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Understanding the different types of ‘ologies’ within Christian theological education

Have you ever wondered how different scholars use various terms when discussing their fields? They might say, “Theology, Christology, Pneumatology,” and you may not understand what they mean. It’s even possible that one spouse is studying theology, while the other spouse is unaware of the different “ologies” within Christian theological education. It may also be that you are simply curious to learn. This list is not exhaustive because new forms of “ologies” are continually created and developed.

Please note that none of this term appears in the Bible directly. People created them to demonstrate their interests and expertise in academic and scholarly interpretation of the Bible.

Whether we agree or disagree with these terms, please note that people spend years and lifetime to study specific aspects of the Bible.

Someone once said, I like kissology, meaning “Keep It Simple Saints.”

Term	Definition
 Theology	Study of God
 Christology	Study of Christ
 Pneumatology	Study of the Holy Spirit
 Soteriology	Study of salvation
 Ecclesiology	Study of the Church
 Missiology	Study of Christian mission
 Eschatology	Study of last things
 Bibliology	Study of Scripture

 Hamartiology	Study of sin
 Patrology / Patristics	Study of early church theology
 Anthropology	Study of humanity
 Hagiology	Study of saints
 Demonology	Study of demons
 Angelology	Study of angels
 Triadology	Study of the Trinity
 Sacramentology	Study of sacraments
 Theodicy	Problem of evil
 Protology	Study of beginnings
 Doxology	Theology of worship

Scriptural & Interpretive Studies

Term	Definition
 Hermeneutics	Principles of biblical interpretation
 Canonology	Formation of the biblical canon
 Textual Criticism	Manuscript study
 Septuagint Studies	Study of the Greek Old Testament

Subsets of Theology

Term	Definition
 Systematic Theology	Comprehensive doctrinal study
 Biblical Theology	Theology within the biblical narrative

 Exegetical Theology	Theology based on specific texts
 Historical Theology	Theology through history
 Practical Theology	Applied theology
 Moral Theology	Ethics and theology
 Pastoral Theology	Theology for pastoral care
 Apologetics	Defense of the faith
 Liturgical Theology	Study of worship practice
 Political Theology	Theology and society
 Public Theology	Theology in public life
 Comparative Theology	Dialogue with other religions
 Constructive Theology	Reworking doctrine today
 Intercultural Theology	Global Christian theology
 Homiletics	Preaching
 Catechetics	Teaching the faith
 Church Polity	Church governance
 Missional Theology	Identity and practice of mission

Paradigm-Based Theologies

Term	Definition
 African American Theology	Theology from African American experience
 Liberation Theology	Theology emphasizing liberation
 Process Theology	Philosophical process-based theology

 Latino/a Theology	Theology from Latino/a context
 Feminist Theology	Theology from feminist perspectives
 Narrative Theology	Theology shaped by story
 Dispensationalist Theology	Theology structured in dispensations
 Fundamentalist Theology	Conservative doctrinal theology
 Postmodern Theology	Postmodern thought in theology
 Postliberal Theology	Response to modern liberal theology

*** If we have missed any “ologies,” please send us an email at
contact@emmanuelisrael.com, and we will be sure to update the list.