Theological Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts

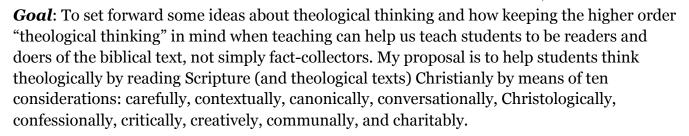
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- **1. Carefully:** *Theological thinking is developed first by being careful readers of the text.*
- **2. Contextually:** Theological thinking is developed next by being aware of the context of each text.
 - a. Literary (micro):
 - **b. Literary (macro):** In addition to the micro context, we should be aware of the larger literary context. This happens on two levels:
 - i. Book
 - ii. Scripture as a whole
 - c. Historical:
- **3. Canonically:** Theological thinking is developed next by reading under the authority of the text.
 - a. Authority
 - b. Final Form

- **4. Conversationally:** Theological thinking is developed next by being in conversation with the text.
- **5. Christologically:** *Theological thinking is developed next by being attuned to what the text says about Christ.*
- **6. Confessionally:** Theological thinking is rooted in and developed by an everincreasing reliance upon the interpretive work done in and through the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Dual Authorship implies Dual Interpretation
 - b. Text vs. Event
- **7. Critically:** Theological thinking is developed by an ability to engage in critical analysis without abandoning interpretive fidelity on other points.
- **8. Creatively:** Theological thinking is developed next by developing a Christian imagination that sees all things through the lens of Christ and helps us bridge the gap between historical context and present practice.
- **9. Communally:** Theological thinking is developed next by reading within community.
- **10. Charitably:** *Theological thinking is developed finally by being a charitable and hospitable reader, assuming the best about the text and considering first that any apparent contradictions are a result of our misguided interpretation.*

Some Conclusions

- **1. Model it:** Teach, preach, and discuss the Scriptures in ways that evidence and model good theological thinking.
- **2. Practice it & Coach it:** Ask students to engage in interpretive exercises and coach them on areas for improvement and growth.