

## 2. Historical Methodology

### 1. Lecture Overview

#### 1) Lecture Title

Methods of Theology: Historical Methodology (Historical Methodology in Theology)

#### 2) Lecture Purpose

- (1) To understand the concept and necessity of methodology.
  - (2) To recognize that theological formation and doctrinal development have taken place within history.
  - (3) To apply historical context properly in biblical interpretation and doctrinal study.
  - (4) To critically evaluate the benefits and limitations of historical methodology.
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### 2. Introduction: Why Historical Methodology?

#### 1) The Christian faith is a faith revealed in history.

- (1) God revealed Himself not through abstract speculation but within actual history.
- (2) The Bible was written within specific times, places, and cultural contexts.

#### 2) Theology is not a philosophy detached from time, but a record and interpretation of redemptive history.

Creation, the Fall, covenant, incarnation, the cross, resurrection, the church, and eschatology are all historical events.

#### 3) Historical methodology protects theology from becoming an abstract idea separated from reality.

When doctrine is understood apart from its historical context, there is a risk of falling into extreme literalism or subjectivism.

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### 3. Definition of Historical Methodology

#### 1) Basic Definition

- (1) Historical methodology is an approach that studies theological truths and doctrines within their process of formation and historical background.
- (2) It investigates when, why, and how biblical texts, doctrines, confessions of faith, and traditions were formed.

#### 2) Objects of Study

- (1) The historical background of biblical texts
- (2) The early church and apostolic tradition
- (3) Patristic theology

- (4) The formation of councils and creeds
  - (5) The development of medieval, Reformation, and modern theology
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#### 4. Major Elements of Historical Methodology

##### 1) Historical Context

- (1) The historical situation in which the text was written
- (2) Political, social, religious, and cultural background
- (3) The concrete life circumstances of the author and the recipients

##### 2) Development of Doctrine

- (1) Doctrine was not systematized all at once but was established through historical controversies and responses to heresies.
- (2) Doctrines such as the Trinity, Christology, and soteriology were clarified through councils and theological debates.

##### 3) The Role of Tradition and Confessions of Faith

- (1) The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Chalcedonian Definition, etc.
- (2) The church's historical confessions of faith serve as important reference frameworks for biblical interpretation.

##### 4) Study of Key Figures (Historical Theology)

- (1) Major theologians: Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, etc.
  - (2) Each theologian's thought is closely related to personal and historical contexts.
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#### 5. Biblical Interpretation and Historical Methodology

##### 1) Relationship with the Historical-Grammatical Method

- (1) Historical methodology helps interpret Scripture by understanding it within grammatical meaning and historical context.
- (2) It respects the original meaning (authorial intent) of the text.

##### 2) Redemptive-Historical Perspective

- (1) Scripture is understood not as a collection of fragmented lessons but as the entirety of God's redemptive history.
- (2) It discerns the flow of law and gospel, promise and fulfillment.

##### 3) Dangers of Incorrect Historical Understanding

- (1) The error of projecting modern values onto the text (anachronism).
  - (2) The error of emphasizing historical facts alone while weakening the divine authority of revelation.
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#### 6. Benefits of Historical Methodology

### 1) Maintaining Objectivity and Balance in Theology

It prevents theology from being biased toward personal experience or contemporary trends.

### 2) Aid in Discernment of Heresy

By understanding how orthodox doctrine was historically formed, heretical claims can be identified.

### 3) Recognition of the Continuity of the Church

It affirms that today's church stands upon apostolic faith.

### 4) Expansion of Depth in Biblical Interpretation

It enables a richer and more accurate understanding of the meaning of the text.

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## 7. Limitations and Cautions of Historical Methodology

### 1) History Itself Is Not Revelation

History is the vessel that contains revelation, not revelation itself.

### 2) The Illumination of the Holy Spirit Must Not Be Excluded

Historical research cannot replace faith.

### 3) The Danger of Relativism

Care must be taken not to weaken the absoluteness of truth by labeling doctrine merely as a "product of its time."

### 4) Maintaining the Final Authority of Scripture

History and tradition must remain subordinate to Scripture.

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## 8. Relationship with Other Theological Methodologies

1) Biblical Methodology: The standard of final authority

2) Historical Methodology: Understanding formation and context

3) Systematic Theology: Systematization of doctrine

4) Philosophical Methodology: Conceptual clarification and logical analysis

Historical methodology complements biblical methodology and never replaces it.

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## 9. Conclusion

1) Historical methodology preserves theology as a living faith.

2) Theology is the study of God's truth revealed within time and history.

3) Sound theology stands upon the authority of Scripture while humbly listening to the faith of the church throughout history.

4) "Theology that ignores history is a rootless theology, and history detached

from Scripture is a directionless record.”

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#### 10. Discussion and Assignment Suggestions

- 1) Investigate the historical process through which the doctrine of the Trinity was formed.
- 2) Discuss the theological significance of the Reformation for the church today.
- 3) Discuss the strengths and limitations of historical methodology in contemporary theological debates.