



Inerrancy and Worldview: Answering Modern Challenges to the Bible

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Though the Bible presents a personal and relational God, popular modern worldviews portray an impersonal divine force in a purely material world. Readers influenced by this competing worldview hold assumptions about fundamental issues--like the nature of humanity, evil, and the purpose of life--that present profound obstacles to understanding the Bible.

In *Inerrancy and Worldview*, Dr. Vern Poythress offers the first worldview-based defense of scriptural inerrancy, showing how worldview differences create or aggravate most perceived difficulties with the Bible. His positive case for biblical inerrancy implicitly critiques the worldview of theologians like Enns, Sparks, Allert, and McGowan. Poythress, who has researched and published in a variety of fields-- including science, linguistics, and sociology--deals skillfully with the challenges presented in each of these disciplines. By directly addressing key examples in each field, Poythress shows that many difficulties can be resolved simply by exposing the influence of modern materialism.

Inerrancy and Worldview's positive response to current attempts to abandon or redefine inerrancy will enable Christians to respond well to modern challenges by employing a worldview that allows the Bible to speak on its own terms.

Inerrancy and Worldview: Answering Modern Challenges to the Bible Details

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From Reader Review Inerrancy and Worldview: Answering Modern Challenges to the Bible for online ebook

Bob O'bannon says

There are two ways to get to know a forest: either you walk through it and see the trees up close, or you can fly over and get a birds-eye view. This book takes the latter approach to the issue of inerrancy, showing how the birds-eye worldview we bring to the Bible will have everything to do with our willingness to submit to its teachings. The whole book has an apologetic tone that is quite useful in a culture that is increasingly suspicious of the Bible's reliability.

Rick Davis says

The title here is a bit misleading as there is a lot about worldview and not much about inerrancy. This is a good overview of how worldview affects various disciplines though. Poythress covers in brief what he deals with in more depth in various other books.

Mark A Powell says

With tactical skill and deftness of prose, Poythress systematically addresses common challenges to the authority and reliability of Scripture. He provides thoughtful and well-reasoned answers to the oft-trumpeted refrains of modern-day antibiblical worldviews, dismantling false assumptions and inaccuracies. Short chapters and logical progression add an extra dimension of readability to an already accessible book. Poythress' effort here deserves a place on the short list of go-to resources for defending the inerrancy and sufficiency of God's Word.

E says

I really wanted to like this book. I really did. I reviewed a similar book of his last January and appreciated it very much. This one I did not. It is not really about inerrancy. It's not even really about worldview. It is a mishmash of thoughts on various topics that interface between faith and the world--science, sociology, skepticism, linguistics, etc. And you wonder again and again what Poythress' point is. Everything he writes is true, and some of it is very interesting, but some editor should have been frank with him. The fact that most chapters are 4-6 pages long did not help. You can read an entire chapter and find it eminently forgettable.

Poythress has written more focused works on many of those topics: mathematics, linguistics, philosophy, science, and sociology. I'm willing to give one of them a try. Hopefully, it's better than this.

JM says

I'll just be honest- I only got a third of the way through this book. While I love Poythress' thoughts and completely agree that the real issue in disagreements over inerrancy is the assumptions we have, I thought this book was incredibly dry. I'm the kind of guy who enjoys sitting in a comfortable chair reading arcane historical works, but this book was too lifeless for even me. I'm thankful for everything I learned, but I don't think I will pick up Poythress book again.

Adam Omelianchuk says

The central thesis of Vern Poythress's *Inerrancy and Worldview* is that "modern people" challenge the authority of Scripture by bringing presuppositions from a materialistic worldview to its pages. That is, modern people, or those who think the Bible is errant, read it through the lens of an "impersonalistic" view of natural laws, moral properties, and regularities in thought and speech. Poythress guides the reader through topics such as the natural sciences, sociology, linguistics, historical criticism, and cognitive psychology so as to demonstrate how an impersonalistic worldview affects modern thinking, and hence the handling of Scripture as an errant human text. The antidote to this state of affairs, he says, is to recast these disciplines along the lines of a "personalistic" worldview, which envisages our lawlike world of regularity as one that is upheld by God's sustaining word. In short, given the reality of a personal God, we should expect an inerrant Bible. Along the way, he addresses certain challenges to particular problem passages and admonishes readers to take account of their spiritual pride that might hinder one's reading of Scripture.

If one is looking for a general overview of how materialistic thinking affects various disciplines (assuming he has represented them fairly) and the conclusions drawn from them, one might find Poythress's book helpful. But if one is looking for a defense of inerrancy, one should look elsewhere. In my estimation, this book woefully falls short of a robust defense of inerrancy, because the assumption of a personalist worldview is not sufficient for believing in an inerrant Bible.

Perhaps Poythress only intends to show that a impersonalistic worldview is sufficient to undermine inerrancy, and that a personalistic one is necessary for upholding it. If this is the case, then his argument is rather trivial. Everyone knows that if materialism is true, the Bible errs, and that the Bible is inerrant only if God exists. But I suspect, Poythress is up to something different, namely showing the reader that, despite confessing a personalistic worldview, one might inadvertently imbibe impersonal presuppositions at work in the disciplines that furnish challenges to inerrancy. Even if this is the case, however, he gives is no good reason to believe the Bible is inerrant.

Why think he gives is no good reason to believe the Bible is inerrant? Because one can affirm all that Poythress wants us to affirm-namely that God exists as a personal subject in whom all truth, beauty, and goodness are rooted-and still deny inerrancy. Consider this argument that I will put in the fictional mouth of Wes:

- [1] God exists and is morally perfect.
- [2] Therefore, God would not command one nation to exterminate all the members of another nation.
- [3] The Bible claims that God commanded one nation to exterminate all the members of another nation.
- [4] Therefore, what the Bible claims about God is false.
- [5] If what the Bible claims about God is false, then the Bible is not inerrant.

[6] Therefore, Bible is not inerrant.

Whether or not one agrees with all the premises of Wes's argument is beside the point; Poythress shows no awareness of the fact that one of the strongest arguments for the errancy of Scripture faced by Christians today is entirely compatible with a personalistic worldview.

To be sure, the response to Wes would be to charge him with putting the judgments of unaided human reason above the judgments of Scripture and that the truthfulness of premise [2] ought to be challenged. This would be no surprise as Poythress, following Van Til, presupposes that the Bible is inerrant; to argue for the authority of Scripture without appealing to it would be to undermine it. Wes might reasonably think this just amounts to begging the question, but the response will be that everyone begs the question at some point, since everyone has to posit some ultimate authority by which truth values are judged. Suppose this is right: what should we make of this? As far as I can see, the dialectic amounts to another instance of one man's *modus ponens* being another man's *modus tollens*; thus neither Wes nor Poythress are more rational or irrational than the other. But stalemates do not result in victory. In any case, affirming a personalistic worldview is insufficient for establishing biblical inerrancy.

Here ends my main complaint with the book. Other complaints are relatively minor, but worth noting. Poythress spends four chapters interpreting Psalm 86:8, which obliquely refers to "gods" other than YHWH, as a text that does not affirm the existence of any such "gods." Why does this matter? Apparently, this is some great challenge posed by Peter Enns who thinks that the ancient Israelites were probably polytheistic. Poythress develops a complex line of response that incorporates the broader context of the passage, and themes developed later on in the canon, all of which is fair and reasonable. But as I was reading this section I kept wondering, "So what if the psalter thought there were other gods?" That doesn't mean there are any, because the psalter's theological beliefs do not determine the fact of the matter." If inerrancy is at stake, then why not interpret it conditionally, "If there are other gods, YHWH is greater than all of them and therefore he alone is worthy of worship?" Logically, this comes out true if other "gods" exist or not.

One final complaint is the self-referential character of the book. Poythress references himself and his other works no less than 69 times! Thus the reader is deprived of primary resources that might better establish or represent his claims, particularly with respect to other disciplines. If the reader should be directed to his books on science, sociology and linguistics so often, why not just read those instead? Perhaps *Inerrancy and Worldview* is intended to be a more accessible introduction to lay people, but I maintain it is too truncated of a work to be helpful to them.

Paul Bruggink says

If you are looking for a book on biblical inerrancy, this isn't it. The author barely touches on the subject of biblical inerrancy. Even the subtitle, "Answering Modern Challenges to the Bible" is misleading, because Poythress fails to address or even mention modern challenges to biblical inerrancy.

Poythress almost totally ignores the current Christian literature on biblical inerrancy, except for Peter Enns' "Inspiration and Incarnation." There is no mention of or interaction with Christian Smith's "The Bible Made Impossible" or Kenton Spark's "God's Word in Human Words" or Carlos Bovell's "Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Authority of Scripture" or Scot McKnight's "The Blue Parakeet," all of which were published prior to 2012. So much for "answering modern challenges to the Bible."

When he does discuss inerrancy, he focuses on a 110-year old definition if the historical-critical tradition and fails to even mention the grammatical-historical method of biblical interpretation.

When discussing days of creation, Poythress proposes the mature creation (apparent age) theory in this book and refers to chapters 5-10 of his book "Redeeming Science," in which he appeared to support analogical days of creation.

In his discussion of miracles, Poythress makes no reference to John Polkinghorne or Denis Edwards or Keith Ward or Thomas Tracy or Robert John Russell or any other current Christian thinkers on divine action.

Chapters 8-30 & 32-35 are many words that say very little about biblical inerrancy. After Chapter 7, only chapter 31 finally gets back on the topic of inerrancy.

There is a lot of worthwhile material in this book, just not much about biblical inerrancy. It needs a more accurate title and subtitle.

John says

This book has gotten a bit of a bad rap on Goodreads because readers seem to be expecting a book that deals primarily with defending the inerrancy of the Bible. The book is not written to defend inerrancy primarily, but to demonstrate how one's worldview presupposes a worldview where the Bible can or cannot conceivably be viewed as inerrant.

Poythress examines how the presuppositions of one's worldview, define the possibilities for a personal or impersonal world. He looks at a variety of standard modern objections to the Bible and the God of the Bible and then answers them not by arguing within their framework, but by examining the presuppositions inherent in the worldview. Poythress thus follows the methods of Van Til in exposing the presuppositions in unbiblical worldviews and objections.

These objections are not limited to inerrancy, but the wide field of modern objections to the Bible. The book does deal with innerrancy, especially toward the end. But this book is not a thorough defense of biblical innerrancy. Those interested in that should look elsewhere.

This book, however, does a very good job of presenting a presuppositionalist critique of modern worldviews that assault the Bible's credibility and innerrancy. I recommend the book, just know be prepared to look for another volume for a more thorough defense of innerrancy if that's what you're looking for.

Dave Jenkins says

The past few years have seen the rise of inerrancy--an issue that many thought was resolved in previous generations come to the forefront of current theological debate, once again. Inerrancy is an important theological truth that while not directly tied to the Gospel itself nevertheless affects how one will ultimately understand issues directly related to the Gospel such as redemption, sin, justification among a host of other issues. For this reason, the issue of inerrancy while not "of first importance" certainly ranks way up there on the priority of Christian doctrine.

It really shouldn't surprise Christians that inerrancy is becoming an issue again at all—since the issue of inerrancy is directly tied to the question of who is authoritative God or man. Theological liberalism has convinced many parts of Christianity today that inerrancy is unimportant because according to them the Bible is a book full of errors. The sad thing is when one looks at the churches of those who deny the inerrancy of the Scriptures it becomes readily apparent who is in “charge”—man and not God. Making much of man is not the church's mission, but making much of Jesus and spreading His fame to the nations is the Church's mission. This is exactly why the issue of inerrancy is so important because it deals definitively not just with whether the text of Scripture is with or without error but rather with the larger question of who is authoritative, God or man. This is also the reason why I was excited when I heard about Dr. Vern Poythress new book *Inerrancy And Worldview: Answering Modern Challenges To The Bible*, because in the past few years I've been spending more time studying the doctrine of inerrancy. Through my study, I have become increasingly convinced that this issue will be one of the biggest theological battles in our generation.

Dr. Poythress notes that the traditional evangelical view of inerrancy says that the “Bible is inerrant; that is, it is completely true in what it says and makes no claims that are not true” (13). The author rightly notes that, “The Bible has much to say about God and about how we can come to know him. What it says is deeply at odds with much of the thinking in the modern world. And this is fundamental difference generates differences in many other areas—differences in people's whole view of the world. Modern worldviews are at odds with the worldview put forward in the Bible. This difference in worldview creates obstacles when modern people read and study the Bible. People come to the Bible with expectations that do not fit the Bible, and this clash becomes one main reason, though not the only one, why people do not find the Bible's claims acceptable” (14).

When some people read the title *Inerrancy and Worldview* they will think that they are reading a book about inerrancy itself, but such an idea would be mistaken. This book is not all about inerrancy but rather deals with the effects of inerrancy as it relates to how people view the world. In other words *Inerrancy and Worldview* was not written to address the question of inerrancy, as much it was in understanding how inerrancy is under attack from competing worldviews.

Dr. Poythress in his book tackles common religious difficulties such the question of “How can only one religion be right, and “Are moral rules a straitjacket?” He also tackles science, materialism, challenges from history, language, sociology, anthropology, psychology, examples, attitudes and corrupt spirituality before concluding the book with examining Scripture and worldviews. Every chapter is condensed and could very easily be made into entire book length treatments on the topics the author examines.

Since this book addresses the effects of inerrancy on our worldview, I want to focus the remainder of our time together examining the last chapter. The issue of worldviews is one that we are increasingly seeing become a bigger issue in our day whether be it with the statements of politicians, or religious leaders—we are seeing many people reveal where exactly they stand on the issues. In many ways this is good because it tells us whether we as Christians can support them or not as Christians. The issue of worldview is important because Jesus has transferred us from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus—He has transformed our worldview from one that is sinful to one is centered on Him and all for His glory and praise.

The author rightly notes that the central problem of our day is “our rebellion against God in the heart. This rebellion leads to rejection of Christ and his ways” (243). When we have a low view of God and of His Word—the natural result of this is to push God out of our lives which is also to commit high-handed rebellion against Him. Dr. Poythress frames the issue this way, “Many people in this modern world continue to trust in Christ and read their Bibles in a believing way, in spite of the pressures around them. Many of them are not philosophical reasoners. They may not be intellectually brilliant. They have come to know

Christ. They trust him because they know him personally. Christ teaches them through the Holy Spirit, and they grow in discernment. They come to distrust much of what claims to be knowledge in the mainstream culture around them, because it does not seem to help them in understanding the world in a biblically informed way. And some of what they hear from modern culture directly contradicts what they find in the Bible. They may end up rejecting a lot of modern culture, because once suspicion grows, they do not know where the falsehoods stop. Many people in the mainstream then look at these exceptional faithful people as ignoramuses. Biblically based Christianity seems to the mainstream to be a threat to intellectual life. And some of the faithful have indeed become anti-intellectual. But one of the reasons is that intellectual life as conceived in the modernist mode, conceals assumptions that deny the true God from the outset” (243).

Whether you are interested in understanding how inerrancy is under attack from popular culture or whether you’re just interested in learning more about Christianity, *Inerrancy and Worldview* is an important book that addresses the issue of inerrancy at the worldview level. By examining the worldviews of our day, the author successfully and wonderfully accomplishes his goal to provide the first worldview-based defense of inerrancy, showing how worldview differences create or aggravate most perceived difficulties with the Bible. The author’s engaging response to current attempts to abandon or redefine inerrancy will enable Christians to respond well to modern challenges by employing a worldview that allows the Bible to speak on its own terms. I highly recommend you pick up this book as it gets to the heart of an issue that Christians will see not decrease, but increase.

Jesse says

He addresses the fact that all unbelievers are biased and bent away from God. This must be understood as we witness and engage the non-believing world. We should keep in mind that the issue is not science, sexuality, history, or whatever, but the issue is sin and separation from God. Without new birth by God regenerating the lost human mind and soul there will be no argument to win.

We must always present the Gospel clearly, scripturally, and consistently while trusting in Him and His power to save souls and minds.

Forrest Schultz says

An In-Depth Examination of Scriptural Inerrancy:

Truth In The Context of The Personal Nature of God and His Creation

A review of

Vern Poythress Inerrancy and Worldview (Crossway, 2012)

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Reviewer: Forrest W. Schultz

Vern Poythress by now has become known for his in-depth studies of all kinds of things. His latest triumph is his treatment of Biblical inerrancy, which is sorely needed due to the great confusion which still exists about this all-important subject. I concur with John Frame who states that Poythress "gets deeper into the question of inerrancy than any other book that I know." His secret is His premiss, which can be easily stated: the personal nature of God must be regarded as the context of the truth which He reveals to man in His Word.

This is so obvious, yet has usually not been taken into account. There are two and only two orders of reality: God and His creation. God is a person (in fact the supreme Person and the very standard and source of personhood); and His creation was planned and produced and is ruled over by a person, God. Therefore all of reality is personal. Therefore all truth about reality is personal, because it is truth about a Person and His creation. Therefore truth must be handled accordingly, i.e. in a personal context. This is what Poythress does in this book, and he contrasts it with the impersonalistic views found in the modern challengers of Scriptural inerrancy. The result is a good and very helpful read! All kinds of confusion are straightened out when this personal context is taken into account. The Biblical worldview is rightly seen to be sophisticated in contrast with the simplistic impersonalistic treatments by the modern worldviews!

Poythress is also sophisticated in his handling of the modern notions. For example, his discussion of the "historical-critical" method is the best I have ever seen, and it too gets down to the depth of the matter, the foundational principles of the thing.

Fortunately, there is one thing which makes it easier to gain a general audience for the discussion of deep stuff (which is actually philosophy) and that is the term "worldview", which Poythress wisely uses in his title, rather than philosophy, which most people think of as something abstruse and impractical, in contrast to worldview, which is considered as dealing with important stuff about practical daily life. In fact, the term was originally called "world-and-life view". Poythress also writes in language easy to understand, and he is quite personal in doing so. For instance, he talks about a typical modern man named "Bob", who thinks this way and that. So, Poythress is not only personal in his philosophy and epistemology, but also in his writing style.

The next book Poythress will be publishing deals with Inerrancy specifically in reference to the harmony of the Gospels matter. It is expected to be out in October. I am planning on reading and reviewing it also.

-2-

Scott says

Got this per Justin Taylor's blog.

I was really excited to read this book because not only is Vern Poythress a really smart guy, but he's a smart guy who's knowledge scales various disciplines. He's written various books looking at things like Sociology, Psychology, Mathematics, etc. Therefore, I was excited to see him condense most of his thought into one book.

However, it should be noted as to what this book IS and what it is NOT.

What this book is not is a book defending the doctrine of Inerrancy. Though there were arguments scattered

throughout that touched on a defense of Inerrancy (e.g. Appendix), this book's strong suit is that it explores how various worldviews look at difficulties with the Bible.

Which leads me to what this book is. This book would more accurately be thought of as a crash course on how to ask the "question behind the question"; or, how to look at how presuppositions fuel how one reaches the conclusions that they reach. Put simply, the power of this book lies in its examination of worldviews and how they affect thinking from the ground up. This, again, is why Poythress is the man for the job.

I'd probably give this book 3.5 stars if I could only because I felt like it dragged on a bit at times. Overall though, I would recommend, especially for those who need a crash course on what a worldview is and how it operates.

Craig Hurst says

For evangelicals, there are few hot button theological issues that will incite a myriad of responses like discussing the doctrine of inerrancy. There is much debate that is as broad as Evangelicalism (including Fundamentalists) itself. For many evangelicals it is a deal breaker for claiming to be an evangelical. For others who want to stretch the stakes and broaden the evangelical tent, inerrancy is an outdated doctrine that needs to be either abandoned or better informed based on modern scholarship in a myriad of fields.

What can often times be missed in the discussion is the role that one's worldview plays in the discussion. It is to the issue of worldviews and inerrancy that Vern Poythress tackles in his recent book *Inerrancy and Worldview: Answering Modern Challenges to the Bible* published by Crossway. The essential argument of the book is that the fundamental divide between those who disagree over the possibility of an inerrant Bible lies at the level of one's worldview. "Modern worldviews are at odds with the worldview put forward in the Bible. This difference in worldview creates obstacles when modern people read and study the Bible." (p. 14) As such, this is not a book that seeks to articulate and defend the traditional doctrine of inerrancy from a more theological stance.

Through a series of thirty six chapters divided under ten sections, Poythress briefly addresses a number of modern challenges to the traditional view of inerrancy. The chapters are short and by that I mean the shortest at just under four full pages and the longest at barely eight pages. Undoubtedly, Poythress is writing for the laymen and acknowledges that he is merely scratching the surface with the issues addressed in each chapter. Nevertheless, the succinctness of each chapter enables one to see the broader worldview issue(s) in view without drowning the reader in a deep theological hole.

What one gleans from the book is that the modern challenge to the traditional view of inerrancy is not a simple objection but is rather broad in scope, thus showing the breath and interconnectedness of one's worldview. This is the point of course. Even putting inerrancy aside, one can easily see the stark differences between the worldview of a modern and an Evangelical throughout the book. Worldviews influence every facet of a person's thought world or belief system.

For Poythress, at the heart of the worldview focus as it relates to inerrancy is whether one's worldview is open or closed. That is, does one's worldview allow for the intervention of an external agent to act within the natural world or not. Further this speaks to whether one has a personalist or impersonalist worldview. For an impersonalist there is no room for an outside agent. For those who hold a personalist worldview there is room for an external agent to act within the universe and on earth among mankind.

An example of how this shakes out can be seen in the hotly debated use of the historical-critical method as it is applied to Scripture more specifically. Poythress defines it as a tradition that “attempts to treat the Bible as a collection of books from human authors, like any other books by human authors – it does not focus on or think about God as divine author.” (p. 46) Following the lead of Ernst Troeltsch, he sums up the three principles of the historical-critical method as follows: (1) Criticism of past documents as unreliable, (2) Analogy of past events to present ones in order to verify the claims of the past and (3) Correlation of events before and after the event in question. (p. 47) Ironically, Poythress believes that these principles have their foundation in God though on an impersonalist worldview they are greatly misused. (p. 48) So, the basis of the principle of criticism is the ability make judgments which has its root in God. Analogies exist due to the constancy and permanency of the created order which was created that way by God. Finally, the principle of correlation as cause and effect is founded in the way in which God made the natural world to operate and well as mankind. The misuse of these principles is summarized as follows:

"The historical-critical method rests on unsound foundations. In fact, it denies at the beginning the existence of the God described in the Bible. Over time, generations of very gifted people working with this method can produce plausible explanations for the origins of the Bible by rearranging, hypothesizing, and building layer on layer of plausible sequences of naturalistic explanations. They end up with naturalistic explanations because naturalistic explanations are the only ones they are searching for and the only ones that count within the framework that they have already adopted. The result, though it contains some positive insights by common grace, is an illusion." (p. 55)

Including the historical-critical method, Poythress addresses many claims against the possibility of inerrancy in the fields of science, language, sociology, anthropology and psychology. Additionally, Poythress goes to the depths of the human condition as affected by sin. For Poythress, the heart of the issue for impersonalists is that sin has corrupted their minds (Eph. 4:17-18). It is this corruption of the mind by sin and its only remedy in the gospel of Jesus Christ that Poythress spends part eight addressing. Part of the transforming power of the gospel is its ability to remove the effects it has on the human mind and thus enable one to accept the truth of God's Word as it speaks to, among other things, the truth about the nature of God and His written Word, Scripture. Since God speaks to man in Scripture revealing truths about Himself in it Scripture is a testimony to and bears the marks of the character of God Himself. Thus, as it applies to the point of the book, if God's character is wrapped up in the revealed truth of Scripture then it cannot be with error for to be so would call into question the character of God. Poythress elaborates,

"The Bible contains many forms of communication, including not only assertions but questions, commands, exclamations, and expressions of personal feeling, which belong to various genres. Some people think of “truth” as confined to assertions. So we need to think about how God's trustworthiness applies to other forms of communication as well. God is trustworthy in all the forms of communication that he uses: he uses each form in accord with its own character that he has ordained. His trustworthiness includes the truthfulness of what he implies in these various forms of communication." (p. 205)

So with all of the helpful worldview critiquing of an impersonalist view of inerrancy, how could one find fault with the book? I do have one issue with the book. While Poythress does address the difference in worldviews through various sides of the issue, he could have done a better job of tying in at least each main section topic to the doctrine of inerrancy itself. I think there were less than ten uses of the word inerrancy in the whole book. The core thesis of the book could have had more impact and clarity had there been a summary at the end of each section that explicitly connected the discussion at hand to the doctrine of inerrancy. For instance, how, on a personalist worldview, can the fields of sociology and anthropology actually contribute to the defense of inerrancy on a worldview level?

That criticism aside, *Inerrancy and Worldview* is a view of the debate from 30,000 feet in the air as it address the worldview issues that underlie the possibility of an inerrant Bible as written by the hands of men and inspired by the Spirit of God. Given the potential for each section to have become a book in itself and the highly intellectual writer that Poythress is, overall, the brevity of each chapter introduces the reader just enough to the issue at hand without losing one's interest in utter simplicity. He gets to the heart of the matter in a very short span of pages which speaks to his grasp of the issues he addresses and the doctrine of inerrancy. This is a good place to start to get one's feet wet on the bigger issues at hand before one delves into the more theological discussion of the doctrine of inerrancy.

NOTE: I received this book for free from Crossway and was under no obligation to provide a favorable review.

Michael Banh says

This book was assigned for my apologetics class and it looked promising at first, but quickly became tedious to get through. Poythress attempts to address the various notions and presuppositions people have when approaching the Bible. He does a fair job in addressing the modernistic worldview which attempts to discard the Bible due to it's seemingly questionable authority and what appears to be contradictory passages. Poythress says that the Bible should inform our worldview rather than the other way around. If we have a problem with the Bible, the problem is not with the text but with us. The book was a bit dry for me and I think that Poythress tries to address too many issues in one book.

Jeremy says

This book answers questions to biblical inerrancy from a variety of disciplines. I particularly enjoyed the end, when Poythress discussed three ethical domains and how each of them is corrupted by sin. The author is remarkable in his ability to shift from philosophical discourse to the humble counsel of a pastor. Poythress does not respond in depth to objections from each field, but he gives you a sample of how the personalist and impersonalist worldviews interact on that topic. His view really does give you a way to begin to respond to objections to each field. Excellent read!
