



Goahead Theological Seminary & College

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Dogmatic Theology

Systematic theology (English: 組織神學, systematics) is the academic discipline within Christianity that uses a logical and systematic methodology to describe themes of faith presented in the Bible and church history. Specifically, it selects the most important themes from the Bible—God, humanity, Christ, salvation, the church, and the eschatology—and systematically structures them. Through logical narrative, it formulates, defends, and asserts doctrines.

In Europe, it's called dogmatics, and in the Anglo-American world, it's called systematic theology. Before the classification of modern Christian theology, systematic theology was the field generally referred to as theology.

Systematic theology is a key theoretical discipline in Christian theology, primarily shaping its structure and categories.

Among the various branches of theology—historical theology, biblical theology, practical theology, and systematic theology—systematic theology is a theoretical discipline. It generally employs rational, logical, philosophical, and theological methods to demonstrate that Christian truth is universally valid and necessary, regardless of time, place, or individuality.

Systematic theology is primarily divided into three branches: apologetics, dogmatics, and ethics.

Apologetics is the discipline that defends and proves the correctness of Christianity, grounded in divine revelation, against the ideologies of each era, including materialism.

Apologetics is considered fundamental theology, and in the early history of Christianity, it logically defended Christianity and formed the fundamental framework for systematic theology.

However, due to its aggressive stance toward natural science, including evolution, it has generated numerous points of conflict with evolutionary theory.

Currently, it also has a branch of theistic evolution.



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Ethics studies Christian ethics, including sin, love, and salvation. Since the late 20th century, it has developed into an independent field within Christian ethics..

Dogmatics, also known as theology, takes an academic approach and explains the content of faith in a deductive and inductive manner. Therefore, from a faith perspective, dogmatics addresses questions such as: what is God, what is the Savior, what is humanity, and how can humans attain salvation. Meanwhile, many consider dogmatics to be the core of systematic theology..

Etymology of dogma

The word dogma (Δογμα) comes from the Greek verb "dokhei" (δοκειν). The word "dogma" (δογμα) is a compound word of "dokhei" (δοκειν: to think) and "moi" (μοι: I).[5] Its meaning is "it seems plausible to me." In ancient Greek, the general usage was different from the present meaning as an officially recognized resolution or decree. This is because the unbiblical excessive dominance of dogma and the authority of tradition and the interference of the church were seen as hindering the development of Christian theology.

Dogmatic theology and systematic theology are both alternative names for theology that systematically presents the truth revealed in the Bible. However, the terminology used varies from country to country..

Dogmatics

The term "dogmatics" was first used by L. Reinhart in his book *Synopsis theologiae dogmaticae* (1659). It is used primarily to refer to the study of doctrine.

The following scholars are representative examples of those who use the term "dogmatics":

- Germany: Otter Weber



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- **Switzerland: Karl Barth, Emil Brunner**
- **Netherlands: Abraham Kuyper, Hermann Bavinck, Bercauter**
- **South Africa: Johan Heinz, Konrad Besmar**

systematic theology

In general, most theologians in Britain and the United States use the term "systematic theology," encompassing not just doctrine but also the systematic presentation of the church's truth. Charles Hodge (American) and Paul Tillich (German-American) use the term "systematic theology," while the German scholar Wolfhard Pannenberg, an exception, uses the term "systematic theology" (Systematische Theologie, 1988).

Definition of Systematic Theology:

Systematic theology, strictly speaking, is a branch of theology and cannot be equated with theology. However, throughout Christian history, from the early days of Christianity to the modern era, theology has often referred to what is now called systematic theology or dogmatics. The field of theology as an academic discipline was only divided in the early modern period, and the current field of theology began to be distinguished around the 18th century, the beginning of the modern era. Even today, systematic theology is broadly understood as theology. Theology as an academic discipline is currently categorized into systematic theology (dogmatics), Old Testament theology, New Testament theology, historical theology (church history), practical theology, and missiology.

Systematic theology is the discipline that develops a biblically logical framework for the study of key theological topics. Topics typically covered include revelation, the Trinity, humanity, Christ, salvation, the church, and the eschatology.

- **Here are some scholarly views on how theology is defined as systematic theology:**
- **Thomas Aquinas said that theology is to be taught by God, to teach people about God, and to lead them to God.**



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- **Charles Hodge said that theology is to present the principles and general truths contained in the facts of Scripture themselves in their proper order and relationship, and to unfold and harmonize all things.**
- **Karl Barth said that theology is the study of what the church proclaims and the task of dogmatics is to examine whether that proclamation is an appropriate proclamation that is in accordance with the Word of God, and he said that all sciences must ultimately become theology (All sciences might ultimately be theology. CD II.1.7).**
- **Paul Tillich said that theology is the systematic interpretation of the contents of the Christian faith and that the church is the home of systematic theology (The Church is the home of systematic theology, Ibid, p. 48). While this expression sounds plausible, he actually liberated theology from the Bible. Both Barth and Tillich viewed theology as having a close relationship with the church.**
- **John McQuarrie translated Heidegger's Being and Time, and as a neo-orthodox scholar, he argues that the Bible is not itself a revelation. It is not an infallible record or testimony of revelation. Theology may be defined as the study which, through participation in and reflection upon a religious faith, seeks to express the content of this faith in the clearest and most coherent language available. His definition broadens the scope of theological study beyond revelation to encompass the realm of general religion. It places excessive emphasis on the subjective human instrument of faith..**
- **Karl Rahner said that theology is the study of faith, and that it is the conscious and methodical explanation and interpretation of divine revelation received and grasped in faith.**
- **Gordon Kauffman said that theology provides an interpretation of humanity, the world, and God from a religious perspective, and the following is his opinion.**
- **He said that the task of theology is to clarify our conversations with God and our thoughts. Understand the Trinity within the context of an evolutionary-historical view of the universe.**
- **Kaufman was influenced by Mennonite origins and their emphasis on right living over doctrine.**
- **Influenced by neo-orthodoxy—the influence of Barth, Paul Tillich, Richard Lieber, and others—is evident in Systematic Theology: A**



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Historicist Perspective (1968). This book presents the central theme of God as a utterly other being, challenging and relativizing the idea that humans are everything.

- He was greatly influenced by Kant's philosophy and ethics. In particular, his theological discourse emphasizes human characteristics and praxis over doctrine.
- Under the influence of Wilhelm Dilthey, R. G. Collingwood, and Paul Tillich, the historical nature of human beings was recognized, and this was concretized by historicism. • Van Til stated that systematic theology strives to present the truths about God revealed in the Bible in a holistic and unified system.

Recent Reformed Position

John Frame offers a recent, simple, and appropriate definition. He sees systematic theology as summarizing the biblical teaching on a given topic. Systematic theology is the discipline that answers the question, "What does the entire Bible teach us today?"

Gurđum says that systematic theology is about collecting and understanding the biblical texts related to various topics, and then clearly summarizing their teachings so that we know what we should believe about each topic.

Methodology of Systematic Theology

1) The Christian Theistic Method

Vantil's method presupposes that God is the source of all finite existence and knowledge, and that He is an absolute, self-conscious being. This is a command, distinguishing Him from non-Christian methods. The theistic method views God as the existential principle of knowledge (Principium Essendi of knowledge).

2) Synthetic Method

Herman Bavinck identifies three elements of the dogmatic method: the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, the doctrine of the Christian faith, and the Christian consciousness.



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• Scripture, the creed, and Christian consciousness: Scripture, as revelation, must be the most important element of the theological method. These three elements must be closely related to each other in a synthetic way. The synthetic method is also called the theological method or the method of authority, which derives theology from the divine self-revelation in

Scripture.3) 현대 신학자들의

Theological Methodology:

These have in common a foundation in humanistic philosophies, such as emotion and reason.

- Schleiermacher: Used human experience and emotion as a theological method.
- Karl Barth: Initially employed dialectical theology, later advocating the theology of the Word. Dialectical theology was influenced by Kierkegaard's principle of paradox. This paradox expresses ideas through contradiction (paradox). Kierkegaard employed Socratic irony. Irony exposes ignorance and leads to the realization of truth. This method unfolds paradoxically.

Bultmann: The Method of Demythologization - Since the Bible was written from the perspective of the ancients' mythological view of history, demythologization involves removing mythical elements. Learned from the Form-Historical School. - Studying how oral tradition and legend were transmitted to form the Bible. Attempting to discover its historicity. Assisting with an interpretive method based on existentialist philosophy..

- Paul Tillich: The Method of Correlation - Explains theology in the present context, in which reason asks questions and revelation answers.
- John Macquarrie: Discusses description, interpretation, and application.

- 1) Description - Use a phenomenological approach.
- 2) Interpretation - We need interpretation for today.
- 3) Application - Apply to the life of the community of faith.

Gordon Kaufman: Imaginative Construction.



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- 1) Phenomenological Description: The diversity of modern experience must be gathered within a concept of the world. This includes an anthropological and cosmic awareness that is relevant and meaningful to people today.
- 2) Introducing the image/concept of God through imagination and constructive thought.
- 3) Modern experience must be understood from God's perspective, that is, theologically.

Topics of Systematic Theology

Theology: A major field of study in Christian theology, it is a biblical-theological study of the Christian God revealed in the Bible. It deals with the essence of the Trinity and the work of God.

Anthropology: Anthropology (Christianity) is the study of humanity in relation to God within the realm of Christian theology.

Christology: A branch of systematic theology, Christology refers to the Christian theological theory of the person and work of Jesus Christ, particularly the relationship between divinity and humanity.

Soteriology: Soteriology (Pneumatology) deals with the person and work of the Holy Spirit. It particularly addresses topics such as calling, repentance, conversion, faith, justification, regeneration, sanctification, perseverance, and glorification.

Ecclesiology: Within the field of Christian theology, ecclesiology is the study of the Christian church, focusing on its origins, the relationship between Christ and the church, the role of salvation, and its policies, discipline, and leadership.

Eschatology: Christian eschatology refers to the Christian doctrine that presupposes the end of the world and humanity and addresses all related issues. It aims to elucidate the progression of the end, including the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection of humanity, the Final Judgment, and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth.



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Related Theological Societies: Founded in 1967 in Korea, the Korean Society for Systematic Theology is a leading academic society specializing in systematic theology. It comprehensively studies the traditional systematic theology of the two major Reformation traditions: Protestant catholicism and Reformed theology. Other societies include the Korean Evangelical Society for Systematic Theology, founded in 1997 with a background in Protestant conservatism, the Korean Society for Reformed Theology, founded in 1996 and the Society for Reformed Theology, founded in 2002, both based on Reformed thought. They primarily research, present, and publish books on topics such as systematic theology, modern theology, ethics, and hermeneutics, contributing to the Korean theological community.

Related Theology:

- Theology
- Theological Principles
- Theological Methodology
- Christian Theological Work
- Christian Theology
- Constructivist Theology
- Christian Theology
- Hermeneutic Theology
- Theology of John Calvin
- Theology of Martin Luther

Subfields:

- Theology
- Trinity
- Christology



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- Pneumatology
- Ecclesiology
- Anthropology
- Soteriology
- Revelation
- Eschatology
- Apologetics
- The Universal Church
- Sacraments
- Christian Ethics

Related Disciplines:

- Biblical Theology
- Historical Theology
- Philosophy
- History
- Ethics
- Economics
- Hermeneutics
- Sociology
- Philosophy of Science

Related Disciplines:

- Biblical Theology, Historical Theology
- Philosophy, History
- Ethics, Economics
- Hermeneutics, Sociology, Philosophy of Science

정리: 이상조목사



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