



Systematic Theology
Maranatha Bible Church
Woman's Training Course

Systematic Theology #1

Introduction:

PROLEGOMENA
Theology
Various kinds of Theology
Systematic Theology
Categories of Systematic Theology
Benefits and Limitations of Theology
Antinomy / Tensions in Theology

Prolegomena:

- From the Greek word, **prolegin**, and it means, the things before the main things.

I. Theology

- Greek word *theos*, “god,” and *logia*, “word.” Theology is not only a subject of study but, an activity. The study of God and the things of God.
- 3 things to keep in mind.

1.) Focus: God

- a. We must keep the focus on God not on ourselves.

John 17:3 ~ “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

Jeremiah 9:23-24 ~ “²³ Thus says the LORD, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; ²⁴ but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the LORD.

2.) Foundation: the Holy Scriptures.

2 Timothy 3:16 ~ “¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness:”

3.) **Fruit: The 5 Blessed D’s**

a. Discovery, Discernment, Despair, Devotion, Development.

- **Discovery**
2 Corinthians 4:5-6
- **Discernment**
Jeremiah 10:6-10
- **Despair**
Psalms 145:3
- **Devotion**
Romans 10:2
- **Development**
Ephesians 4:14-15; Hebrews 5:12-14

II. Various Kinds of Theology

- 1.) **Biblical Theology**
Theological perspectives as presented by one individual or as presented in one area of the Bible.
- 2.) **Historical Theology**
Studies how Christians in different periods have understood various theological topics.
- 3.) **Philosophical / Natural Theology**
Studying theological topics largely without use of the Bible but using the tools and methods of philosophical reasoning and what can be known about God by observing the universe.
- 4.) **Practical Theology**
The organization of Scripture with an emphasis on the personal application of doctrinal truth in the lives of the church and individual Christians.

III. Systematic Theology

- The term systematic comes from the compound Greek word made up of *syn*, “together,” and *histanai*, “to set up,” meaning “to set up together” or “to systematize.”
- **Definition:** The organic science of God and all things outside of God in their relations to Him.

Seven Presuppositions of Systematic Theology.

- 1.) The Existence of the God of the Bible. **Heb. 11:6.**
- 2.) God as the Source of all Meaning of Himself and the Universe. **1 Cor. 2:6-16.**
- 3.) The Accurate and Sufficient Revelation of God by the Scriptures. **2 Tim. 3:16-17.**
- 4.) The Depravity of Unregenerate Man. **Rom. 1:19-21; 3:10-11; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Cor. 2:14.**
- 5.) Man is a Rational, Personal Creature, Able to Receive, Understand, and Transmit Linguistic Communication.
- 6.) Regenerate Man has a Spiritual Endowment Because of the Holy Spirit.
- 7.) True Theology is the product of Inner Illumination by God the Holy Spirit. **1 Cor. 2:11-15.**

IV. The History of Systematic Theology

- *Jesus taught Systematic Theology.*
 - Read **Luke 24:13-35, Vs. 25-27, Vs. 44-45**
- *When was the first Systematic Theology book compiled?*
 - The first know attempt was by Origin.
 - **Origin** = 185 A.D. to 254 A.D. We wouldn't agree with all of his theology.
 - **Augustine of Hippo** = 13 November 354 – 28 August 430 AD.
 - **John of Damascus** = c. 675 or 676, - 4 December 749.
- *Later compositions in the middle ages.*
 - **Thomas Aquinas** = 1225 – 7 March 1274.

- *During the Reformation.*
 - *Philip Melancthon* who was a friend of *Martin Luther*.
 - **Ulrich Zwingli**
 - **John Calvin**
- *Coming into the modern age.*
 - **Louis Berkoff**
 - **Cornelius Van Til**
 - **John Frame**
 - **The Moody handbook of Biblical Theology**
 - **Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem**
 - **Biblical Doctrine by MacArthur & Mayhue**
 - **Joel Beeke's Reformed Systematic Theology**

Look in Biblical Doctrine on pg. 34-35; 66 to see many more.

V. Categories of Systematic Theology

Bibliology – The doctrine of the Bible.

Theology Proper – The doctrine of the existence of God and His attributes.

Christology – The doctrine of Christ.

Pneumatology – The doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Angelology – The doctrine of angels.

Anthropology– The doctrine of humanity.

Hamartiology – The doctrine of sin.

Soteriology – The doctrine of salvation.

Ecclesiology – The doctrine of the church.

Eschatology – The doctrine of the end times.

VI. Benefits and Limitations of Systematic Theology

A.) **Benefits**

- There are several benefits of Systematic Theology.

B.) Limitations

- There are some ways that systematic Theology is limited.

VII. Antinomy / Tensions in Systematic Theology

- Apparent contradictions in Scripture that have internal and external consistency and are, therefore, true.

A. Examples of Theological Tensions.

1.) *The Trinity:*

2.) *The Person of Christ:*

3.) *Scripture:*

4.) *Divine Sovereignty and Human Accountability:*

_____ (Rom. 8:28-30; 9:21; 1 Peter 1:2).

(Matt. 16:27; John 3:36; 1 Peter 4:17).

There are four general areas we will touch on in our study of Bibliology.

BIBLIOLOGY
Revelation
Inspiration of Scripture
Authority and Canonicity of Scripture
Inerrancy, Infallibility, and Illumination of Scripture

Bibliology

I. Revelation

- The disclosing of God's existence and perfections to man.

A. General / Natural Revelation

- The general disclosing of God's existence through nature, conscience, and history. Ps. 19:1-4; Ps. 8:3; Isa 40:26; Jer 33:20-21; Amos 9:5-6; Acts 14:15-17; Romans 1:18-32, 2:14-15.
- Limitations of General Revelation
 - Obscured by the curse on nature. Gen 3:17-19; Rom 8:18-25
 - Man is willfully blind to it because of his depravity. Rom 1:21-23; Eph 4:17-19; 2 Cor 4:4.
 - _____ . Ps. 19:1-4
 - _____ . Rom 1:20; 10:8-15
- Purpose of General Revelation is to Show us:
 - _____ . Psalm 19:1-3
 - _____ . Romans 1:19-20
 - That He transcends much of our understanding and is immortal
Romans 1:20-23

- That He is full of kindness and mercy. **Matthew 5:44-55.**

B. Special Revelation

- The revealing of God’s existence and attributes. This is done by supernatural means to particular individuals. During the church age revelation consists primarily of the words of the Bible. **Revelation 22:18-20.**
- Some other forms prior to completion of Scripture.
 - Dreams or Visions. **Genesis 37:5; Acts 16:9**
 - Angel. **Luke 1:11, 26,27.**
 - Incarnation. **John 1:1-5.**

General Revelation	Special
Found in nature, history, and the conscience.	Found in Christ and the Bible.
Available to <i>all</i> men.	Available to those exposed to the Word of God or Christ.
Leaves men without excuse.	Leaves men with a remedy.
Leads to condemnation.	Leads to salvation

II. Inspiration of Scripture

- Working definition: God, by the Holy Spirit, moved the human authors of Scripture, so that through and without violating their own personalities, they, without error, composed and recorded God’s complete canonical message to man in the words of the original autographs of the Bible.

Four Views of Inspiration

- 1.) **Dictation Theory:** God gave the human writers a word for word dictation.
- 2.) **Partial Theory:** God gave them some general ideas and they sat down and wrote the words from these general ideas. Scriptures make claims to be fully truthful. **Ps. 119:43, 160; 2 Tim. 2:15, John 17:7.**
- 3.) **Natural Theory:** The biblical writers gained inspiration not from God but from within themselves. This is contrary to Scripture itself. **2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20-21.**

- 4.) **Biblical View:** Verbal plenary inspiration. Every word of the bible is divinely inspired and therefore authoritative. **2 Tim 3:16.**

III. Authority and Canonicity of Scripture

Authority:

- Definition of authority.
- Authority is the “power or right to enforce obedience; moral or legal supremacy; right to command or give a final decision.”
- The primary source of authority when it comes to Scripture is God. **Gen. 1:1; 17:1; Deut.10:17; 1 Tim. 1:17; Ps. 139:1-6.**
- How did we know which books are truly authoritative God breathed Scripture and which books were not to be included?

Canon: (Rod or measuring stick)

- **Author:**
-

- **Factual:**
-

- **Continuity:**
-

- **Agreement:**
-

Apocrypha:

Books written between 400 B.C. and the time of Christ.

- The books include:
 - 1.) Ecclesiasticus
 - 2.) Wisdom
 - 3.) 1 Maccabees
 - 8.) Esther (additional verses)
 - 9.) Baruch
 - 10.) The Prayer of Manasses

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|------------------------|--|
| 4.) 2 Maccabees | 11.) The Song of the Three Holy Children |
| 5.) Tobit | 12.) The History of Susanna |
| 6.) Bel and the Dragon | 13.) 1 Esdras |
| 7.) Judith | 14.) 2 Esdras |

Is the Canon closed? What about books like the Gospel of Thomas?

Pseudepigrapha [soo-duh-pig-ruh-fuh]

- Means, “to write falsely.” The pseud epigraphical books were written between 200 BC to AD 300. by unknown authors.
- Interesting for students of history and ancient religious thought, they are not inspired by God and therefore not part of the canon of Scripture. They do not pass the tests.
 - 1) **They were written under false names.**
 - 2) **They contain historical errors.**
 - 3) **They contain outright heresy.**

There are many, Some of them include:

The Testament of Hezekiah, The Vision of Isaiah, The Books of Enoch, The Secrets of Enoch, The Book of Noah, The Apocalypse of Baruch (Baruch was Jeremiah’s scribe according to Jeremiah 36:4), The Rest of the Words of Baruch, The Psalter of Solomon, The Odes of Solomon, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Testament of Adam, The Testament of Abraham, The Testament of Job, The Apocalypse of Ezra, The Prayer of Joseph, Elijah the Prophet, Zechariah the Prophet, Zechariah: Father of John, The Itinerary of Paul, The Acts of Paul, The Apocalypse of Paul, The Itinerary of Peter, The Itinerary of Thomas, The Gospel According to Thomas, The History of James, The Apocalypse of Peter, The Epistles of Barnabas.

Is the Canon closed?

Yes, Scripture clearly supports this.

- 1.) **Scriptural reason**
 - **Proverbs 30:5-6, Galatians 1:6-9, Revelation 22:18-19**

The final aspects of Bibliology that we are going to look at are the Inerrancy, Infallibility, and Illumination of Scripture.

IV. Inerrancy; Infallibility and Illumination of Scripture

Inerrancy: literally means, “without error.” The Bible is without error in the original - autographs.

Some Claim Inerrancy is Only Partial.

- **Partial**
“The Bible is inerrant only in its salvific doctrinal teachings.

- **Complete**–
“The Bible is fully true in all it teaches or affirms.
- **The Biblical Basis for Inerrancy:**
Proverbs 30:5; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16; Titus 1:2.

Infallibility: Means, unable to mislead or fail in accomplishing its divinely intended purpose. The Biblical bases can be seen in:

- **The Biblical Basis for Infallibility:**
Psalm 19:7; Isaiah 55:11; 2 Peter 2:19.

Illumination: An enablement from the Holy Spirit to discern that the Scriptures are, in fact, the word of God, 1 John 2:20-21.

Illumination is not:

It does not:

It does not:

Guarantee that every word will be immediately understood. Some aspects of the Scripture difficult to understand and one needs to study and ask the Holy Spirit to give them Illumination or understanding.

The End