

Week 1: Introduction to Systematic Theology

Definition and Purpose of Theology

Theology is the study of God and His relationship with the world. It seeks to understand the nature, character, and works of God and how these truths shape our beliefs and actions. Systematic theology organizes these truths into coherent categories to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Christian faith.

The purpose of theology is not merely intellectual but deeply spiritual—it seeks to glorify God, deepen our relationship with Him, and equip believers to live faithfully in response to His revelation.

Methods and Sources of Theology

Systematic theology relies on several key methods and sources to construct its framework:

Scripture: The Bible is the primary and ultimate authority for theology. It reveals God's nature, His works, and His will for humanity.

Tradition: The collective wisdom of the Church through history provides valuable insights and interpretations that enrich our understanding of faith.

Reason: Logical reflection and critical thinking help organize and clarify theological concepts, ensuring coherence and consistency.

Experience: Personal and communal experiences of God's presence and work provide context and application for theological truths.

Together, these sources form a balanced approach, ensuring theology is both biblically grounded and practically relevant.

Overview of Core Doctrines

Systematic theology is structured around core doctrines that summarize key aspects of the Christian faith:

The Doctrine of God (Theology Proper): Examines God's attributes, the Trinity, and His work in creation and providence.

The Doctrine of Humanity (Anthropology): Explores humanity's creation, nature, purpose, and fall into sin.

The Doctrine of Christ (Christology): Focuses on the person and work of Jesus Christ, His incarnation, atonement, and resurrection.

The Doctrine of Salvation (Soteriology): Discusses God's plan of redemption, grace, faith, and the role of the Holy Spirit.

The Doctrine of the Church (Ecclesiology): Defines the Church's identity, mission, and sacraments.

The Doctrine of Last Things (Eschatology): Addresses end-times events, Christ's return, and the ultimate hope of believers.

Conclusion

This week serves as an introduction to the discipline of systematic theology, providing a foundation for deeper exploration of these doctrines in the weeks to come. Our journey will aim to unite intellectual understanding with heartfelt devotion, equipping us to live faithfully and bear witness to God's glory.