

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BTHD 529 Foundations of Biblical Theology

Benny C. Aker PhD

Thursdays: Feb 9, 16, 23

March 9, 16,

2006

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to biblical theology covering methodology, history, basic issues, and the foundational content of the field. Correlation between biblical and systematic theology is explored and discussed. The course includes an examination of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures and the unity and diversity of the biblical revelation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, the student should be able to:

1. Read the Bible with a better biblical theological hermeneutic and arrive at a more sound relevant and biblical interpretation;
2. Prepare a biblical theological sermon, lesson, or article;
3. Evaluate various kinds of literature that are in the market place of church leaders and congregants in respect to their biblical theological soundness;
4. Demonstrate a skill that is able to interpret biblical texts and do biblical theology through the eyes of different cultures and different historical circumstances;
5. Appreciate the different ways of doing biblical theology and evaluate them;
6. Do biblical theology by interpreting a variety of biblical genres.

TEXTBOOKS

Carson, D.A., et. al., editors. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000. (Also available on CD with other IVP titles through Logos)

COURSE OUTLINE

Chapel meets on March 9 6:00-7:15

First Class

A four page paper is due; the topic is on the “Difference between Systematic and Biblical Theology” (be sure to illustrate as well as to describe) (formatting and style, etc., must conform to Turabian’s 6th edition). [Notes and lesson plans for all the matters below are on “Class notes”-- “Aker”--“Foundations of Biblical Theology ” on library computers.]

The reading assignment for this class is to begin on the list under the Second Class.

Discussion topics for this introductory class are:

1. Nature of Inspiration: foundation of biblical theology
2. Discovering the nature of theology--defining it;
3. Various ways of conceptualizing and doing it:
 - a. First dimension: denominationally/religiously and ethnically (examples):
 - i. Reformed: Baptist/Presbyterian/Lutheran,
 - ii. Liberation theology (Black or Hispanic),
 - iii. Roman Catholic,
 - iv. Orthodox,
 - v. Black African (Evangelical),
 - vi. Methodist,
 - vii. Asian (Chinese, Korean, or Japanese) (Evangelical),
 - viii. Classical Pentecostal (AG; Church of God; Four Square);
 - b. Second dimension: anthropological (see chart):
 - i. Occidental (contractual/individualistic societies);
 - ii. Oriental (kinship/group societies);
 - c. Third dimension:
 - i. Relational orientation kinship/ group societies),
 1. doing,
 2. being,
 - ii. Reason versus rationalism,
 - iii. Experience,
 - iv. Revelation,
 - v. Ideology,
 - vi. Tradition,
 - vii. Propositions.
4. Function of theology.

Second Class

Four page paper due on the topics of description, prescription; diversity within unity; and the issue of a starting point. Be sure to illustrate these as well as to describe.

Biblical Theology Introductory readings are:

NDBT [textbook], pp. 1-11

- “Biblical Theology”

NDBT [textbook], pp. 11 - 19

- “History of Biblical Theology”

NDBT [textbook], 20-27

- “Challenges to Biblical Theology”

NDBT [textbook], pp. 27- 34

- “The Canon of Scripture”

NDBT [textbook], pp. 34- 42

- “Scripture”

NDBT [textbook], pp.43-51

- “Biblical History”

NDBT [textbook], pp. 52-64

- Exegesis and Hermeneutics

NDBT [textbook] pp. 89-111

- “Systematic Theology and Biblical Theology”

Readings on Biblical Theology Issues are:

NDBT [textbook], pp. 64-72

- “New Testament Use of the Old Testament”

NDBT [textbook], 81-89

- “Relationship of Old Testament and New Testament”

Particular Application

NDBT [Textbook] pp. 104-12

- “Preaching and Biblical Theology”

Some specific articles on the issues in biblical theology are as follows and are online (accessed from http://www.findarticles.com/cf_0/moLAL/1_33/9822800/print.jhtml), in “Class Notes” on AGTS computers or in books on reserve:

- David M. Bossman, “Rethinking the Past For an Energized Biblical Theology,” *BTB* (Summer, 2000).
- David M. Bossman, “Biblical Theology For a Secular Society. (Presenting the Issue),” *BTB* (Spring, 2001).
- Anna Brawley, ”Grafted In: Why Christians are Thinking About a Jewish Biblical Theology *BTB* (Winter, 2000).
- Robert K. Gnuse, “Words That Testify of God: The Theology of the Old Testament,” *BTB* (Fall, 2001).
- Robert Gnuse, “The Critic of Biblical Theologians: A Review of James Barr’s *The Concept of Biblical Theological: An Old Testament Perspective*. (Book Review),” *BTB* (Summer, 2001).
- Roland E. Murphy, “When is Theology “Biblical”? Some Reflections,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* (Spring, 2003).
- Roland E. Murphy, “Once Again—the ‘Center’ of the Old Testament. (Old Testament Theology),” *BTB* (Fall, 2001).
- Marshall, I. Howard, “Developing a Biblical Hermeneutic for a Developing Theology.” (An article in the Class Notes/Aker/Foundations of Biblical Theology folder on Y drive).
- Read brief introductions to each of the biblical theologians below. You will find the introductory material in the front of each one’s book and/or in Gerhard Hasel’s *New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) and *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (4th ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991). Also, Ben C. Ollenberger, Elmer A. Martens, and Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Flowering of Old Testament Theology* (Winona Lake, IND: Eisenbrauns, 1992). All are on reserve.

Topics of discussion are:

1. Compare biblical and systematic theology and define biblical theology;
2. Biblical theologians and biblical theological issues and their approaches to OT or NT theology:
 - a. Old Testament:
Samuel L. Terrien,
Theodorus C. Vriezen,
Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.,
Gerhard von Rad,
Elmer A. Martens,
Walther Eichrodt,
John L. McKenzie,
Brevard Childs,
Ralph L. Smith,
George Wright;
Brevard Childs
Paul R. House
 - b. New Testament:
Leon Morris,
George E. Ladd,
Leonhard Goppelt,
Werner Georg Kümmel,
Hans Conzelmann,
Alan Richardson,
Donald Guthrie;
3. Clarify these issues:
 - a. prescription,
 - b. description,
 - c. diversity,
 - d. unity,
 - e. center of organization,
 - f. development, (Marshall's *Beyond the Bible* will serve well here—to be discussed)
 - g. discontinuity,
 - h. continuity,
 - i. approach/organization.

Third Class

A four page paper is due on the topics of continuity/discontinuity; development; and methods of synthesizing.

Readings for this class are as follows:

1. Reading of specific biblical texts (cf. class outline below);
2. Reading of commentary material on the selected passages (see below);
3. Read *NDBT* (textbook) on "Psalms" pp. 203-208.
4. Read *NDTB* on topics that emerge from the Psalm below and that are listed in the third part of our textbook.

Topics of discussion:

1. Review and finish issues from last class.
2. Doing theology from poetry: interpret Psalm 135.
 - a. Read carefully and layout the Psalm in its poetic structure;
 - b. Consult a few good commentaries for assistance;
 - c. Write down interpretative observations, noting the issues (prescription, continuity/discontinuity, and etc.);
 - d. Examine carefully the language in this Ps of the first exodus and think about such issues as descriptive/prescriptive language; continuity/discontinuity ideas, and etc.;
 - e. Collect relevant theological topics;
 - f. Be ready to discuss and present in class.

Fourth Class

Reading for this class will focus on the biblical texts as given below.

1. As you read and study, please use the textbook to discover background information
 - a. (Part 2) “Isaiah” and “Ezekiel” in *NDBT*
 - b. as well as information about topics (Part 3) that emerge from studying the biblical texts, for instance, “Exile,” in *NDBT*.
2. Reading of commentary material on the selected passages (see below).

Texts to study and discuss:

1. Isaiah 40-43;
2. Ezekiel 34, 37, and 47.
3. Locate the key themes of these chapters and apply the methodological issues.

Fifth Class

A ten to twelve page formal paper is due. Choose a biblical theological topic, addressing the issues studied in this course as well as presenting good theological content, and write on it. Use good formal and acceptable AGTS style (Turabian 6th ed. is the guide).

Reading for this class will focus on the biblical texts as given below.

1. As you read and study, please use the textbook to discover background information
 - a. (Part 2) “Matthew,” “Mark,” “Luke,” “John,” and “Acts” in *NDBT*
 - b. as well as information about topics (Part 3) that emerge from studying the biblical texts, for instance, “Jesus Christ,” “John the Baptist,” “Salvation,” in *NDBT*.
2. Reading of commentary material on the selected passages (see below).
3. Focus on two topics: John the Baptist and Spirit baptism (in his telling about what Jesus would do from the four Gospels and Acts).

Focus items:

1. Work on John the Baptist in the four Gospels, one at a time (a Synopsis is a valuable tool here). Ask as you interpret, how do the Gospels differ from one

- another? Why? What does John mean with “He will baptize you with Holy Spirit [and fire]?”
2. Examine the Gospels’ and Acts’ teaching on “Kingdom.” And salvation? Relate to Spirit-baptism.
 3. What is the background of John in Malachi and Isaiah?
 4. Discuss the issues related to this time of study, especially continuity and discontinuity.

METHODOLOGY

1. Class preparation: Reading of textbooks and other related material.
2. Lectures.
3. Class discussion/participation in class.
4. Write three, four page papers as listed above.
5. Write a 10-12 page paper on a biblical theological topic.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Class attendance and participation will be expected and assumed as a beginning point of class deportment and grading. Due to the nature of the class, only one absence for emergency purposes is permitted (should be cleared in advance).
NOTE: Students are expected to prepare in advance for the next class. We will discuss relevant topics from the class syllabus. Students are to ask questions and otherwise interact in class discussion.
2. Completion of all assigned readings (textbooks and articles).
3. Writing assignments:
 - A four page paper distinguishing systematic from biblical theology (due 1st class);
 - A four page paper on defining and elucidating description, prescription; diversity within unity (due 2nd class);
 - A four page paper on defining and elucidating continuity/discontinuity; development; and methods of synthesizing (due 3rd class);
 - A ten to 12 page paper on a biblical theological theme. Due the last day of class.

NOTE: Several copies of papers are on reserve to provide models for the student.

Use appropriate seminary style, form, and content for all assignments. The 6th edition of Turabian should religiously be followed.

GRADING PROCEDURE

1. 1 st four page paper	50 points
2. 2 nd four page paper	50 points
3. 3 rd four page paper	50 points
4. Biblical Theology paper	100 points
Total points possible	250 points

Averaged number of points and appropriate percentage:

95-100%=A

90- 94%=A-

87- 89%=B+

84- 86%=B

80- 83%=B-

77-79%=C+

74-76%=C

70-73%=C-

65-69%=D

NOTE: Late assignments may be penalized.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

(* indicates book is on reserve in library)

Barr, James. *The Bible in the Modern World*. N.p., n.d.

*_____. *The Concept of Biblical Theology: An Old Testament Perspective*.
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999.

*Black, D. A., and D. S. Dockery. *New Testament Criticism and Interpretation*. Grand
Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.

Bright, John. *The Authority of the Old Testament*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967;
reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975.

Bruce, F. F. *New Testament Development of Old Testament Themes*. Grand Rapids:
Eerdmans, 1969.

Caird, G. B. *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press,
1980.

Carson, D. A. *Scripture and Truth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

*Childs, Brevard S. *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context*. Philadelphia:
Fortress Press, 1986.

*_____. *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection
on the Christian Bible*. Minneapolis : Fortress Press, 1993.

*_____. *Biblical Theology: A Proposal*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002.

Clowney, Edmund P. *Preaching and Biblical Theology*. Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and
Reformed, 1977.

Davidson, A. B. *The Theology of the Old Testament*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1916.

- Dentan, Robert Claude. *Preface to Old Testament Theology*. Rev. ed. New York: Seabury Press, 1963.
- *Dockery S. David, et. al. *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation: A Complete Library of Tools and Resources*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.
- Dyrness, William A. *Themes: Old Testament Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1979.
- *Eichrodt, Walther. *Theology of the Old Testament*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, n.d.
- Elbert, Paul, ed. *Essays on Apostolic Themes*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985.
- Fuller, Daniel P. *The Unity of the Bible: Unfolding God's Plan for Humanity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Furnish, V. P. *Theology of the New Testament*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981; 1982.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000.
- *Goppelt, L. *Theology of the New Testament*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981; 1982.
- *Guelich, R. A., ed. *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.
- *Guthrie, D. *New Testament Theology*. Downer's Grove, IL: IVP, 1981.
- *Hasel, Gerhard F. *New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.
- *_____. *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.
- Hayes, John H., and Frederick C. Prussener. *Old Testament Theology: Its History and Development*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985.
- *House, Paul R. *Old Testament Theology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998.
- *Hubbard, Robert L., Jr., Robert K. Johnston, and Robert P. Meye, eds. *Studies in Old Testament Theology*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1992.

Jacob, Edmond. *Theology of the Old Testament*. Translated by Arthur W. Heathcote and Philip J. Allcock. New York: Harper & Row, 1958.

Johnston, R. K., ed. *The Use of the Bible in Theology: Evangelical Options*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985.

Kaiser, Walter C. *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1985.

*_____. *Toward Rediscovering the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987.

*_____. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

Howard, Marshall, I. *Beyond the Bible: Moving From Scripture to Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.

*Morris, Leon. *New Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986.

*Ollenberger, Ben C., Elmer A. Martens, and Gerhard F. Hasel. *The Flowering of Old Testament Theology*. Winona Lake, IND: Eisenbrauns, 1992.

O'Toole, R. F. *The Unity of Luke's Theology*. Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1984.

Payne, J. Barton. *The Theology of the Older Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962. Ridderbos, H. *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975.

*Smith, Ralph L. *Old Testament Theology: Its History, Method, and Message*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993.

Soulen, Richard N. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 2nd ed. Revised and Augmented. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981.

Stronstad, R. *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984.

Taylor, M. J., ed. *A Companion to John: Readings in Johannine Theology*. New York: Alba House, 1977.

*Von Rad, Gerhard. *Old Testament Theology*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967.

Whiteley, D. E. F. *The Theology of St. Paul*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972.

*Wright, George Ernest. *The Old Testament and Theology*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

Youngblood, Ronald. *The Heart of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971.

Zimmerli, Walther. *Old Testament Theology Outline*. Translated by David E. Green. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978.

ARTICLES/CHAPTERS

Aker, Ben. "New Directions in Lucan Theology: Reflections on Luke 3:21-22 and Some Implications." In *Faces of Renewal*, ed. Paul Elbert. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987.

Bock, Darrell L. "Evangelicals and the Use of the Old Testament in the New." (2 Parts) *Bibliotheca Sacra* 142 (July-September, October-December, 1985): 209-23, 306-19.

Bundry, David. "The Genre of Systematic Theology in Pentecostalism." *Pneuma* 15 (Spring, 1993): 89-102.

Edwards, James. "Initial Evidence of the Holy Spirit Baptism and Pentecostal Type-scenes in Acts." In *Toward Pentecostal/ Charismatic Theology: Baptism in the Holy Spirit*. SPS Meeting, Gordon-Conwell, November, 1984.

Grenz, Stanley J. "What Does Hollywood Have to Do with Wheaton? The Place of (Pop) Culture in Theological Reflection." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 43:2 (June, 2000):303-14.

Hummel, Horace D. "The Old Testament Basis of Typological Interpretation." *Biblical Research* 9 (1964): 38-50.

Johnston, Robert K. "Pentecostalism and Theological Hermeneutics: Evangelical Options." In *Pastoral Problems in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement*, ed. Harold D. Hunter. SPS Conference in Cleveland, Tenn., November, 1983.

Raisanen, H. *Beyond New Testament Theology*. Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990.

Sheppard, Gerald T. "Pentecostals and Dispensationalism: The Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship." In *Pastoral Problems In the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement*, ed. Harold D. Hunter. SPS Conference in Cleveland, Tenn., November 1983.

Stendahl, Krister. "Biblical Theology." In *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick, 1: 418-32. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962.

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by Benny C. Aker, Ph.D., October 26, 2005.

E-Mail: baker@agts.edu; bigen25@cs.com

Phone: 417-268-1075; 417-833-5573