

Theological Systems

- I. Definition: Answers the question—*What is the pattern of God's revelation?*
- II. The order
 - A. Exegesis must precede doctrine
 - B. Doctrine must precede a theological system.
- III. Goal: To understand the nature of God's relationship to human beings.
 - A. Once the pattern of divine revelation has been tentatively determined, the question of how a particular passage fits into the total pattern becomes much easier to answer.
 - B. A primary concern is the relationship between the testaments: The Old to the New.
- IV. Continuity and Discontinuity
 - A. Continuity—The unbroken and consistent existence or operation of something over a period of time.
 - B. Discontinuity—A sharp difference of characteristics between parts of something.
- V. Theological Systems—God's pattern for revelation.
 - A. Lutheran Theory.
 1. A proper understanding of Scripture must carefully distinguish between two parallel and ever-present truth of Scripture: Law and gospel.
 - a. Law—God and His hatred of sin, His judgement and His wrath.
 - b. Gospel—God in His grace, His love and His salvation.
 - c. Lutheran Theory strongly emphasizes continuity.
 - B. Dispensational Theory.
 1. A dispensation is a way of ordering things
 2. Primary distinctions:
 - a. A literal interpretation of Scripture—especially prophesy.
 - b. The uniqueness of Israel as distinct from the church
 3. Classical Dispensationalism organizes into seven dispensations.
 4. Emphasizes discontinuity.

