

New Testament Theology II

This comprehensive study explores the theological foundations of the New Testament, examining the diverse yet unified message of God's redemptive work through Jesus Christ. From the Gospels to Revelation, we will discover how each author contributes to the rich tapestry of Christian doctrine and faith.



Course Overview

01

Johannine Theology

The Gospel of John, Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation reveal Christ as the eternal Word, the source of life and light.

02

Pauline Theology

Paul's comprehensive theology explores God's nature, Christ's work, salvation by grace, and life in the Spirit.

03

General Epistles

Hebrews, James, Peter, and Jude provide practical wisdom and theological insights for Christian living.

The Gospel of John: Theological Foundations



The Fourth Gospel stands as one of the most important books ever written. Its theological depth and unique perspective on Jesus Christ have shaped Christian thought for nearly two millennia. John's Gospel presents Jesus not merely as a historical figure, but as the eternal Word who became flesh to reveal God's glory.

The Word Became Flesh

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." - John 1:1, 14

John's prologue introduces the revolutionary concept of the Logos - the Word. This term, familiar to both Jewish and Greek readers, represents God's self-expression in the universe. For Jews, it recalled God's creative word in Genesis. For Greeks, it evoked the rational principle governing all existence.

John declares that this Logos was not merely a principle but a person - Jesus Christ. The incarnation represents the most extraordinary event in cosmic history: the eternal Word taking human form to dwell among humanity.

Jesus as the Christ

The Messiah

John explicitly states his purpose: "These signs are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (20:31). Throughout the Gospel, Jesus fulfills messianic expectations.

The Son of God

Jesus is described as the "one and only Son" (monogenês), indicating his unique relationship with the Father. This relationship is characterized by perfect unity and mutual knowledge.

The Son of Man

This title appears 13 times in John, always connected to salvation or heavenly glory. Jesus bridges heaven and earth, bringing divine realities to humanity.



The "I AM" Statements

John records seven profound "I AM" declarations that reveal Jesus' divine nature and salvific work. These statements use the emphatic Greek construction that echoes God's self-revelation to Moses at the burning bush.



"I am the bread of life"

Jesus provides spiritual sustenance necessary for eternal life. He doesn't merely give this bread - he IS this bread, satisfying humanity's deepest hunger.



"I am the light of the world"

Jesus illuminates spiritual darkness and provides guidance for life. His light exposes truth and reveals the path to God.



"I am the door"

Jesus is the exclusive entrance to salvation and fellowship with God. Through him alone do we find access to the Father.



"I am the good shepherd"

Jesus demonstrates sacrificial love by laying down his life for his sheep. Unlike hired hands, he genuinely cares for those entrusted to him.



"I am the resurrection and the life"

Jesus doesn't merely bring resurrection - he IS the resurrection. Those who believe in him possess eternal life that transcends physical death.



"I am the way, truth, and life"

Jesus provides the exclusive path to the Father. He embodies ultimate truth and offers authentic life to all who follow him.



"I am the true vine"

Spiritual vitality depends on maintaining connection with Christ. Separated from him, believers cannot produce spiritual fruit or experience abundant life.

The Theology of Witness



John employs the concept of "witness" more than any other New Testament author. Multiple witnesses testify to Jesus' identity and mission, creating an overwhelming case for faith.

The witnesses include: John the Baptist, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, Jesus' works, and believing individuals. This comprehensive testimony leaves no excuse for unbelief.

Signs and Works

John carefully selects seven miraculous signs that reveal Jesus' divine nature and glorify God. Unlike the synoptic writers who use "mighty works" (dynamis), John employs "signs" (sêmeion) and "works" (ergon) to emphasize their revelatory purpose.

Water to Wine

Jesus' first sign at Cana revealed his glory and led the disciples to believe in him.

1

2

Healing the Official's Son

Demonstrates Jesus' power over distance and disease through faith alone.

Healing at Bethesda

Shows Jesus' authority over chronic illness and his power to heal completely.

3

4

Feeding the 5000

Reveals Jesus as the bread of life who satisfies spiritual hunger.

Jesus: Fully Human, Fully Divine

True Humanity

- Experienced physical weariness (4:6)
- Felt thirst and hunger
- Wept at Lazarus' tomb (11:35)
- Experienced anguish (11:33, 12:27)
- Asked questions to gain information
- Depended on the Father for knowledge and power

True Divinity

- Eternal existence with the Father
- Creative power and sustaining authority
- Perfect unity with the Father (10:30)
- Supernatural knowledge of people's hearts
- Power over life and death
- Worthy of the same honor as the Father (5:23)



God as Father

John uses "Father" 137 times - more than any other New Testament book. This reveals God's intimate, loving relationship with both Jesus and believers. The Father-Son relationship demonstrates perfect love, unity, and mutual glorification.

God the Father actively works in salvation, sends the Son, loves the world, and draws people to himself. His fatherhood is not distant but intimately involved in human redemption.

The Holy Spirit: Paraclete and Teacher

1

The Paraclete

The Spirit serves as Advocate, Helper, and Comforter who comes alongside believers to guide and strengthen them.

2

Spirit of Truth

The Spirit leads believers into all truth and reveals the deep things of God to receptive hearts.

3

Divine Teacher

The Spirit teaches believers all things and brings Jesus' words to remembrance, ensuring doctrinal continuity.

Eternal Life: Present and Future

"Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life." -
John 5:24

John's unique contribution to New Testament theology is his emphasis on eternal life as a present possession. While maintaining future eschatological hope, he stresses that believers already experience the life of the age to come.

This eternal life is qualitative as well as quantitative - it represents a new kind of existence characterized by intimate knowledge of God and fellowship with Christ.

The Passion: Glory Through Suffering

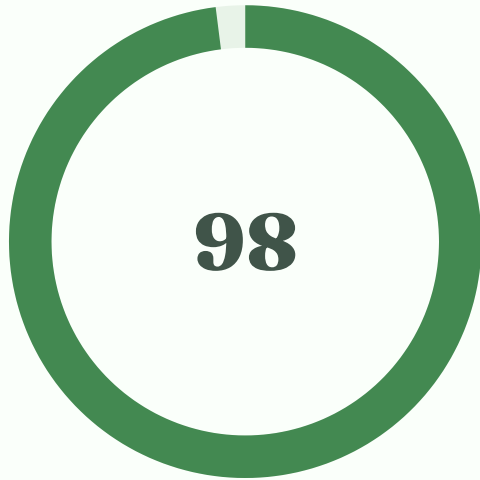
John devotes nine chapters to the events surrounding Jesus' passion and resurrection. For John, the cross is not defeat but glory - the ultimate revelation of God's love and Jesus' divine nature.

The crucifixion represents Jesus' "hour" - the moment for which he came into the world. Through death, Jesus destroys the works of Satan, draws all people to himself, and accomplishes eternal redemption.



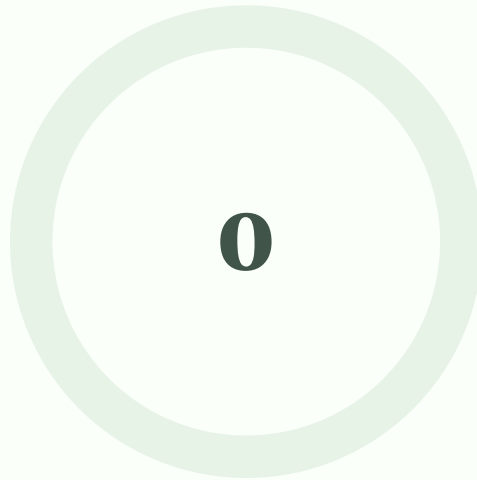
Faith: The Human Response

John uses the verb "believe" (pisteuein) 98 times but never the noun "faith." This dynamic emphasis shows that faith is active commitment, not merely intellectual assent.



Times "Believe" Appears

Emphasizing faith as dynamic action



Times "Faith" Appears

Avoiding static conceptualization



Times "Jesus" Appears

More than any other NT book

Love: The Divine Motivation

God so loved the world

Love is the fundamental motivation behind God's redemptive work. John 3:16 reveals that God's love for the world prompted the gift of his Son. This love is not earned but freely given to undeserving humanity.

Christian love mirrors divine love - sacrificial, unconditional, and transformative. Jesus' new commandment calls believers to love as he has loved them, creating a community marked by divine love.



Light and Darkness: The Great Division

John presents cosmic conflict between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, life and death. Jesus as the light of the world exposes spiritual darkness and provides illumination for life.

This dualism is not ontological but moral - people choose light or darkness based on their response to Jesus. The light shines in the darkness, and darkness cannot overcome it.

Judgment: Present and Future Reality

Present Judgment

Jesus came primarily to save, not judge. However, his presence creates judgment as people respond either with faith or rejection. Unbelief constitutes self-condemnation.

Future Judgment

John maintains hope in final resurrection and judgment. Jesus will raise both righteous and wicked - some to life, others to condemnation.

The Johannine Epistles: Testing Authentic Faith

The three letters of John address practical concerns about discerning true Christianity from false teaching. Written to churches facing docetic heresy that denied Christ's true humanity, these epistles provide tests for authentic faith.

Doctrinal Test

True Christians confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh - affirming both his humanity and divinity.

Moral Test

Genuine believers demonstrate transformed lives characterized by obedience to God's commands and love for others.

Social Test

Authentic Christians remain in fellowship with the believing community rather than departing into sectarian isolation.

The Book of Revelation: Theology of Power

Revelation addresses persecuted churches with a theology of divine sovereignty. Despite apparent triumph of evil forces, God remains in complete control and will ultimately vindicate his people.

The book reveals Jesus Christ as the glorified Lord who holds the keys of death and Hades. He is simultaneously the slain Lamb and the conquering Lion, demonstrating that victory comes through sacrificial love.



The Lamb Who Was Slain

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" - Revelation 5:12

Revelation's central figure is the Lamb who was slain - appearing 29 times. This paradoxical image shows that ultimate power belongs to the one who sacrificed himself for others.

The Lamb's blood purchases people from every nation, creating a kingdom of priests who serve God. Victory comes not through violence but through self-sacrificial love.

Pauline Theology: The Apostle to the Gentiles



Paul's theological contributions span 13 New Testament letters, representing the most comprehensive doctrinal framework in early Christianity. His transformation from persecutor to apostle illustrates the radical nature of divine grace.

Writing primarily to Gentile churches, Paul developed a theology that bridged Jewish heritage and Gentile mission, creating a universal gospel accessible to all peoples.

Paul's Theology of God

Sovereign Creator

Paul refers to God 548 times - 40% of all New Testament references. For Paul, God is absolutely central to all existence and experience. He is the sovereign Creator who works all things according to his will and purpose.

548

References to God

40% of all NT references to God

77

Uses of "Glory"

47% of NT occurrences

100

Uses of "Grace"

Two-thirds of NT occurrences

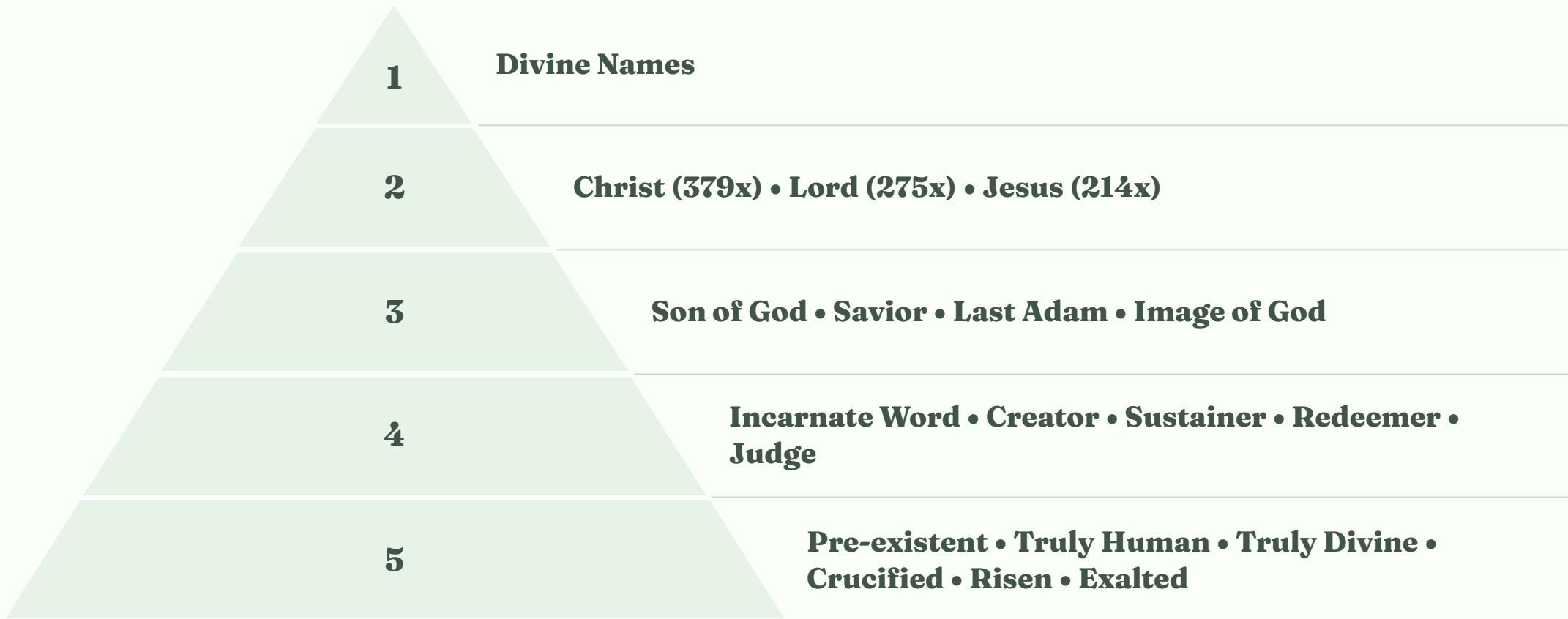
Divine Predestination and Grace

Paul teaches that God's eternal purpose includes predestining believers for salvation and good works. This doctrine provides security rather than fatalism - God's election ensures that his redemptive plan will succeed.

"Those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified." - Romans 8:30

Predestination serves ethical purposes - believers are chosen for holiness and good works, not mere privilege.

Paul's Christology: The Exalted Lord



The Christ Hymn: Philippians 2:5-11

Paul's most exalted Christological passage reveals Jesus' voluntary self-emptying (kenosis) and subsequent exaltation. Though existing in the form of God, Christ took the form of a servant and became obedient to death.

God's response was to exalt Jesus above every name, making him Lord of all creation. This pattern of humiliation-exaltation becomes the model for Christian living.



Salvation: Deliverance from Sin's Power

The Human Predicament

- Universal sinfulness (Rom 3:23)
- Slavery to sin's power
- Death as sin's consequence
- God's wrath against unrighteousness
- Futility of law-keeping for salvation

God's Solution

- Justification by faith alone
- Christ's substitutionary death
- Reconciliation with God
- Redemption from sin's penalty
- Adoption into God's family

Life in the Spirit

Paul's pneumatology emphasizes the Spirit's indwelling presence in all believers. The Spirit produces spiritual fruit, provides spiritual gifts, and enables victory over the flesh.



Divine Person

The Spirit possesses mind, will, and emotions, demonstrating personality rather than mere force.



Spiritual Fruit

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.



Spiritual Gifts

Diverse abilities given for building up the church and serving God's purposes.



The Church: Body of Christ

Paul's ecclesiology presents the church as Christ's body, God's temple, and the bride of Christ. Unity in diversity characterizes this community where Jews and Gentiles become one new humanity.

The church serves as God's instrument for displaying his wisdom to spiritual powers and extending the gospel to all nations. Each member contributes unique gifts for the common good.

Hebrews: Christ Our Great High Priest



Superior to Angels

Christ inherits a more excellent name and receives worship from angelic beings.

Greater than Moses

Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ is faithful as Son over God's house.

Perfect High Priest

Unlike Levitical priests, Christ offers himself once for all, securing eternal redemption.

The General Epistles: Practical Christianity

James: Faith and Works

Genuine faith produces good works. James combats dead orthodoxy that fails to transform behavior and relationships.

Peter: Hope in Suffering

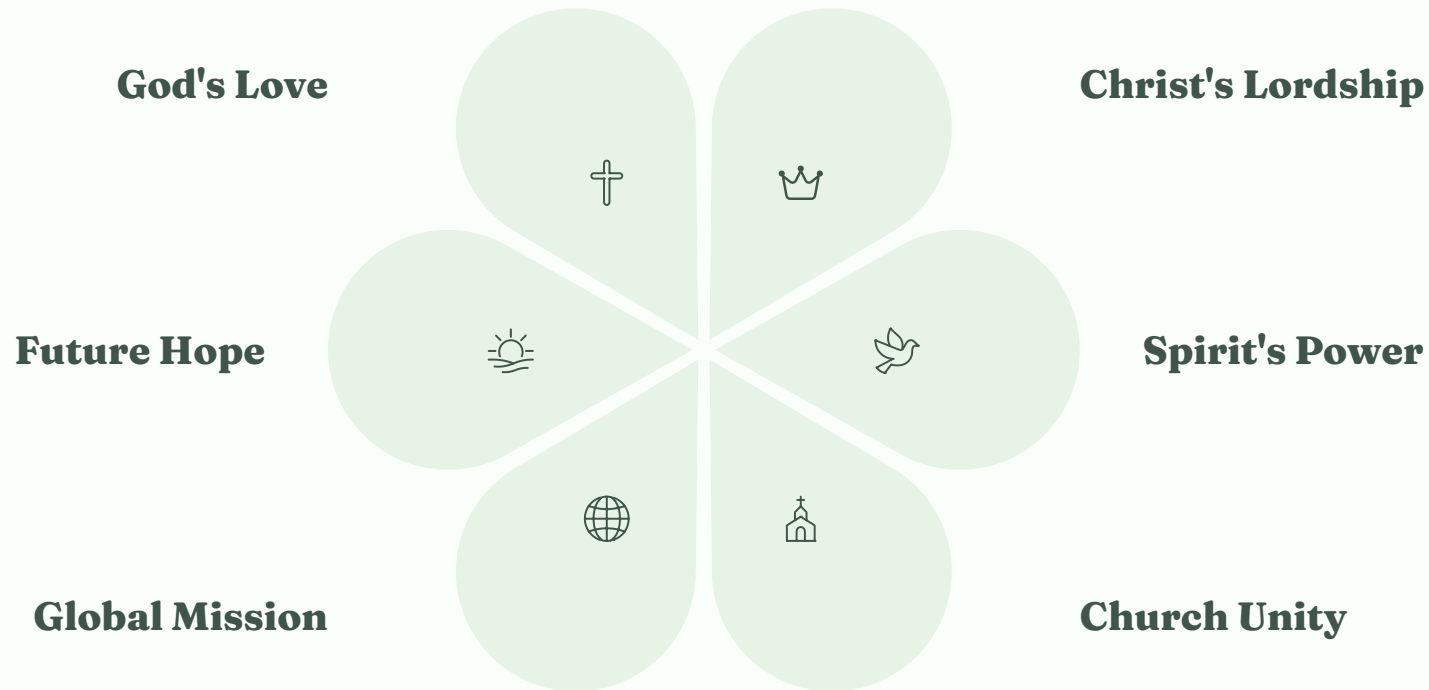
Christian suffering serves God's purposes. Believers should rejoice in sharing Christ's sufferings and maintain hope.



Unity of New Testament Theology

One Gospel, Many Voices

Despite diverse literary styles and historical contexts, the New Testament presents a unified theological message. God's redemptive work through Jesus Christ forms the central theme connecting all 27 books.



Conclusion: The Eternal Gospel

New Testament theology reveals God's eternal purpose to restore fallen humanity through Jesus Christ. From John's Word made flesh to Paul's cosmic Christ, from Peter's living hope to Revelation's victorious Lamb, the message remains consistent: God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.

This theological foundation continues to shape Christian faith and practice, calling believers to embrace God's grace, live in Christ's love, walk in the Spirit's power, and anticipate the consummation of God's kingdom. The New Testament's theological richness provides inexhaustible resources for understanding God's redemptive work and humanity's eternal destiny.

"To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen." - Revelation 1:5-6