

WHAT IS BIBLICAL THEOLOGY?

I. Definitions of Biblical Theology

- A. By pietists. Denotes a popular as opposed to ecclesiastical and scholastic presentation of Xnty.
- B. Denotes creed of early Xns as contrasted with later development of doctrine in the church.
- C. Some make it mean the revelational nature of Xnty as contrasted with rational theology. This is sometimes what people think DTS theology is and contrast bet DTS and other seminaries' theology. Actually in this sense DTS theology is biblical but obviously there is some diff bec we have systematic theol courses which are biblical and Bib Theol courses.
- D. Schmid defines it as a collection of proof passages for the more imp't doctrines and divisions of dogma.
- E. Weidner, I, p. 13, says it is an investigation "in a purely historical manner, the teaching of each single writer of the NT." Not quite right to say it is a purely historical task esp if you contrast history and exegesis but actually you don't need to do that.
- F. Best definitions. "That branch of theological science which gives an historical presentation of revealed religion during the period of its growth." Schulz, I, 2.
"The revelation of God in X did not consist, as to its nature, in the communication of a sum of religious ideas and doctrines, given all at once, but the religious consciousness and life which were produced by the revelation in Christ assumed different forms in its different leading representatives, and at different stages of its development. And it is the task of New Testament Theology to represent the individually and historically conditioned manifoldness of the New Testament forms of doctrine, and clearly to set them forth in their unity and harmony." Weidner, I, 13-14.
"that branch of Exegetical Theology which deals with the process of the self-revelation of God deposited in the Bible." Vos.

II. The Relation of Biblical Theology and Revelation

- A. Bib Theol emphasizes the historic progressiveness of revelation. Deals with rev as a Divine activity. Rev. not completed in one act but unfolded itself in long series of successive acts. Great argument against ultra-dispensationalism.
- B. Bib Theol emphasizes the embodiment of rev in history. Rev becomes incarnate in history. But act revelations are always preceded and followed by word revelations. Barth denies rev in words but cf 2 Cor 2:13.
- C. Bib Theol brings out the organic nature of the historic progress of rev. The organism which we call rev did not develop with uniform motion but in epochs. By diff amounts and with diff points of view thruout history. P's mind diff from Peter's. NT diff from OT. Moses diff from other prophets. Does not contradict infallibility of Script--simply states that rev not uniform. This is a theistic view--other is a Deist's one--God static and either gave it all at once or with dull uniformity.
- D. Bib Theol emphasizes in a diff way (not exclusive way, i.e. not implying that Sys Theol not practical) that rev is practical and adaptable. God wants us to know in Semitic sense--have reality interwoven into experiences of life; not in Hellenistic sense of simply in one's consciousness.

III. The Relation of Biblical Theology to other Branches of Biblical Study.

- A. To Apologetics. Bib Theol assumes the results of Apol---i.e. the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Script.
- B. To OTI and NTI. We assume the integrity of critical investigations. These sciences must precede Bib Theol. However, sometimes in study of Bib Theol it is nec to examine certain critical points, e.g. makes diff as to authorship of Pastorals in Pauline theol and date and priority of 2 Pet and Jude. Readers of Heb impt.
- C. To Exegesis. Direct connection bec exegesis is grammatical, i.e. tells us exactly what the author wished to say, and it is historical, i.e. tells us what each writer wished to say in his own age. "Only in this way is a historical presentation possible" Schulz, 1,3. Really should write out an exegesis of all material under consideration. Jude 3, 1 Pet 3:1 without a word. Eph 5:26. Critical questions---what belongs in the text---also come under this.
- D. To Systematic Theology. Not implying that Sys Theol not biblical. Both are based on the Bible and no attempt is made in Bib Theol courses to imply that other theol not bib. Also both systematize. Both are Biblical and both are systematic.
1. As to priority. Bib Theol is introductory to Sys theol. Yet distinct bec of its historical emphasis, but it is "the exegetical foundation for Dogmatic Theology. It is the material withwhich the latter science builds." Weidner, 15. In DTS Sys 1st and Bib later electives; but this order nec unless you're going to construct Sys Theol from scratch and do all the inductive sutdyyourself. In DTS order Bib magnifies the parts of Sys. Both absolutely nec.
 2. As to form. Sys presents ⁱⁿ one harmonious whole Xn thought and message from today's viewpoint. Bib presents from historical standpoint the thot of the leaders of Judaism and Xnty during the particular period of growth.
 3. As to content. Sys considers all Bib thot. Bib just the contents of a particular period of person. e.g. 1 Pet 3---baptist of HS prob not understood by Peter that early. Sys is the blossom; Bib the pedal.
- E. To HCD. Bib Theol within the circle of historical theol. But distinct bec HCD shows how doctrines of Xnty became ecclesiastical dogmas. Distinct from Ch Hist bec that shows how Xnty fared within context of ~~other~~ nations. HCD tells that the Church or readers thot. Bib Theol tells what the writer thot.

IV. The Theological Method of Biblical Theology.

In Sys theol the method is to systematize all truth on a given subject. Bibl theol systematize truth of one man or one period. Vos says it should be an historic progression--by periods and yet admits that such an approach does not do justice to the peculiarities of the agents of revelation. Prob best that in earlier periods we do it by periods (as Pent) and later when truth becomes more detailed to do it by men (as P).

Whether by period of man you have another choice in method--treat either the period or man acc to the regular divisions of sys theol or acc to the outstanding areas and lines of his thinking or the particular distinctivenesses of rev during that period. If LSC apostle of grace is main thing in his mind. Don't find much on visible church. If Peter--look for the effect of his close relation to Christ's life. If Heb how does address of book affect it? If Pent. what things esp were revealed that early. Systematize and present under categories but never force the man into all 8. When thru will have lots of facts under various categories, but want you also to remember outstanding things of that period or man.

V. The Origin of the Study of Biblical Theology.

Prob Reformation gave initial impetus bec there the deviation bet doctrine of the Church and doctrine of Bible clearly brot out. Ref demanded renovation of theol in accordance with Script. Attempts were made to arrange in an independent manner the results of grammatical-historical study alongside the dogmatics of the Church either to its support or correction.

Spencer--1635-1705.

Bengel--1687-1751.

Pietism.

John Philip Gabler--De justo discrimine theologiae biblicae et dogmaticae, 1789.

This work first emphasized the historical character of Bib Theol.

George L. Bauer, 1755-1806.

WML de Wette, 1813.

L.J. Rueckert, 1825.

Augustus Neander, 1789-1850 in his History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church by the Apostles. This represented the teaching of the Apostles separately.

C F Schmid, 1794-1852. Bib Theol of the NT

Bernhard Weiss.

Oehler, Davidson, Vos.

VI. Results of the study of Biblical Theology.

1. Imparts new freshness into the truth by showing it in its original historic setting. Not just repetition of dogmas of Sys Theol under an individual or period.
2. Safeguard against ultradispensationalism. Bec you are made to see the true development of doctrine as in Acts, and bec you are made to see similarities bet writers.
3. Bib Theol relieves to some extent the unfortunate situation that certain fundamental doctrines seem to depend on the testimony of isolated prooftexts. Vos. Bec you see theol substructure. James doesn't speak of inspiration yet see belief in it in very firm way in his epistle.

4. Safeguard against isolating doctrine from historical context. Too often fundamentalists isolate and don't see doctrine in its historical context. Acts 2:38 and LSC's interpretation. Note student who said couldn't find sin question mentioned in sermons in Acts, but if understand historical context of meaning of repent of course it is there.
5. Gives appreciation of man.
6. Gives balance to doctrine of inspiration bec of 5. Too often we only look at words and results and forget the human instrument. Necessary to look behind words and see individuality, personal interests, literary style of the man. This true when unit is a man and not a period.
7. Gives appreciation of age of grace. This true when unit of study is a period and not a man. When see what was revealed in other ages see what we have today. And be thankful and humble.

OLD FIELDBOND

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