

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. We are looking again today at prolegomena, which means we are saying a few things in advance before we start studying individual doctrines from the Scriptures.
2. Last time, we addressed only one question, “What Are the Benefits and Limitations of Systematic Theology?”
3. Today, we are asking “What Is the Relationship of Systematic Theology to Doctrine?”
4. Before we start to answer that question, let me remind you of what we mean by “systematic theology.”
5. The term, “systematics,” stresses the idea of a “system or body” of truth.
6. The term emphasizes that systematics seeks to present the whole set of biblical doctrines comprehensively.

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<sup>1</sup> Material taken from MacArthur, John; Mayhue, Richard. Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth (Kindle Location 1203). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

7. It emphasizes their “wholeness” and “inter-relatedness,” as an integrated, cohesive, body of truths.<sup>2</sup>
8. Wayne Grudem defines systematic theology as *any study that answers the question, “What does the whole Bible teach us today?” about any given topic.*
9. This definition indicates that 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.<sup>3</sup>
10. To summarize then, systematic theology focuses on the collection and then the summary of the teaching of all the biblical passages on a particular subject.<sup>4</sup>
11. So “What Is the Relationship of Systematic Theology to Doctrine?”
12. Doctrine is another word for teaching.
13. There are several things we need to understand and consider as we think about doctrine tonight.

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<sup>2</sup> Nichols, Greg. Lectures in Systematic Theology: Doctrine of God (p. 18). UNKNOWN. Kindle Edition.

<sup>3</sup> Grudem, Wayne A. [Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine](#). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004. Print.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Grudem.

## LESSON

- I. Doctrine represents teaching that is considered authoritative
  - A. When Christ taught, the crowds were amazed at his authority (Matt.7:28–29; Mark 1:22, 27; Luke 4:32).
  - B. A church’s “doctrinal” statement contains a body of teaching used as the standard of authoritative orthodoxy. (hand out doctrinal statement)
  - C. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word *laqakh* means “what is received” or “accepted teaching” (Deut.32:2; Job 11:4; Prov.4:2; Isa.29:24).
  - D. It can be variously translated as “instruction,” “learning,” or “teaching.”
  - E. In the New Testament, two Greek words are translated as “doctrine,” “instruction,” or “teaching”: *didachē* (referring to the content of teaching) and *didaskalia* (referring to the activity of teaching).
  - F. Paul used both words together in 2 Timothy 4:2–3 and Titus 1:9. In Latin, *doceo*, “to teach,” *doctrina*, “what is being taught,” and *doctor*, “the one who is

- teaching,” all contribute to the meaning of the English word doctrine. The content may be informational (to be believed) or practical (to be lived out).
- G. It refers to general teaching (systematized or not, true or false), such as the “teaching of Balaam” (Rev. 2: 14) or “human teachings” (Col. 2: 22), in contrast to biblical teaching such as Christ’s teaching (Matt. 7: 28) or Paul’s teaching (2 Tim. 3: 10).
- H. Biblical doctrine, therefore, refers to the teaching of Scripture, whether it be proclamational, expositional, or categorical. That makes all Scripture “doctrinal,” whether it be read, taught, preached, or systematized into theological categories.
- I. Systematic biblical doctrine (systematic theology) refers to a categorical summation of biblical teaching that follows normally employed themes or categories.
- J. The teaching of Scripture serves as the yardstick, gauge, standard, paradigm, pattern, measure, and plumb line by which all other teaching on any given subject is determined to be true or false, received or rejected, sound or unsound, orthodox or heretical.

- II. Sound biblical doctrine has many implications for the life of Christ's church
  - A. Sound doctrine exposes and confronts sin and false doctrine (1 Tim.1: 8–11, esp. 1:10; 4:1–6).
  - B. Sound doctrine marks a good servant of Christ Jesus (1 Tim.4:6; see also 1 Tim. 4:13, 16; Titus 2:1).
  - C. Sound doctrine is rewarded with double honor for elders (1 Tim. 5:17).
  - D. Sound doctrine conforms to godliness (1 Tim.6:3; Titus 2:10).
  - E. Sound doctrine is included in the apostolic example to follow (2 Tim. 3: 10).
  - F. Sound doctrine is essential to equipping pastors (2 Tim. 3:16–17).
  - G. Sound doctrine is the continual mandate for preachers (2 Tim.4:2–4).
  - H. Sound doctrine is a basic qualification for eldership (Titus 1:9).

III. Scripture teaches that there will always be opposition to sound doctrine

- A. both by humans (Matt. 15:2– 6; Mark 11:18; 1 Tim. 1: 3, 10; 2 Tim. 4: 3; Titus 1:9) and by Satan and demons (1 Tim. 4:1).
  
- B. The Bible outlines several antidotes/ corrections to false doctrine:
  - 1. Speaking the truth of sound doctrine in love (Eph.4:15)
  
  - 2. Teaching sound doctrine (1 Tim.4:6; 2 Tim.4:2)
  
  - 3. Holding fast to sound doctrine (Titus 1:9; Rev. 2: 24– 25)
  
  - 4. Refuting false doctrine (Titus 1:9)
  
  - 5. Rejecting and turning away from teachers of false doctrine (Rom.16:17; 2 John 9–10)
  
- C. There is a direct, inseparable relationship between sound doctrine and saintly living, something Scripture teaches clearly and consistently (Rom.15:4; 1 Tim. 4: 16;6: 1, 3; 2 Tim.3:10; Titus 2:1– 4, 7–10).

- D. The reverse is also true— where there is false belief, there will be sinful behavior (Titus 1:16).
- E. In spite of Scripture's clear emphasis on both purity of doctrine and purity of life, a number of mistaken notions have arisen concerning the relationship between what a person believes and how a person should live. These wrong ideas include the following:
1. Right doctrine automatically leads to godliness.
  2. It doesn't matter how a person lives so long as he or she has right doctrine.
  3. Doctrine deadens, spiritually speaking.
  4. There is no connection between what one believes and how one lives.
  5. Christianity is life, not doctrine.
  6. Doctrine is irrelevant.
  7. Doctrine divides.

8. Doctrine drives people away. In contrast to the negativity aimed at doctrine, the absence of sound doctrine and the presence of false doctrine will always lead to sinful behavior. Without sound doctrine, there is no scriptural basis to delineate right from wrong, no doctrinal authority to correct sin, and no biblical encouragement to motivate godly living.

F. On the other hand, the spiritual value of sound doctrine is incalculable:

1. Sound doctrine is spiritually profitable (2 Tim. 3: 16–17).
2. Spiritual blessings are promised for obedience (Rev. 1: 3; 22:7).
3. Sound doctrine guards against sin (e.g., Job, Joseph, Daniel, Christ).
4. Sound doctrine delineates between truth and error (2 Cor. 11: 1–15; 2 Tim. 3: 16– 17).
5. Sound doctrine was central to Christ’s ministry (Matt. 7: 28–29; Mark 4: 2; Luke 4: 32).



6. Sound doctrine was central in the early church (Acts 2:42; 5: 28; 13:12).
7. Sound doctrine was central to apostolic ministry (Paul: Acts 13:12; 17:19; Gal. 2:11– 21; John: 2 John 9–10).
8. Martyrs gave their lives for sound doctrine (Christ: Mark 11:18; Stephen: Acts 7: 54–60; James: Acts 12:2; Paul: 2 Tim. 4:1–8).
9. Christ and the apostles left a mandate to pass sound doctrine on to the next generation (Christ: Matt. 28: 20; Paul: 2 Tim.2: 2).
10. Churches were commended for sound doctrine or condemned for lack of sound doctrine (Ephesus, commended: Rev. 2:2, 6; Pergamum and Thyatira, condemned: Rev. 2:14– 15, 20).
11. Established sound doctrine anticipates and prepares for eras when sound doctrine is out of season (2 Tim.4: 3).
12. Sound doctrine protects the church from false teachers (Titus 1: 9).

13. Sound doctrine provides true spiritual adornment for believers (Titus 2:10).

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Sound biblical teaching and sound systematic doctrine are inseparably connected to “theology.”
2. Whether it be expositionally viewed in a text of Scripture or comprehensively categorized from all Scripture, biblical teaching cannot be disconnected from its identification with theology.
3. Put another way, all biblical teaching is theological in nature, and all Christian theology is biblical in content.