INTERPRETATION: DOCTRINAL REFLECTION

What is systematic theological reflection? How does it relate to biblical theology?

"If biblical theology helps you discern the progressive unfolding of God's redemptive plan in Christ, then systematic theology helps you synthesize everything that the Bible says in the form of doctrines."[1]

"Systematic theology begins with key topics (God, man, sin, Christ, salvation, etc.) and then searches the Scriptures to see what they teach about them. On the other hand, biblical theology attempts to read the whole story of the Bible and asks how each part relates to the whole."[2]

Systematic: "Because Scripture faithfully represents the mind of God, the teaching of Scripture can be put together into a coherent whole. We can sum up what Scripture as a whole says about its central concerns, such as the character of God, the state of creation, the nature and fallenness of man, the saving work of Christ, the life of the church, and the promise of the world to come. Working through these topics in an orderly progression is called systematic theology."[3]

Systematic Theology: "A way of reading the Bible that summarizes and synthesizes the teachings of Scripture and brings them to bear on our lives."[4]

Biblical Theology: "A way of reading the Bible as one story by one divine author that culminates in who Jesus Christ is and what he has done, so that every part of Scripture is understood in relation to him."[5]

**For Biblical Theology, think of putting *together a puzzle*. Systematic theology is like going *bowling,* it serves as the guardrails toward the pins and the goal of accurate interpretation – having sound doctrine as you interpret the Bible.

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[1] David Helm, *Expositional Preaching,* 83.
[2] Roark and Cline, *Biblical Theology,* 26*.*
[3] Bobby Jamieson, *Sound Doctrine*, 38.
[4] Jamieson, 38.
[5] Roark and Cline, 26.