

BCM 308
CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
A WORKING OUTLINE OF LECTURES
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INTRODUCTION—THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

LECTURE I: INTRODUCTION TO THE NATURE OF THEOLOGY

- A. Qualifications for the Student of Christian Theology
- B. Definitions of Theology
 - 1. Scientific
 - 2. Revelatory
 - 3. Traditional
 - 4. Experiential
 - 5. Historic
- C. Stages in Theological Development
 - 1. Kerygmatic Stage
 - 2. Apologetic Stage
 - 3. Polemic Stage
 - 4. Systematic Stage
- D. The Nature of Religion
 - 1. The origin of religion in general
 - a. Sociological explanations—e.g. Émile Durkheim (1858-1917)
 - b. Psychological explanations—e.g. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)
 - c. Economic explanations—e.g. Karl Marx (1818-1883)
 - 2. The qualities of the Christian religion in particular
- E. Basic Characteristics of Evangelical Christianity

F. Wesley's Quadrilateral for Determining Truth (John Wesley [1703-1791])

1. Scripture
2. Reason
3. Tradition
4. Experience

LECTURE II: THE DOCTRINE OF REVELATION

- A. Introduction
- B. General Revelation
- C. The Special Revelation in the Bible, the Written Word
- A. The Special Revelation in Jesus Christ, the Enfleshed Word

LECTURE III: THE DOCTRINE OF GOD THE FATHER

- B. Introduction—"All the wisdom we possess" John Calvin (1509-1564)
- C. The Existence of God
 1. Understanding God's existence
 2. Confirming God's existence (proofs for the existence of God)
 - a. St. Anselm (1033-1109)
 - b. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)
 - c. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)
 - d. Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)
- C. The Attributes of God
 1. The absolute attributes
 2. The relative attributes
 3. The moral attributes

LECTURE IV: THE DOCTRINE OF ANTHROPOLOGY

- A. Humanity in relation to God and the universe
- B. Unique Characteristics of humanity

C The Fall of humanity

1. Pelagius (354-420/440) and St. Augustine (354-430)
2. John Calvin (1504-1564)
3. Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)
4. John Wesley (1703-1791)

D. The future

1. Redemption
2. The new heaven and the new earth

LECTURE V: HOW DOES GOD WORK?

1. Theodicy
2. Gottfried Leibnitz (1646-1716)
3. Statement of the problem of evil
4. How to deal with the problem of evil

LECTURE VI: THE DOCTRINE OF GOD THE SON

A. Christ and the Old Testament

B. Christ and the New Testament

1. The virgin birth of Jesus
2. The baptism of Jesus
3. The temptation of Jesus
4. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus

C. The Estates of Christ

1. The estate of humiliation
2. The estate of exaltation

D. The Offices of Christ

1. The office of prophet
2. The office of priest
3. The office of king

E. The Human and Divine Natures of Jesus Christ

1. Background

- a. The nature of heresy
- b. The doctrine of Christology
- c. Christology and the New Testament

2. Christological Heresies

- a. Those who emphasized the humanity of Jesus to the exclusion of His divinity.
- b. Those who emphasized the divinity of Jesus to the exclusion of His humanity.
- c. The Church develops a Christology
- d. Affirmations of other Church Councils.

3. The Situation Today

- a. Liberal Christianity
- b. Conservative Christianity
- c. A final reminder

F. The Nature of the Atonement

- 1. Introduction to the doctrine
- 2. Atonement in the Old Testament
- 3. Atonement in the New Testament
- 4. Theories of the atonement

a. The objective view of the atonement—Christ as Expiator and Savior

- 1) The problem
- 2) The locus
- 3) The focus
- 4) The emphasis
- 5) People who hold this view of the atonement

- a.) St. Anselm (1033-1109)
- b.) Fundamentalism/Evangelicalism

b. The subjective view of the atonement—Christ as Example and Teacher

- 1) The problem
- 2) The locus
- 3) The focus
- 4) The emphasis
- 5) People who hold this view of the atonement

- a.) Peter Abelard (1079-1142)
- b.) Liberal Protestantism

c. Christ as Victor view of the atonement—Christ as Conqueror and Lord

- 1) The problem
- 2) The locus
- 3) The focus
- 4) The emphasis
- 5) People who hold this view of the atonement

- a.) St. Augustine (354-430)
- b.) Martin Luther (1483-1546)

d. Concluding remarks

LECTURE VII: THE DOCTRINE OF GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. Introduction

B. The Person of the Holy Spirit

C. The Work of the Holy Spirit

1. In the Old Testament
2. In the New Testament
3. In the Church
4. In the world
5. In the individual

D. The Doctrine of Sanctification

1. Explained as a mystical conversion experience (e.g. Teresa of Ávila [1515-1582])
2. Explained as a baptism of the Holy Spirit (e.g. Pentecostalism)

3. Explained as entire sanctification or perfect love—(e.g. John Wesley [1703-1791])
4. Explained as growth in God's grace—(e.g. John Calvin [1504-1564])

LECTURE VIII: THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

- A. Initial Considerations
- B. The New Testament Witness
 1. To Jesus Christ
 2. To the Holy Spirit
 3. To Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- C. The Church Attempts to Formulate a Doctrine of the Trinity
 1. Differences among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
 2. Unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
 3. Tertullian's formulation—Tertullian (c.160-c.225)
 4. The Council of Nicea—Emphasis upon three persons and one substance
- D. The Significance of the Doctrine of the Trinity
 1. The Doctrine of the living God
 2. The Doctrine of creation
 3. The Doctrine of revelation
 4. The Doctrine of redemption
- E. Conclusion—Worship of the Triune God

LECTURE IX: THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

- A. Introduction: English usage of the word "Church"
- B. The history of the Church
- C. The attributes of the Church
- D. The organization of the Church
- E. The worship of the Church

- F. The sacraments of the Church
 - 1. The nature of the sacraments
 - 2. The number of sacraments
- G. The relationship between Church and state
 - 1. The separation of Church and state
 - 2. The radical separation of Church and state
 - 3. The union of Church and state
- H. Why people leave the Church or change churches

LECTURE X: THE DOCTRINE OF CHRISTIAN HOPE

- A. The Second Advent of Christ
 - 1. The Kingdom of God
 - 2. Characteristics of the Second Advent
- B. The Resurrection of the Dead
 - 1. Resurrection in the Bible
 - a. The Old Testament
 - b. The Intertestamental Period
 - c. The New Testament
 - 2. The Resurrection of the Believer
- C. The Millennium
 - 1. Three Millennial Positions
 - a. Premillennialism
 - b. Amillennialism
 - c. Postmillennialism
 - 2. Four Aspects of Millennialism
 - a. The outpouring of the Spirit
 - b. The paradise of the blessed
 - c. The great harvest of souls

- d. The final triumph
- D. Afterlife
 - 1. New Testament affirmation
 - 2. Heaven
 - 3. Hell

LECTURE XI: THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

- A. “All good theology ends in ethics.”
- B. Humanity lives in three states:
 - 1. Before the fall
 - 2. After the fall
 - 3. After salvation
- C. Two greatest problems in the sinful world—pride and love of self
- D. The three concerns of Christian ethics
- E. The three virtues of Christian ethics
- F. Christians and the law of God

LECTURE XII: CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE TODAY

- A. Definitions
 - 1. Modernity
 - 2. Enlightenment
 - 3. Modernism
 - 4. Postmodernism
- B. Enlightenment’s Critique of Christian Theology: Specific Issues
- C. What is the Place of Christian Doctrine?
- D. Movements in Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century and This Century
 - 1. Existentialism

- a. Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855)
 - b. Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976)
 - c. Paul Tillich (1886-1965)
- 2. The Social Gospel Movement (e.g. Walter Rauschenbusch [1861-1918])
- 3. Ecumenism
 - a. Reasons for a Divided Protestantism
 - b. Growing Recognition of the Basic Unity of Protestantism
- 4. Neo-orthodoxy
 - a. Karl Barth (1886-1968)
 - b. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)
 - c. Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971)
- 5. Theological Movements Confronting Modernism and Post-Modernism
 - a. New Conservatism
 - b. Theologies of Hope (e.g. Jürgen Moltmann)
 - c. Theologies of Liberation (e.g. Black Theology, Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology)
 - d. Pluralism and the Relationship of Christianity with other religions (e.g. John Cobb).
 - e. Renewed emphasis on both the work of the Holy Spirit and Eschatology (e.g. Gonzalez)
 - f. Evangelicalism (e.g. Alister McGrath)
- E. Christianity Looks at Itself and Other Religions
 - 1. The dialogue of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism
 - a. Historic Attitudes
 - 1.) Problems Protestants have had with Roman Catholics
 - 2.) Problems Roman Catholics have had with Protestants
 - b. Historic Changes
 - c. The Nature of the dialogues
 - d. Disagreements

2. Three approaches to other World Religions

F. Where Do We Go From Here?

“Christianity is defined by the person and work of Jesus Christ. The doctrinal truths supporting this assertion—as set out in Scripture and summarized in the major Christian creeds—provide a compelling reason for pursuing human learning. At the same time, they also offer strong protection against the abuses of human learning. Understanding more about Christ and his work not only opens a wide doorway to learning, but also checks tendencies toward idolatry that are as potent among scholars as in the rest of humankind.”

Mark A. Noll, *Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind*, ix.