

Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology with a Focus on Its
Very Practical Dimensions—An Introductory Course for the Church

Objectives and Lesson Plans

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Class Members' Needs:

1. The attendees need to know the six loci, or key Biblical doctrines, of historic Christian systematic theology, their meaning, and the Biblical basis and practical applications of each.
2. The class members need to know how to explain the systematic sequence, the logic of the loci, to others in a witness for Jesus Christ and in explaining the message of the Bible.

Level III Objectives to Meet the Needs: (To add more Level III Objectives, see the tutorial, [Christian Education Goals and Objectives with a Focus on Level III Objectives: How to Be Sure Your Students Are Understanding and Doing What You Have Taught Them](#), PowerPoint Presentation.)

1. Cognitive Objective: By the end of this course, given a matching task and an explanation of the six loci of historic Christian systematic theology, their Biblical meaning, and current practical applications, every student will be able to correctly list all six loci in their order and match at least one meaning and one application for each.
2. Affective Objective: In every class session of this course, the teacher will observe no signs of boredom (e.g., eyes closing and head drooping fighting off sleep, texting on their phones, talking with others in the class), no students will quit the class for reasons pertaining to the class, and 100% of the class will participate in learning activities, including a minimum of 75% making at least one comment.
3. Behavioral Objectives:
 - a. By the end of this course, at least 75% of the students will inform me, by writing YES or NO on a 3x5 card, that they have explained all six loci of historic Christian systematic theology in their correct sequence, with at least one Biblical text for each of the loci, to at least one other person and offering at least one practical application for each of the six loci in that conversation.
 - b. By the end of June this year, at least 50% of the class will stop by the Ask a Pastor station in the atrium and inform me, either with a “thumbs up” sign or verbally, or with a 3x5 card with the word YES on it in my mailbox, that they have explained all six loci in their correct sequence with at least one Biblical text and one practical application, to at least three additional people.

Classroom Setup:

1. Arrange seating at tables in a large square or rectangle in order to facilitate: lesson tasks, class discussion, and members coming to know one another.
2. Make sure the computer projection system is functioning well.
3. Materials to have ready: Markers, 5 x 8 cards, 3 x 5 cards, Matching Task, scissors if needed.

Class Lesson Plans:

Lessons One and Two—Introduction

First Session

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer
2. Distribute 5 x 8 Cards and Markers for 5 x 8 Name Plates; Explain Use: Please fold your 5 x 8 card lengthwise and write your name on both sides so people sitting across from you and alongside you can learn your name. A key aspect of the nature of the church is a very special fellowship with each other and with the Holy Spirit. We'll study more about that when we come to the Biblical teaching about the church, which in theology is called ecclesiology.
3. Present and Discuss the PowerPoint Slides for Lesson One
 - a. Discuss Slides 1 - 15.
 - b. Ask the class to read the rest of the slides on the PowerPoint before class next week.
4. Close this session in prayer.

Second Session

5. Distribute 5x8 Cards (Name Plates) and Markers for Name Plates for anyone new to the class.
6. Welcome and Opening Prayer
7. Present and Discuss the rest of the PowerPoint slides for Lesson One, beginning where we left off in last week's first session of Lesson One.
 - a. If a time constraint exists, pass over and ask the class to read and think about Slides 16–35. The information on these slides is quite straightforward. It's likely no discussion of

these is needed in class; however, we'll begin next week's session with a discussion of any questions you have about these slides, then about any others.

- b. Present and discuss Slides 31 and 36 – 44.
 - c. If a time constraint exists, pass over and ask the class to read and think about Slides 45 – 50. The information on these slides is quite straightforward. It's likely no discussion of these is needed in class; however, we'll begin next week's session with a discussion of any questions you have about these slides, then about any others. For more information on the scientific method and its abuse that leads to a preponderance of false science, see my essay, "[Science: Distinguishing Between Sound and Flawed Science](#)."
 - d. Read and discuss Slide 51.
8. Answer and discuss questions class members raise from their homework (reading the PowerPoint for this class on the From Acorn to Oak 12 Website).
 9. Other Discussion
 10. Homework:
 - a. In order to complete all six loci by the end of this course, we'll have to take one per week, starting next Sunday, when we'll study Theology (the Bible's teaching about who God is; what he is like; what he has done; and what he is doing). I've tried to include in next week's PowerPoint (or PPT) the main teachings of the Bible about God. However, unsurprisingly, it is more than we can cover in class, **but the Lord desires his people to know this information—it's why he put it in his Word**.
 - b. Therefore, I would like you to read the Theology PowerPoint when you have time during the week. When we reconvene next Sunday, Lord willing, here is the format of the class I would like us to use:
 - 1) For the first part of the class, I'll highlight some of the key Bible teachings about God that especially concern matters skeptics and honest inquirers raise, which we believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ need to be prepared to address. (1 Peter 3:15-16)
 - 2) After my initial presentation at the beginning of the class, I want to open up the opportunity for you either to raise any questions **or** add any insights or comments you would like to make, either on what I've said or any of the other subjects on slides we were not able to discuss in the first part of the class.
 - c. Since the subject of God, and the following loci, are as voluminous as they are, and since not everyone wants all that paper, it seems best to not ask the church to print out the

PowerPoints (PPTs) but for each of us to access these PPTs on these Website and download any you wish at either <https://fromacorntoak12.com/essential-christianity-an-introductory-course-on-historic-christian-systematic-theology-with-a-focus-on-its-very-practical-applications/> or <https://seelyedward.academia.edu/research>. Here are some thoughts to keep in mind:

- 1) When you read, don't fret about the original Old Testament Hebrew and Septuagint (250 B.C. Greek translation of the Old Testament) and New Testament Greek words or their English transliterations in the parentheses beside them. I have included them only for those who want to have that additional information and documentation for their own understanding or in order to supplement their information when explaining Scripture texts to others, especially any who are skeptical. With this awareness, you know you can direct people for this further information to either of these free and safe Websites.
 - 2) As I've noted in the PPTs, if you, or anyone else, want further information on any of these subjects, it is available on a much larger PPT with the same title that is also available on the same page on both Websites. The PPT for this class consists of selected slides from the larger one, the original and unabridged PPT containing all six loci of historic Christian systematic theology. Whatever we can't cover in class, you will have in writing anytime anywhere.
 - 3) Again, both of my Websites are free—I'm not selling anything—and they're both safe; you will not get a virus, and no scammer will access your contact information, by visiting either of my Websites.
 - 4) Furthermore, you have two added blessings: by visiting my Website you also have a link to Mr. Jim Found's Website (<https://foundbytes.com>) and to Dr. Robin Dugall's Website (robindugall.com), both of which have a wealth of helpful information.
- d. Here is how to access each week's PPT. Log on to my general Website: <https://fromacorntoak12.com/> or www.edwardseely.com and select the Christian Theology page. Then select, or just click here on "[Essential Christianity: An Introductory Course on Historic Christian Systematic Theology—With a Focus on Its Very Practical Applications.](#)" You can also access these PPTs by logging on to my academic Website at <https://seelyedward.academia.edu/research>. If anyone is unable to access the Internet, via your own computer or a relative or friend's computer, please let me know.

We'll all get a lot more out of this class, and be able to use it for the Lord, if we do our homework (I'm included!) and then come prepared to discuss what we've read. If your week was so full that you weren't able to finish reading all, or even some, of the slides, still feel a warm welcome to attend the class the next Sunday. You'll at least be able to learn from what is presented, not only from me but from others in the class, and you can

always catch up when your schedule permits. We have to start on time, but if you are late, come in anyway—we'll always be glad you made it. (Note to other teachers: An evaluation of this course revealed that 75% of the adult students in the class did the homework.)

11. Closing Prayer

Sessions Three through Eight

1. Open the class with a warm welcome to all and a prayer for God's wisdom and his help for us to understand and apply what we are learning.
2. Ask the class to repeat together the six loci in order. As we do it together, give a one-sentence summary of each and why the next is necessary. (See the slide with a summary on all six loci in their logical order.)
3. Put the abbreviated PowerPoint of the doctrine for the day (i.e., Theology in the third session, Anthropology in the fourth session, Christology in the fifth session, Soteriology in the sixth session, Ecclesiology in the seventh session, and Eschatology in the eighth session) on the screen and point out at least the items in the yellow highlighting.
4. Try to allow some time for questions or comments. Ask people to make note of any slides you didn't have time to present or discuss, and any questions or comments they yet have, to talk with you about after class, and/or for the final, ninth, session that will be dedicated to discuss those questions and hear those comments. In the meantime, plan to be the last one out of the class, and regularly let the class know you will be glad to talk with anyone as long as needed after class, anywhere else, and via phone. If you have time, offer to correspond with class members via email.
5. Ask people to read the PowerPoint on the doctrine (e.g., Theology, Anthropology, Christology, Soteriology...) for next week.
6. Close each class session with prayer, asking God for his help to apply in our daily life experiences what we are learning.

Last (Ninth) Session

1. Open the class with prayer.
2. Show the "Systematic Theology: Historic Christian Systematic Theology—A Matching Task" (Lesson One PPT Slide #3) on the projection screen **before** distributing the two sheets to each person.

- a. Explain why we're doing this task again.
 - 1) It's another way to help us make the connections with God's revealed Word, what it means, and how it applies in our lives. Show again PPT Theology Abridged Overview Slide #25.
 - 2) Also, it provides tangible encouragement for all of us as to the progress we're making pertaining to this subject matter and for me to see how well I accomplished one of my objectives for this course.
 - 3) It provides an "advance organizer" for today's session and facilitates our discussion for the remainder of the class. See "[Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology—With a Focus on Its Very Practical Dimensions, Including Answers to Our Great Questions of Life—for Now and Eternity](#)," Unabridged PowerPoint, Preface item #9b. For further information on the advance organizer teaching method see [Christian Education Ministry for the 21st Century and Beyond](#).
- b. Distribute and make sure each person has the two sheets of paper containing the matching task. Do the matching task with the class. The task is typically done by tearing the sections apart to make the correct matches; however, some people prefer scissors to be available if possible. Don't spend too much time on this part of the project; time for making thoughtful matches is key and much more important.
- c. As the class nears completion of the task, distribute the 3 x 5 cards with their anonymous numbers that only they know from the first session, asking them to select their card and pass the rest on to the next person.

When the class is finished with the task, display on the projection screen Lesson One PPT Slide #6 with the correct matches: A4b; F3d; B1e; C2f; E6c; D5a. Ask the class members to record on their card the number of any matches they made that had to be changed (mismatches) this session. PLEASE CIRCLE THAT NUMBER AND PUT TODAY'S DATE BY IT. PLEASE ALSO CIRCLE THE NUMBER OF MISMATCHES IN SESSION ONE, SO I CAN TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CODE NUMBER AND THE NUMBER OF CHANGES THAT YOU MADE. (A FEW OF YOU MADE A SINGLE DIGIT CODE, AND I WANT TO MAKE SURE WHICH IS WHICH.) v is completed.

- 1) FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO JOINED THE CLASS SINCE THE FIRST SESSION AND HAVEN'T DONE THIS MATCHING TASK BEFORE, JUST PUT THE NUMBER OF ANY CHANGES YOU HAD TO MAKE ON THE CARD. You don't need to make a code number.

- 2) When the students are finished, ask them to pass the cards to their right, obtain them from the last student to receive them, and at home see if Cognitive Objective #1 above has been met.

d. Behavioral Objectives:

- 1) By the end of this course, at least 75% of the students will inform me, by writing YES or NO on a 3x5 card, that they have explained all six loci of historic Christian systematic theology in their correct sequence, with at least one Biblical text for each of the loci, to at least one other person and offering at least one practical application for each of the six loci in that conversation. DOES ANYONE NEED A NEW 3 x 5 CARD?
- 2) By the end of June this year, at least 50% of the class will stop by the Ask a Pastor station in the atrium and inform me, either with a “thumbs up” sign or verbally, or with a 3x5 card with the word YES on it in my mailbox, that they have explained all six loci in their correct sequence with at least one Biblical text and one practical application, to at least three additional people.
3. Ask if anyone has brought any questions or comments on what has been studied in the preceding sessions. If so, ask who would like to go first and begin answering the questions or listening to the comments. Pertaining to the latter, respond as needed and ask if anyone else would like to comment. Discuss as needed.
4. If no one has brought a question, be prepared to present and discuss a slide you didn't have time to present in the session for that day, e.g., Near Death Experiences in the Eschatology session or the subject of spiritual gifts, including the extraordinary gifts, e.g., speaking in tongues, in the Soteriology session. Such an introduction typically facilitates discussion for as much of the rest of the time as available.
5. Mention to the class that you will be glad to talk with anyone as long as needed after class, at upcoming Ask a Pastor sessions (opportunities the second and fourth Sundays of each month September through June to stop by the Ask a Pastor station in the church narthex), at church anytime, anywhere else, and via phone.
6. Close the class session with prayer, asking God for his help to apply in our daily life experiences what we have learned in the class and what we are continuing to learn in our daily walk with Christ Jesus, indeed with our triune God.

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