

INTRODUCTION

1. Tonight we are returning to our study of Biblical Doctrine and the prolegomena that is leading us in this study.
2. If you remember prolegomena is referring to the information before the information.
3. We are answering questions about systematic theology before we actually dig into each theology found in the Scriptures.
4. We said the term, “systematics,” stresses the idea of a “system or body” of truth.
5. The term emphasizes that systematics seeks to present the whole set of biblical doctrines **comprehensively.**
6. **It emphasizes their “wholeness” and “inter-relatedness,” as an integrated, cohesive, body of truths.**²

¹ Material taken from MacArthur, John; Mayhue, Richard. Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth (Kindle Location 1203). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

² Nichols, Greg. Lectures in Systematic Theology: Doctrine of God (p. 18). UNKNOWN. Kindle Edition.

7. Systematic theology involves collecting and understanding all the relevant passages in the Bible on various topics and then summarizing their teachings clearly so that we know what to believe about each topic.³
8. There are 8 questions that we have considered so far are:
9. What Is Theology?
10. Why Study Theology?
11. What Are the Various Major Kinds of Theology?
12. What Is Systematic Theology?
13. What Are the Categories of Systematic Theology?
14. What Is the Relationship between Exegetical, Biblical, and Systematic Theology?
15. What Are the Benefits and Limitations of Systematic Theology?
16. What Is the Relationship of Systematic Theology to Doctrine?

³ Grudem, Wayne A. [*Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*](#). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004. Print.

17. And tonight we're considering the 9th, "What Is the Overarching and Unifying Theme of Scripture?"

LESSON

IX. What Is the Overarching and Unifying Theme of Scripture?

A. The broad theme of king/kingdom (human and divine) appears throughout the Bible

1. With the exceptions of Leviticus, Ruth, and Joel, the Old Testament explicitly mentions this theme in thirty-six of its thirty-nine books.
2. Except for Philippians, Titus, Philemon, and 1, 2, and 3 John, the New Testament directly mentions the subject in twenty-one of its twenty-seven books.
3. All in all, fifty-seven of the sixty-six canonical books include the kingdom theme (86 percent).
4. The Hebrew words for "king," "kingdom," "reign," and "throne" appear over three thousand times in the Old Testament, while the Greek words for these terms appear 160 times in the New

Testament.

5. The first Old Testament mention occurs in Genesis 10:10 and the last in Malachi 1:14.
6. The initial appearance in the New Testament comes in Matthew 1:6 and the last in Revelation 22:5.
7. The exact expression “kingdom of God” does not appear in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, Matthew alone uses the phrase “kingdom of heaven,” but he uses it interchangeably with “kingdom of God” (Matt. 19: 23– 24). And where he uses “kingdom of heaven” in passages that parallel other Gospels, those Gospel writers use “kingdom of God” (cf. Matt. 13: 11 with Luke 8: 10), thus establishing the correspondence between these two phrases.
8. Jesus never precisely defined “kingdom of heaven/ God” in the Gospels, although he often illustrated it (e.g., Matt. 13: 19, 24, 44, 45, 47, 52). Surprisingly, no one ever asked Christ for a definition. It can be assumed that they at least thought they understood the basic idea from the

Old Testament, even if their ideas were mistaken.

B. Most telling, perhaps, is the plethora of King titles given to Christ in the New Testament:

1. “King of Israel” (John 1:49; 12:13)
2. “King of the Jews” (John 18: 39; 19: 3, 19, 21)
3. “King of kings” (1Tim. 6:15; Rev.17:14; 19:16)
4. “King of the ages, immortal, invisible” (1Tim.1:17)
5. “King of the nations” (Rev.15:3)

C. His reign is said to be forever and ever (Rev.11:15; 22:5)

D. A biblical study of God’s kingdom would lead one to conclude that it is multifaceted, multidimensional, multifocal, multifactorial, and multifarious. It certainly could not be considered monolithic in character. The idea of God’s kingdom encompasses every stage of biblical revelation. For instance,

1. God is King of eternity (pre-Genesis 1, Revelation 21– 22, post-Revelation 22)
2. God is King of creation (Genesis 1– 2)

3. God is King of history (Genesis 1– Revelation 20)
 4. God is King of redemption (Genesis 3– Revelation 20)
 5. God is King of the earth (Genesis 1– Revelation 20)
 6. God is King of heaven (pre-Genesis 1, Genesis 1– Revelation 22, post-Revelation 22)
- E. All kingdom of God passages can be summarized by recognizing several broad aspects
1. First is the universal kingdom, which includes the rule of God that has been, is, and forever will be over all that exists in time and space.
 2. Second is God's mediatorial kingdom, in which he rules on earth through divinely chosen human representatives.
 3. Third is the spiritual or redemptive aspect of God's kingdom, which uniquely deals with a person's salvation and personal relationship with God through Christ.

- F. When Scripture uses the word “kingdom” to refer to God’s kingdom, it could point to any one aspect of the kingdom or several of its parts together.
1. Careful interpretation in context will determine the particulars for a given biblical text.
 2. With these ideas in mind, it is proposed that God as King and the kingdom of God should together be seriously considered as the grand, overarching theme of Scripture.
 3. A number of noble ideas have been considered in the past, such as the glory of God, redemption, grace, Christ, covenant, and promise. Each possibility explains a part of God’s kingdom, but only God’s kingdom explains the whole.
 4. From before the beginning until after the end, from the beginning to the end, both in and beyond time and space, God appears as the ultimate King.
 5. God is central to and the core of all things eternal and temporal. The kingdom of God convincingly qualifies as the unifying theme of Scripture.

John Bright succinctly and eloquently captured this thinking as follows: Old Testament and New Testament thus stand together as the two acts of a single drama. Act I points to its conclusion in Act II, and without it the play is an incomplete, unsatisfying thing. But Act II must be read in the light of Act I, else its meaning will be missed. For the play is organically one. The Bible is one book. Had we to give that book a title, we might with justice call it “The Book of the Coming Kingdom of God.” That is, indeed, its central theme everywhere.

The authors of this volume would only edit Dr. Bright’s brilliant summary by deleting one word, “Coming.” For God’s kingdom has been, is, and forevermore shall be.

6. The kingdom of God can be explained in this manner: The eternal triune God created a kingdom and two kingdom citizens (Adam and Eve) who were to have dominion over it. But an enemy deceived them, seduced them into breaking allegiance to the King, and caused them to rebel against their sovereign Creator. God intervened with consequential curses that exist to this day. Ever since, he has been redeeming

sinful, rebellious people to be restored as qualified kingdom citizens, both now in a spiritual sense and later in a kingdom-on-earth sense. Finally, the enemy will be vanquished forever, as will sin. Thus, Revelation 21– 22 describes the final and eternal expression of the kingdom of God, where the triune God will restore the kingdom to its original purity with the curse having been removed and the new heaven and the new earth becoming the everlasting abode of God and his people.

CONCLUSION

1. So the theme of Scripture is God as King and rules His kingdom over all.
2. Are you a child of the King?
3. Let's pray.