

Doctrine of God: How Do We Talk About God?

Wednesday, March 6th, 2024

John 17:3

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The Beauty of Systematic Theology

- > Typically, what is in mind when we think of “systematic Theology” is what we call *Theology Proper*
- > Not the “proper” way to talk about God, but God as the primary focus of theology in the first place

The Beauty of Systematic Theology

> It is equally a blessing to study God

> God *is* and because God *is*, we want to know Him as He is and on His own terms

The Beauty of Systematic Theology

> However! We must understand that learning about God is not exactly the same as truly *knowing* God; Systematic Theology or Theology proper will never help us know God anymore than reading a book about George Washington means we “know” him as a person

How Should We Talk About God?

> What category are we use and why?

> Who or what tells us about God?

How Should We Talk About God?

- > What happens when we choose NOT to use the bible to talk about God?
- > Why can't we use our concepts to talk about God?

How Should We Talk About God?

> We may use certain language to define God or express who God is, but only if it is explicitly implied by Holy Scripture or is derived from Scripture directly

How Does God Reveal Himself? A First Issue...

- > Always in the *masculine*
- > *ο* (mas), *η* (fem), and *το* (neut)
- > God is always *ο θεός* or Him (*αυτόν*)

How Does God Reveal Himself?

> Why in the masculine? 1 Corinthians 11:3

- This is a possible answer, though, even here we must be careful not to muddy the waters

- However, hierarchy, status, ultimacy, and authority seem to be in mind even with God being in the masculine form

How Does God Reveal Himself?

> 1 Corinthians 11:3 also gives us a sense of structure, as does Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1 or Colossians 1:15-20, etc.

How Does God Reveal Himself?

> God as masculine and as the ultimate structure provides the Christian view of gender (both because God gave gender Gen. 1:27) and, with it, structure and hierarchy (sense of responsibility)

Resources:

John Frame, *A Theology of Lordship, Vol. 2: The Doctrine of God* (P&R Publishing, 2002)

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged in One Volume* (Baker Publishing Group, 2015)

Wayne Grudem, *Introduction to Biblical Doctrine: Systematic Theology* (Zondervan Academic, 2020)

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