

Systematic Theology

Introduction (Prolegomena)

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Introduction

Whenever you mention systematic theology, many people are either put off by it, or intimidated by it. It immediately conjures up images of large university classrooms with boring professors droning on in their lectures, and half the students fighting the urge to fall asleep. I want to put your minds at ease; my goal is to make this material interesting and edifying. My aim in undertaking this study is to enrich each of your understandings of the various doctrines that make up the Christian Faith. As the apostle Peter exhorted his readers:

(14) But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; **(15)** But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you* with meekness and fear: **(16)** Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. [*1 Peter 3:14-16*]

In a similar way, we should all be thoroughly versed in the basic doctrines of Christianity and be able to explain to others why we believe what we believe. That's the goal of this study. Or, as Paul told Timothy:

(15) Study *to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* [*2 Timothy 2:15*]

To put it bluntly, if you want God to look down on you and say, "I approve," or, "Good job, my faithful servant," then you need to study; it's as simple as that.

(↓ Continued ↓)

Maybe you're asking yourself, "Why do I need to study theology? Isn't it enough that I love Jesus?" While loving God and loving Jesus are good things, to do so without proper knowledge is a dangerous place to be. Why do I say "dangerous"? Because zeal (or passion) without knowledge can lead to some serious doctrinal errors. The Jews of Paul's day had an incredible zeal for God, but their zeal was, as Paul put it, "not according to knowledge" (*Romans 10:2*) — i.e., it was not in accordance with biblical truth. Similarly, millions of Muslims around the world have a genuine zeal for their god Allah, but just like the Jews of Paul's day, that zeal is "not according to knowledge," and therefore they remain lost in their sin. So it's very important for each and every follower of Christ to have a proper understanding of the beliefs that make up *the Faith*. As Jesus Himself said in the Great Commission:

(19) Go ye therefore, and teach {literally: make disciples of} all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **(20)** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen. [*Matthew 28:19-20*]

There are many, many Christians today who are getting sucked into cults such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, or the LDS Church, simply because they weren't properly versed on Biblical doctrine. The less you know about Bible doctrine, the more susceptible you are to being misled. Many cults today actually present themselves as if they are simply another denomination of the Christian Church. Now, living in Utah, most of you are probably on your guard against the Mormon Church and its teachings. But what about the next charismatic teacher or preacher that comes across the radio or TV? Will you be able to recognize what's wrong with what he/she is saying? So Bible doctrine is for everyone! And what we are doing here in this class is trying to fulfill the command Jesus gave to His disciples to "Go ... and make disciples ... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

What Is Theology?

The word “theology” comes from combining the two Greek words **θεός** (*theos*), which means “God,” and **λόγος** (*logos*), which means “a word, saying, speech, discourse, thought, or reasoning,” and literally means “a word about God,” or “reasoning about God.” In other words, theology is the rational interpretation and expression of the Christian Faith. We all are familiar with various fields of scientific study ending with *-logy*. For example, *biology* (*bio* [= life] + *logy*) is the study of life, *geology* (*geo* [= earth] + *logy*) is the study of the earth, and *anthropology* (*anthropos* [= man] + *logy*) is the study of man. Similarly, *theology*, in its most basic sense, is the study of all things pertaining to God.

The word “systematic,” according to Dictionary.com, means:

1. Having, showing, or involving a system, method, or plan.
A systematic course of reading, or systematic efforts.
2. Given to or using a system or method; methodical.
A systematic person.
3. Arranged in or comprising an ordered system.
Systematic theology

There are actually several more definitions, but you get the idea. Put together, the term *systematic theology* literally means:

“A systematic, methodical study of all things having to do with God, conducted in an ordered or categorized manner.”

The following is excerpted from Charles Ryrie’s book *Basic Theology*:¹

“At least three elements are included in that general concept of theology:

- (1) Theology is intelligible. It can be comprehended by the human mind in an orderly, rational manner.
- (2) Theology requires explanation. This, in turn, involves exegesis and systematization.
- (3) The Christian faith finds its source in the Bible, so Christian theology will be a Bible-based study. Theology, then, is the discovery, systematizing, and presentation of the truths about God.”

Dr. Ryrie defines systematic theology this way²:

“Systematic theology correlates the data of biblical revelation as a whole in order to exhibit systematically the total picture of God’s self-revelation.

“Systematic theology may include historical backgrounds, apologetics and defense, and exegetical work, but it focuses on the total structure of biblical doctrine.

“To summarize: Theology is the discovery, systematizing, and presentation of the truths about God. *Historical* theology accomplishes this by focusing on what others throughout history have said about these truths. *Biblical* theology does this by surveying the progressive revelation of God’s truth. *Systematic* theology presents the total structure.”

¹ Charles Ryrie; *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth*; Moody Publishers, © 1999; p. 13.

² *ibid*; p. 15.

Doctors John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, in their systematic theology book, defined systematic theology this way³:

“Systematic theology answers the question, ‘What does the completed canon of Scripture teach about any one theme or topic?’ For example, what does the Bible teach from Genesis to Revelation about the deity of Jesus Christ? A basic definition of systematic theology, then, would be ‘the ordered exposition of Christian doctrines.’”

Wayne Grudem, in his seminal work *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, defined it this way⁴:

“Systematic theology is any study that answers the question, ‘What does the whole Bible teach us today?’ about any given topic.”

So then, my own definition of Systematic Theology would be “The thorough, methodical examination of each and every doctrine that makes up the Christian Faith.” It is *thorough* because we will leave no stone unturned, as we fully explore each doctrine; it is *methodical* because we will move methodically from one doctrine to the next, and so on, until we have covered them all.

³ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue; *Biblical Doctrine — A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth*; Crossway, 2017; p. 36; citing James L. Garrett; *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 1:8.

⁴ Wayne Grudem; *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*; Zondervan, 1994; p. 21; citing Professor John Frame of Westminster Seminary in Escondido, California.

Why Study Systematic Theology?

Dr. Charles Ryrie expressed it well when he said⁵:

“Theology is for everyone. Indeed, everyone needs to be a theologian. In reality, everyone *is* a theologian — of one sort or another.

“And therein lies the problem. There is nothing wrong with being an amateur theologian or a professional theologian, but there is everything wrong about being an ignorant or a sloppy theologian. Therefore, every Christian should read theology. Theology simply means thinking about God and expressing those thoughts in some way.”

When it came to those scholars in the 19th century who were opposed to a systematic approach to theology, Charles Spurgeon had the following response⁶:

“Systematic theology is to the Bible what science is to nature. To suppose that all the other works of God are orderly and systematic, and the greater the work the more perfect the system: and that the greatest of all His works, in which all His perfections are transcendently displayed, should have no plan or system, is altogether absurd.”

If you’re thinking that *systematic theology* is only for scholars, you are mistaken. A study of systematic theology is a benefit to anyone who seeks to expand their knowledge of biblical doctrine, and thereby be better equipped to explain it to others, whether they be brothers and sisters in the Faith, or the unsaved that you encounter in your daily walk. A firmer understanding of the doctrines of Christianity is beneficial to every believer.

As Paul explained in his epistle to the Ephesian church, Christ has placed within His Church certain people, for the purpose of growing the church body, and the “perfecting” of believers (i.e., the completing or maturing of believers), until we all arrive at a place of unity, both in the Faith, as well as in our knowledge of the Son of God:

(11) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
(12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:
(13) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature^{5} of the fulness of Christ: **(14)** That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; **(15)** But speaking the truth^{6} in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: **(16)** From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. [*Ephesians 4:11-16*]

^{5} {Greek: *age*, or, *maturity*} ^{6} {margin: or, *being sincere*}

As the psalmist says:

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” [*Psalms 119:11*]

So really, it’s mine and pastor Kaei’s God-given job to try to grow every member of this church in their knowledge of Christ, and in their understanding of the Christian Faith. That’s really the goal of this study.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” [*Colossians 3:16*]

⁵ Dr. Charles C. Ryrie; *Basic Theology* (Moody Publishers, ©1999); p. 9.

⁶ Charles Spurgeon, as quoted in Iain Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon* (London: Banner of Truth, 1973), p. 9.

Different Types of Theology

Theologies can be categorized several ways:

1. By Historical Era:

- Patristic Theology The development of theology among the early church fathers.
- Medieval Theology The development of theology in the medieval period.
- Reformation Theology The development of theology during the Reformation.
- Modern Theology The development of modern theology.

2. By Viewpoint:

- Arminian Theology the development of the theology of Jacobus Arminius.
- Calvinistic/Reformed Theology The development of the theology of John Calvin.
- Roman Catholic Theology The development of the theology of the Roman Catholic Church.
- Barthian Theology The novel theology of Karl Barth (1886–1968).
- Liberation Theology a theology focused on the liberation of the oppressed, popularized in the 1960s and 1970s among Latino and black churches.

3. By Focus:

- Historical Theology The historical study of doctrinal developments over the centuries, focusing on what those who studied the Bible thought about its teachings, either individually or collectively, as in the pronouncements of church councils. It shows how the church has formulated both truth and error over the centuries, and serves to guide the theologian in his own understanding of doctrine.
- Biblical Theology The organization of Scripture thematically by biblical chronology or biblical author with respect to the progressive revelation of the Bible. Or. the organization of Scriptural teachings based on when and where in the Bible they occur, rather than topically. Biblical theology deals with the historical development of doctrine as God progressively revealed Himself to mankind, and looks at the lives of the writers, the circumstances surrounding the writing, and the cultural background at the time.
(properly a component of Systematic Theology).
- Dogmatic Theology The organization of Scripture with an emphasis on favored or selected church creeds.
- Systematic Theology The organization and exposition of the various doctrines contained in Scripture, arranged by subject matter.
- Apologetic Theology The organization of Scripture with a focus on defending the authority of the Bible and its teachings.
- Exegetical Theology The methodical organization of Scripture by dealing exegetically with individual texts of the Bible
(properly a component of both Biblical and Systematic Theology).
- Natural Theology The study of what can be known about God by human reason alone through the empirical study of the natural world (i.e., without using Scripture).
- Practical/Pastoral Theology The organization of Scripture with an emphasis on the personal application of doctrinal truth in the lives of the church and individual Christians.

The five areas of theology which are of the most concern to us, and which are included under the heading of Systematic Theology are:

1. Historical Theology
2. Biblical Theology
3. Exegetical Theology
4. Apologetic Theology
5. Systematic Theology

These will all be covered, or at least touched on, as we go through this study of systematic theology.

Drs. John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue explained the relationship that exists between *exegetical*, *biblical*, and *systematic* theology this way⁷:

“All biblical theology is systematic in nature; all systematic theology is biblical in content; and both biblical and systematic theology are exegetical in the interpretive process. Therefore, the key question is not which one is the best approach to theology but rather, how do the three interrelate with each other?”

“To use a construction metaphor,

- Exegetical theology supplies the building material for the foundation and structure;
- Biblical theology provides the foundational support for the structure; and
- Systematic theology serves as the structure built on the foundation.”

⁷ Drs. John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue; *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth*; Crossway publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 2017; pp. 37 -38.

A Few Words about Systematic Theology

Benefits of Systematic Theology

The following is excerpted from Biblical doctrine: a systematic summary of Bible Truth by Drs. John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue⁸:

“Systematic theology can provide several benefits:

1. An unabridged collection of biblical truth
2. And orderly synthesis and summation of biblical doctrine
3. An imperative to take the gospel to the ends of the earth
4. A repository of truth for expositional preaching and teaching
5. A scriptural basis for Christian behavior in the church, the home, and the world
6. A defense of biblical doctrine against false teaching
7. A biblical response to ethical and social malpractice in the world”

Limitations of Systematic Theology

They go on to describe some of the limitations of systematic theology⁹:

1. The silence of the Bible on a particular topic (Deut. 29:29; John 20:30; 21:25)
2. A theologian’s partial knowledge/understanding of the entire Bible (Luke 24:25-27; 32; 2 Pet. 3:16)
3. The inadequacy of human language (1 Cor. 2:13-14; 2 Cor. 12:4)
4. The finiteness of the human mind (Job 11:7-12; 38:1–39:30; Rom. 11:33-35)
5. The lack of spiritual discernment/growth (1 Cor. 3:1-3; Heb. 5:11-13)”

⁸ *ibid*; p. 39.

⁹ *ibid*; p. 40.

Systematic Theology Versus Doctrine

Doctrine, in the strictest sense of the word, simply means “teaching.” There are two Greek words that get translated as “doctrine” in the New Testament:

- **διδασκαλία** (*didaskalia*) = instruction (the function or the information); usually referring to the act itself.
- **διδασκαλία** (*didachē*) = instruction (the act or the matter); i.e., usually referring to the content of the instruction

Both of these words are derivatives of the Greek verb **διδάσκω** (*didaskō*), which means “to teach.” The word “doctrine” itself can refer to any teaching, true or false, biblical or unbiblical, such as when we speak of the “doctrines of men.” For example, both Muslims and Mormons hold to certain *doctrines*. But the way we will use the term here in this study is to refer to Biblical doctrine — or the doctrines of truth contained in Scripture.

Scripture itself outlines several advantages that sound doctrine has for the Church and believers¹⁰:

1. Sound doctrine exposes and confronts sin and false doctrine (*1 Tim. 1:8-11, esp. 1:10; 4:1-6*)
2. Sound doctrine marks a good servant of Christ Jesus (*1 Tim. 4:6; see also 1 Tim. 4:13; Titus 2:1*)
3. Sound doctrine is rewarded with double honor for elders (*1 Tim. 5:17*)
4. Sound doctrine conforms to godliness (*1 Tim. 6:3; Titus 2:10*)
5. Sound doctrine is included in the apostolic example to follow (*2 Tim. 3:10*)
6. Sound doctrine is essential to equipping pastors (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*)
7. Sound doctrine is the continual mandate for preachers (*2 Tim. 4:2-4*)
8. Sound doctrine is a basic qualification for eldership (*Titus 1:9*)”

According to Dr. John MacArthur, Scripture provides several antidotes and/or remedies for false doctrine¹¹:

1. Speaking the truth of sound doctrine in love (*Eph. 4:15*).
2. Teaching sound doctrine (*1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 4:2*).
3. Holding fast to sound doctrine (*Titus 1:9; Rev. 2:24-25*).
4. Refuting false doctrine (*Titus 1:9*).
5. Rejecting and turning away from teachers of false doctrine (*Rom. 16:17; 2 John 9-10*).

Dr. MacArthur goes on to say, “There is a direct, inseparable relationship between sound doctrine and saintly living, something Scripture teaches clearly and consistently (*Rom. 15:4; 1 Tim. 4:16; 6:1, 3; 2 Tim. 3:10; Titus 2:1-4, 7-10*). The reverse is also true — where there is false belief, there will be sinful behavior (*Titus 1:16*). In spite of Scripture’s clear emphasis on both purity of doctrine and purity of life, a number of mistaken notions have arisen concerning the relationship between what a person believes and how a person should live. These wrong ideas include the following¹²:

1. Right doctrine automatically leads to godliness.
2. It doesn’t matter how a person lives so long as he or she has right doctrine.
3. Doctrine deadens, spiritually speaking.
4. There is no connection between what one believes and how one lives.
5. Christianity is life, not doctrine.
6. Doctrine is irrelevant.
7. Doctrine divides.
8. Doctrine drives people away.

¹⁰ *ibid*; p. 41

¹¹ *ibid*; pp. 41

¹² *ibid*; pp. 41-42

Major Doctrine Versus Minor Doctrine

Wayne Grudem, in his systematic theology textbook, explains the difference between what are considered “major” doctrines, and those that are considered “minor” doctrines. He explains that, “Christians often say they want to seek agreement in the church on major doctrines but also to allow for differences on minor doctrines. I have found the following guideline useful:

‘A major doctrine is one that has a significant impact on our thinking about other doctrines, or that has a significant impact on how we live the Christian life. A minor doctrine is one that has very little impact on how we think about other doctrines, and very little impact on how we live the Christian life.’¹³

For example, it’s perfectly acceptable to have disagreements among Bible-believing Christians over questions such as, “What happens to tribulation saints when they die?” or, “When do the tribulation saints get resurrected?” or, “Should the church have elders, or deacons, or both?” Disagreements, or differences of opinion on these kinds of subjects will have very little impact on the way we think about other Christian doctrines, or on how we live the Christian life. Thus, we should consider them minor, and certainly not break fellowship over them.

¹³ Wayne Grudem; *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*; Zondervan, 1994; p. 21; citing Professor John Frame of Westminster Seminary in Escondido, California.

Topics Within Systematic Theology

The study of Systematic Theology is typically broken down into ten sections (not counting the Introduction):

0. Introduction Prolegomena
1. God’s Word Bibliology
2. God the Father Theology Proper
3. God the Son Christology
4. God the Holy Spirit Pneumatology
5. Angels, Demons, and Satan Angelology
6. Man Anthropology
7. Sin Hamartiology
8. Salvation Soteriology
9. The Church Ecclesiology
10. The Future Eschatology

Presuppositions

The Foundational Presupposition

Before we can begin a study of biblical doctrines, we must, at the outset, assume an *a priori* position with regard to our source material — the Bible. If the Bible is untrue, nothing else matters, and there would be no point in studying biblical doctrine.

We’re not going to simply assume the Bible is true without making any attempt to prove its truth; we will demonstrate its truth as we get into the Bibliology portion of this study. But before we prove its truth, we’re going to assume its truth as a presupposition. As we go through the first section on Bibliology (the study of the Bible), we will see that the Bible actually proves itself.

Other Presuppositions

Aside from our foundational presupposition that the Bible is the word of God, and it is true, there are other presuppositions which need to be clarified at the outset.

Interpretive Presuppositions

- The Necessity of Normal, Plain Interpretation
 - The Golden Rule of Biblical interpretation: If the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense, lest you end in nonsense.
 - This interpretive method allows for the use of figures of speech, but they should always be obvious.
- The Priority of the New Testament
 - God’s revelation was progressive, over a period of roughly 4,100 years. Each successive revelation built upon the previous ones.
 - The Old Testament provides the foundation for the New Testament; The New Testament sheds light on the Old Testament.
 - Old Testament revelation was preparatory and partial; New Testament revelation is climactic and complete.
- The Legitimacy of Proof Texts
 - Proof texts must be used in their correct contexts. As Dr. D. A. Carson cites his father as saying, “A text without a context is a pretext for a proof text.”
 - Some caveats:
 - ▶ Old Testament texts should not be used to prove a doctrine or truth that was not revealed until the New Testament.
 - ▶ Old Testament proof texts should not be used to subvert a clear New Testament teaching.

Systematizing Presuppositions

- The Necessity of a Theological System
 - The difference between exegesis and theology is the system used.
 - Exegesis analyzes; theology correlates those analyses.
 - Exegesis relates the meanings of texts; theology interrelates those meanings.
 - The exegete strives to present the meaning of truth; the theologian, the system of truth.
 - Theology’s goal, whether biblical or systematic theology, is the systematization of the teachings under consideration.
- The Limitations of a Theological System
 - The limitations of biblical revelation (the Bible doesn’t tell us *everything*).
 - Logic, implications, and inferences have their appropriate place, but should never be used to *create* doctrine.
 - We must fight the urge to “fill in the blanks,” as it were, where Scripture is silent.

Personal Presuppositions

Personal presuppositions are those we are to assume regarding the reader, or the student.

- One must be a believer.
 - Since it is the Holy Spirit that “guides us into all truth” (*John 16:13*), one must obviously have the indwelling Holy Spirit in order to properly understand Scripture.
- One must think theologically:
 - One must think exegetically — determine the precise meaning of a particular text.
 - One must think systematically — correlate all available facts in a thorough manner.
 - One must think critically — evaluating the priority of all related evidence.
 - One must think synthetically — combining all aspects of a doctrine as a whole.
- One must depend upon the Holy Spirit for guidance in interpretation.
 - Regardless of one’s particular level of academic prowess, one must humble themselves and submit to the teaching of the Holy Spirit.
 - One must not allow their own preconceived ideas interfere with the teaching of the Holy Spirit.
- One Must Worship
 - This is not intended as a mere academic exercise — one is expected to use whatever knowledge they learn from their study of systematic theology to more fully worship God.

Definitions

As we go through this study, some terms will have to be defined. We'll start with these basic ones, and as others arise throughout our study, we'll define them as we go.

- RevelationThe revealing of something that was previously hidden or unknown. Divine revelation is the process whereby God has revealed His truth and His will to mankind, either as seen in His Creation, or through direct communication.
- InspirationThe divine act whereby God communicated to men what He wanted them to record, in such a way that they recorded the very words and sense of God, even though written in their own particular literary style.
- IlluminationThe divine ability, through the working of the the indwelling Holy Spirit, to understand what God has recorded in Scripture.
- Verbal Inspiration.....Applying to the very words, not merely to the concepts or ideas. Verbal inspiration means that God inspired each and every individual word of Scripture.
- Plenary InspirationApplying equally to all constituent parts. Plenary inspiration means that all of the Bible is inspired, and every part of the Bible is equally inspired.
- Confluent InspirationTwo agents were involved in the Inspiration of Scripture — human and divine. The human agent was the physical recorder, while the divine agent specified what was to be recorded.
- InerrancyWithout error in its recording, copying, and transmission.
(It contains no “typos.”)
- InfallibilityWithout error in its teachings.
(It’s teachings and principles are never wrong, inadequate, or outdated.)
- HermeneuticsThe science of interpreting texts. Biblical hermeneutics is the science of properly interpreting Scripture.
- ExegesisFrom the Greek *εξ* (*ex*), which means “out from,” and *ἡγε* (*hēge*), which means “leading.” Together, *exegesis* means “leading out from.” It describes the act of trying to ascertain the true intended meaning of a particular text.
- Eisegesis.....From the Greek *εις* (*eis*), which means “into,” and *ἡγε* (*hēge*), which means “leading,” plus the suffix “sis.” Together, *eisegesis* means “leading into.” It describes the act of trying to read a particular meaning into a text (i.e., coercing the text to support a particular meaning).

(↓ *Continued* ↓)

- Doctrine.....Simply means “teaching.” When we speak of Biblical doctrine, we’re referring to what the Bible teaches.
- Dogma.....A statement on what the Church teaches (esp., the Roman Catholic Church).
- Creed.....(From the Latin *credo*, which means “I believe”) A statement of what one believes. For example, the *Apostles’ Creed*, the *Nicene Creed* (the First Council of Nicaea in AD 325), the *Chalcedonian Creed* (the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451), and others, were all simply statements of what the people who wrote them believed.

(Doctrine, Dogma, and Creed are related terms, as illustrated below:)

- Doctrine = What the Bible teaches
- Dogma = What the Church teaches
- Creed = What I believe

- Impeccability.....The inability of Christ to sin.
- Contradiction.....A set of two statements, one of which denies the other.
- Paradoxa seemingly contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true; an apparent but not real contradiction.