

The Nature of Divine Illumination

Various Texts

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Not only has God graciously given to us His very Word, leaving us with a witness to His will for the church, He has also given to us His Holy Spirit who aids us in our understanding of His Word. This ministry of the Spirit, commonly referred to as 'divine illumination,' is explained in different ways by varying denominations. In fact, it adds a touch of irony to this doctrine when we consider that there is little agreement about what the Bible actually teaches concerning illumination! Nevertheless, most Christians believe that the Bible teaches some form of ongoing, illuminating work of the Spirit, and it my purpose this morning to suggest the importance of this doctrine by setting forth what the church has believed concerning illumination, what the Bible has to say on the matter, and what conclusions we may draw based on the biblical text.

1. Illumination: What the Church Has Believed

- A. Apostolic Fathers
- B. Augustine
- C. Thomas Aquinas
- D. John Duns Scotus
- E. John Calvin
- F. The Westminster Confession
- G. Jonathan Edwards
- H. The Contemporary Church

2. Illumination: Some of the Biblical Evidence

- A. John 14:25-26; 16:12-15
- B. 1 Corinthians 2:1-16
- C. 2 Corinthians 3:3, 12-18
- D. 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6, 9b; 2:13; 4:9
- E. Acts 18:24-26
- F. 2 Peter 3:15-16
- G. Ephesians 3:14-19
- H. Ephesians 1:15-18

3. Illumination: Tentative Conclusions