

4. Practical Methodology

I. Introduction: The Necessity of Practical Methodology

1. The Purpose of Theology

- 1) Theology is not merely the study of God and truth; it must be applied within life and community.
- 2) The core of practical methodology is to ensure that knowledge and faith align, so that belief bears fruit in real-life contexts.

2. Definition of Practical Methodology

- 1) Practical Methodology is the field of study that systematically examines how theological knowledge can be applied to everyday life, church ministry, and society.
 - 2) It is not merely ethical instruction but an academic and pastoral approach connecting theological truth to concrete actions and ministry.
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II. Characteristics of Practical Methodology

1. Experience-Centered Approach

- 1) Theological truth must be confirmed and realized through experience and life.
- 2) Example: Practicing faith principles through worship, prayer, mission, and service.

2. Application-Oriented Approach

- 1) Theological knowledge should move beyond mere understanding to solving real-life problems and transforming lives.
- 2) Example: Counseling, ethical decision-making, fulfilling social responsibilities.

3. Complementary Approach

- 1) Connects biblical, historical, and philosophical theology to justify practical judgments and actions academically.
 - 2) Ensures that practice is not just an emotional reaction but grounded in theological reasoning.
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III. Components of Practical Methodology

1. Biblical Foundation

- 1) All practice must be based on biblical principles.
- 2) Example: Love, justice, service, discipleship.
- 3) Emphasizes the flow: principles derived from Scripture → practical application.

2. Doctrinal Understanding

- 1) Grasp the meaning and purpose of doctrines and apply them to life and ministry.
- 2) Example: Understanding the Trinity → restoring relationships and fostering cooperation within the community.

3. Pastoral Application

- 1) Provides theological grounding for preaching, counseling, teaching, and missions.
- 2) Promotes spiritual maturity and strengthens the community through practical ministry.

4. Ethical Judgment

- 1) Offers theological guidance on contemporary social and personal ethical issues.
- 2) Example: Bioethics, economic activity, social justice, environmental concerns.

5. Reflective Practice

- 1) Evaluate and reflect on actions and outcomes to enable continuous growth and improvement.
- 2) Follows a cyclical structure: *learn* → *apply* → *assess* → *revise*.

IV. Approaches in Practical Methodology

1. Contextual Analysis

- 1) Analyze life circumstances, social environments, and church contexts.
- 2) Identify problems and needs accurately.

2. Principle Application

Apply biblical and theological principles to specific situations.

3. Action Planning

- 1) Develop concrete action guidelines and strategies.
- 2) Example: Ministry programs, service projects, educational courses.

4. Implementation and Evaluation

- 1) Evaluate results after implementation and provide feedback.
- 2) Incorporate improvements for sustained practice.

V. Conclusion: The Significance of Practical Methodology

- 1) Practical methodology serves as a bridge connecting theology and life.
- 2) Theological knowledge attains true significance when expressed in action within church and society.
- 3) Ultimately, all theological study should lead to transformation in life and the expansion of God's kingdom.