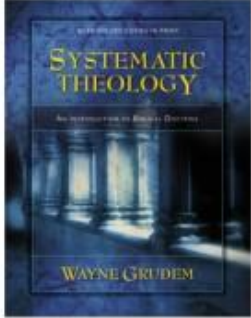




Systematic Theology



Two of my favorite classes at Moody were Systematic Theology I and II. They were 3 ½ hour block classes in the evening once a week. 5:30-9. We used Guedem's Systematic Theology as our text book studying the first half one semester and the second half the second semester. The professor was Dr Zuber and he about killed us all with homework. That I actually ended up enjoying and using parts of for OddDuck's Statement of Faith.

But never once in two semesters did I ever consider myself a theologian. And, honestly, the whole three and a half years at Moody and the 7 ½ years since.

And why? Why should we see ourselves as theologians and study systematic theology?

Traditionally we label pastors and professors as theologians. Treat the word as a lofty profession only the most learned and brainy can obtain. Most folks I know are not that. No offense please-

Theology by "Got Questions?" definition is "*Theology is the art and science of knowing what we can know and understand about God in an organized and understandable manner*". So - a theologian is someone who studies God (in an organized and understandable manner).

Grudem's then says systematic theology looks at the whole witness of Scripture and applies directly to the lives of Christians and by studying systematic theology it enables Christians to fulfill the Great Commission.

Our Sunday School class is reading the book *You Are a Theologian* by Jen Wilkenson and J.T. English. The book is essentially a very mini Grudem's Systematic Theology and the message is that we- the average person - is perfectly capable of studying and understanding concepts such as the immutable attributes of God.

And again why? Who cares if we know that God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient? That scripture is inerrant? That Jesus will return someday to make things right?

Let's look at it this way- When you love someone don't you want to know everything about them? How much more so for God?

Also, the more we know about the real God the better to realize a counterfeit when we come across one.

All of the cults, straight down the line, change God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit to suit their purposes. They come up with what they want to say and fit God around it.

The LDS (Mormons) believe God is an exalted man. He became God by being perfect, earning his way into the Celestial Kingdom and His eternal nature. Our God, the Christian God, has no beginning or end in His eternality. He is outside of time, having created it for us to use in keeping order in our lives.

The Holy Spirit according to the Jehovah Witnesses is simply God's "active spirit" and not part of the Trinity.

The World Mission Society Church of God, a Korean based cult with a base in Naperville, says God is their founder, Jesus is the next leader and the Holy Spirit is the third leader who will be the one to return. A concept not found in Grudem's OR the Bible.

Word of Faith/Prosperity Gospel contends because God created creatures after their own kind which means because God created us after Himself this makes us gods also. Little "g" but still gods.

You get the picture. By knowing who God and his attributes really are and how to approach the Bible in an orderly way we can get past all of the junk out there. And there is so much out there. So many groups twisting scripture, making up their own stories. Asking "Did God really say...?" Leading people away from the truth of the Gospel.

So yes- yes we need to be theologians. Not only for our own sakes but those we daily come across who need to be guided past the junk and to the truth. Thus fulfilling the Great Commission-

Just like a theologian-

Susan and Joe Wolf