

ABSTRACTS:

R. Alan Streett, "Open Theism: Evangelicalism's Latest Controversy." CTR, 2004, N.S. 1(2):131-145.

Gives a brief overview of the recent controversy in the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) over whether John Sanders' and Clark Pinnock's writings are in line with inerrancy. Interviews Darrell L. Bock and Norman L. Geisler about the orthodoxy of open theism, the threat it poses to inerrancy and the ETS, the future of that society, and the future of belief in inerrancy of the Bible. ADS

A Boyd Luter and Emily Hunter McGowin, "From Bad to Worse: A Portrait of Open Theism as a Theological System." CTR, 2004, N.S. 1(2):147-165.

Proponents of open theism have not yet made an attempt to give a systematic account of their theological positions, but many positions may be deduced from related statements. They view mankind positively, ignoring the fall. Sin is seen as a broken relationship with God rather than an affront to holiness. In Christology they emphasize Jesus' humanity, and in pneumatology they allow that humans and other spirits may impede the Holy Spirit. Since God can be wrong inerrancy is undercut. Ecclesiology is unclear, but they emphasize ecumenicity and egalitarianism. Salvation depends on free choice of humans, may be universal, and is not guaranteed by faith. ADS

Clark H. Pinnock, "A Response to 'From Bad to Worse.'" CTR, 2004, N.S. 1(2):167-170.

Responds to preceding article in same issue by Luter and McGowin concerning implications of open theism in certain areas of theology. Open theism is an extension of Wesleyan tradition intended to get people to make a difference for God. It takes scripture more seriously than those who explain away divine repentance and human free will. Pinnock is orthodox in Christology and pneumatology, believes in spiritual warfare, holds that Christians are co-laborers with God, that sin is mostly a breaking of a relationship, and that the pale of salvation is wider than Christianity. ADS

Emily Hunter McGowin, "A Response to Clark Pinnock." CTR, 2004, N.S. 1(2):171-172.

Responds to Pinnock's statements in the preceding article in the same issue concerning open theism's bibliology, anthropology and eschatology. They will not address the issue of biblical inerrancy directly, they overemphasize humankind's involvement in "God's project," and they do not adequately explain how God's ultimate victory is certain when his will can be thwarted. ADS

Douglas S. Huffman, "Some Logical Difficulties in Open Theism." CTR, 2004, N.S. 1(2):173-189.

Open theism contradicts itself when it says that God is omniscient and knows what he will do even though the future cannot be known except as possibilities. Openness theologians also err when they directly connect knowledge of the future and certainty of the future to coercion. In the end, even they must hold to compatibilism, which they say violates free will and destroys God's open project. Their confidence in the future is also self-contradictory since God is not totally in control unless he abandons human free will. ADS

Bruce A. Ware, "Robots, Royalty, and Relationships? Toward a Clarified Understanding of Real Human Relations with God Who Knows and Decrees All That Is." CTR, 2004, N.S. 1(2):191-203.

Greg Boyd's open theism, utilizing "neo-Molinism" to account for how God relates with humans, falters on its own terms. For a biblical, coherent, and workable model of divine-human relatedness ten elements must be brought together: God's exhaustive sovereignty, human freedom compatible with divine sovereignty, human freedom of desire, both "direct-causative" and "indirect-permissive" divine action, a compatibilist middle knowledge, God's involvement with humans in time and space, conceptions of both divine immutability and mutability, the existence of some contingent divine qualities, some difference between divine-human and human-human relations, and the glory of God as the end of human life. ADS

Steve W. Lemke, "God's Relation to the World: Terrance Tiessen's Proposal on Providence and Prayer." CTR, 2004, N.S. 1(2):205-213.

Review article of Providence and Prayer by Terrance Tiessen. This is a valuable volume as a review of different views of providence. There are eleven problems that Tiessen needs to reconsider: not distinguishing indeterminism and incompatibilism, insisting on only extreme options regarding human freedom, confusing efficient cause with final cause, kinds of divine and agent causation offered, paucity of New Testament references, logical problems in defending Calvinism on the charge of fatalism, not determining fatalistic and fatalism, combining openness and Calvinist theology, supposed incompatibility of libertarian free will and foreknowledge, skirting the problem of evil, and appeal to mystery. ADS

Glenn R. Wittig, "Open Theism: A Selective and Annotated Bibliography." CTR, 2004, N.S. 1(2):215-238.

Includes short history of open theism. Bibliography divides literature of proponents into monographs and essays; divides literature of critics into monographs in general, monographs dealing exclusively with Clark Pinnock, and essays. ADS