

III. A Recommended Approach to Systematic Theology

A. Seek a truly objective attitude

It is the opinion of the present writer that a more objective attitude in the study and writing of systematic theology is greatly needed. The fact that many students of the subject are also preachers and propagandizers for the great truths of salvation may tend to reinforce the common human tendency to be equally dogmatic on all matters, including those that rest on mere assumption or inference. Some books on systematic theology pass lightly over matters on which there is general agreement while strongly urging acceptance of the author's particular view on secondary questions or on those parts of his system that rest on inference rather than on clear Scriptural teaching.

Positive acceptance of the complete inerrancy and dependability of the divine revelation is vital to progress in systematic theology. On questions of interpretation a more objective attitude can lead to detection of long-accepted fallacies and to rejection of erroneous hypotheses.

B. Recognize the incompleteness of our knowledge.

Progress in systematic theology would be advanced rather than hindered by frank recognition of the fact that many matters of great importance to the understanding of the universe have not been revealed to humanity. We can stand solidly upon what God has revealed but should recognize that God's world doubtless involves many concepts that He has not chosen to reveal to us. Few men can understand all the intricacies of the construction of a jet plane. How then can we expect that God would ~~assist~~ give us material for complete understanding of all the details of His nature and of His plan? The cause of systematic theology would be advanced by frank admission that there are many matters on which material for decision is not available to us.