

But if abduction is the way we actually do theology, then how can we ascertain the truth-value of the models proposed? Holmes says there are three truth criteria for models. Theological constructs must possess "empirical adequacy" (i.e., must embrace and do justice to the entire scope of relevant data); must "fit" the data properly and closely; and must "cohere" within the overall doctrine of Scripture (i.e., must round out a coherent conceptual scheme).

5. The contribution of John Jefferson Davis

J. J. Davis, in *Foundations of Evangelical Theology*, speaks of three models of systematic theology: the "concordance" model, the "synthesis" model, and the "transformational" model.

The concordance model he associates with Charles Hodge and the Old Princeton theologians; characterizes it with the motif, "Christ above culture" (in the sense that it "does not take adequate account of the social context of the theological task and the historicity of all theological reflection"); and says that it sees the task of systematic theology as "an orderly arrangement of biblical doctrines, together with an elucidation of their organic relationships."

The synthesis model he associates with various proponents of liberal theology, including Schleiermacher, Harnack, Fosdick, Shailer Mathews, Bultmann, Tillich, and the Marxist liberation theologians; characterizes it with the motif, "Christ of culture" (in the sense that the gospel is "amalgamated with the highest insights and ideals of the culture," and the culture "becomes a theological norm rather than simply a point of contact"); and says that it sees the task of systematic theology as influencing and persuading the secular culture by making itself timely and relevant.

The transformational model (which Davis espouses) he characterizes with the motif, "Christ transforming culture" (in the sense that "a creatively contextualized evangelical theology actively engages in conversation with the culture, immerses itself in its thought forms," and "seeks to understand humanistic culture not in order to gain its social approval, but in order to persuade, convert, and transform it"); and says that the task of systematic theology is "to provide hermeneutical linkage between the 'what it meant' dimension established by biblical theology and 'what it means' dimension of ministry and mission, established by systematic theology." Davis calls this the method of "contextualization", which he defines as "the articulation of the biblical message in terms of the language and thought forms of a particular culture or ethnic group."

There are several questions that are occasioned by Davis' description of these three models, especially when comparing the "concordance" with the "transformational" models. One question has to do with the content and form. Is the content of the "transformational" model essentially the same as that of the "concordance" model, with only the form being different? Is the emphasis on transformation merely a matter of applying