**What You Should Know from TH4 - Systematic Theology 2**

Lakeside Institute of Theology

1. What is theology?
   1. Theology is the study of God (from Greek words *theo*-“God,” and *logos*-”study”). *Christian* theology is the study and effort to understand God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture.
2. What is Biblical Theology?
   1. Biblical Theology is 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.)
3. What is Dogmatic Theology?
   1. Dogmatic Theology is 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.)
4. What is Systematic Theology?
   1. Systematic Theology is 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, theology of salvation, etc.)
5. How might we describe the most appropriate relationship between theology and science?
   1. All truth is God’s truth, so if theology is to have the needed impact in the world it must affirm reason and sense observation, just as science & philosophy do.
6. What was the dominant approach to theology before the Reformation (AD 1517 and after), and why did this change?
   1. Prior to the Reformation, Dogmatic Theology was virtually the only theology that existed, as it was in support of Roman Catholic doctrine.
   2. The Reformation emphasis on *sola Scriptura* (“Scripture alone”) as the source of authority led to an explosion in biblical and theological scholarship and commentaries.
7. In a theological sense, what do we mean by “providence,” especially the Providence of God?
   1. The Providence of God refers to the means by and through which God maintains and governs all things in the universe. or …
   2. “That continued exercise of divine energy whereby the Creator preserves His creatures, is operative in all that comes to pass in the world, and directs all things to their appointed end.” (Berkof)
8. According to Christian orthodox theology, what all is included in considerations of God’s Providence?
   1. The universe as a whole ([Psalm 103:19](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%20103.19)), the physical world ([Matthew 5:45](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%205.45)), the affairs of nations ([Psalm 66:7](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%2066.7)), human birth and destiny ([Galatians 1:15](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Galatians%201.15)), human successes and failures ([Luke 1:52](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%201.52)), and the protection of His people ([Psalm 4:8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%204.8)).
9. Against what other prevalent philosophical ideas is the doctrine of God’s Providence directed?
   1. The idea that the universe is governed by chance (*Epicureanism*).
   2. The idea that the universe is governed by fate (*Stoicism*).
   3. The idea that God simply started the universe and then departed (*Deism*).
10. What were the rulings of the early Church and the Ecumenical Councils regarding the doctrine of the Providence of God?
    1. Throughout ancient times and the Middle Ages there was virtually no official Church rulings or statements about the Providence of God because there was no controversy regarding God’s Providence. Everyone was in agreement that God **does** preserve and govern the world. Not even one Church Council felt the need to express itself on this issue.
11. When were the first questions and doubts about the Providence of God expressed?
    1. There was no dissension to the doctrine of Providence until 16th century Socinians (*Polish unitarian heretics*) and Arminians claimed God’s providence was limited by the independent power of man to control his own life, taking the control out of the hands of God.
12. What impact did the 18th & 19th century Enlightenment have on the doctrine of the Providence of God?
    1. In the 18th & 19th centuries Deism presented God as withdrawing from the world after the Creation – a view that has developed into modern ideas about a world controlled only by natural law.
    2. With the development of the theory of evolution and the growth of scientism natural science claimed to provide the explanation for everything, with the presumption that there was no more need of any religious belief regarding God’s continued providential involvement in the world.
13. What is the two-fold distinctionChristian theism stresses regarding Creation and Providence?
    1. Creation is the calling into existence that which had not existed before, while Providence continues or causes to continue what has already been called into existence.
    2. There can be no cooperation by the creature (us) with God in the act of *Creation*; but there *is* an aspect of cooperation and participation of the creature with the Creator in the continuation of God’s *Providence*.

1. What are FOUR critical errors often made regarding the Providence of God?
   1. Mistaking the continued providential activity of God in the world with mere foreknowledge. *(i.e., God knows what will happen but doesn’t make it happen.)*
   2. The Deistic belief that God’s concern for the world is not universal, special or ongoing, but rather is only of a general nature, providing only general direction. This suggests that at the Creation God imparted certain properties and laws, and then left Creation to work out its destiny within those parameters, but with at most only general oversight. *(i.e., The world is simply a machine that God put into motion and then left.)*
   3. The pantheistic loss of distinction between God and the world, which therefore dispenses with Creation as being separate from God, and so also with any sense of God’s providential activity within Creation. *(i.e., Modern liberal theology’s emphasis on immanence – the “closeness” of God; to the exclusion of any sense of God’s transcendence – the “wholly otherness” of God.)*
   4. The limiting of Providence only to “General Providence” – the administration of the world in only the most general ways thru natural laws; while denying “Special Providence” – God’s concern with the details of history, the affairs of human life, and particular experiences – especially of the righteous. *(General Providence alone would, for example, allow for no prayers to be answered, as God is not seen as dealing with specifics.)*
2. What are THREE Aspects of the Providence of God?
   1. **Preservation** – the principle of providence by which God maintains the ***existence*** or ***being***of all of His Creation. *(i.e., the Principle of Conservation of Matter and Energy)*
   2. **Concurrence**, or **Cooperation** – the principle of Providence by which God maintains the ***necessary actions*** of His Creation. *(i.e., the Principle of Cause and Effect)*
   3. **Government** – the principle of Providence by which God directs all of Creation to the ***ultimate fulfillment of his perfect will***.
3. What is Theological Anthropology?
   1. The study of humanity ("anthropology") *as it relates to God*. Theological anthropology is concerned with the questions of what it means to be “human” in light of a belief in God; especially, in what way are humans made in the image of God?
4. What are some of the questions that Theological Anthropology typically considers?
   1. How did humanity come into being?
   2. What does it mean that humanity was made in the image of God?
   3. For what purpose was humanity created?
   4. Of what is humanity made?
   5. Of what parts do we consist? Is there a difference in soul and spirit?
   6. What is the destiny of humanity, and what affects that destiny?
5. What is Christian Anthropology?
   1. Theological anthropology that is motivated, organized and directed within a particularly Christian theological context.
6. Why do we believe a clear Christian anthropology so important?
   1. Every culture ever discovered has sensed there is something wrong with humanity. A clear Christian anthropology is necessary to make sense of who and what we are, and what is wrong with us – the existence of sin and evil, the Fall and Redemption, etc.
7. What is the Christian (and Jewish) theological understanding of how humanity came into being?
   1. Judaism and Christianity insist that humanity did not come into existence by accident or chance, but rather as an intentional act, created by an all-powerful God as the high-point of his work in creating the universe.
8. According to a Christian (and Jewish) theological anthropology, what does it mean that humanity was made in the image of God?
   1. We were made to “resemble” God – not in the sense of our material, flesh-and-blood body (because God is Spirit – John 4:24), but in our immaterial selves.
9. In what ways might it be said that humanity was made in the image of God?
   1. We are made in God’s image **mentally**, **morally** and **socially**:
      1. **Mentally**, because we are sentient, rational, volitional agents, capable of intellectual reflection and creativity.
      2. **Morally**, because in our original state we were righteous and morally pure, and we still retain enough of this aspect to be able to know right from wrong and to choose.
      3. **Socially**, in that we were created for relationship in a deeper and more intimate way than any other created being. In particular, we were made in God’s image so that we might be in relationship with Him.
10. For what purpose was humanity created?
    1. According to the Westminster Confession Shorter Catechism: “Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”
    2. For God’s good pleasure.
    3. For us to be in relationship with God – that we might love and glorify Him*.*
    4. To be stewards over creation.
11. Of what is humanity made?
    1. All people have both material and immaterial parts.
       1. Our ***material*** selves – our flesh-and-blood bodies – make us like all other created material beings.
       2. But our ***immaterial*** selves – our soul/spirit essence – makes us like God in a way unlike any other created material being.
    2. Of the two, the **immaterial soul/spirit** is more what our true selves are – our eternal spiritual selves.
12. Theologically, what is meant by “the Fall?”
    1. The Fall is the event, recorded in Genesis 3, in which Adam and Eve – God’s first created persons and ancestors of all humanity – betrayed the trust and love of God by violating the only restriction that had been placed upon them – to not eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.
13. What were the consequences of the Fall?
    1. By thus defying and disobeying God, the perfect relationship with God was broken, and Adam and Eve received their just punishment for their betrayal:
       1. Human self-awareness became self-consciousness, shame and guilt.
       2. Reason was perverted; people became self-deluded.
       3. Insecurity – reflected in blame and accusation – entered the world.
       4. All human faculties and judgment became clouded.
       5. Pain and death entered the world – for all creation.
       6. For humanity, this was not only physical death, but spiritual death.
       7. Evil entered the world for the first time.
14. What is sin?
    1. Anything in a creature which does not express, or which is contrary to, the holy character of the Creator.
    2. “Sin” (with a capital) is our spirit of rebellion against God, placed in us as part of our humanity, inherited (or “imputed”) from our ancestors. (The “plague of Sin.”)
    3. But, “sins” are the acts we commit which reflect the Sinful nature that is in us.

1. What is meant by “Original Sin?”
   1. When Adam disobeyed God and sin came into the world, all of Adam’s descendants – the entire human race – was infected with the “plague of Sin” and so fell from grace.
2. What is soteriology?
   1. The study of religious doctrines of salvation, from Greek *soter*, “savior” & *logos*, “the word.”

1. What, in a Christian sense, is meant by “salvation?”
   1. The saving of the soul from sin & its consequences; especially, the means by which a person is forgiven of sin & reconciled to God.

1. What is the focus and role of Christian soteriology?
   1. Christian soteriology examines how an individual is miraculously saved by divine grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and so is reconciled to God.
2. What have been some of the different Christian understandings down through the centuries of how Christian salvation works?
3. **Moral Transformation** – the belief that a person is saved from sinfulness by faithfully following the teaching of Jesus and the example he set of how to live.
4. **Christus Victor** – the belief that Jesus achieved salvation for us by defeating our spiritual enemies, the powers of evil, especially Satan.
5. **Ransom Theory of Atonement** – the belief that Satan had power over people’s souls in the afterlife, but that Christ rescued people from that power.
6. **Satisfaction Theory of Atonement** – the belief that people needed salvation from divine punishment they rightfully deserved for their sins, but Christ’s atonement satisfied the offense our sin caused against God’s honor, doing away with the need for people to be punished. *(Anselm)*
7. **Penal Substitution** – the belief that human sin required punishment, but Christ took the penalty of God’s judgment on Himself, thus saving all people who by faith in Christ receive the free gift of salvation.
8. What understanding of salvation was most accepted by the Protestant Reformers, and so is most common among Protestants today.
9. **Penal Substitution** – the belief that human sin required punishment, but Christ took the penalty of God’s judgment on Himself, thus saving all people who by faith in Christ receive the free gift of salvation.
10. What were the Five *Solae* declarations of the Reformation that related to how we receive salvation?
11. *Sola gratia* – “by grace alone.”
12. *Sola fide* – “through faith alone.”
13. *Sola Scriptura* – “based on Scripture alone.”
14. *Solus Christus* – “through Christ alone.”
15. *Soli Deo gloria* – “to give glory to God alone.”
16. What is the meaning of “justification?”
    1. God’s unconditional love shown to us by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, paying the debt for our sins and making it possible for us to be saved.

1. What is the meaning of “sanctification?”
   1. The process by which we are made holy, both immediately as we accept Jesus and are saved, and then progressively through the rest of our lives as we allow the Holy Spirit to further sanctify us and make us more like Jesus.
2. What is the meaning of “to sanctify?”
   1. To sanctify anything is to set it aside for a sacred purpose. This can apply to *anything* – temple vessels, special days, and especially a person who has been committed to God and so is in the process of being made more holy.
3. What is the source of our sanctification?
   1. Sanctificationis not a product of our own merits or efforts, but is entirely through the merits of Jesus, as applied to our lives by the Holy Spirit.
4. How and when does sanctification occur in a Christian believer?
   1. Immediately upon our salvation the Holy Spirit enters us and we are no longer held hostage to death but are free to live as God desires. But because of our habitual sin, sanctification is also a progressive process throughout our lives, by which we are made more holy.
5. What is the meaning of “glorification?”
   1. The final completed perfection we will experience when Jesus returns, as we received our resurrected bodies and enter into the kingdom of heaven.
6. In what way if the doctrine of “glorification” the Protestant alternative to the Roman Catholic belief in Purgatory?
   1. Purgatory is, in Catholic belief, the place where souls go after death so they can be made sufficiently holy for entrance into heaven. Glorification, according to Protestant beliefs, is the means by which the elect receive perfection and their resurrected bodies in preparation for entering the kingdom of heaven.
7. What is the discipline of “ecclesiology?”
   1. **Ecclesiology** deals with the origins of the Christian Church, its relationship to Jesus, its role in salvation, its polity, destiny and leadership.
8. What are some of primary questions with which ecclesiology concerns itself?
   1. WHO or WHAT is the Church?
   2. What is the relationship of the individual believer to the Church?
   3. What does the Church DO?
   4. What is the authority of the Church?
   5. How should the Church be governed?
   6. How does the Church’s New Covenant relate to the covenants between God and the people of Israel, as expressed in Scripture?
   7. What is the ultimate destiny of the Church?
9. What are the two major ways of understanding what the Church is and how it exists?
   1. The **“Invisible Church”** – the global community of those who by faith have accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. (*communio fidelium*)
   2. The **“Visible Church”** – the external hierarchy, structure, activities and architecture – both locally and globally – that can be seen by all. (*mater fidelium*)
10. Why does the Church exist – what are its purposes?
    1. To share the Good News, making disciples for Jesus: the Great Commission – Mt. 28:19-20
    2. To bring Glory to God – 1 Cor. 10:31
       1. Thru worship (including the Sacraments)
       2. Thru instruction
       3. Thru fellowship
       4. Thru service
11. What are the three primary forms of Church structure and governance?
    1. Episcopal, in which leadership is provided by bishops (*episcopos*).
    2. Presbyterian, in which leadership is provided by an ordained Board of Elders (*presbuteros*) elected from the local congregation.
    3. Congregational, in which leadership is primarily by the pastor, with assistance from a committee of elected lay leaders.
12. According to the Creeds, what are the four marks or “attributes” of the Church?
    1. **One** – the followers of Jesus Christ are ONE in their belief in one God & one Lord, Jesus Christ.
    2. **Holy** – the followers of Jesus Christ are HOLY, not meaning without sin, but rather that they are set apart for a special purpose by and for God.
    3. **Catholic** – the followers of Jesus Christ are the Church “catholic” – or “universal” – made up of all people everywhere and at all times who believe in and profess Jesus as Lord.
    4. **Apostolic** – the Church is based on the continuity of the teaching of the Apostles of Jesus, especially as recorded and taught in Scripture.
13. What is a sacrament?
    1. A **sacrament** is a sacred [Christian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity) [rite](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rite) recognized as of particular importance and significance.
    2. “An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.”

1. On what basis did the Protestant Reformers decide what should be the Sacraments of the Church?
   1. The Reformers determined that sacraments were sacred acts of divine institution, and so should be limited to those which Jesus himself participated in and which he directed his followers to also practice.
2. What are the usual Protestant sacraments, and how do these differ from both Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox sacraments.
   1. Protestantism recognized two sacraments – Baptism and Holy Communion (or the Eucharist).
   2. Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy add five more sacraments (for a total of seven) to Baptism and the Eucharist. These are [Confirmation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confirmation_%28Catholic_Church%29), [Penance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacrament_of_Penance_%28Catholic_Church%29) (Reconciliation), [Anointing of the Sick](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anointing_of_the_Sick_%28Catholic_Church%29) (known prior to the [Second Vatican Council](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Vatican_Council) as Extreme Unction), [Matrimony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage_%28Catholic_Church%29) (Marriage), and [Holy Orders](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_orders_%28Catholic_Church%29).
   3. The Eastern Church actually is open to MORE than seven sacraments, as they consider anything the Church does as the Church to be in some sense sacramental.