

Session 1: Why Study Theology

CONFERENCE PURPOSE

¹¹ About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing ¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ **But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.** —Hebrews 5:12-14

We want to help believers develop a strong and clear _____ of the Bible, be able to _____ what is right from wrong, and let God's truth _____ all they do in deep and meaningful ways.

WHAT IS THEOLOGY

The word theology comes from the Greek words “theos”, meaning God, and “logos”, meaning “word or discourse.”

Theology is the sustained effort to know the character, will, and acts of the triune God as he has disclosed and interpreted these for his people in Scripture... in order that we might know him, learn to think our thoughts after him, live our lives in his world on his terms.

— David Wells: *The Theologian's Craft*

“Theology is the discovery, systematizing, and presentation of the truths about God.”

— Charles Ryrie: *Basic Theology*

NOTES:

KINDS OF THEOLOGY

1. _____ Theology:

It seeks to rightly see and define the overarching theme of Scripture and how all the parts work together.

2. _____ Theology:

It seeks to answer the question of what the proper understanding of a particular passage is, and thus the appropriate conclusion that can be drawn. This division includes the study of biblical languages, biblical archaeology, cultural studies, and hermeneutics.

3. Historical Theology:

It is the historical study of doctrinal developments from the apostolic era to the present.

4. _____ Theology:

The study of what can be known about God by human reason alone through the empirical study of the natural world.

5. _____ Theology:

The organization of Scripture with an emphasis on the personal application of doctrinal truth in the lives of the church and the individual.

WHAT IS SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY?

The organization of Scripture by a synthesis of scriptural teaching, summarized using major categories that encompass the entirety of God's written revelation.

—John MacArthur: *Biblical Doctrine*

Definition: Systematic Theology is the definition and _____ of God's truth into a unified, categorical, and logical order.

Purpose: Systematic theology seeks to bring the various passage and their teachings together. Like putting a puzzle together, we might see the whole picture and each piece in it.

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And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. — Luke 24:27

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY OUTLINE

1. **Bibliology:** the truth of _____.
2. **Theology Proper:** the doctrine of God.
3. **Christology:** the doctrine of _____.
4. **Pneumatology:** the doctrine of God the Holy Spirit.
5. **Angelology:** the doctrine of angels.
6. **Anthropology:** the doctrine of man.
7. **Hamartiology:** the doctrine of sin.
8. **Soteriology:** the doctrine of salvation.
9. **Ecclesiology:** the doctrine of the _____.
10. **Eschatology:** the doctrine of future, _____.

WHY STUDY THEOLOGY:

1. It is _____

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God — Colossians 3:16-17

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth — 2 Timothy 2:15.

What systematic theology seeks to do in our lives is not supplemental to the faith; it is essential to it.

NOTES:

2. It is needed for _____ scripture well.

When a text refers to God, or man, or sin, or Christ, or the church, or faith, you are in grave danger of distorting the meaning of those concepts unless you know what the whole Bible teaches about them, unless you know the Bible's systematic theology. — 9Marks: Why should expositional preaching include systematic theology?

Context: Systematic theology helps us understand the concepts of an individual passage in the greater _____ of what the Bible has to teach on that issue or item.

Clarity: Systematic theology helps us _____ define what the Bible says on various topics, so that we might easily identify those things that do not align.

3. It is needed for Christian _____.

Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers — 1 Timothy. 4:16

Theology is not an impersonal intellectual position; it has a real and defining impact on every part of life.

Correct theology will lead to greater Christian understanding, obedience, and worship, as incorrect theology leads to confusion about Christ, disobedience, and lost worship.

4. It fuels deep and meaningful _____.

True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. — John 4:23–24

Theology will help both deepen and define our worship of God.