"That Blessed Hope" **Biblical Theology**

Introduction:

Last Sunday: 1. - We Started Looking At: - The Different Approaches: - That You Can Take: - When You Want To Learn More About: - Eschatology From The Bible: - Which Is The Study Of Prophecy About The End Times! And We Saw That: 2. - The *Systematic* Approach: - Is What We Are Most Familiar With: - When It Comes To This Study! - Systematic Theology: - Is One Way Of Discovering: - What The Bible Has To Say: - About A Topic! - We Uses Systematic Theology: - To Help Us: - Synthesize And Summarize: - What The Bible Says: - About A Particular Question Or Doctrine! - Wayne Grudem - States In His Systematic Theology: - That It: "Attempts To Summarize The Teachings Of Scripture In A Brief, Understandable, And Very Carefully Formulated Statement!" And So - This Is The Primary Way: 3. - We Get All Of Those Charts & Diagrams: - About The End Times: - That We Looked At Briefly Last Week! - And - That's OK: - Because They Are All: - Derived From A Study Of The Scriptures: - And Can Be Very Useful: - To Help Us Understand Something That Can Be As Complex As Eschatology! 4. But - There Are Some Weaknesses: - To These Kinds Of Systematic Approaches To Eschatology! - And One Of Those Weaknesses Is That: - It Might Cause Us To Look At Scripture: - As "Proof-Texts" - To Support A Particular View: - Instead Of Seeing How Those Texts Were First Used & Understood: - By Both The Author & Original Readers! 5. Well - That Is Where: - A Second Approach: - To Theological Ouestions: - Comes In! - And This Approach: - Is Known As: - "Biblical Theology!" (Approach) - Now - This Does Not Mean: - That Systematic Theology: - Isn't Biblical - Because It Certainly Strives To Be! - But - It's Just Another Approach: - To Looking At A Question Or Doctrine: - From And Through: - The Bible! - So - To Begin - I Want Us To First Look At:

1. The Point Of Biblical Theology!

- Just Like Systematic Theology:

- Biblical Theology Starts With:

- A *Subject* To Study:

- And Something To Investigate!

- It Can Even Be:

- The Same <u>Question</u>:

- That You Ask:

- In Systematic Theology!

- For Example:

- In Both Approaches:

- You Can Try To Find Out The Biblical Answer To The Question:

- Who Is God?

- And - For Our Study:

- You Can Use Both Approaches:

- To Find Out The Biblical Answers To The Question:

- What Is Going To Happen In The End Times?

- So - Even Though The Subject Matter:

- May Be The Same:

- You Start To Notice The Difference:

- When You Look At:

- A Field Of Study:

- In Your Quest:

- To Answer Your Questions!

- In Systematic Theology:

- The Whole Bible:

- Is Your Field & Sphere Of Study:

- And The Texts Are Usually Weighted More-Or-Less Equally!

- But - In Biblical Theology:

- The Field Of Your Study:

- Can Be <u>Narrowed</u> To:

- A Specific Book Or Writer Or Even Testament:

- In The Bible!

- So - The Same Subject:

- But In A Different Sphere!

- For Example - What Does:

- The Book Of Genesis Tell Us About God? Or - What Does:

- The Apostle Paul Tell Us About God In His Letters?

- Of Course - There Is Going To Be:

- A Lot Of Overlap Between These Two Approaches:

- But There Might Be Some Significant Differences As Well!

- Because - Even Though The Book Of Genesis:

- Tells Us <u>A Lot</u> About God - It Does Not Tell Us:

- Everything About God!

- But - When You Narrow:

- The Field Of Your Study:

- It Helps You To Take A Step Back:

- And See What Moses Knew About God & What God Wanted His Original Audience To Know About Him!

- And That Then Leads Us To:

- A Development:

- Of The Doctrine Or Theme That You Are Looking At!

- Because - That Is How God Chose:

- To Reveal Himself And His Purposes!

- Over Time & History!

- You Can See One Example Of This:

- In The Books Of Genesis & Exodus:

- When - In Exodus 6:2-3 - "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the

LORD: / And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them!"

- So - From This - We Can See:

- That God Gave Moses:

- More Information About Himself:

- Than He Gave to Abraham, Isaac, And Jacob!

- Its *Not* That:

- How The Lord "Appeared" Unto The Patriarchs:

- Was Untrue - But Rather:

- It Was Not Entirely Complete!

- Not Evolution Or Change:

- But Revelation And Light!

- In Fact - In Genesis 15:6:

- We Are Even Told That Abraham "Believed In The LORD - Jehovah!"

- But - Albert Barnes - "The Full Import Of That <u>Name</u> Was Not Disclosed To Them!"

- As It Was To Moses:

- Back In Exodus 3:14 - When - "God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you!"

- So - The Point Of:

- Biblical Theology:

- Is To Help Us See The *Historical* Development:

- Of A Biblical Topic Or Truth:

- Within A Specific Range Of Biblical Study!

- And That Leads Us To:

2. The <u>Pictures</u> Of Biblical Theology!

- To Help Us See What I'm Talking About:

- There Are A Few Illustrations:

- That Might Help!

- First - Biblical Theology Is:

- Like A Seed!

- A Seed That Is Planted:

- And Then - Grows & Develops:

- To Maturity!

- This Is Something Jesus Himself Used:

- To Describe The "Kingdom Of God!"

- In Mark 4:26-29 - "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; / And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. / For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. / But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come!"

- In This Parable:

- Jesus Describes The Growth And Development:

- Of The Kingdom Of God!

- It Is Like A Seed:

- Cast Into The Ground:

- Which Then "Bringeth Forth Fruit Of Herself; First The Blade, Then The Ear,

After That The Full Corn In The Ear!" (4:28)

- Of Course - We Know That Jesus Is Describing:

- The Spiritual Nature:

- Of His Kingdom's Growth!

- But - What How Did His Disciples First Understand The Kingdom Of God?

- Well -You Have To Go Back Through The Old Testament:

- To See What They Thought:

- About The Kingdom Of God:

- To Fully Appreciate What Jesus Was Teaching Them!

- For Every Christian Doctrine:

- There Is A Seed:

- Planted By God In His Word:

- That Over Time - Grows & Develops - So That:

- You Can See More & More Of What God Intended About That Truth!
- In Fact So Many Of The Major Doctrines Of The Bible:

- Can Be Found In Seed Form:

- In The Book Of Genesis!
- Another Way To Illustrate Biblical Theology:

- Is To See It:

- Like A *Light!*

- Like The Light Of The Sun:

- That - At First:

- Is Dim - When It Begins To Dawn:

- On A New Day!

- But Then:

- It Gets Brighter & Brighter:

- Until "There Is Nothing Hid From The Heat Thereof!" (Psalm 19:6)

- This Picture Can Be Found:

- In Proverbs 4:18:
 - "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day!"

- Of Course - This Is Referring To:

- The Growth & Maturity & Purity:

- Of "The Just" Which Includes All Who Are "Justified By Faith" In Christ!
- (See Romans)

- But - There Might Be More To This Verse:

- Than Just Our Spiritual Development!

- Could It Also Be Describing "The Perfect Day" When:

- They Themselves Will Be Glorified?

- As Jesus Said In:

- Matthew 13:43 - "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the \underline{sun} in the

kingdom of their Father!"

- Jesus Is Talking About Eschatology!

- And So - When Comes To:

- Doctrine - Including Eschatology:

- More & More Light:

- Is Given To Us:

- Over The Course Of Biblical History!

- So - What Begins:

- As Dim Revelation In Genesis:

- May Become Brighter & Brighter:

- By The Time We Come To The Book Of Revelation!

- And This Is What Biblical Theology:

- Will Help Us Discover!

- But - This Does Not Mean That:

- We Have All The Light There Is!

- We Just Have All The Light We Need!

- Even John Admits This In 1 John 3:2 - "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is!"

- So - When It Comes To Our Personal Eschatology:

- There Is Still More Light:
 - To Be Shined On Just:

- "What We Shall Be" & What It Will Be Like:

- When "We Shall See [Jesus] As He Is!"

- And That Leads Us To Learn About:

3. The Process Of Biblical Theology!

- One Brief Example:

- Of Biblical Theology:

- Should Help Us See How It Can Help Us:

- In Our Own Understanding Of Truth!

- In Genesis 3:15 - We Are Given:

- What Is Known As:

- The "Proto-Evangelium" - Or - The First Mention Of The Gospel - About The "Seed!"

- When God Says To The Serpent - "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel!"

- Well - Both Adam & Eve:

- Were There To Hear This Promise:

- And - From That Time:

- They Looked Forward To A Special:

- Seed Of The Woman!

- Who Would Eventually Crush:

- That Old Serpents Head!

- In Biblical Theological Terms:

- The "Seed" Of Genesis 3:15:

- Is The "Seed" Of The Doctrine:

- Of Redemption!

- And - There Was Enough Truth Given:

- To Both Adam & Eve:

- For Them & Their Children:

- That To Believe In This Seed:

- Meant Salvation & Redemption From Their Sin!

- But - As Time Went On:

- God Started To Narrow Down The Search Pattern:

- For Just Who This "Seed" Would Be!

- He Would Also Be:

- The Seed Of Abraham!

- Because In Genesis 12:1-3 - We Meet Abraham For The First Time:

- And God Makes A Gracious Promise To Him:

- "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: / And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: / And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed!""

- God Promised To Bless Abraham:

- And God Promised To Bless The World:

- Through Abraham!

- And So - That Redeeming Seed:

- That We Are Too Look For:

- Will Come Through The Family Of Abraham!

- But God Doesn't Stop Here!

- He Narrows Things Down Even Further:

- And Identifies The Redeemer As:

- The Seed Of Isaac & Jacob!

- God Extends His Promise To Abraham:

- Through His Son Isaac - And Not Ishmael:

- And Through His Son Jacob – And Not Esau!

- And - Over Time:

- God Continued To Narrow Down The Field To:

- The Seed Of Judah & David & Solomon!

- So That - When You Come To The Genealogies:

- Of Matthew & Luke - You Find The Fulfillment Of:

- All Of These Prophecies & Promises:

- In Our Lord Jesus Christ!

- Well - In A Similar Way:

- This Is Going To Be:

4. The Purpose Of Biblical Theology:

- Even When We Are Looking At:

- What The Bible Says About:

- The End Times!

- We Believe That Over The Biblical Time-Line:

- God Develops And Shines More Light On:

- The Doctrine Of Eschatology!

- So - Our Goal:

- Is Not Just To:

- Look At Charts & Diagrams:

- Which We Will Do A Bit More:

- Over The Coming Weeks!

- But - Eventually:

- As Joel James Admonishes:

- "Build Your Eschatology *Step* By *Step*, Following The Progress Of Revelation From One Key Passage To The Next!"

Conclusion:

1. Really - This Should Be The First Approach:

- That We Take:

- With Any Biblical Question Or Doctrine!

- But - All Too Often:

- We Don't - Because:

- It Just Doesn't Seem As Neat And Orderly:

- As Those Diagrams & Those Systematic Approaches!

2. But - There Is A Reason:

- Why God Has Revealed His Truth To Us:

- In The Manner & Order He Did!

- And That Is Why:

- We Need To Investigate His Truth:

- The Same Way!

3. So - These Are:

- The Two Approaches:

- That You Can Take:

- With Biblical Eschatology:

- The Systematic Theological Approach:

- Which Has Its Place! And:

- The Biblical Theological Approach:

- Which Is Where It Should Start!

4. Next Week:

- We Are Going To Look At:

- Some Of The Key Principles:

- That We Need To Keep In Mind:

- When It Comes To:

- Interpreting & Understanding:

- The Passages In The Bible That Deal With:

- Prophecy And The End Times!

5. Close:

- Titus 2:13 - "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ!"

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