

**Discipleship:  
An  
Introduction to  
Systematic Theology and  
Apologetics**

**Why should we study systematic theology and  
apologetics?**

**The Heights Church September 13, 2015**

# **What is Systematic Theology?**

**Systematic theology is an orderly, coherent study of the principal doctrines of the Christian faith. R.C. Sproul**

- 1. Organized by topics.**
- 2. It attempts to summarize the teaching of Scripture in brief, understandable, and very carefully formulated statements.**
- 3. Much more detailed than ordinary Bible studies.**
- 4. Summarizes Biblical teaching much more accurately than most Bible studies.**
- 5. Fairly evaluates all the relevant passages for a given topic.**
- 6. Systematic theology does not improve upon the Bible, but it does aid us in understanding and explaining the Bible.**

# What is Doctrine?

**A doctrine\* is what the whole Bible teaches today about some particular topic.** Wayne Grudem

- 1. A doctrine is the result of doing systematic theology**
- 2. We will study those doctrines that meet at least one of the following:**
  - Most emphasized in Scripture**
  - Have been most significant throughout church history**
  - Are more important today than in previous church history**

\*Roman Catholic and Lutheran theologians may use *dogma* to refer to doctrines that have official church endorsement.

# What is Apologetics?

**Apologetics is the discipline that seeks to provide a defense of the truthfulness of the Christian faith for the purpose of convincing unbelievers.** Wayne Grudem

**1. Apologetics boils down to:**

- Knowing what we believe**
- Why we believe it**
- And being able to communicate what we believe and why in an effective, winsome manner to those who question our faith.**

**2. John Calvin observed in his Institutes we seek proof not persuasion.**

# Syllabus

## The Doctrine of the Bible

- Revelation, Inspiration, Authority, and Inerrancy
- The Canon, History and Affirmations of Faith

## The Doctrine of God

- His communicable and incommunicable attributes
- The Trinity
- Knowledge of God, His will, providence and prayer

## The Doctrine of Creation

- Genesis 1:1 and the Cosmological Argument
- Romans 1:20 and the Teleological argument
- Science, chance and Intelligent Design
- Angels, Satan, and Demons
- The creation of Man
- Sin and the Covenants

# **Syllabus** continued page 2

## **The Doctrine of Christ**

- The offices and Person of Christ
- His Substitutionary Atonement
- His Resurrection & Ascension
- Union with Christ and His Intercession

## **The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit**

## **The Doctrine of Redemption**

- The paradigm shift of the Reformation
- The Doctrines of Grace & Moral Inability
- Election and Effective Atonement
- God's Effective Call & Preservation of the Elect
- Objections to the Doctrines of Grace
- Regeneration, Conversion & Adoption
- Justification and Sanctification

# **Syllabus** continued page 3

## **The Doctrine of the Church**

- **The Nature of the Church**
- **The Sacraments**

## **The Doctrine of the Future**

- **Death and the Intermediate State**
- **The Return of Christ and Resurrection of the dead**
- **Major Millennial views**
- **Final Judgment and Eternal Punishment**
- **New Heaven and Earth**

We will meet from 9:00 to 10:00 AM

every Sunday between September 20 and May 22 **Except:**

- November 29, 2015: Thanksgiving
- December 27, 2015 Christmas and New Years
- March 27, 2016 Easter

# Why should we study Systematic Theology and Apologetics?

- 1. “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”** Matthew 28:18-20
- 2. always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet doing it with gentleness and respect** 1 Peter 3:15



# Why should we study Systematic Theology?

**“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20**

- **All authority = Freedom without limitation**

**Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, ““You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”” Matthew 4:8-10**

# Why should we study Systematic Theology?

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- **disciples = believing learner or learning believer**
- **Make = the primary thing we are to do**
- **teaching all I commanded = True converts want to know the truth.**
- **I am with you always = We need not fear that we must make disciples by our own resources**
- **end of the age = second coming**

# Why should we study Apologetics?

always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet doing it with gentleness and respect 1 Peter 3:15

- always prepared: We need to be ready with good answers
- make a defense: Greek word *apologia* means to make a defense.
- asks, gentleness and respect: Be winsome not aggressive.
- hope: absolute assurance, not just wishful thinking

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges to making disciples.

- **We live in an era of unprecedented Biblical illiteracy.**
- **Atheism is characterized by aggressively attacking Christianity as a serious threat to society.**
- **Postmodernism is the dominate but undefinable philosophy.**
- **There is no absolute truth except that there is no absolute truth.**
- **The distinction between ethics and morality is not understood.**
- **Science is revered but not understood.**
- **Very few college graduates have taken a course in formal logic.**

# In Conclusion:

Systematic theology enables us to summarize the teaching of Scripture in brief, understandable, and very carefully formulated statements.

**SO THAT**

**We know what we believe, why we believe it AND are able to communicate what we believe and why in an effective, winsome manner to fulfill the commands for all Christians in Matthew 28:18-20 and 1 Peter 3:15-16.**