

Lesson 10

Part One – Introduction to Systematic Theology

- I. Introduction
 - a. What is Systematic Theology?
 - b. What is the relation between Systematic Theology and Hermeneutics?
 - c. Why is it important to study the Bible systematically?

Part Two – Theology Proper - Beginning at the Beginning

- I. Introduction to the One True God
 - a. Arguments for the existence of God
 - b. Why only one God
- II. The Nature of God
 - a. God's incommunicable perfections (attributes)
 - b. God's *communicable* attributes
 - i. Spirituality
 - ii. Intellect (includes knowledge, wisdom, and veracity)
 - iii. Morality (includes goodness, love, grace, mercy and longsuffering)
 - iv. Holiness
 - v. Righteousness
 - vi. Justice
 - c. God as Trinity
 - i. Definition
 - ii. Misinterpretations/Misunderstandings
 - iii. Explanation
 - iv. Difficulties
- III. The Decree of God
 - a. Definition
 - b. Characteristics of God's Decree
 - c. Order of God's Decrees
- IV. The Names of God

Part Three – Christology: The Doctrine of Christ

- I. The Pre-existence and Eternality of Christ
 - a. Direct Proof
 - i. Micah 5:2.
 - ii. John 1:1.
 - iii. John 8:58.
 - iv. Hebrews 1:8.

- v. Colossians 1:17.
- b. Indirect Proof
 - i. Christ's heavenly origin proves His eternal existence.
 - ii. Christ's pre-incarnate work proves His eternal existence.
 - iii. Theophanies prove His eternal existence.
- II. Old Testament Prophecies of Christ
 - a. Prophecies Concerning Christ's Lineage
 - i. Virgin Birth
 - ii. Line of Shem
 - iii. Line of Abraham
 - iv. Line of Isaac
 - v. Line of Jacob
 - vi. Line of Judah
 - vii. Line of David
 - b. Prophecies Concerning Christ's Birth
 - i. The Manner
 - ii. The Place
 - c. Prophecies Concerning Christ's Life
 - i. His Forerunner
 - ii. His Mission
 - iii. His Ministry
 - iv. His Teaching
 - v. His Presentation
 - vi. His Rejection
 - d. Prophecies Concerning Christ's Death
 - i. A Painful Death
 - ii. A Violent Death
 - e. Prophecies Concerning Christ's Victory
 - i. His Resurrection
 - ii. His Ascension
- III. The Incarnation of Christ
 - a. Meaning of the Incarnation
 - b. Explanation of the Incarnation
 - i. Genealogies
 - ii. Virgin Birth
- IV. The Humanity of Christ
 - a. Meaning of Christ's Humanity
 - b. Characteristics of Christ's Humanity
 - i. He was virgin born

- ii. He had a true body of flesh and blood
 - iii. He had a normal development
 - iv. He had a human soul and spirit
 - v. He experienced the same things as humans
- V. The Deity of Christ
 - a. Meaning of Christ's Deity
 - b. Scriptural Proof for Christ's Deity
 - i. His names
 - 1. God
 - 2. Lord
 - 3. Son of God
 - ii. His attributes
 - 1. Eternality
 - 2. Omnipresence
 - 3. Omniscience
 - 4. Omnipotence
 - 5. Immutability
 - 6. Life
 - iii. His works
 - 1. Creator
 - 2. Sustainer
 - 3. Forgiver of sin
 - 4. Miracle worker
 - iv. He receives worship
- VI. The Hypostatic Union
 - a. Meaning of the hypostatic union
 - b. Explanation of the hypostatic union
 - c. Kenosis and the hypostatic union
- VII. Earthly Life of Christ
 - a. Introduction
 - b. The Words of Christ
 - c. The Works of Christ
 - d. The Rejection of Christ
 - e. The Death of Christ
 - i. Substitution
 - ii. Redemption
 - iii. Reconciliation
 - iv. Propitiation

- v. Forgiveness
- vi. Justification

VIII. The Resurrection of Christ

a. Importance

- i. The resurrection determines the validity of the Christian faith.

As Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:17, “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.”

- ii. The resurrection was the guarantee of the Father’s acceptance of the Son’s work.

The resurrection indicated that the work of the cross was completed.

- iii. The resurrection was essential in the program of God.

Christ promised the Holy Spirit would be sent as a Helper for the disciples (John 16:7), but the Holy Spirit could only come to them if Christ departed and returned to heaven in the resurrection.

- iv. The resurrection fulfilled the prophecies.

David prophesied of Christ’s resurrection in Psalm 16:10. Peter indicated that the resurrection of Christ fulfilled this prophecy. Christ Himself predicted not only His death but His resurrection (Matthew 16:21; Mark 14:28).

b. Proofs for the Resurrection

- i. The empty tomb.

Either Christ was resurrected or someone stole the body. If opponents took the body why did they not simply produce it later? The disciples couldn’t have stolen the body because Roman soldiers were guarding the tomb and had placed the Roman seal on it.

ii. The linen wrappings.

When John entered the tomb, “*he saw and believed*” (John 20:8). Many scholars believe that the use of certain terminology indicates that when John saw the linen wrappings “and believed” that he must have seen something that convinced him that Jesus had risen from the dead. Many of these scholars believe that it’s quite possible that the linen wrappings still retained the shape of the body while the headpiece was “*rolled up in a place by itself*” (John 20:7; cf. 11:44). They surmise that since John knew that no one could have taken the body out of the wrappings and replaced them to retain the shape of a body, he must have passed through the linen wrappings. This would certainly explain the image on the Shroud of Turin!

iii. The resurrection appearances.

The resurrected Lord was seen by many people in the 40 days following his resurrection. Among them were the faithful women at the tomb, two on the Emmaus road, Peter, the Twelve, 500 believers at one time, James, the apostles, and Paul (Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:13-35; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8). Those witnesses were an important testimony to the veracity of the resurrection. Post-ascension appearances of the Lord Jesus to Paul and John are recorded in Acts and Revelation.

iv. The transformed disciples.

The disciples knew Christ had died and were skeptical at first concerning His resurrection, but when they saw Him they were completely changed. The Peter of Acts 2 is quite different from the Peter of John 19. Knowledge of the resurrection made the difference.

v. Observance of the first day of the week.

The disciples immediately began to meet together in commemoration of Jesus’ resurrection (John 20:26; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10).

vi. Existence of the church.

The existence of the church is dependent on the fact of the resurrection. The early church grew through the preaching of the doctrine (Acts 2:24-32; 3:15; 4:2).

- IX. The Ascension of Christ
 - a. Facts about the ascension.

The ascension of Christ is described in Mark 16:19, Luke 24:51, and Acts 1:9. It is also mentioned in Acts 2:33, where Peter indicates the Christ's ascension is evidenced by the fact that He sent forth the Holy Spirit, who was witnessed by so many on the day of Pentecost. He further emphasizes that Christ's ascension was in fulfillment of Psalm 110:1 where the Lord said, "Sit at My right hand." Paul emphasizes the same truth in Ephesians 4:8, where he indicates Christ "ascended on high...and gave gifts to men." The book of Hebrews encourages us to draw near to the throne of grace with confidence because "we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God" (Hebrews 4:14). Peter indicates in 1 Peter 3:22 that the believer is saved through an appeal to the risen, ascended Lord.

- b. Significance of the ascension.
 - i. The ascension ended the earthly ministry of Christ.

The ascension marked the end of the period of self-limitation during the days of His sojourn on earth.

- ii. The ascension ended the period of Christ's humiliation.

Christ's glory was no longer veiled following the ascension (Jesus prayed for this in John 17:5 and we see it in Acts 9:3, 5).

- iii. The ascension marks the first entrance of resurrected humanity into heaven and the beginning of a new work in heaven (Hebrews 4:14-16; 6:20).

A representative of the human race in a resurrected, glorified body is the Christian's intercessor. He is our "forerunner."

- iv. The ascension made the descent of the Holy Spirit possible (John 16:7).

It was necessary for Christ to ascend to heaven so that He could send the Holy Spirit.

Next Time: In our next study, we will begin to look at the offices of Christ, His present ministry in the world, and His future work.