

SUMMER IN THE SYSTEMATICS

THEOLOGY PROPER

THEOLOGY

“Theology is the sustained effort to know the character, will, and actions of the triune God as he has disclosed and interpreted these for his people in Scripture . . . in order that we might know him, learn to think our thoughts after him, live our lives in his world on his terms, and by thought and action project his truth into our own time and culture.” David Wells

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Involves “collecting and understanding all the relevant passages in the Bible on various topics and then summarizing their teachings clearly so that we know what to believe about each topic.” Wayne Grudem

The traditional categories of Systematic Theology include:

Theology Proper - the doctrine of the existence and being of God

Bibliology - the doctrine of the inspiration, inerrancy, authority, and canonicity of the Bible.

Christology - the doctrine of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ

Pneumatology - the doctrine of the person and work of the Holy Spirit

Anthropology - the doctrine of man

Hamartiology - the doctrine of sin

Soteriology - the doctrine of salvation

Angelology - the doctrine of angels (holy and fallen) and Satan

Ecclesiology - the doctrine of the church (universal and local)

Eschatology - the doctrine of last things (end times)

THEOLOGY PROPER

The doctrine of the existence and being of God.

I. GENERAL REVELATION

“General Revelation” refers to the ways in which God has revealed aspects of His person, nature, and character to all of humanity, so that they will, in turn, have an awareness of His existence and being. Categories of “General Revelation” include:

- A. Nature (or “Creation”). Psalm 19:1-2; Isaiah 40:12; Acts 14:15-17; Romans 1:19-20
- B. Providential Control (or “History”). Proverbs 21:1; Psalm 75:7; Acts 17:26-27
- C. Conscience. Ecclesiastes 3:11; Romans 2:14-15

2. SPECIAL REVELATION

“Special Revelation” is God’s disclosure of Himself in more detailed, specific, and personal manners (i.e., compared to how He reveals Himself through general revelation). Categories of “Special Revelation” include:

- A. Direct Acts. Genesis 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 34:10-12; Matthew 3:17
- B. Dreams and Visions. Isaiah 1:1; Ezekiel 1:1; Revelation 1
- C. The Incarnation of Christ. John 1:14; Hebrews 1:1-2
- D. Scripture. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Peter 1:19-21

“General revelation points to a higher power, while special revelation personally introduces the higher power as the triune God of Scripture, who created the world and all that is in it . . . and who provided the only Redeemer in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhew