

Agenda

1. Roll Call & Homework Check
2. Discuss Sproul

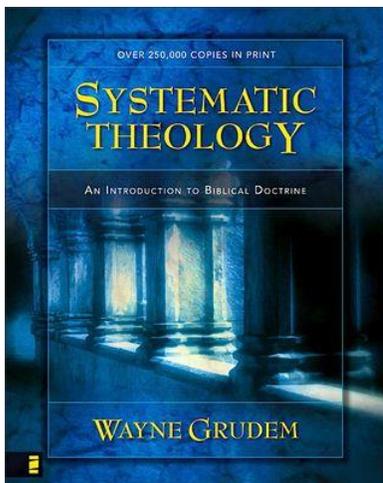
Roll Call & Homework Check

1. Sproul, *Everyone's a Theologian*, Chs 9–11
2. Psalms 13–18
3. Optional: "The Psalms Must Be Fulfilled," by John Piper

Discuss Sproul

Everyone's a Theologian
Chapters 9–11

In addition to Sproul, I have integrated insights into these notes from:



Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994. 1291-pages.

This resource is highly recommended as a general introduction to systematic theology. You can purchase it for \$50.00 at Amazon.ca.

Chapter Nine: Knowledge of God

1. God Incomprehensible (47–48)
 - a. Incomprehensible
 - b. John Calvin, *finitum non capax infinitum*
2. God Revealed (48–50)
 - a. Anthropomorphism

- b. God described
 - i. Via negationis
 - ii. Via eminentiae
 - iii. Affirmations
- 3. Three Forms of Speech (50–51)
 - a. Univocal language
 - b. Equivocal speech
 - c. Analogical speech

Discussion about Chapter Nine (Consider this in advance of our time together; write notes)

- What does it mean that God is Spirit?
 - o John 4:19–26
 - o 1 Corinthians 15:35–57
 - o Philippians 3:2–11

Chapter Ten: One in Essence

1. Unity and Uniqueness (53–53)
 - a. The Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4–5)
 - b. First Commandment (Exodus 20:3)
2. The Trinity (54–56)
 - a. John 1:1–5
 - i. Logos
 - ii. Syn
 - iii. Meta
 - iv. Pros
 - b. “The translation ‘the Word was God’ has been challenged by the Jehovah’s Witnesses, who translate it ‘the Word was a god,’ implying that the Word was simply a heavenly being but not fully divine. They justify this translation by pointing to the fact that the definite article (Gk. *ho*, ‘the’) does not occur before the Greek word *theos* (‘God’). They say therefore that *theos* should be translated ‘a god.’ However, their interpretation has been followed by no recognized Greek scholar anywhere, for it is commonly known that the sentence follows a regular rule of Greek grammar, and the absence of the definite article merely indicates that ‘God’ is the predicate rather than the subject of the sentence [footnote 12: This rule (called ‘Colwell’s rule’) is covered as early as chapter 6 of a standard introductory Greek grammar. . .]. (A recent publication by the Jehovah’s Witnesses now acknowledges the relevant grammatical rule but continues to affirm their position on John 1:1 nonetheless.)”¹
3. Divinity of Jesus²
 - a. Isaiah 9:6
 - b. Matthew 28:17
 - c. Mark 2:7
 - d. John 1:1–5; 20:25–29

¹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 234.

² Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 234–237.

- e. Romans 9:5
 - f. Colossians 2:9
 - g. Hebrews 1:3, 10
 - h. Titus 2:13
 - i. 2 Peter 1:1
4. Divinity of the Holy Spirit³
- a. Psalm 139:7–8
 - b. Matthew 12:32; 28:18–20
 - c. John 3:5–7; 14:26
 - d. Acts 5:3–4
 - e. Romans 15:18–19
 - f. 1 Corinthians 2:10–11; 3:16
 - g. 2 Corinthians 13:14
 - h. Hebrews 9:14

Chapter 11: Three in Person

1. A Paradox (57–58)
 - a. The Trinity is a paradox. What is a paradox?
2. Essence and Person (58 – 59)
 - a. Ousios
 - b. Persona
3. Subsistence and Existence (59–60)

³ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 237–238.

- a. Subsistence
 - b. Existence
4. References to the Trinity in the Old Testament.⁴
- a. Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7
 - b. Psalm 45:6–7; 110:1
 - c. Isaiah 6:8; 48:16; 63:10
 - d. Hosea 1:7
 - e. Malachi 3:1–2
 - f. “If this angel of the LORD is a ‘messenger’ of the LORD, he is then distinct from the LORD himself. Yet at some points the angel of the LORD is called ‘God’ or ‘the LORD’ (see Gen. 16:13; Ex. 3:2–6; 23:20–22 [note ‘my name is in him’ in v. 21]; Num. 22:35 with 38; Judg. 2:1–2, 6:11 with 14).”⁵
 - g. Proverbs 8:22–31
 - i. “The Hebrew word that commonly means ‘create’ (*bārā*) is not used in verse 22; rather the word is *qānāh*, which occurs eighty-four times in the Old Testament and almost always means ‘to get, acquire’ . . . This is a legitimate sense and, if wisdom is understood as a real person, would mean only that God the Father began to direct and make use of the powerful creative work of God the Son at the time creation began: The Father summoned the Son to work with him in the activity of creation. The expression, ‘brought forth’ in verses 24 and 25 is a different term but could carry a similar meaning: the Father began to direct and make use of the powerful creative work of the Son in the creation of the universe.”⁶
5. References to the Trinity in the New Testament⁷
- a. Matthew 3:16–17; 28:19
 - b. 1 Corinthians 12:4–6
 - c. 2 Corinthians 13:14

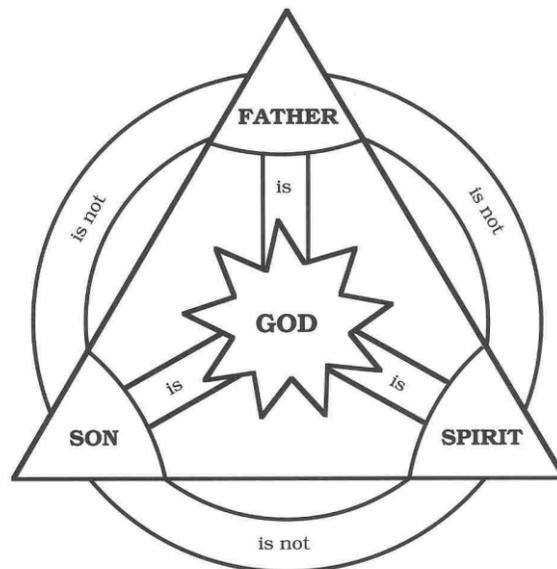
⁴ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 226–230.

⁵ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 229.

⁶ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 230.

⁷ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 230–231.

- d. Ephesians 4:4–6
 - e. 1 Peter 1:2
 - f. Jude 20–21
6. “In one sense the doctrine of the Trinity is a mystery that we will never be able to understand fully. However, we can understand something of its truth by summarizing the teaching of Scripture in three statements:
- a. God is three persons.
 - b. Each person is fully God.
 - c. There is one God.”⁸



7. “Errors Have Come By Denying Any of the Three Statements Summarizing the Biblical Teaching”⁹
- a. “Modalism Claims That There Is One Person Who Appears to Us in Three Different Forms (or “Modes”). . .
 - i. “At various times people have taught that God is not really three distinct persons, but only one person who appears to people in different ‘modes’ at different times. For example, in the Old Testament God appeared as ‘Father.’ Throughout the Gospels, this same divine person appeared as ‘the Son’ as seen in the human life and ministry of Jesus. After Pentecost, this same person then revealed himself as the ‘Spirit’ active in the church. . .
 - ii. “This teaching is also referred to by two other names. Sometimes it is called Sabellianism. . . Another term for modalism is “modalistic Monarchianism. . .

⁸ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 231.

⁹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 241–248.

- iii. “Modalism gains its attractiveness from the desire to emphasize clearly the fact that there is only one God. . .
- iv. “The fatal shortcoming of modalism is the fact that it must deny the personal relationships within the Trinity that appear in so many places in Scripture (or it must affirm that these were simply an illusion and not real).”¹⁰
- b. “Arianism Denies the Full Deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. . .
 - i. “Arius taught that God the Son was at one point created by God the Father, and that before that time the Son did not exist, nor did the Holy Spirit, but the Father only. . .
 - ii. “The dispute with Arius concerned two words that have become famous in the history of Christian doctrine, *homoousios* (‘of the same nature’) and *homoiousios* (‘of a similar nature’). The difference depends on the different meaning of two Greek prefixes, *homo-*, meaning ‘same,’ and *homoi-*, meaning ‘similar’. . . Arius would agree to the word *homoiousios*. But the Council of Nicea in 325 and the Council of Constantinople in 381 realized that this did not go far enough, for if Christ is not of exactly the same nature as the Father, then he is not fully God. So both councils insisted that orthodox Christians confess Jesus to be *homoousios*, of the same nature as God the Father.”¹¹
- c. “Subordinationism. . .
 - i. “While Arianism held that the Son was created and was not divine, subordinationism held that the Son was eternal (not created) and divine, but still not equal to the Father in being or attributes—the Son was inferior or ‘subordinate in being to God the Father.’”¹²
- d. “Adoptionism. . .
 - i. “Before we leave the discussion of Arianism, one related false teaching needs to be mentioned. ‘Adoptionism’ is the view that Jesus lived as an ordinary man until his baptism, but then God ‘adopted’ Jesus as His ‘Son’ and conferred on him supernatural powers. Adoptionists would not hold that Christ existed before he was born as a man; therefore, they would not think of Christ as eternal, nor would they think of him as the exalted, supernatural being created by God that the Arians held him to be.”¹³
- e. “The Filioque Clause. . .
 - i. “The word *filioque* is a Latin term that means ‘and from the Son.’ It was not included in the Nicene Creed in either the first version of A.D. 325 or the second version of A.D. 381. Those versions simply said that the Holy Spirit ‘proceeds from the Father.’ But in A.D. 589, at a regional church council in Toledo (in what is now Spain), the phrase ‘*and the Son*’ was added, so that the creed then said that the Holy Spirit ‘proceeds from the Father *and the Son* (*filioque*)’ . . .
 - ii. “The doctrinal controversy and the split between the two branches of Christianity [Eastern, against *filioque*, and Western, in favour of *filioque*] have not been resolved to this day. . .

¹⁰ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 242.

¹¹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 243–244.

¹² Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 244.

¹³ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 245.

- iii. “The weight of evidence (slim though it is) seems clearly to favor the western church [to include *filioque*].”¹⁴

Discussion about Chapters 10–11 (Consider this in advance of our time together; write notes)

- What do you find most difficult about the concept of the Trinity?
- Discuss the distinctions between Father, Son, and Submission. Do you hold to Eternal Functional Submission of the Son to the Father? (see optional reading for week 4: De Young, “Distinguishing Among the Three Persons of the Trinity within the Reformed Tradition”)

¹⁴ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 246.