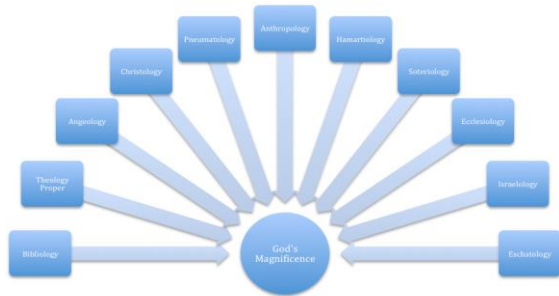


Christian Theology

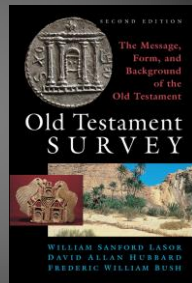


Christian Theology

- Coherent = All parts hang together and do not contradict
- Primarily Scriptural = Main basis of Christian theology; science, history, etc., is secondary
- Context of the Culture = Both the original culture and our current culture
- Contemporary Idiom = Regular language of our culture
- These things make it systematic

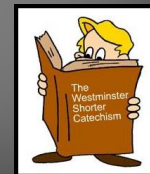
Seven Fields of Christian Theology

- Biblical Theology
 - In depth study of one area of revelation (often one book or era at a time)
 - Original languages
 - Textual criticism
 - Literary criticism
 - Exegesis
 - Isolates doctrines to single book being studied



Seven Fields of Christian Theology

- Historical Theology
 - Church history
 - Church doctrine throughout history
 - Tracks doctrinal shifts throughout time.
- Dogmatic Theology
 - Study of creeds of different sects and denominations
 - More time in creeds than Scriptures



Seven Fields of Christian Theology

- Philosophical Theology
 - Logic, reason, data gathering, formulating arguments.
 - Apologetics
- Contemporary Theology
 - Study of the men, movements, and trends that are influencing the modern church and world
 - It is important to know what is going on



Seven Fields of Christian Theology

- Systematic Theology
 - It is the collecting, scientifically arranging, comparing, and exhibiting and defending of all facts from any and every source concerning God and His works
- Practical Theology
 - Seeks to use all of these doctrines in life and practice.



Use of Philosophy

- Different Views
 - Tertullian and Luther
 - Augustine and Aquinas
- Dangers
- The Proper Perspective

Doing Systematic Theology

- Weigh Your Sources
 - a. Direct statements of Scripture
 - b. Direct implications of Scripture
 - c. Probable Implications of Scripture
 - d. Inductive Conclusions
 - e. Insights from General Revelation
 - f. Outright Speculation

Doing Systematic Theology

- Process of Doing Systematic Theology
 1. Collect Biblical materials
 2. Unify these materials
 3. Ask, "What is the meaning?"
 4. Assess historical treatments
 5. What is the perspective of the culture (helps us know what to emphasize)
 6. Discerning descriptive from prescriptive
 7. Use extrabiblical sources
 8. State doctrine in current language
 9. Consider the apologetic element
 10. Develop interpretive motif
 11. Stratify the topics

Why Systematic Theology?

- Some reject it.
 - They see it as dangerous; they prefer Biblical Theology
- *Analogia Scriptura* = analogy of scripture
 - All books are inspired by the same Holy Spirit, and so scriptures from all books can be compiled to discern doctrine.
 - This fact makes it to where you don't have to learn doctrine one book at a time.
- Why Systematic Theology is NOT topical preaching
- Benefits
 - Speed of coverage; fence of orthodoxy; knowing the Word

Limitations of Systematic Theology

- There are pitfalls
 - Carelessness can turn it into topical studies of proof-texting
 - Can falsely lead to the conclusion that the Bible is a bunch of propositions
 - Can fool someone into thinking they scientifically mastered the Bible – it is inexhaustible
- When both are done right, Biblical and Systematic Theology strengthen each other and prevent the pitfalls that each can lead to.

Conclusion

- Theology is important
- This will be a process of learning
- This is knowledge of relationship
 - You can't be close to God if you don't much about Him.
 - Try applying that to your human relationships.