

1. Methods of Theology

I. Biblical Methodology

1. Introduction: Why Biblical Methodology?

1) Definition of Theology

- (1) Theology is the academic study of God, and God has revealed Himself.
- (2) Therefore, the starting point of theology is not human thought or experience, but divine revelation.

2) Scripture as the Center of Revelation

- (1) God has revealed Himself through general revelation and special revelation,
- (2) and the final and normative record of special revelation is Scripture.

3) The Necessity of Biblical Methodology

- (1) Throughout church history, many heresies and theological distortions have arisen when theology began not with Scripture but with philosophy, experience, or culture.
 - (2) Therefore, true theology must begin with Scripture and be tested by Scripture.
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2. Definition of Biblical Methodology

1) What Is Biblical Methodology?

- (1) Biblical methodology is based on the conviction that Scripture is the inspired Word of God,
 - (2) that Scripture itself is the highest authority and the standard for theological interpretation, and
 - (3) it is a methodology by which the biblical text is exegeted, doctrines are derived, and faith and life are applied accordingly.
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3. Theological Presuppositions of Biblical Methodology

1) Inspiration of Scripture

- (1) Although Scripture was written through human authors, its ultimate author is God (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:20–21).
- (2) Therefore, Scripture is the inerrant Word of truth.

2) Authority of Scripture

- (1) Scripture is the final authority above the church, tradition, reason, and experience.
- (2) All doctrines and practices must be judged by Scripture.

3) Sufficiency of Scripture

All truth necessary for salvation, faith, and a godly life has been sufficiently revealed in Scripture (Ps 19:7; Jude 3).

4) Clarity (Perspicuity) of Scripture

The central message of Scripture—salvation, Christ, and faith—can be clearly understood under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

4. Core Principles of Biblical Methodology

1) Scripture Interprets Scripture (Scriptura Scripturae Interpres)

- (1) Difficult passages must be interpreted in light of clearer passages.
- (2) Interpretations that disrupt the harmony of the whole of Scripture must be rejected.

2) Text-Centeredness

- (1) The meaning of the biblical text itself takes priority over subjective inspiration, personal experience, or the spirit of the age.
- (2) The question “What does this text say?” precedes “What do I feel?”

3) Contextual Interpretation

- (1) Historical context, literary context, and theological context must all be considered together.
- (2) Doctrines must not be constructed by isolating individual words or verses.

4) Progressive Revelation

- (1) God revealed Himself progressively throughout redemptive history.
 - (2) The Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament, and the New Testament is understood on the foundation of the Old Testament.
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5. The Practical Process of Biblical Methodology

1) Observation

- (1) What does the text actually say?
- (2) Analysis of repeated words, connectors, structure, characters, time, and place

2) Interpretation

- (1) Consideration of the original languages, grammar, context, and historical background
- (2) Identification of the author’s intent and original meaning

3) Theological Synthesis

- (1) How does this passage connect with the doctrines of the whole of Scripture?
- (2) Identification of its place within redemptive history

4) Application

- (1) How should the text be applied to the life of the church and believers today?
- (2) Application must follow interpretation.

6. Comparison Between Biblical Methodology and Other Methodologies

Category	Starting Point	Danger
Biblical Methodology	Biblical Revelation	None (standard of orthodox theology)
Philosophical Methodology	Human Reason	Rationalism · Liberalism
Experience-Centered Methodology	Personal Experience	Mysticism · Subjectivism
Tradition-Centered Methodology	Church Tradition	Formalism · Authoritarianism

7. The Theological and Pastoral Importance of Biblical Methodology

1) Preserves Doctrine

It safeguards core doctrines such as justification by faith, the Trinity, and the deity of Christ.

2) Discerns Heresy

It enables discernment of teachings that are not in harmony with the whole of Scripture.

3) Establishes Proper Education

It forms the foundation for text-centered preaching and expository preaching.

4) Matures the Faith of Believers

It provides an unshakable standard for faith.

8. Conclusion

- 1) Biblical methodology is not merely a technical skill of interpretation, but a theological posture before God.
- 2) All theology must begin with Scripture and return to scripture.
- 3) Sola Scriptura is not only the slogan of the Reformation, but the lifeline of the church today.