

Systematic Theology 1 (TH3)

*Fridays, 1-3 PM, *Jan.24-Mar.7, 2014*

*Required Text: Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem
- \$400 pesos

Ross Arnold, Winter 2014
Lakeside Institute of Theology

Policies and Requirements

1. Classes are free, but all students seeking a certificate or degree must purchase books (paper, not electronic), which will be made available by the Institute.
2. Students in certificate or degree tracks may miss no more than one class per course, without arrangements made in advance with the teacher to make up missed work (at the discretion of the teacher).
3. Students in certificate or degree tracks will be required to take a pass/fail final exam in each course, based on study guidelines provided by the teacher.
4. Students in certificate or degree tracks must make a passing grade (based on "pass/fail") in each course in order to receive credit towards a certificate or degree.
5. Candidates for degrees (Master of Theology and Master of Theology & Ministry) must be approved by the Institute Director before final admission into a degree program.

Systematic Theology 1 (NT5)

1. Introduction to Systematic Theology
2. Doctrine of the Word of God
3. Doctrine of God
4. Doctrines of Creation and Providence
5. Doctrines of the “Supernatural” –
Miracles, Prayer, Angels and Demons
6. Doctrine of Christ
7. Doctrine of the Holy Spirit; Final Exam



- **What can and should you expect from “Systematic Theology 1?”**

- By the end of this class, assuming you attend the lectures and read the materials, you should have a good sense of the major theological doctrines of the Christian faith, as well as a system for organizing those doctrines.

What is “Theology?”

- Theology: the study of God (from Greek words *theo-* “God,” and *logos-* “study” or “reason”). *Christian* theology is thinking reasonably about God, or the study and effort to understand God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture.
- Biblical Theology: more specifically, the study of doctrines found in the Bible, arranged according to their chronological and/or historical background. (i.e., theology of the Pentateuch, or the theology of John’s writings, etc.)
- Systematic Theology: the division of theological doctrines by systematic categories or groupings, in order to better understand their final meaning and relevance for today. (i.e., theology of angels, of salvation, etc.)
- Dogmatic Theology: a form of systematic theology, used to articulate and defend the theological doctrines of a particular organized church body. (i.e., Roman Catholic dogma; Presbyterian dogma; dispensational theology, etc.)

What is “Systematic Theology?”

“The art and science of knowing and understanding what we can about God, in an organized way, through the division of theological doctrines into systematic categories or groupings, in order to better understand their final meaning and relevance for today. (i.e., theology of angels, of salvation, etc.)”

While Christian Theology is based on our assurance that we can and do come to know God, there are other beliefs...

- Agnosticism – “I honestly don’t know.”
- Skepticism – “I really don’t think so.”
- Pessimism – “I’m afraid not.”
- Secularism – “I don’t think it’s important, so I really don’t care.”

One of the primary tasks of Christian Theology is to prepare us to respond to these ways of thinking and believing.

Brief History – Christian Theology

- Pre-Reformation (starts 1517 AD) – Dogmatic Theology was almost all that existed.
- Reformation emphasis on *sola Scriptura*, with explosion in scholarship & commentaries.
- 17th Century Protestant Scholasticism & development of Systematic Theologies.
- 17th-18th Cent. Enlightenment, Rationalism & denial of the supernatural, incl. in Scripture.
- 1787 – Johann Philipp Gabler; separation of Biblical and Systematic Theology disciplines.
 - Biblical Theology: historical; what Scriptures *meant*.
 - Systematic Theology: doctrinal; what Scriptures *mean now*.

Brief History – Christian Theology

- Systematic Theology continued on as before, though no longer purely Dogmatic in focus.
- Biblical Theology started pushing to discover what was BEHIND and BEFORE the Scriptures we have.
- Development of Biblical Criticism: “the scholarly study and investigation of biblical writings that seeks to make discerning judgments about those writings.”

Dealing with Objections to Theology

- Many Christians are misinformed and so negative about theology.
- Anyone who thinks about God or the ultimate questions of life IS a theologian! The only question is – are we going to be GOOD theologians or BAD theologians.

Definitions of Theology

- The study of God (from Greek words *theo*-“God,” and *logos*-“study” or “reason”).
Christian theology is thinking reasonably about God, or the study and effort to understand God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture.
- “Faith seeking understanding.”
- Reflecting on and articulating the God-centered life and beliefs that Christians share as followers of Jesus Christ, in order that God may be glorified in all that Christians say and do.

Dealing with Objections to Theology

- There are different levels of theology:
 - Folk Theology
 - Lay Theology
 - Ministerial Theology
 - Professional Theology
 - Academic Theology

The Tasks of Theology

➤ Theology's Critical Tasks

1. Examining and evaluating Christian beliefs.
2. Categorizing valid Christian beliefs as *dogma*, *doctrine* or opinion.

➤ Theology's Constructive Tasks

1. Constructing unified models of diverse Christian teaching
2. Relating those models in a relevant way to contemporary culture.

