

8. Historical Theology

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

Historical theology is that discipline which seeks to trace the progressive development, from the Apostolic age to the present, of that human understanding of the truths of Special Revelation which has been expressed in doctrines, doctrinal systems, dogmas, and creeds. As such, historical theology is a study of the progress of human understanding of divine truth.

And that, if you don't recognize it, is about where we started on page 1. No, the course is not over yet.

C. Some Selected reading

These are texts used in the background and preparation of the course (A number of others are referred to in the text of the syllabus...these are works that have figured into the primary class preparation.) They are annotated as I am able in this space and time.

Barnard, Thomas D. The Progress of Doctrine in The New Testament...an older work with considerable thoroughness, not easily available...at the time of my initial work I went to Princeton to consult it (and other works)

Berkhof, Louis: The History of Christian Doctrines. A very useful work, now in re-print and, as it is arranged mostly topologically, very easily used.

Cunningham, W. Historical Theology...in some ways a forerunner in the field...the author being a Puritan writer with all the complicated syntax and trying paragraphs.

Fisher, G.P. History of Christian Doctrine...good summaries showing the role of the historical events in doctrinal formulations.

Harnack, A. Outlines of the History of Dogma. The product of a great liberal mind, the anti-Christian thinking is rather pronounced but the scope of the work is enormous and no one is really thorough in this field who has not read Harnack.

Kelly, J.N.D. Early Christian Doctrines. This is the class text and along with other works by this author is eminently worthwhile reading and owning. His perception is good and his analysis specifically correct on point after point.