

CORNERSTONE  
*Bible Church*

# Theology for LIFE

LESSON #1: PROLEGOMENA



# PROLEGOMENA

## — Lesson #1 —

A COURSE TAUGHT BY PASTOR CARY GREEN



*"Systematic Theology may be defined as the collecting, scientifically arranging, comparing, exhibiting, and defending of all facts from any and every source concerning God and His works."*





# -INTRODUCTION

2 Timothy 2:15

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## 1A: Requirements for the Theologian

→ Be \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 2:14).

Though an unbeliever can study theology, he cannot discern the truth of God like a believer can.

→ Be \_\_\_\_\_ (James 4:6).

No one is right all the time; be willing to be challenged by Biblical evidence you may not have previously encountered. And be willing to admit that you don't understand everything about God and His ways (Deut. 29:29).

→ Be \_\_\_\_\_/spiritual (Heb. 5:11-14).

Immaturity results in a sluggish, slow understanding of God's truths.

→ Be \_\_\_\_\_ and diligent (Col. 1:28-29).

God intends His children to study (Prov. 25:2; 2 Tim. 2:15).

→ Be \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 4:1-2).

We are “stewards of the mysteries of God,” and in that awesome stewardship we are to be found faithful.

→ Be \_\_\_\_\_ (Psa. 29:2; Rom. 11:33).

The more our knowledge of God deepens, the more our hearts should rise up in worship of Him.

### Quote:

*“EVERY CHRISTIAN NEEDS to have a sound, true, Biblical understanding of God and His truth, and we must never stop growing in our pursuit of that goal. The writer of Hebrews chided his readers because they had stalled at the very basics: “You have become dull of hearing,” he told them in Hebrews 5:11. They needed to reboot, to start learning and growing again—not only for their own sakes, but because it is every Christian’s duty to be a discipler of others.*

*“By this time you ought to be teachers,” he said. But “you need someone to teach you again the elementary principles of the oracles of God” (v. 12). They needed to move beyond simple basics and gain a grown-up understanding of the Christian faith. They were stuck at the stage of needing to be fed milk, when they should have moved on long ago to more solid things. Their spiritual growth had been stunted by their own apathy, inattention, lethargy, or whatever. Now they could not comprehend the more substantial truths they desperately needed to learn, because “solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil” (v. 14, ESV).*

*That passage underscores a point that ought to be fairly obvious: someone who is unskilled in doctrine cannot possibly be a capable teacher. We must be learners before we can be instructors. You can’t disciple others if you yourself are not a true disciple. And since every Christian is called to be a disciple-maker, none of us is exempt from the duty of cultivating a mature, Biblically informed understanding of sound Christian doctrine.*

*True spiritual growth involves increasing in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18). Take sound doctrine out of the mix, and whatever religious activity remains is a mere pretense. In fact, religious fervor without sound doctrine is spiritually deadly.*

*Pharisaical religion is the classic Biblical example of that. People sometimes wrongly portray the Pharisees as overly concerned about sound doctrine—as if the very heart of their error was that they were so particular about their precise theology that they became cold and unfeeling.*

*But their error was exactly the opposite. It was zeal without knowledge (Romans 10:2–3). Their abandonment of sound doctrine led them into legalistic self-righteousness. Others who abandon sound doctrine sometimes veer off in the opposite direction, turning the grace of God into licentiousness. Both errors are as deadly as the rankest pagan superstition. Sound doctrine is absolutely essential to healthy Christian living.*

*Too many evangelicals in our generation take a blithely superficial approach to theology. Doctrinal precision is often frivolously dismissed as a pedantic concern that somehow interferes with unity in the church or peace of mind in the individual. Novelty, human cleverness, and political correctness are given preference over fidelity to the Bible. Sentimentality and style seem to outweigh the authority of Scripture in the minds of some, including many church leaders. The church in our generation simply does not have the same commitment to sound doctrine that characterized the Reformers and their Puritan heirs. As a result, it is rare to find a good book on Bible doctrine written with lay readers in mind.*

*That's why I am excited about this edition of The Moody Handbook of Theology, by Paul Enns.*

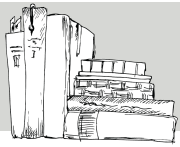
*It is a wonderfully thorough, eminently readable, richly informative study of Christian theology. Whether you are a new believer or an accomplished seminary professor, I'm certain you will find this book an indispensable resource. Dr. Enns himself is someone who has never stopped growing and learning.*

*This new edition of his classic work is the finest yet. It's a wonderful remedy for the apathy and superficiality of the present age, and a helpful companion for the long journey toward that mature understanding of truth that Scripture urges us to pursue.*

*May you gain fresh insight, a passion for Biblical truth, and an appetite for more understanding as you read."*

JOHN MACARTHUR

Pastor, Grace Community Church, Sun Valley, CA



## 2A.

# Definition of Systematic Theology

The term *THEOLOGY* is derived from the Greek *theos*, meaning "\_\_\_\_\_" and *logos*, meaning "\_\_\_\_\_" or "discourse"; hence, "discourse about God."

The word *systematic* comes from the Greek verb *sunistano*, which means "to stand together" or "to \_\_\_\_\_"; hence, systematic theology emphasizes the systematization of theology.

### Quote:

*"Systematic Theology may be defined as the collecting, scientifically arranging, comparing, exhibiting, and defending of all facts from any and every source concerning God and His works." – Louis Sperry Chafer*

## Theology is...

*"The science of the facts of divine revelation so far as those facts concern the nature of God and our relation to Him, as His creatures, as sinners, and as the subjects of redemption. All these facts, as just remarked, are in the Bible." – Charles Hodge*

*"That discipline which strives to give a coherent statement of the doctrines of the Christian faith, based primarily upon the Scriptures, placed in the context of culture in general, worded in a contemporary idiom, and related to issues of life." – Millard Erickson*

---

---

---

---

# 5

## ingredients in a definition of theology:

1. Theology is \_\_\_\_\_, utilizing the tools and methods of Biblical research and study.
2. Theology is \_\_\_\_\_, drawing on the entirety of Scripture and relating the various portions to one another.
3. Theology is \_\_\_\_\_ to culture and learning.
4. Theology must be \_\_\_\_\_, relating God's truth to the questions and challenges of today.
5. Theology must be \_\_\_\_\_, not merely declaring objective doctrine, but relating it to life itself.

## Other classifications of theology:

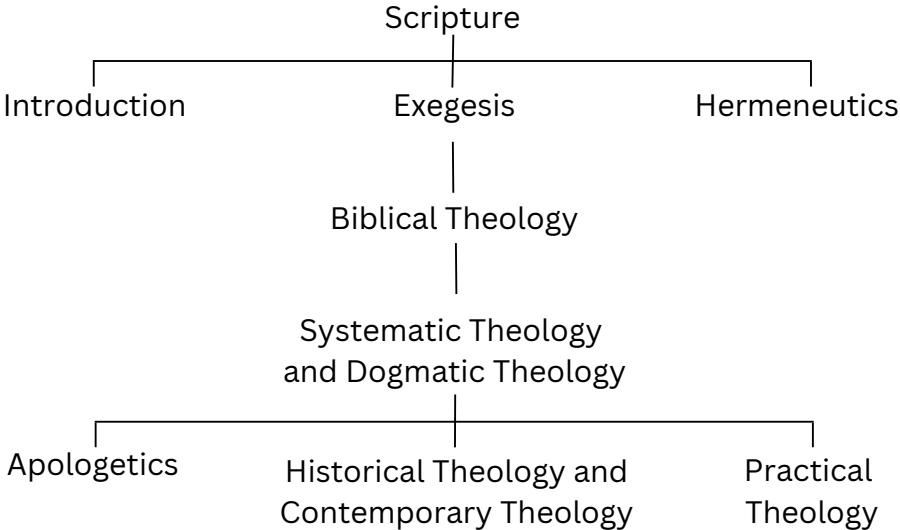
\_\_\_\_\_ **theology** is a narrower focus, emphasizing the study of a particular era or writer (e.g., the prophetic era or Johannine [John's] theology).

\_\_\_\_\_ **theology** is the study of the unfolding of theology through history. For example, historical theology might follow the development of Christology (the study of God the Son) in the early centuries of the Christian church, when the church councils formulated their position on a great many doctrines such as the two natures of Jesus Christ—fully God and fully Man.

\_\_\_\_\_ **theology** is normally understood as the study of a creedal system as developed by a denomination or a theological movement (e.g., "Baptist theology," or "Calvinism").

\_\_\_\_\_ **theology** is sometimes used synonymously with systematic theology. While also systematizing theology, this designation emphasizes that it is written from a decidedly Christian perspective (but not suggesting that works called "systematic theology" are not).

### Relationship of Biblical Theology to Other Disciplines



### Sequence of Biblical Theology





**Quote:**

*"The difference between exegesis and theology lies in the system used. Exegesis analyzes, and theology connects the individual analogies together. Exegesis explores the meaningful context of the text, while theology combines the meanings. The exegete tries to explain the importance of truth; the theologian, the system of truth" – Charles Ryrie*

---

---

---



### **3A.**

## **Divisions Within Systematic Theology**

Behind each of these major categories stands a tremendous amount of information culled from every part of Scripture. The basics do need to be known because they are the matrix of the \_\_\_\_\_ within which the believer will operate, and with which he will relate to the world around him, to other believers, to the church to which he belongs, and to the carrying out of his responsibilities before his Lord.

**1**

### **Prolegomena**

This is a " \_\_\_\_\_ " in the world of theology. It lays the foundation, both spiritual and academic, for the serious study of the rest of the fields of theology.

**2**

### **Hamartiology**

Meaning "the study of \_\_\_\_\_," hamartiology deals with the origin and nature of sin, and its consequences for the world of men, angels, and the created order.

**3****Bibliology**

This is the study of the origin of the Bible; its inspiration, infallibility, inerrancy, and authority; the development of the \_\_\_\_\_; the relationship among revelation, inspiration, illumination, and interpretation.

**4****Theology Proper**

Not to be confused with systematic theology, this term denotes the study of the nature and existence of God, specifically the first Person of the Trinity, \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_—His personality, attributes, decrees, names; the Trinity; and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Theology proper distinguishes the study of God from “theology” in general.

**5****Christology**

As the name implies, this is the study of the second Person of the Trinity, \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_—His pre-existence, His First Advent, birth, childhood, baptism, temptation, transfiguration, teaching and ministry, miracles, sufferings and death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and future \_\_\_\_\_.

**6****Pneumatology**

Its name taken from the Greek for “Spirit,” this is the study of the third Person of the Trinity, \_\_\_\_\_—His ministries of conviction, regeneration, indwelling, baptism, sealing, and filling; His \_\_\_\_\_ in the different ages; and the description of His ministries in the Old Testament and New Testament.

**7****Charismatic Theology**

This is a study of what the Bible has to say about the Holy Spirit imparting \_\_\_\_\_ to believers, particularly the so-called “sign gifts” such as \_\_\_\_\_ and speaking in tongues.

**8****Angelology/Demonology/Satanology**

This is the study of angels (including \_\_\_\_\_ angels, Satan, and demons); their origin and destiny; their activity and power.

**9****Anthropology**

This is the study of \_\_\_\_\_ and destiny; his fall and its consequences for him; his being made in the image of God; his material and immaterial parts; and his \_\_\_\_\_.

**10****Soteriology**

This is the study of the suffering and death of Christ and its effects; the extent of the \_\_\_\_\_; the multiple terms for \_\_\_\_\_ and the regenerating work of God; the eternal security of the believer; and sanctification in the Christian life.

**11****Israelology**

As its name proclaims, this is the study of the Nation of Israel; its choice by God; its place in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God for the ages; and its relationship to the Kingdom of God.

## 12 Ecclesiology

This is the study of the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ as distinguished from Old Testament Israel; its beginning and end; its character and structure; its mission; its place in God's plan for the ages.

## 13 Eschatology

This is the study of \_\_\_\_\_ as it relates to Christ, Israel, the Church, the Kingdom, and the nations; future judgments and resurrections; the cluster of end-time events and persons; intermediate and eternal states; and new heavens and earth.

---

---

---

---

---

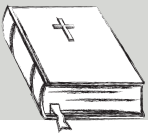
---

---

---

---

---



## 4A. Necessity of Systematic Theology



Why do we even need a systematic theology?

### 1B. As an \_\_\_\_\_ of Christianity

Systematic theology is necessary as a researched and studied explanation of the doctrines that are foundational and necessary to Christianity. As a result of systematic theology, Christians are able to have a clear understanding about the fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith. The Bible was not written in a doctrinal outline; hence, it is important to \_\_\_\_\_ the teachings of the Bible in order to understand the doctrines found throughout it.

### 2B. As an \_\_\_\_\_ for Christianity

Systematic theology enables Christians to \_\_\_\_\_ their beliefs rationally. Early in the Christian church believers used their systematized beliefs to address opponents and unbelievers. This is perhaps even more important today with the emergence of humanism, Communism, cults, and Eastern religions. The systemized doctrines of the Christian faith must be understood, and then presented as a defense of historic Christianity.

### **3B. As a means of \_\_\_\_\_ for Christians**

Systematic theology is an assertion of Christian truth truths that are essential to the maturity of believers (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Paul's writings make it clear that doctrine (theology) is \_\_\_\_\_ to Christian maturity, for Paul normally builds a doctrinal foundation in the first part of his epistles (e.g., Eph. 1-3) before he exhorts believers to live correctly (e.g., Eph. 4-6).

Sadly, many Christians have faithfully attended church services for decades, but have little understanding of the major doctrines of the Christian faith. Yet a knowledge of correct doctrine is important in Christian maturity; moreover, it protects the believer from error (cf. 1 John 4:1, 6; Jude 4).



## **5A. Requirements of Systematic Theology**

### **1B. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of Scripture**

No adequate theology is possible without a belief in the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. If this doctrine is abandoned, reason becomes the source of authority and sits in judgment upon the text of Scripture.

### **2B. Use of proper \_\_\_\_\_ principles**

The application of sound hermeneutical principles will reinforce objectivity, forcing the interpreter to set aside biases and extremes.



**3B. \_\_\_\_\_ approach**

Theology should be scientific, in the sense of employing knowledge of the Biblical cultures and the Biblical \_\_\_\_\_ and in drawing theological conclusions.

**4B. \_\_\_\_\_**

Theology must be based on inductive research and conclusions, not deductive reasoning. The theologian must approach the Scripture with a tabula rasa, an open mind, allowing the Scripture to speak for itself—without forming prejudicial opinions about what the Scripture should say.

**5B. \_\_\_\_\_ revelation**

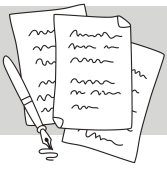
Both the Old and New Testaments are inspired. However, the revelation God gave us about Himself \_\_\_\_\_ throughout the Scriptures. We have a much clearer picture of Him as we come to the end of the New Testament than we had when we began the Old. Hence, the New Testament will often shed indispensable light upon passages in the Old Testament.

**6B. \_\_\_\_\_**

Even while one is applying proper hermeneutics and methodology, there is also a \_\_\_\_\_ element to understanding God's truth. The believer is aided by the Holy Spirit's ministry of illumination in guiding the believer to an understanding of divine truth (1 Cor. 2:11-13).

**7B. Recognition of human \_\_\_\_\_**

In this lifetime man will never be able totally to comprehend God. He must be satisfied with limited—though \_\_\_\_\_—knowledge (Deuteronomy 29:29).



## 6A.

# Sources of Systematic Theology

### 1B. Primary sources

The \_\_\_\_\_ provide, in their revelation of God and man's relationship to Him, our ONLY \_\_\_\_\_ source of theology.

If God has revealed Himself (and He has), and if that self-revelation is accurately encoded in the sixty-six books of Scripture (and it is), then the Scriptures are THE primary source of man's knowledge of God.

\_\_\_\_\_ is also a primary source of some knowledge of God (Psa. 19). Nature is a constant witness concerning God's attributes, eternal power, and divine nature (Rom. 1:20).

### 2B. Secondary Sources

The \_\_\_\_\_ such as the Nicene Creed, the Westminster Confessions, and many others, are important in understanding how other Christians over the centuries have understood theological concepts.

\_\_\_\_\_, in spite of its fallibility, is beneficial in understanding affirmations about the Christian faith. What individuals, churches, and denominations have taught is a helpful consideration in formulating theological statements.

\_\_\_\_\_, as guided by the Holy Spirit, is also a source of theology. Reason, however, must submit to the supernatural, rather than attempting to define it.



## 7A.

# Interpretive Principles Within Theology

### 1B. The \_\_\_\_\_ principle

Scripture should be understood in its literal, natural, and normal sense. In general, the Bible speaks in literal terms and must be allowed to speak for itself.

While the Bible does contain figures of speech and symbols, they are intended to convey literal truth.

### 2B. The \_\_\_\_\_ principle

A passage should be interpreted in its historical context. What the author intended and what the text meant to its first audience must be taken into account for a proper, contextual understanding of the meaning of Scripture.

### 3B. The \_\_\_\_\_ principle

Correct interpretation of a Biblical passage requires an understanding of the basic grammatical structure of each sentence in the original languages. To whom do the pronouns refer? What is the tense of the main verb? By asking simple questions like these, the meaning of the text becomes clearer.

### 4B. The \_\_\_\_\_ principle

This principle, also called the *analogia scriptura*, means that Scripture is to be its own \_\_\_\_\_. It assumes that the Bible does not contradict itself. Thus, if an interpretation of a passage conflicts with a truth taught elsewhere in the Scriptures, that interpretation cannot be correct. Scripture must be compared with Scripture to discover its accurate and full meaning.

## 5B. The \_\_\_\_\_ principle

God intended Scripture to be understood. However, not every portion of the Bible is equally clear. Therefore, clearer portions should be employed to interpret the less clear.



## 8A. Theology's Implications for Life

### 1B. Sound doctrine permeates \_\_\_\_\_

Sound Biblical doctrine has many implications for the life of Christ's church.

- Sound doctrine is \_\_\_\_\_ profitable (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- Obedience to sound doctrine brings \_\_\_\_\_ (Rev. 1:3; 22:7).
- Sound doctrine provides true spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ for believers (Titus 2:10).
- Sound doctrine \_\_\_\_\_ between truth and error (2 Cor. 11:1-15; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- Sound doctrine \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ sin and false doctrine (1 Tim. 1:8-11, esp. 1:10; 4:1-6; Titus 1:9).
- Sound doctrine \_\_\_\_\_ to godliness (1 Tim. 6:3; Titus 2:10).
- Sound doctrine \_\_\_\_\_ a good servant of Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 4:6; see also 1 Tim. 4:13, 16; Titus 2:1).

- Sound doctrine is an essential \_\_\_\_\_ for elders and pastors (Titus 1:9; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- Sound doctrine is the continual \_\_\_\_\_ for preachers (2 Tim. 4:2-4).
- Sound doctrine is \_\_\_\_\_ with double honor for elders (1 Tim. 5:17).
- Sound doctrine was central to \_\_\_\_\_ ministry (Matt. 7:28-29; Mark 4:2; Luke 4:32).
- Sound doctrine was central in the \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2:42; 5:28; 13:12).
- Sound doctrine was central to Apostolic ministry (\_\_\_\_\_: Acts 13:12; 17:19; Gal. 2:11-21; 2 Tim. 3:10; \_\_\_\_\_: 2 John 9-10).
- \_\_\_\_\_ gave their lives for sound doctrine (Christ: Mark 11:18; Stephen: Acts 7:54-60; James: Acts 12:2; Paul: 2 Tim. 4:1-8).
- Christ and the Apostles left a mandate to pass sound doctrine on to the next \_\_\_\_\_ (Christ: Matt. 28:20; Paul: 2 Tim. 2:2;).
- Churches were \_\_\_\_\_ for sound doctrine or \_\_\_\_\_ for lack of sound doctrine (Ephesus, commended: Rev. 2:2, 6; Pergamum and Thyatira, condemned: Rev. 2:14-15, 20).
- Established systems of sound doctrine anticipate and \_\_\_\_\_ for eras when sound doctrine is out of season (2 Tim. 4:3).

## 2B. \_\_\_\_\_ for false doctrine

Sadly, Scripture teaches that there will always be opposition to sound doctrine, both by \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt. 15:2-6; Mark 11:18; Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 1:3, 10; 2 Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9) and by \_\_\_\_\_ and demons (1 Tim. 4:1).

But God has not left us defenseless. The Bible outlines several antidotes/corrections to false doctrine:

- \_\_\_\_\_ the truth of sound doctrine in love (Eph. 4:15)
- \_\_\_\_\_ sound doctrine (1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 4:2)
- \_\_\_\_\_ fast to sound doctrine (Titus 1:9; Rev. 2:24-25)
- \_\_\_\_\_ false doctrine (Titus 1:9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ and turning away from teachers of false doctrine (Rom. 16:17; 2 John 9-10)

Scripture teaches that there is a direct, inseparable relationship between \_\_\_\_\_ doctrine and \_\_\_\_\_ living (Rom. 15:4; 1 Tim. 4:16; 6:1, 3; 2 Tim. 3:10; Titus 2:1-10). The reverse is also true—where there is false belief, there will be sinful behavior (Titus 1:16). In spite of Scripture's clear emphasis on both purity of doctrine AND purity of life, a number of mistaken notions have arisen concerning the relationship between what a person believes and how a person should live.



### 3B. Wrong ideas about doctrine



- Right doctrine automatically leads to\_\_\_\_\_.
- It doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ how a person lives so long as he or she has right doctrine.
- Doctrine \_\_\_\_\_, spiritually speaking.
- There is \_\_\_\_\_ connection between what one believes and how one lives.
- Christianity is \_\_\_\_\_, not doctrine.
- Doctrine is \_\_\_\_\_.
- Doctrine \_\_\_\_\_.
- Doctrine \_\_\_\_\_ people away.

However, the Bible makes it clear that the absence of sound doctrine and the presence of false doctrine will always lead to sinful behavior. Without sound doctrine, there is no Scriptural basis to delineate right from wrong, no doctrinal authority to correct sin, and no Biblical encouragement to motivate godly living.

# CONCLUSION

Whether it be expositionally viewed in one specific text of Scripture or comprehensively categorized from all Scripture, Biblical teaching cannot be \_\_\_\_\_ from theology.

**All Biblical teaching is theological in nature, and all Christian theology is Biblical in content.**



## Quote:

*"Furthermore, a healthy theology is a combination of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. One without the other will be found lacking." –R. T. Kendall*

**To emphasize the \_\_\_\_\_ (head) alone is a dangerous thing.**

- Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up (1 Cor. 8:1).
- Our intellect is only a part of our personhood.
- Intellectual stimulus alone breeds pride and leads to inertia and self-righteousness.

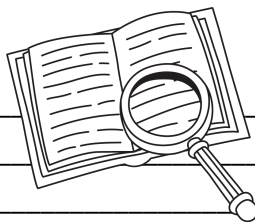
**To emphasize the \_\_\_\_\_ alone is also a dangerous thing.**

- The heart is more deceitful than all things and desperately sick (Jer. 17:9).
- A preoccupation with the heart can lead to an over-emphasis on the emotional.

**The best theology is developed by the Word of God, and on our \_\_\_\_\_.**

- Prayer is the counterpoint to spiritual inertia and intellectual pride.
- Prayer is the vehicle through which our hearts remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

## Questions to Ask:



## Extra Notes:

