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SCRIPTURE IN THE THEOLOGIES OF W. PANNENBERG AND D. G. BLOESCH: AN INVESTIGATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ITS ORIGIN, NATURE, AND USE

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Scripture has played an authoritative role in Christian theology for centuries and has been at the very heart of Protestant theology from its beginning. The rise of modern historical criticism, however, has led to a crisis at the very foundation of Protestant theology. In this context this dissertation seeks to set forth, analyze, compare, and evaluate the concept of Scripture in the theologies of two contemporary Protestant systematic theologians, who represent significantly different concepts of Scripture. The theologians chosen for study are Wolfhart Pannenberg and Donald G. Bloesch.

A brief introduction, delineating the objective, research methodology, and delimitations of the study, is followed by an issue oriented overview of the concept of Scripture in theology, that begins with the Protestant Reformation and describes important theological representatives who significantly influenced the concept of Scripture in church history up to the present time.

Chapter 3 focuses on Wolfgang Pannenberg's concept of Scripture by describing his understanding of its origin, nature, and use. In the second part of this chapter an analysis of theological and anthropological presuppositions which influence his concept of Scripture is attempted. Chapter 4 describes Donald G. Bloesch's concept of Scripture, following the same pattern as chapter 3.

The final chapter compares the positions of Pannenberg and Bloesch and evaluates them on the basis of the internal consistency of their views. The assumptions and presuppositions upon which their respective positions seem to rest are also taken into consideration. It appears that despite their fundamentally different starting points and significant differences in their positions there are a number of surprising similarities between Pannenberg and Bloesch which seems to suggest that the concept of Scripture is determined for both theologians ultimately by presuppositions that are derived and shaped *extra scripturam*.