

## How to Study the Bible

### Unit 4: Theological Analysis – Lesson 1: What Is Theology?

#### What and Why of Theology?

- Definition:
  - **Formal:** What the whole Bible teaches us today about any given topic.
  - **Practical:** Understanding what the bible teaches us about God and his relationship with the created universe.
  
- Objective:
  - **Interpret the Bible in light of the whole Bible:** When studying the Bible, we must be able to recognize how every part of the bible harmonizes with itself and maintains continuity.<sup>1</sup>
  
- Functions of Theology<sup>2</sup>
  1. **Clarification** – Develops clear, holistic and comprehensive belief system
    - **Do the other parts of the bible matter?**
    - **Do I know how this fits into the overall story and message of the bible?**
  
  2. **Correction** – Overcome Wrong Ideas
    - **I don't know everything?**
    - **False teachings are always changing.**
  
  3. **Integration** – Theology is key to properly applying the bible
    - **A Biblical way of life requires a theological framework.**
    - **Theology is a tool to equip believer to live, worship, teach, and answer biblically.**

#### Theological Categories

- Doctrine: Belief
  - Doctrine (Belief) is the result of theology.
    - Theology is the process, doctrine is the result.
  
  - The Big Ten:<sup>3</sup>
    - **Doctrine of the Word of God (Bibliology)**
      - Revelation of God
      - Canonicity and Inspiration
      - Inerrancy and Authority
      - Clarity and Sufficiency
    - **Doctrine of God**
      - Existence of God
      - Incommunicable Attributes
      - Communicable Attributes
      - Trinity
      - Creation
      - Sovereignty of God

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<sup>1</sup> Henry A. Vikler, *Hermeneutics, Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*, Pages 121-122.

<sup>2</sup> J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology, Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 19-20.

<sup>3</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000).

- ***Doctrine of Angels and Demons (Angelology)***
  - Spiritual realms
  - Heavenly beings
  - Fallen Angels
  - Satan
- ***Doctrine of Man (Anthropology)***
  - Physical aspect
  - Spiritual aspect
  - Ministry and Life
- ***Doctrine of Sin (Hamartiology)***
  - The Fall
  - Fallen Human Nature
- ***Doctrine of Christ (Christology)***
  - Person, deity, mission.
- ***Doctrine of Redemption (Soteriology)***
  - Election, Regeneration, Conversion, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, Perseverance, Death and the Intermediate State, Glorification.
- ***Doctrine of the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)***
  - Person of the HS, Works, Coming, Gifts
- ***Doctrine of the Church (Ecclesiology)***
  - Mission, Government, Nature, Scope and Function
- ***Doctrine of the Future (Eschatology)***
  - Last things, Return of Christ, End Times, Death

### **Class Exercise**

Read the following passages and identify the appropriate theological category(ies) it fits in.

1. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23)
2. The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. (Ps. 145:8)
3. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (Jn. 1:1)
4. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. (Gen. 9:6)
5. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. (Col. 3:16)
6. For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment...(2 Pt. 2:4)
7. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. (1 Cor. 6:19-20)