

## Part 01 Prolegomena

*“I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.... And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.... I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.” (Eccl 1:12,17-18, 3:10-11)*

The Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs a Prolegomena. Prolegomena is a preliminary discussion, especially a formal essay introducing a work of considerable length or complexity. Prolegomena comes from the Greek, “*Prolegēin*” – meaning to say before hand<sup>1</sup>. Such an introduction essay to a systematic theology, is necessary here to set some pre-conditions, to scope out the formidable task, and, in this instance especially, to redefine the system in systematic and differentiate this effort from the many other works of this nature.

Theology is the compounding of two words, “*theos*” for God, and “*ology*” for a verbose, exhaustively researched, consideration of, a meditation on, a discussion about, and a communication of, its topic. Theology is thus an exhaustively covered presentation of everything that could be known about God and everything that God has done.

Knowing everything under the sun is a pretty daunting task.

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1 The American Heritage Dictionary, 3rd edition 1994 Soft Key International, s.v. , *Prolegomena*

The travail given to man by God is to seek and search out all things that are done under heaven. (Eccl. 1:13, 3:10). All rational minds are to be exercised in this travail. By God's grace and his wisdom this impossible travail turns into joy, when our relationship with him is made right. A systematic theology is a supreme culmination of that joy. The systematic gathering, categorizing, and analyzing of everything that God has revealed to man could indeed be a great travail. It is a task that can naught be be completed, and, because it is the finite grappling with the infinite, it can not be successful. It is, however, the sore travail given to the sons of men, and one dare not slack from its calling. Every effort is herein made to cause this exhaustive task to be less of a “sore travail” and more of a “no greater joy.” “I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men, to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time: Also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end... I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” (Ecc. 3:10, 3John 1:4)

*Theology is for Everyone*

Every rational thinking human is developing a theology. God created humans with that inborn propensity. In its basest form theology is man's musing about God. God implanted that in every rational mind. What think ye of God the creator? What think ye of Christ? What think ye of sin? What think ye of the fall of Lucifer? What think ye of “So great Salvation”? “Hear , O Israel; the LORD our God is one LORD; and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto they children, and shalt talk of them when thou settist in thine

house, and when thou walkest by the way: and when thou liest down and when thou risest up.” (Deut. 6:4-7) What think ye of God? What think ye of His Words? In a less raw form, theology must be more than musing about God, it must take on a more organized pattern and a more thorough consideration of God centered things.

A Christian, being one who has individually confessed and accepted the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, for their saving, has now a quickened, corrected, and personal relationship with their God and Creator. They also have a charge from him that they carefully develop a theology. A theology, again, is a musing about, a consideration of, and even an analysis of, (ology) everything that can be known of God (*Theos*), and of everything that God has done in this his universe. An unregenerate mind is self centered, rebellious, Christ less, and ergo, God less. His pursuit of theology will turn to self worship, (i.e. evolution as it promotes the self made man) and/or creature worship, (worshiping the creature, i.e. stars, images, idols, animals, humans, angels, et.al.) more than Creator worship. (Rom 1:10) The quickened mind of the born again believer, however, is enlightened and guided away from a self centered theology, into a God centered, Holy Spirit directed theology. But, theology is still the travail assigned to every rational mind. Carefully organizing ones musing about God, when done carefully, with method and thoroughness, might be called systematic.

### *Why Systematic?*

Systematic actually speaks toward the organizational method for the development of a theology. A systematic theology will be systematic in three particulars. First, it must be systematically holistic. There is to be nothing in particular left out. There is to be a stepping back and a consideration of the larger picture, as it were, and this review is to

ask, “Is there anything not fully considered?” Second, for a theology to be systematic, it needs a systematic method of consideration for each of its parts. A Bible doctrine work provides due consideration of every major theme taught in the Bible. Systematic theology must exceed Bible doctrine in that it must also methodically give due consideration to what the Bible does not teach, even what God has not revealed. Man has developed some beliefs about God which are not found nor supported in the Bible. Rational philosophy and irrational religions have come to bare on what one believes about God, man, and the Bible. These sources insert deception in ones theology; deception which must be systematically routed out.

Lastly, for a theology to be systematic, it needs to pursue a systematic analytical method, rather than the scientific method which cannot fulfill such a systematic purpose. In such a truly systematic method a circle or sphere encompasses the whole system to be considered. Parts, participants, and other systems outside of this sphere of consideration, are only interconnected via inputs to, or outputs from the system under consideration. Ergo, for a systematic theology, the sphere is to contain everything one can know about God and his works. To produce a Biblical theology that sphere need only contain everything revealed to man by God in the Holy Bible: distinctly clarified that is God's written word and NOT the vision of a 500 foot high Jesus that Oral Roberts saw, nor the Golden Tables of law that Joseph Smith allegedly received from an angel in Palmyra, N.Y. Notice in drawing a border around a system, certain things are purposely, and consciously left out. It will be seen that this last particular of a systematic theology, that of defining the system under consideration, is crucial, and recognizing the pieces which must fall outside of the system has been the downfall of previous works called systematic

theology. A good theology will thus be holistic, methodical and focused on a bordered system, making a good theology a systematic theology, and a truly systematic theology a good theology.

This Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is undertaken because it is unprecedented. In this author's fifty three years as a born again believer, (1960 – 2013), and thirty years as a theologian, there has not been found a systematic theology work that has been thoroughly Biblical, thoroughly Baptist and thoroughly systematic. A thoroughly Biblical systematic theology not only contends for an inerrant, infallible, plenary, verbally inspired Holy Bible, it discards confessions, orthodoxies, and traditions which over step that Bible as sole authority. A thoroughly Baptist Systematic Theology contends for the perpetuity of a right and righteous remnant. This remnant holds the rightly divided word of truth, understood in a historical, grammatical, literal manner, a word of truth which reveals God's dispensational truths. It also contends that Roman Catholic doctrine has always been wrong and the tentacles of Roman Catholic error have rooted in the whole of Protestant doctrine like leaven. Baptists are not, and never have been Protestant<sup>2</sup>. A thoroughly systematic, systematic theology is holistic, methodical, and carefully bounded in a system of truth. There are other tremendous works of systematic theology and thorough coverages of Bible doctrines. This one is meant to stand alone in these three hallmarks, Biblical, Baptist, and Systematic. Careful definition of the latter will ensure the previous two hallmarks.

*Theology is not a Science and has not been Systematic*

A thorough analysis is systematic only because it has thoroughly analyzed a

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2 John Christian, Baptist History Vol 1

system. This truth has been so maligned by theologians, and is so crucial for a successful systematic theology, that it needs to be given a thorough clarification in a Prolegomena. Any analysis and especially one so crucial as a theology, must needs be systematic to be effective and thorough. A theology can only be systematic when there is a defined system under consideration. Failure to perceive this fact has been the downfall of previous “systematic” theologies.

Charles Hodge (1797-1878), from Princeton Theological Seminary, may be considered the Father of the Published Systematic Theologies. He was very genius, a very gifted communicator, and very Presbyterian. Such a Father of the Published Systematic Theologies made two glaring errors in his Prolegomena, and consequently in his published work. Charles Hodge considered theology a science which must follow a scientific method, just like the other sciences. Charles Hodge also loosely compassed a border around his theology, i.e. his system under consideration, which attempted to capture everything ever known, ever observed, and ever believed about God, and all His works. Consider why these are indeed untenable error for an effective and efficient systematic theology.

Theology is long considered a science, like Biology, Archeology, Astronomy and Physics, and oftentimes, by those wishing to more ennoble it, it is called the Queen of the Sciences. But theology is not a science at all, and dare not follow a scientific method. There is no science or scientific method which allows for an inerrant, infallible, plenary, verbally inspired, authoritative source as a final authority, yeah, its sole authority, Biblical theology does, indeed it must. The scientific method and any resulting science which is framed by its tenants is based on hypothesizing about observations and then

extensively testing your hypothesis. This scientific method, actually formalized on Charles Hodge's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, involves five steps: 1) Formulation of the question about an observed phenomena, 2) Formulating a hypothesis which conjectures its answer, 3) Predicting the logical consequences of the hypothesis, 4) Testing to see if the real world behaves as predicted by the hypothesis and, finally, 5) Analyzing the results of the real world experiment in order to refine the hypothesis. Now after a hypothesis has been extensively tested and widely and generally accepted, with no evidence to dispute it, it may be generalized and summarized into a theory, and after a theory has been extensively tested and widely and generally accepted, with no evidence to dispute it, and no exceptions to be found, it may be generalized and summarized as a law. Does this seem like a sound way to determine theology? I trow not.

Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), German mathematician, astronomer and astrologer, used this very method for constituting the laws of planetary motion, but what we know about God, in our theology, has absolutely nothing to do with observing, questioning, hypothesizing, theorizing and constituting laws. Charles Hodge erred when he attempted to fit the scientific method into his theology development, and that glaring error has found root in systematic theologies right up to Geisler's 2002 extensive publication<sup>3</sup> The error is manifest in Hodge's first serious topic of consideration;<sup>4</sup> Hodge makes his first argument the proof of the existence of God. The Holy Bible, which he has conjectured to be his sole source and sole authority for theology, is herein set aside; it takes one on no such adventure. It is Charles Hodge's treatment of theology as just another of the natural sciences which causes him to employ techniques found in the scientific method.

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3 Normal L. Geisler, *Systematic Theology in One Volume*, Bethany House, 2002, 3, 4, 5, 11

4 Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology: Volume I*, Charles Scribner & Company, 1871, 1

Likewise, following the Father of Published Systematic Theologies, this 'proof of the existence of God' is the first coverage of Augustus Strong's 1907 Baptist work of Systematic Theology<sup>5</sup>, as does Henry Clarence Thiessen's 1949 Baptist work of systematic theology.<sup>6</sup> It is given coverage in Lewis Sperry Chafer's 1948 verbose six volumes of neoevangelical work of Systematic Theology,<sup>7</sup> and even in Geisler's 21<sup>st</sup> century evangelical effort.<sup>8</sup>

The Holy Bible extends no effort towards the proof of God's existence. He is the “I AM.” Further, it is revealed in inerrant, infallible language that every human born into this world knows of his eternal Godhead, and is without excuse. (Romans 1) Even further, it is revealed in that inerrant, infallible communicate that His Only Begotten Son, his Anointed One, the Christ, is the light that lighteth every man. There is no scientific hypothesis about His existence, a hypothesis which is carefully brought to the fruition and proof by a scientific method, because theology is not a science. Science and its methods support mans groping for greater knowledge, theology dare not do that groping like other sciences must. Theology is a process of collaborating and organizing declared truth, not a science of exploring, on a quest for confirmed truth.

Charles Hodge, genius and communications master, opened a course of study which laid aside the inerrant, infallible sole source of theology and picked up the philosophy book. He, and all systematic theology books which followed his outline, pursue the ontological argument for the existence of God. “I think therefore I am,” as a

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5 Augustus H. Strong, *Systematic Theology: Three Volumes in 1*, Philadelphia, Valley Forge PA, The Judson Press, 1907

6 Henry Clarence Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Grand Rapids, Mich., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949

7 Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology Vol 1-6*, Dallas Seminary Press, 1948

8 Geisler, *Systematic Theology in One Volume*.



profound statement, may find a sound home in a philosophy book, but it and its presumed author, have no place in a theology book. Likewise a teleological aposterior argument which proves the existence of God is nothing more than philosophical fodder for scholars showing how knowledge puffeth up. It has no place in a Biblical systematic theology book. Supposing a power which produces intelligence and rational thought might lack an intelligence and rational thinking is such a profound tom-foolery that it should not even be considered in a good philosophy book.<sup>9</sup> Hodge, and those following his theological footsteps, give this teleological argument due consideration in a systematic theology book which they suppose should follow a scientific method, because they suppose that theology is just another of the sciences. Theology is not a science, and should never stoop to a scientific method to try to prove the existence of God, or to “prove” anything else that has been revealed to man by an infallible inerrant source.

Science is<sup>10</sup> “The observation, identification, description, experimental investigation, and theoretical explanation of phenomena” and a theologian dare not call the study of his God and Creator anything resembling such a definition. Science is “Such activities restricted to a class of natural phenomena,” and a theologian dare not call his supernatural God nothing more than a natural phenomena. Science is “such activities applied to an object of inquiry or study,” and a theologian dare not call his infinite God and Creator just an object nor employ “such activities” in his travail to know/understand all things under heaven. Science is “methodological activity, discipline, or study: An activity that appears to require study and method: and knowledge, especially that gained

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9 No critique of Hodge's use of philosophical cosmological argument or philosophical moral argument need be considered here, his careful following of scientific method for these arguments is assured and still errant.

10 American Heritage Dictionary, s.v. *science*

through experience,” and the theologian dare not lean on any of these secondary definitions to capture what he must capture from an inerrant, infallible, plenary, verbally inspired written revelation authored by his infinite Creator. Theology is not a science, and it cannot be captured in its entrapments.

The scientific method is “The principles and empirical processes of discovery and demonstration considered characteristic of or necessary for scientific investigation, generally involving the observation of phenomena, the formulation of a hypothesis concerning the phenomena, experimentation to demonstrate the truth or falseness of the hypothesis, and a conclusion that validates or modifies the hypothesis.”<sup>11</sup> Their method is excellently suited for mans comprehension of all of God's creation, (Would that it were followed by the humanists with their wild hypothesis that breeding dogs together long enough will produce a Clydesdale horse, or that copulating lizards eventually hatch out a bald eagle!) but the scientific method has no place in theology. Theology must needs be exploring, categorizing, comprehending and understanding the God who reveals himself, and in so doing it is far above the natural phenomena that mere science explores. When the theologian resorts to science and scientific method in his task, he does theology a great disservice; as has Hodge, Strong, Thiessen, Chafer and Geisler. When one has an inerrant, infallible, plenary, verbally inspired sole source of truth, which these theologians affirm, (Thiessen and Chafer only affirm that we once upon a time had it, but lost it due to incompetent copyists, Geisler affirms that we only have 90% of the text left<sup>12</sup> but should trust what we have anyway, while modernist textual critics try to reassemble the rest) there is little need for a scientific method which strives to deduce what truth is, and

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<sup>11</sup> American Heritage Dictionary, s.v. *scientific method*

<sup>12</sup> Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 177

no justification for categorizing theology as a science which must rely on such methods.

*Consider the System in Systematic*

An insurmountable disservice has been done to theology by those who have not properly enveloped the system under consideration. Systematic, in the sense of a systematic theology, must include more than a planned ordered procedure of investigation, it needs to include a definition of the system which is to be considered. Charles Hodge, the Father of the Published Systematic Theologies thought to use the methods of science to explore and reason out all that could be known about God. It has been seen that the methods of science are suited for exploring all natural phenomena of God's creation, but are not at all suited for exploring the uncaused cause of all that phenomena. It must now be considered that Hodge's definition of exactly what was to be explored was far too broad and inclusive. Hodge attempted to document everything that has ever been believed about God since the coming of Christ, the manifestation of God. In this broad sweeping gesture, for it never was a clear definition, Hodge must include all the philosophies of man, all the teachings of the Mother of Churches, all the humanist and atheist perspectives and discussion about how many angels might dance on the head of a pin. This failure to scope his systematic theology, to narrow down and accurately define his approach to so daunting a task, is what has given theology a daunting shudder for most Christians, and caused systematic theology to leave a bad taste in even the preachers mouth.

Conventional theologians have tried to compensate for this failure by inappropriately dividing a “Practical Theology” and a “Biblical Theology” from this more foreboding “Systematic Theology.” Such divisions are artificial and damaging.

They imply that practical theology is not Biblical theology, that Biblical theology is not practical, and that neither can be systematic. Properly, yeah, even systematically considering the errors in Hodges approach can embolden a far better approach. A systems analysis approach to theology must replace the failed scientific method's approach. Such an analytical method can restore theology to a valid position of being practical, Biblical and systematic.

*Truly Systematic is Accomplished with Actual Systems*

With a system analyst an overwhelmingly complex system<sup>13</sup> is subdivided into smaller systems. The analyst draws a line, or border around each system, and explores the interacting interdependence of just this one system under his consideration. This is a powerful and versatile tool for analysis of very complex systems, and the complexity of this one, theology, is infinite, ergo there is no more suited methodology for its comprehension. Consider some finite illustrations of its success.

The automobile is a reasonably complex system and its complexity has advanced annually in recent years. The exhaust system is a tiny element of the more complex engine system, part of the drive system which is an integral part to the automobile. The exhaust system has a muffler which is an element in a sound muffling system and a catalytic converter which is part of an emissions control system. Each group of interacting, interrelated or interdependent elements forming a complex whole is a system in itself and these systems combine and interact to form a system called the automobile. The automobile is part of a larger system called the transportation system. To use an automobile you do not need to know that platinum is a catalyst for the chemical reaction

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<sup>13</sup> American Heritage Dictionary, s.v. *system*, A group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole.

which breaks down engine emissions. That may only be consoling knowledge when you have to open your wallet so wide to replace a catalytic converter, or when you want to know why it is against the law to buy a used one. The latter law being part of a crime prevention system. On a very physical level one can comprehend what a system is and how a systematic analysis is necessary for comprehension, design, and troubleshooting of an automobile. Rational beings are rational because they can take another step towards abstraction. Let us therefore do just that.

Biology is the study of all living things. Plants are living things and the study of plants is called Botany. Entomology is the study of insects. There are certain defined boundaries for when a living thing is considered a plant and when it is categorized as an insect. A mosquito is an insect with an intricately designed system for extracting blood from a mammal when plant liquids are not satisfying. A mammal is a class of warm blooded vertebrate animals characterized by a covering of hair on the skin and the production of milk to nourish its young. One need not labor the fact that although they may be called “ologies”, these are all systems with interacting inter-related or inter-dependent elements forming a complex whole. Biology is a defined bordered system which fits into an even larger system of study. Biology, the study of living things, is not really the study of all living things. It has a border or restriction which prevents the study of angels under this category. borders and restrictions are good and necessary in categorizing the studies of our interacting systems with that much understanding in place one can approach theology with a system analysis methodology and redefine the whole realm of Systematic Theology. That re-definition is prudent and necessary. Charles Hodge, opened an overwhelming flood gate when he included in his systematic theology,

input from Orpheus and Homer because they were called Greek Theologians<sup>14</sup>, and when he referenced the genius of Aristotle just because he classed the sciences as physics, mathematics and theology and wrote about nature, number and that which concerns God.<sup>15</sup>

It is necessary that Biblical theology consider the Holy Bible as its sole authority and sole source for truth. Draw a circle around Aristotle and other genius' and call it Philosophical theology, encircle Saint Augustine and his Roman Catholic Church and call it Roman Catholic theology, encircle John Calvin and the Westminster confession and call it Presbyterian Theology, encircle Charles Darwin and the humanist manifesto and call it humanist theology. et.al., all separate systems with borders interconnections and interactions.

Each of these circles must be considered systems in themselves. They are purposely separated from each other like the insect is separated from the plant and the mammal. They may each undergo their own systematic analysis, and they each have various interacting, innerrelated and interdependent elements. Carefully defining these separate systems is essential for understanding the effect they might have on a truly Biblical Systematic Theology. Charles Hodge as a Father of Published Systematic Theologies set a precedence for considering theology as a science, and for incorporating all that was ever believed about God. His use of Philosophy, introduced the immaterial and material dichotomy of man, instead of the Bible's Trichotomy, his use of Saint Augustine introduced the Catholicness of the Church instead of the Bible's emphasis on the local church, his use of Roman theology introduced penance, priest, and clergy, the

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14 Hodge, *Systematic Theology Vol 1*, 34 (of 682 pgs soft copy)

15 Hodge, *Systematic Theology Vol 1*, 34 of 682 in A5softcopy

Westminster Confession, decrees, predestination of souls, and fatalism; indeed all who followed in his footsteps, Strong, Thiessen, Chafer, and Geisler, gave inclusiveness greater consideration than Biblical exclusiveness. When Geisler wrote his 21<sup>st</sup> century systematic theology his goal was to systematically capture all that is believed by evangelicals; Nicene Creed, neoevangelicalism, theistic- evolution and all. Such an all encompassing theme takes up every bit of 1664 pages and advances Hodges' myth that a systematic theology must incorporate everything that reasonable minds have ever believed about God.

A systematic theology which uses the Holy Bible for its sole source and uses a system analysis approach instead of a scientific method can isolate itself from the effects of philosophy, Catholicism, Reformed theology, neoevangelacism, theistic evolutionist, et.al. Such a task is accomplished by using great care in how the systems are bounded. Where in time past it was considered that all these systems overlapped, certainly reformed theology and Roman theology both had some Bible theology, and perhaps Reformer had more than Rome, it was not deemed essential to make each a wholly separated system. All interactions and interrelationships between these systems need to be interfaced as inputs or outputs and system borders need to be kept secure. This isolation of separate systems is an essential key for this type of systematic analysis. In times past a huge system of Christian belief was captured by encircling a myriad of overlapping belief systems and truth was supposedly captured by testing various hypothesis by a scientific method. Such a process was flawed and is failed. It was ever testing and hypothesizing and never coming to the truth. Using a system analysis methodology isolates each system of belief behind clear borders, allows only guarded and

understood interrelations, and allows our focus on any of the individual systems. The system which shall capture that focus will be called Biblical Theology.

A system called Biblical Theology, with a function of generating its very name, is isolated from all other systems of theology and contains, enveloped in a sphere, as it were, the 66 books<sup>16</sup> written by forty Hebrew authors over a period of 1592<sup>17</sup> years, and called the Holy Bible, the Bible, the Holy Scriptures, the Scripture, the Word of God and the Words of God. Consider, for a moment, what else should be in this system.

Eliminating the obvious, the teachings of Aristotle, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Westminster Confession of Faith will not be herein found. One need not slander any of these, but one needs to isolate them from our Biblical Theology. These may be isolated into their own separated systems, systems with controlled, supervised interfaces.

Should an infinite God be enclosed in this system called Biblical Theology? The system is indeed finite and cannot contain the infinite. But consider the desire to capture all of God that the finite mind can possibly grasp, and consider that that whole realm of possibility is already in this system, it is all captured in the Holy Bible. “The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.” (Deut 29:29)

Should the influence of the Holy Spirit of God be in our system called Biblical Theology? No. Consider carefully this answer. In a system analysis methodology elements recognized in the system must be isolated as a separate operating system, i.e. a subsystem, which performs a function pertinent to the larger system.

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16 There will follow a full justification for the allowance of these 66 books.

17 The Pentateuch was written at Sinai in 1492 B.C. (memorable date) and Revelation of Jesus Christ in 100 A.D.



Consider, for example, the automobile exhaust system. It performs three functions, it conducts exhaust gas to the rear, it muffles the sound of the engine exhaust, and it cleans up some exhausted emissions. Certainly the piping system in charge of conducting gas does some muffling. Certainly the catalytic converter muffles some as well, but each subsystem in this system has a separate function to perform and gets isolated into its own system. Their interrelationship and interactions are marked by defined and controlled interfaces. There are indeed three separate functions in the exhaust system.

In our system called Biblical Theology, there is only one function, organizing revealed truth. If the Holy Spirit or more specifically the influence of the Holy Spirit is considered an element in this system he must be recognized as a separate subsystem which comes to bear on that revealed truth. In doing so one must consider that, allegedly, the Holy Spirit revealed a 500 foot image of Jesus to Oral Roberts. It is thus obvious that the Holy Spirit shall not be considered as a separate system operating within the system of Biblical Theology. Any work and influence that the Holy Spirit of God does must be done within the 66 books of the Words of God. And thus saith the Scripture: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” (John 16:31) For the revelation of truth which belongs in a Biblical Theology, the Holy Spirit of God must not be a separate operating agency. He shall only work in the confines of the revealed Word of God.

Should the rational mind of man be an element, i.e. a subsystem, inside of our system called Biblical Theology? If one carefully followed the reasoning just developed

about the Holy Spirit the easy answer is, No. And thus saith the Scripture: “ Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2Tim 2:15) For the revelation of truth which belongs in a Biblical Theology, the rational mind of man must not be a separate operating agency, it shall only work in the confines of the revealed Word of God.

It is clarified then that there is only one element operating inside of our system called Biblical Theology, and that element is the Holy Bible. The function of our system is to organize every thing that can be known about God and about all His works. The beauty of this Systematic Theology is that it is to develop a theology which has the inerrant, infallible, plenary, verbally inspired Holy Bible as its sole source. The strength of this Systematic Theology is that it purports an ability to separate itself from the influences of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, the Westminster Confession, Saint Augustine of Hippo, Saint Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin, the Humanist Manifesto, et.al.

Two weakness of this Systematic Theology come to mind. First, as just clarified, the Holy Spirit of God and the rational mind of man must be functionally operating inside of the system, but they have been refused a position as an operating subsystem of the system. This may be more of a necessary analytical decision than a weakness, but it will require some consideration during the development of theology. A second weakness of this Systematic Theology is that it is very foreign to all previous methodologies for building what has come to be called systematic theology. This too is more of a necessary analytical decision than a weakness, but it will require a redefining of how one does theology, and that redefining will not be accepted by some traditionalists.

One final consideration about this improved systematic methodology has to do

with the interacting, interrelating and inner dependency of the systems it defines, there is a necessary output and input interface defined between the systems that function within the larger system. For this consideration the larger system will be all that is believed by “Christians.” Some included systems considered for this interface illustration are, 1) this system of Biblical Theology, a system called 2) Roman Catholic Theology, a system called 3) Reformed Theology, and a system called 4) Evangelical Theology. (included just to recognize the extensive documentation effort of Norman L. Geisler) As minimal as it might be, there is an output from Biblical Theology which is input to Roman Catholic Theology. Is there an output from Roman Catholic Theology which serves as an input to Biblical Theology? I trow not! The purpose of this systematic development is to keep our Biblical Theology separate from all influences of the Roman Catholic Church. Likewise there is an output from Biblical Theology which is input to Reformed Theology, perhaps noticeably larger than the one to Rome. Is there an output from Reformed Theology which is input to Biblical Theology? Again, No. Such a connection is purposely severed. Likewise, again, Biblical Theology outputs to Evangelical Theology. Likewise its input from Biblical Theology is perceptibly larger than Reformed Theology's similar input. But, alas, again, output from Evangelical Theology must not find its way to be input to Biblical Theology. Ergo, all output from other systems which might act as input to Biblical Theology are purposely and conscientiously severed.

Consider that there is an output from Roman Catholic Theology that serves as input to Reformed Theology, and another inputting stuff into Evangelical Theology. Consider also that Roman Catholic Theology has mutated because of input from Reformed Theology, and likewise, from the output of Evangelical Theology. It is

adequate to be conscious of all this dynamic while being wholly focused on the system called Biblical Theology.

Also consider that there is a sound rule in Bible Hermeneutics (the Art of Bible Interpretation) which states that each interpretation should be compared with what man has always believed about a text. It is called the Rule of Orthodoxy. This is still a sound rule and is fitting for ones development of theology, when it is limited to being a rule of reasonableness and not a rule of absolutes. In this context of a systematic development of a Biblical Theology a Rule of Orthodoxy is not to be elevated to a position where it might supply input to our system. A Rule of Orthodoxy might, however, find some application in the rational mind which is studying to show itself approved unto God. Even in that application great care must be exercised that such “orthodoxy” not find an input avenue into Biblical Theology. It is still essential that Biblical Theology have a sole source in Holy Scripture.

#### *The New Improved Systematic Methodology*

This premise, this systematic methodology, is the basis for the development, documentation, and publication of this Systematic Theology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It will unite Biblical Theology and Practical Theology with a true Systematic Theology. It is a different approach than has ere been documented for theology. It hails from the halls of the systems engineer and systems analyst. It is holistic. It is prudent that it be the premise for every theology.