

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Introduction & Doctrine of the Word

I. Introduction

- A. What is systematic theology?

- B. Why study systematic theology?
 - 1. For God
 - 2. For Others
 - 3. For Us
 - 4. Doctrine Matters

- C. Doing Systematic Theology: Key Features
 - 1. Biblically Grounded
 - 2. Historically Informed
 - 3. Contextualized
 - 4. Lived Out

II. The Doctrine of the Word

The Starting Point:

- 1. There is a God
 - 2. He Speaks

- A. The Case for the Bible as Our Authority
 - 1. Old Testament (Deut 5.22; Deut 32)

 - 2. New Testament Recognizes Authority of OT (Matt. 5.17; Jn 10.35; Lk 24.44)

INTRODUCTION & DOCTRINE OF THE WORD

3. New Testament Recognizes an Authority on Par with OT (Heb 1.1-2; 2 Pet 3.16; 1 Tim 5.18)

B. Canon ("measuring reed, or "rule") of Scripture

1. OT Canon (Lk 24.44; Mt 23.35;)

2. NT Canon (Heb 1.1-2, Jn 1)

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Doctrine of the Word, pt. 2

Introduction | *Psalm 119:97-104: "Oh, how I Love your law..."*

I. The Canon ("measuring reed" or "rule") of Scripture

A. Old Testament Canon

1. Threefold division affirmed by Jesus (Luke 24:44)
2. Other books (such as Apocrypha) not included

B. New Testament Canon

1. God acts, then provides written interpretation of his acts
2. Distinction between accepting a book's authority (happened immediately) and finalizing a list of the canon (took longer)
3. Non-biblical books present radically different messages
4. Early believers didn't "choose" books but "received"/ "inherited" them

C. Early church criteria to demonstrate a book's legitimacy

1. Apostolicity
2. Antiquity
3. Conformity to the rule of faith (orthodoxy)
4. Universality

D. Implications

1. Church didn't create the Bible; the Bible created the church
2. The canon is closed

II. Attributes of Scripture

Article IV, Section A of GBC Doctrinal Statement

We Teach "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God "were moved by the Holy Spirit" to write the very words of Scripture. We teach that while there was progress in Revelation from God, this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings—historical, poetical, doctrinal, prophetic and to the smallest word and inflection of a word as appeared in the original manuscripts. We teach that the whole Bible as originally written is therefore without error.

We Teach the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We teach the Bible is sufficient in that it contains all the words of God one needs for life and godliness. This sufficiency is rooted in the sufficiency of God Himself. We teach that, while the Holy Spirit continues to aid the believer in understanding and applying the truth of Scripture, the canon of Scripture was closed at the end of the apostolic age and the Holy Spirit is not revealing new truth to believers today.

We Teach for every passage of Scripture there is only one true interpretation. Every believer is responsible to determine carefully the true original intent and meaning of Scripture. This meaning is to be ascertained as one diligently applies the literal, grammatical, historical method of interpretation. We teach this process requires both effort on the part of the believer and the aid of the Holy Spirit. While there is one truth in a given passage there may be many proper applications.

We Teach all Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read or understood until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction (Matt. 5:18, 24:35; Mark 12:26, 36; Luke 24:27, 24:44; John 5:39; 7:17; 10:35; 16:12-15; 17:17; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 2:7-15; 10:1-13; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; 1 John 2:20; Jude 1:3-4).

A. The Divine Inspiration of Scripture: Scripture is God's Word.

(2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21)

How to respond? Learn the whole Bible.

B. The Inerrancy of Scripture: God's Word to Us

(Heb. 6:18, Prov. 30:5, John 10:35)

How to respond? Trust that every word is true.

C. The Infallibility of Scripture: God's Word is Reliable

(Same scriptures as points A&B)

How to respond? Memorize the Word so it can be your guide in good times and bad.

D. The Clarity of Scripture: God's Word is Understandable

(Psalm 19:7, Deut 6:7)

How to respond? Share the Word with others.

E. The Necessity of Scripture: God's Word is Indispensable

(Rom. 1:19, 2:14, 10:14-17)

How to respond? Meditate on the Word to grow in godliness.

F. The Sufficiency of Scripture: God's Word is Enough

(2 Tim. 3:16-17)

How to respond? Obey God's Word in all of life.

Book Recommendations: Doctrine of the Word

- Greg Gilbert, *Why Trust the Bible?* (Crossway, 2015)
- Barry Cooper, *Can I Really Trust the Bible?* (Good Book Co., 2014)
- C. E. Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?* (Oxford Univ., 2010)
- John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (P&R, 2010)
- John Wenham, *Christ and the Bible*, 3rd ed. (Wipf & Stock, 2009)
- Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* chaps. 2-8 (Zondervan, 1994)
- J. I. Packer, "Fundamentalism" & the Word of God (Eerdmans, 1958)
- The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978), available online at http://library.dts.edu/Pages/TL/Special/ICBI_1.pdf