
INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

Doctrine of Man
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THE STUDY OF THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

- Before we dive into the actual material of the doctrine of man, or theological anthropology, as it is also known, we should situate this study within the larger scope of the theological disciplines.
- Coming from the Greek ἄνθρωπος and λόγος, “anthropology” is quite literally the study of man.
 - You will find courses on anthropology at nearly every accredited university and liberal arts institution of higher learning.
 - The Doctrine of Man is also one of the traditional theological *loci*.
 - It rightly falls under the heading of systematic theology. Yet, we can never understand God’s teaching about man if we *limit* our consideration to systematic theology.
 - More basically, we must understand how to be faithful systematic theologians in the first place. That means understanding how the other disciplines inform systematic theology and *vice versa*.

REDEMPTIVE-HISTORICAL HERMENEUTICS

- We must rehearse several basic points about Scripture and its entailments for exegesis.
 - Proper exegesis requires a focus on Scripture as a divine product. Scripture is God’s Word. He is the *primary author*. He has inspired human agents to record his Word as *secondary authors*. Scripture is fundamentally unlike any other document. It is God-breathed.
 - When engaging in systematic theology, we are concerned with the texts of the Old and New Testaments in their finished form, *as a whole*.
- A proper hermeneutic (rules of interpretation) looks at all of Scripture, the immediate context, the canon available at the time of it’s writing, and then also the entire canon.
 - If we cannot interpret revelation according to proper principles, we have no reasonable expectation of ever arriving at a true and proper theology.
 - Scripture as a whole must be our most basic reference point. This is the only legitimate point of departure for any theological study.
 - When we realize this nature of Scripture, we recognize more of its majesty.
 - Scripture is no longer seen as a collection of narratives, poems, and letters. It’s a vast network of divine texts that mutually interpret one another.
- When considering covenant history, we must understand the big picture.
 - When considered as a whole, covenant history unfolds in three distinct epochs.
 - *Protology*: Creation to the Fall into sin

- *Typology*: Promised redemption until the coming of Christ
 - *Eschatology*: the epoch between the first and second coming of Christ
- This basic structure is helpful for understanding God’s relationship to man throughout all of covenant history.
 - These epochs cannot be isolated from one another in interpretation.
 - At the same time, we cannot reverse the order or otherwise mix them up. Eschatology has always been the *goal* of covenant history.

SYSTEMATIC AND BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

- Systematic theology seeks to organize the content of revelation topically.
 - In his book *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments*, Geerhardus Vos describes this topical arrangement as drawing a circle.
 - Whereas systematic theology seeks to organize the Bible topically and logically by drawing a circle, biblical theology seeks to represent the progressive unfolding of revelation in history by drawing a line.
- In brief, the difference between biblical and systematic theology is the difference between historical and logical construction.
 - But it’s not as if these disciplines developed independently from each other in Scripture.
 - Vos—“It should be remembered that on the line of historical progress there is at several points already a *beginning of correlation* among elements of truth in which *the beginnings of the systematizing process can be discerned.*” (*Biblical Theology*, 16)
- We must remember is that both biblical and systematic theology rely upon exegetical theology. Systematic and biblical theology are not antagonistic. They mutually contextualize, regulate, and inform each other.