

# Week 4 Overview of Research Methodology

## 1. Lecture Objectives

- 1) The purpose of this lecture is to help students understand the basic concepts of research methodologies used in academic studies.
- 2) Students will also learn how to choose appropriate research methods for their thesis.

## 2. Definition of Research Methodology

- 1) Research methodology refers to the systematic methods and procedures used by researchers to investigate problems and discover new knowledge.
- 2) Research methodology includes:
  - (1) Research design
  - (2) Data collection methods
  - (3) Data analysis methods
  - (4) Ensuring validity and reliability

## 3. Major Types of Research Methods

- 1) Qualitative Research
  - (1) Qualitative research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of phenomena.
  - 2) Key characteristics:
    - (1) Focus on meaning and experience
    - (2) Analysis of small-scale data
    - (3) Uses interviews, observation, and document analysis
    - (4) Examples:
      - ① Theological thought studies
      - ② Biblical interpretation research
      - ③ Historical theology studies

### 2) Quantitative Research

- (1) Quantitative research analyzes research problems using numerical data and statistics.
- (2) Key characteristics:

- ① Objective data
- ② Statistical analysis
- ③ Surveys and measurable variables

Examples:

- ① Church growth studies
- ② Religious perception surveys

### 3) Literature Research

- (1) Literature research investigates research problems by analyzing existing academic sources.
- (2) Key characteristics:
  - ① Analysis of books, articles, and historical documents
  - ② Theory-based research
  - ③ Most commonly used in theological studies

### 4. Methodology in Theological Research

- 1) Theological research uses general academic research methods but has distinctive characteristics:
  - (1) Scripture-centered study
  - (2) Historical document analysis
  - (3) Doctrinal interpretation
  - (4) Theological argumentation
- 2) Major theological research fields include:
  - (1) Biblical Theology
  - (2) Systematic Theology
  - (3) Historical Theology
  - (4) Practical Theology

### 5. Criteria for Selecting a Research Method

- 1) When choosing a research method, the following factors should be considered:
  - (1) Research question
  - (2) Research objectives
  - (3) Availability of data
  - (4) Researcher's analytical ability
- 2) A good research method is the one that best answers the research

question.

## 6. Discussion Questions

- 1) What are the differences between qualitative and quantitative research?
- 2) Why is literature research important in theological studies?
- 3) Which research method is most appropriate for your thesis topic?

## 7. Assignment

- 1) Before next week, prepare the following:
  - (1) Select a research method for your thesis
  - (2) Explain the reason for your choice
  - (3) List possible sources of research data