

# BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR THE PULPIT

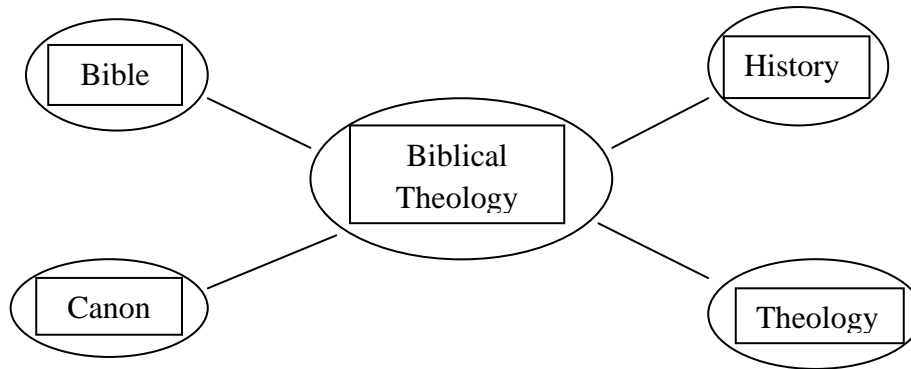
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*Biblical Theology is the attempt to find the horizon, that place where thought meets action, where ancient text and theological meaning relate to life in this world and in this time.*

## TENSIONS in the CHURCH

Biblical Studies vs. Systematic Theology

History vs. Canon (literary)



### Biblical Studies

Textual Studies of syntax, grammar, textual criticism

Historical studies, archaeology, sociology

Evaluation and interpretation within the textual and historical context

The *Referential* aspect: "What does it say?"

### Theology

Teachings of the Bible within the rubric of Christian Faith

Meaning is sought within traditional, orthodox faith.

Systematic, Dogmatic, or Philosophical theological approaches

Historical church theology, creeds, systems

The *Mimetic* aspect: "What does it mean?"

### Biblical Theology

Relationships

Creation and humanity with God

God's interactions within this world

Historical context with modern world

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## Dynamic vs. Unchanging

God, creation, and humanity are in DYNAMIC relationship instituted by God that must be interpreted through each new era in history (growing, shifting, developing)

Yet, God's nature is UNCHANGING and presents the need for Systematic, sometimes Dogmatic, theological constructions (attributes and characteristics of God and God's creation)

## Unity vs. Diversity

Christ event brings continuity between Testaments

BT views both Testaments as a unified whole

Yet, each author and book is diverse in historical context, vocabulary, purpose, etc.

Old Testament and New Testament are distinctive in form and background

## East vs. West

Old Testament is Eastern in cultural setting - Polytheistic

Stories, poetry, narrative interpretive history

New Testament is Eastern culture influenced by Hellenism/Western culture

Debate, philosophy, propositional thinking

Structured legalism with little notice of "other gods"

Judaism vs. Yahwism

## Bible

Defines God through *Acts* of God within creation

Tells stories of an interactive God who is dynamic and revelatory in various ways and manners

Shows God at work in the lives of **PEOPLE**

Reveals the attributes and character of God through actions of God (Paul describes God with propositions based on the actions of God through Jesus Christ)

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## TWO Approaches to the TEXT

### Historical Paradigm

The biblical texts are studied as a progressive movement in writing, terminology, vocabulary, and theological revelation

Questions include: sources used? Oral traditions? Editing? Historical pressures?

Smaller “chunks” (pericopes) of Scripture are analyzed intensely within their historical, grammatical, and compositional context

### Literary Paradigm

The TEXT becomes the center of attention

The written words speak apart from historical context

Sacred text can be analyzed like any other text

Connections between text and audience are sought

The Scripture takes on a sense of TIMELESSNESS

### Three Forms of Theology

1. Theology WITHIN the story (What is the theology taught within the textual context?)
2. Theology THROUGH the stories (What over- arching theology runs throughout the scripture?)
3. Theology BASED on the stories (What categories, attributes, etc. are seen through scripture that can be systematically analyzed)

### Exercise:

“A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham.” Matthew 1:1 (NIV)

How do the terms used relate to historical contexts?

What is the historical context OF the verse?

What does it *say* to us as written?

What does it *mean*?

Think through the theology revealed *in*, *through*, and *based* on the verse.

What would a biblical theological sermon on this verse look like?