

Types of Theology in the World

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Abstract: This article focuses on pilgrim theology, which includes many different fields. The five main fields are exegesis (drawing out the meaning of the biblical texts), biblical theology (tracing the history of redemption and the promises of God from Genesis to Revelation), systematic theology (discerning what the Bible as a whole says about a particular topic), church history (examining God's providence in Christ's body), and practical (or applied) theology (exploring the application of theology in everyday life). Some people would see apologetics (defending the faith against various forms of unbelief) as part of systematic theology, whereas others would see it as a separate field of its own. Each of these main fields has various branches.

Keywords: theology, types, God, religious, analyses, natural word, argument, epistemology, philosophy.

INTRODUCTION

Theology is the study of religious belief from a religious perspective, with a focus on the nature of divinity. It is taught as an academic discipline, typically in universities and seminaries. It occupies itself with the unique content of analyzing the supernatural, but also deals with religious epistemology, asks and seeks to answer the question of revelation. Revelation pertains to the acceptance of God, gods, or deities, as not only transcendent or above the natural world, but also willing and able to interact with the natural world and to reveal themselves to humankind.

Theologians use various forms of analysis and argument (experiential, philosophical, ethnographic, historical, and others) to help understand, explain, test, critique, defend or promote any myriad of religious topics. As in philosophy of ethics and case law, arguments often assume the existence of previously resolved questions, and develop by making analogies from them to draw new inferences in new situations.

METHODS AND TYPES

Indian theology

The earliest theological reflections in Hinduism are found in the Rg Veda, the oldest sacred text. Here, an abstract Supreme Being is acknowledged as self-originating and the source of all phenomena. Vedic gods, including Indra, Varuna, and Vishnu, share common characteristics. They are said to have created the universe, set the sun in the sky, and propped apart heaven and earth. These gods are susceptible to human praise, and their personifications vary.

Hindu theology embraces panentheism, believing that the Supreme Soul (Parmatma) both transcends and pervades the universe. This underlying principle unifies the diverse pantheon of gods and goddesses. While Hinduism appears polytheistic due to its many deities, it is essentially monotheistic, recognising the unity of the divine.

The Bhakti movement (medieval period) emphasized intense devotion to a personal deity. Bhakti theologians like Ramanuja, Madhva, and Chaitanya advocated for loving surrender to God. Devotional texts, such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Ramayana, shaped theological thought by emphasizing devotion, ethics, and the pursuit of moksha (liberation).

Shankara, the founder of Advaita Vedanta, expounded non-dualism (advaita) by asserting that the individual soul (jivatman) is identical to the Supreme Soul (Brahman). This philosophical theology influenced Hindu thought, emphasizing self-realization and the illusory nature of the material world.

In contemporary Hinduism, theologians engage with issues like social justice, environmental ethics, and interfaith dialogue. Theological reflection continues to evolve, drawing from ancient texts, philosophical traditions, and the lived experiences of practitioners.

Christian theology

Christian theology, in scholastics of the Middle Age regarded as "the queen of sciences".

The 16th-century Protestant reformation, in the spirit of Renaissance humanism, paid great attention to the study of biblical text, accompanied by outbursts of popular theology in personal religious fervor.

Recent Christian theological movements include Liberation theology, liberal theology, and fundamentalism.

Islamic theology

From the late 19th century onward, Islamic theology adapted to changing contexts. Scholars in Arab countries, Turkey, Iran, India, Central Asia, and Indonesia, explored diverse theological perspectives. Modern theologians grappled with issues like secularism, pluralism, and the compatibility of Islamic teachings with contemporary life.

Biblical Theology

Biblical theology is focused on the specific ways that the discreet and unique authorial voices in Scripture reflect on the larger questions of theology and the relationships of actions and activities between God and human creatures. Biblical theology is undertaken by persons who are formed and practiced by their Christian faith, account for the historical currents that feed and flow in and through Scripture, and do so with full awareness of how the particular voices in Scripture rise together as a canonical choir, coordinating together in ways that are ultimately reflected in dogmatic theology.¹

Historical Theology

Historical theology, likewise, is undertaken within the practices of faith, paying specific attention to all the movements of human history from the perspective of biblically informed views of space and time, accounting for the dynamic movements of dogmatic theology and the practices of the Church.

Systematic Theology

The practices and reflections of systematic theology take up the canonical currents of Biblical theology, appropriating the theological voices of history. It does so with the full consciousness that dogmatic theology serves the Church as the people of God in her efforts to live and act faithfully in relation to her Creator, and Lord and Savior in the power of the Holy Spirit. Dogmatic theology's goal is forming practiced faithfulness.

Practical Theology

Lastly, practical theology begins with the full consciousness that all the practices of the church and Christians are underwritten by theologies; biblical, historical, and systematic. The goal of

¹ <https://seminary.grace.edu/what-are-the-four-types-of-theology-answers-from-a-theology-school/>

practical theology is to reflect intentionally on present practices and their ingredient theologies in order to critically discern their shape and character so as to deeper faithful practices, correct those that are sinful, and discern with greater clarity how to live out biblical Christian virtues.

The strength of a fourfold organization of theology is its capacity to simplify the overwhelming and demanding complexity of the question of God and humanity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in all of the Trinity's relations with human creatures against the backdrop of creation in both time and space. The challenge, and temptation, of this artificial organization within theology schools and otherwise, is to think of any of the four as discreet or independent.²

Scientific cosmology describes human beings as existing simultaneously in four dimensions: height, length, depth, and time, all of which are implicit and necessary for defining the being and actions of human beings. Likewise, should we think of the necessity and mutuality of the four types of theology?

If you are asking questions like "What are the four types of theology?", you might be looking for a theology school. Grace College and Theological Seminary explores all four types of theology under the instruction of expert faculty mentors.

CONCLUSION

Theology is also a science, in the old Latin sense of a scientia, a branch of knowledge. In the Middle Ages, theology was rightly held to be the queen of the sciences. Unfortunately, in today's world, theology is no longer seen as the apex and unifying subject of human understanding. All knowledge has become fragmented as a result, since only theology can unite all knowledge while respecting its diversity. Without theology to hold knowledge together, "universities" (places where "truth is one," the meaning of the term university) have actually become "multiversities." If, however, all truth is God's truth, then there is no reason why all branches of knowledge could not be reunited with theology at the head.

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²https://learn.ligonier.org/guides/theology?srltid=AfmBOoq7qOhSB9futB_Z9xPglHvFDVrZN9p0Q6cHHJc30nY06Xum7C6

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