2:12-13; Col 3:2-5; Titus 1:1; 2:1-14; 3:3-8; Heb 12:1-3; Jas 1:18-21; 1 Pet 4:1-2; 2 Pet 1:5, 10-11; 1 Jn 4:10-11; Jd 20-21; Rev 2:4-5).
- I believe the Bible uses God's redemption to repel the unbeliever either by appearing to be too humiliating or too simplistic (Isa 6:8-13; Matt 13:14-15; Acts 28:26-27; Mk 4:12; Lk 8:10; Rom 11:8; 1 Cor 1:18-25; 2:14).

Bibliography: ***EDBT*** (Inerrancy); ***NDBT*** (Inspiration); **Grudem** (Bible Doctrines); **Erickson** (Christian Theology); **Prothro** (Theories of Inspiration); **Messmer** (The Inspiration, Authority, and Inerrancy of Scripture).

THEOLOGY PROPER Stephen Mansfield

Outline (Based on Grudem)

I. The Character of God:
- A. Existence
- B. Knowability
- C. Incommunicable attributes
  - Independence
  - Unchangeableness
  - Omnipresence
- D. Communicable attributes
  - Attributes of God's being
  - Mental attributes
  - Moral attributes
  - Attributes of purpose

II. The Trinity
- A. The threeness of God
- B. The divinity of every person
- C. The oneness of God
- D. The distinctions of the Godhead

III. Creation
- A. Creation *Ex Nihilo*
- B. Creation as distinct from God
- C. Creation as God's glory on display
- D. Creation's goodness

IV. God's Providence
- A. Preservation
- B. Concurrence
- C. Government
- D. The importance of human actions

V. Angels, Satan, Demons
- A. Identity of angels
  - Purpose of angels
  - Humanity's relationship to angels
- B. Identity of demons
  - Origins of demons
  - Satan as head of demons
  - Activity of Satan and demons
  - Our relationship to demons

Creedal Statement

- I believe that God exists (Gen 1:1) and that he has made himself knowable to humanity (Rom 1:19), though not comprehensively (Ps 131:1; 145:3). He also communicates certain attributes to mankind, while not others as they are only possible for him.
- I believe that God is a trinity, being three in person (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:4) and one in essence (Deut 6:4; Isa 44:6; Jn 17:3). I deny that any one analogy can fully capture the character of the trinity yet may be helpful for explaining various aspects. I deny attempts of explaining the trinity as three modes of one God, one divine God and non-divine Christ and Spirit, or three divine Gods.
- I believe that God directly created the universe with his spoken word (Gen 1:1, 3), through the Spirit (Gen 1:2), and through Christ (Jn 1:3, 10; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2). I believe the Creation act occurred six literal, twenty-four hour days. I believe he created a literal Adam whose sin is imputed to all their offspring. I deny that a belief in a young earth is "of first importance" and is consequently not essential for salvation (1 Cor 15:3-5). I believe that old earth views that deny a literal Adam distort the gospel indirectly by compromising the doctrine of imputed sin and righteousness (Rom 5:12-14; 1 Cor 15:21).
- I believe that God sovereignly preserves his creation (Acts 17:28; Col 1:17; Heb 1:3), ruling it both directly (Job 37:6-13; Ps 148:8) and indirectly. I believe that God's sovereignty, while absolute, does not eliminate humanity's responsibility (Phil 2:12-13; Heb 13:21; 1 Cor 15:10).
- I believe that God created angels for worshiping him (Isa 6:2; Rev 4:8) and carrying out his plan for creation (1 Cor 6:3; Heb 1:14). I believe that God created demons including Satan, all of which were originally angels but chose to rebel against God and will be eternally tormented in the end times (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6). Christians should avoid a fascination with angels and demons as both do not deserve our full admiration (Matt 4:9-10; Lk 4:7-8; Col 2:18; Rev 22:8-9).

Bibliography: ***EDBT*** (Preservation); ***NDBT*** (Concurrence); **Grudem** (Bible Doctrines); **Erickson** (Christian Theology); **O'Callaghan** (Theistic Evolution and the Fall); **Schweitzer** (The Eight Elements of the Westminster Doctrine of Creation: Why They are Incompatible with Theistic Evolution).

Christology **Stephen Mansfield**

Outline [based on Grudem and Erickson]

I. The Deity of Christ
   A. Identification as God
   B. Attributes of deity
      Omnipotence
      Eternity
      Omniscience
      Sovereignty
      Worthiness of worship

II. The Humanity of Christ
   A. The incarnation
      The virgin birth
      Sinlessness
   B. Human weakness and limitation
      Physical and mental growth
      Human emotions
      Human needs

III. The Atonement of Christ
   A. The cause of the atonement
      The justice of God
      The love of God
   B. The necessity of the atonement
      The inability of mankind's efforts to atone
      The inability of animal sacrifices to atone
      The inability of Christ to atone apart from his death
   C. The nature of the atonement
      Christ's obedience for us
      Christ's sufferings for us

Credal Statement

- I believe that Jesus is fully divine as demonstrated in the Scripture's testimony (Jn 1:1; 1:18; 20:28; Rom 9:5; Titus 2:13; Heb 1:8; 2 Pet 1:1) and his exhibition of divine attributes (Mt 8:26-27; 18:20; Jn 8:58; Mk 2:5-7, 8; Rev 19:10).
- I believe that Jesus is fully human as demonstrated in his incarnation through his miraculous virgin birth (Mt 1:18, 20, 24-25; Lk 1:34-35; cf 3:23). I believe that he was sinless in his humanity (Lk 4:13; Jn 8:12, 29, 46; 15:10; 18:38; Rom 8:3; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15). I believe that Jesus experienced the full range of human physicality and psychology including their limitations (Mt 4:2, 11; 8:10; Mk 13:32; Lk 2:40, 52; Jn 4:6; 12:27; 19:28; Heb 5:8).
- I believe Jesus' atonement for mankind's sins was caused both by God's justice (Rom 3:25, 26) and love (Jn 3:16). I believe Jesus' atonement was necessary because of mankind's inability (Rom 8:3-4; Heb 4:9; 7:18), animals' inability (Ps 40:6-8; Heb 10:6, 8), and Jesus' inability apart from his death for mankind's sins (Mt 26:39).
- I believe Jesus accomplished atonement for mankind's sins through his obedience (Mt 3:15; Rom 5:19; 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 3:9; and his sufferings (Isa 53:3, 6, 12; Mt 4:1-11; 26:56; 27:46; Mk 14:34; 15:24; Rom 3:25; Gal 3:13; Heb 2:7; 5:8; 12:3-4; 1 John 2:2).
- I reject as unbiblical all perversions of the atonement including the following:
    - Example theory, because it limits Jesus' atonement to the efficacy of a mere pattern to follow, thus eliminating its true power in dealing with mankind's guilt (1 Cor 5:21).
    - Moral influence theory, because it reduces the atonement to a mere expression of God's love, thus also eliminating it of its wrath-absorbing power (1 Jn 2:2).

Bibliography: **NDBT** (Christology, Incarnation); **NDT** (Atonement, Humanity); **Erickson**, 601, 626; **Grudem**, 229-272; **Burnhop**, Beyond the Kaleidoscope: Towards a Synthesis of Views on the Atonement, 345-346; **Loewe**, From the Humanity of Christ to the Historical Jesus, 314-315.

Eschatology **Stephen Mansfield**

Outline [based on Grudem, Erickson, and sample doctrinal statement]

I. The Millennium
- A. Tribulations views
  - Partial tribulation rapture
  - Post-tribulation rapture
  - Mid-tribulation rapture
  - Pre-tribulation rapture
- B. Millennium views
  - Postmillennialism
  - Amillennialism
  - Premillennialism

II. The Return of Christ
- A. Sudden, personal, visible, bodily return
  - False views: Merely spiritual return in people's hearts
- B. Believers' eager hope
- C. The unknowable timing
  - False view: Personal revelations or formulas that proport to know the timing of Christ's return
  - False view: The selling of possessions and to wait for Christ's return

III. The Final Judgment and Eternal Punishment
- A. Finality
- B. Timing
- C. Christ will be the judge
- D. Unbelievers will be judged
- E. Believers will be judged
- F. Angels will be judged
- G. Hell as literal, conscious judgement
  - False views
    - Annihilated existence
    - Annihilated consciousness

IV. The New Heavens and New Earth
- A. New Heavens and new earth
- B. Spiritual and physical living with God
  - False view: Afterlife as mere spiritual existence

Credal Statement

- I believe the church age will end upon the resurrection of dead believers and the taking up, also referred to as the rapturing of living believers (1 Thess. 4:14–17). I believe the Rapture takes place before the Tribulation because Scripture seems to indicate God will "keep" believers from that Tribulation (1 Thess 5:9; Rev 3:10).
- I believe God will send a unique Tribulation to judge the surviving unbelievers (Dan 9:26–27; Mt 24:21; Rev 3:10). I reject the Partial-rapture view since it seems inconsistent with God's promise to change "all" believers "in a moment" (1 Cor 15:51–52). I reject the Post-tribulation and Mid-tribulation views since they allow for believers suffering God's judgement.
- I believe after the Tribulation that Christ will return suddenly, personally, visibly, and bodily (Jn 14:3; Acts 1:11;1 Thess 4:16). I believe this gives the believer an eager hope for the future in this present life (Rev 22:20; Tit 2:12-13; Phil 3:20; 1 Cor 16:22). I believe the time of Christ's return cannot be known (Mt 24:44; 25:13; Mk 13:32-33; Lk 12:40).
- I reject as unbiblical the claim that Christ will only return in a spiritual sense (Rev 1:7). I reject personal revelations or formulas that proport to know the timing of Christ's return. I reject the practice of selling possessions and waiting for Christ's return, considering it disobedience (Mt 25:26-30).
- I believe God will finally judge all his creation (Acts 17:30-31; Rom 2:5; Rev 20:11-15) after the millennium and rebellion (Rev 20:1-6, 11). I believe that Christ himself will be the judge (2 Tim 4:1; Acts 10:42; cf. 17:31). And he will judge unbelievers (Rom 2:5-7; Rev 20:12), believers (Rom 14:10-12; 2 Cor 5:10; cf. Rom 2:6-11; Rev 20:12, 15), and Christians will judge angels (1 Cor 6:3; cf. 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6).
- I believe hell is a literal, conscious expression of God's punitive wrath (Mt 25:41; Mk 9:43; Lk 16:22-24; Rev 14:9-11). I reject as false all views that reduce hell to a mere spiritual place. I reject all annihilationism view including that of existence and consciousness.
- I believe God has prepared the new heavens and the new earth for the saved (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1-2). I believe this place includes both immaterial (spiritual) and material (physical) life with God (Acts 1:9, 11; cf. Lk 24:51). I reject views that describe the afterlife as mere immaterial existence.

Bibliography: **EDBT** (Tribulation, Persecution); **NDBT** (Resurrection); **Erickson**, 1096, 1099; **Grudem**, 427-465; **Bernard Ineichen**, Losing the rapture: escaping from fundamentalist Christian belief, 661-662; **David Malcolm Bennett**, Raptured or not raptured? That is the question, 143-144.