

Lecture One--prolegomena: A Word Before We Begin

by Greg Herrick

This sermon introduces transformative theology, emphasizing the importance of critical thinking, community, and the application of theological principles in daily life.

Scripture: Proverbs 2:6, John 14:6, Colossians 2:8, 2 Timothy 2:15, 1 Peter 3:15

Topics: "Systematic Theology", "Christian Doctrine"

Description

Greg Herrick delivers a sermon on the importance of transformative theology, emphasizing the need for evangelicals to engage in critical thinking and reflection to combat the 'ghost mind' prevalent in the community. The sermon explores various definitions and goals of theology, highlighting the different branches such as natural, dogmatic, historical, biblical, systematic, and apologetic theology. It also delves into the categories of systematic theology, stressing the significance of understanding key doctrines like bibliology, theology proper, Christology, pneumatology, and more.

Transcript

IA. A Prolegomena to Transformative Theology

1B. Introduction: "The State of the Union"

1C. Screwtape Learns A Lesson--C. S. Lewis, The ScrewTape Letters

The Junior demon was not to teach people to think...about anything!

2C. Mark Noll--The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind

The "scandal" is that there is no mind.

3C. Os Guinness--Fit Bodies and Fat Minds: Why Evangelicals Don't Think and What To Do about It

Guinness gives eight influences affecting evangelicals--influences leading to an evangelical "ghost mind."

2B. Doing Transformative Theology and Other Trades

3B. Definitions and Goals: Theological Vision

1C. Various Uses of the Term 'Theology'

1D. Natural Theology

2D. Dogmatic Theology

3D. Historical Theology

4D. Biblical Theology

5D. Systematic Theology

6D. Apologetic Theology

2C. Definitions of Systematic Theology

1D. Stanley Grenz and Roger E. Olson

"Christian theology is reflecting on and articulating the God-centered life and beliefs that Christians share as followers of Jesus Christ, and it is done in order that God may be glorified in all Christians are and do."¹

2D. Millard J. Erickson

Theology is "that discipline which strives to give a coherent statement of the doctrines of the Christian faith, based primarily upon the Scriptures, placed in the context of culture in general, worded in a contemporary idiom, and related to the issues of life."²

3D. John H. Leith

"Christian theology is critical reflection about God, about human existence, about the nature of the universe and about faith itself in the light of the revelation of God recorded in Scripture and particularly embodied in Jesus Christ, who is for the Christian community the final revelation, that is, the definitive revelation which is the criteria of all other revelations."³

4D. Charles Hodge⁴

(1) "Theology therefore, is the exhibition of the facts of Scripture in their proper order and relation, with the principles or general truths involved in the facts themselves which pervade and harmonize the whole; (2) theology...[is] the science of the facts of divine revelation so far as those facts concern the nature of God and our relation to him, as his creatures, as sinners and as subjects of redemption. All of these facts, as just remarked are in the Bible. But as some of them are revealed by the works of God, and by the nature of man, there is so far a distinction between natural theology, and theology considered distinctively as a Christian science."⁵

3C. The Goal of Doing Transformative Theology

4B. Ideas Do Matter!

5B. Categories of Systematic Theology: A Helpful Grid

1C. An Important Note

- 2C. Bibliology: The Bible
- 3C. Theology Proper: God
- 4C. Christology: The Person and Work of Christ
- 5C. Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit
- 6C. Angelology: Holy and Fallen Angels
- 7C. Anthropology: Man
- 8C. Hamartiology: Sin
- 9C. Soteriology: Salvation
- 10C. Ecclesiology: The Church
- 11C. Eschatology: End Times
- 6B. Sources for Doing Transformative Theology
 - 1C. Scripture: The Primary Authority
 - 2C. Tradition: A Voice from the Past and Present
 - 3C. Culture/Reason: The "Frog in the Kettle"
- IIA. The Person Doing Transformative Theology
 - 1B. Personal Character and Context
 - 1C. Christlike Beliefs
 - 2C. Christlike Virtues
 - 3C. Christlike Habits
 - 4C. Christlike Relationships: The Centrality of Biblical Community in the Theological Task
 - 2B. Personal Skills and Knowledge
 - 1C. Differing Conceptions of Truth
 - 2C. Sources of Knowledge
 - 3C. Biblical Language and the Nature of God
 - 1D. Univocal Language
 - 2D. Equivocal Language
 - 3C. Analogical Language

4C. Developing Reasoning Skills

1D. Creative Thinking

1E. Misconceptions about Creative Thinking

2E. A Creative Idea

3E. Facts about Creative Thinking

2D. Critical Thinking

1E. Misconceptions about Critical Thinking

2E. The Need for Critical Thinking

3E. Facts about Critical Thinking

3D. A Holistic Model: Combining Creativity and Critical Awareness

1E. Exploration

2E. Expression

3E. Investigation

4E. Idea Production

5E. Evaluation and Refinement

4D. Understanding Argumentation

1E. Induction and Deduction

2E. The Structure of An Argument

1F. The Claim(s)

2F. The Ground(s)

3F. The Warrant(s)

4F. The Backing

5F. The Qualifiers

6F. The Rebuttals

3E. Informal Fallacies To Watch For

1F. Fallacies of Relevance

2F. Fallacies of Presumption, Ambiguity, and Grammatical Analogy

- 3F. Fallacies of Ordinary Language
- 2C. Developing an Understanding of Philosophy
- 1D. The History of Philosophy
- 1E. Ancient Philosophy
- 2E. Medieval Philosophy
- 3E. Modern Philosophy
- 4E. Contemporary Philosophy
- 2D. The Main Ideas Studied in Philosophy
- 1E. Reality/Metaphysics
- 2E. God
- 3E. Experience
- 4E. Death
- 5E. Logic, Knowledge, and Truth
- 6E. Ethics and Value
- 7E. Meaning
- IIIA. The Practice of Doing Transformative Theology
- 1B. Prayer and Alertness
- 2B. A Method
- 1C. Exploration
- 1D. Ask Questions (5 W's)
- 2D. Search the Scriptures for Relevant Passages and Themes
- 3D. Read One or Two Dictionary Articles
- 2C. Expression
- 1D. The Central Questions in the Discussion
- 2D. The Major Answers Given to the Questions
- 3C. Investigation
- 1D. Read The Most Important Works (Cited in Dictionary Article or from Research)

2D. Outline Their Arguments: Weak Points/Good Points/Foundational Points

4C. Idea Production

1D. Review the Biblical Data

2D. Review the Major Questions and Answers

3D. Think through Creative Alternatives and New Solutions

4D. Think Laterally (Correlation Is Key!)

5D. State, Explain, and Defend Your Solution

5C. Evaluation and Refinement

1D. Think through the Practical Consequences of Your Idea.

2D. Does It Line Up with Scripture, Christian Theology (i.e., the gospel) and Is It Internally Consistent?
Why Is It Better than Other Solutions?

3D. Why Will People Accept/Not Accept It? How Can You Help Them?

3B. Areas To Think About

1C. Biblical/Theological Issues

2C. Church Praxis Issues

3C. Ethical Issues

4C. Political Issues

5C. Wider Cultural Issues

6C. Apologetics

4B. Implementing Your Ideas

IVA. Select Bibliography

1B. Biblical

1C. Commentary Series

The NIV Application Commentary Series, Zondervan

Tyndale Commentary on the OT/NT, Eerdmans/IVP

The New International Biblical Commentary Series (NIBC), Hendrickson

The New American Commentary Series (NAC), Broadman and Holman

The New International Commentary on the OT/NT (NICOT/NICNT), Eerdmans

Baker Exegetical Commentary Series (BEC), Baker

The Expositor's Bible Commentary (EBC), Zondervan

Word Biblical Commentary (WBC), Word Publishers

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1 Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *Who Needs Theology? An Invitation to the Study of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 49.

2 Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 21.

3 John Leith, *An Introduction to the Reformed Faith: A Way of Being the Christian Community*, rev. ed. (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981), 91.

4 Charles Hodge (1797-1878) was one of the most influential American Presbyterian theologians of the nineteenth century. He taught at Princeton from 1822 until he died. He was a strong Calvinist who wrote commentaries on Romans, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Corinthians as well as various treatises including one against Darwinism. He defended the Bible against inroads from higher criticism and wrote a three volume systematic theology of 2000 pages! See Mark Noll, "Hodge, Charles," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 513-14.

5 Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 1:19.

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