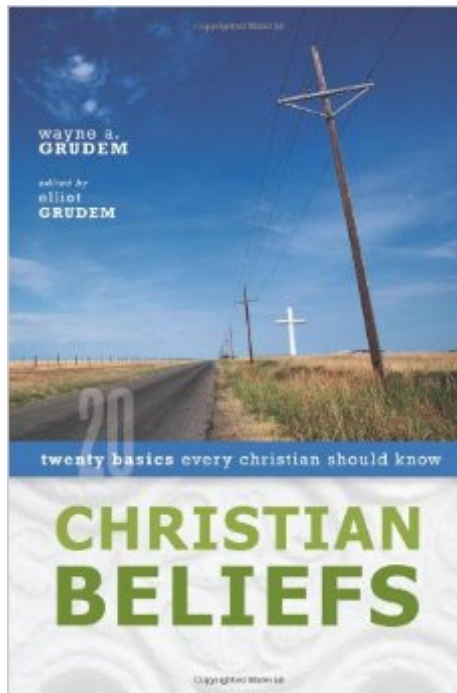


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Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basics Every Christian Should Know



Synopsis

Christian Essentials Made Plain and Simple God doesn't call every Christian to go off to seminary, but there are certain matters of doctrine—that is, the church's teaching—that every Christian simply must know. Theology is important because what we believe affects how we live. If you're a relatively new believer in Jesus, or if you're a more mature Christian looking for a quick brush-up on basics of the faith, *Christian Beliefs* is for you. This readable guide to twenty basic Christian beliefs is a condensation of Wayne Grudem's award-winning book on systematic theology, prized by pastors and teachers everywhere. He and his son, Elliot, have boiled down the essentials of Christian theology for the average layperson and made them both clear and applicable to life. You will learn about the Bible, the characteristics of God, what it means that we are created in the image of God, what God has done for us in Christ, the purpose of the church, and much more. Each chapter includes questions for personal review or group discussion. These truly are twenty basic beliefs that every Christian should know. Wayne Grudem is a master teacher with the ability to explain profound truths in simple language. He is a man of deep conviction and theological passion—and those who read this book will be both educated and encouraged in the faith. R. Albert Mohler Jr., President, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky Based on *Systematic Theology*, this summary will certainly help beginners with Christ to get the hang of their faith. J. I. Packer, Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia As Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology* contracts into a compact book, I do not lose my enthusiasm for the truth he loves and the clarity of his words. John Piper, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

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Customer Reviews

Grudem's book is an excellent overview of the basics of Christian beliefs from a Reformed point of view. The chapters are between 3-5 pages, just long enough for a new Christian to read and digest the material without getting bogged down in a lot of detailed discussion. That is not to say that this book is light on doctrine or details. All of the fundamentals are there. While it is written from a Reformed point of view, the book is applicable for all evangelical Christian perspectives. I know Pentecostal churches that use this book for new Christian classes. I am using this book as a text for a Christian Foundations class, and it is working well. For a new Christian, or for someone wanting to know the basics of Christian beliefs, this is a great starting point. For more in-depth study, I would also recommend Grudem's book Bible Doctrines, which is the next step up, and also his book Systematic Theology, which is extremely readable and detailed.

I love this book because the way Mr. Grudem speaks is like having a chat with a friend not talking to an intellectual. The issues he covers are clearly presented in ways that make it easy to follow. The systematic approach is clear and concise. Another thing I like is I can go back and grab a chapter for review and not have to worry about having read the other chapters. One final thought is that I appreciate how both sides of an argument are addressed. The author doesn't simply state the position he believes and leave you wondering about the other side of the story. He discusses the challenges that the theological position he is taking often faces.

I have read Grudem's Systematic Theology and Bible Doctrine. Christian Beliefs provides a wonderful introduction and practical guide concerning the primary doctrines of the Bible. It is written in such a way that even the young reader can understand. I have found Wayne Grudem to be clear and precise.

Was happy to get this book and appreciate the clear, very simple way it explains classic orthodox beliefs. But I have some concern that while it only takes 4 pages to summarize Christ, 3.5 pages for the Atonement, 2.5 for Resurrection, it then devotes TEN pages to Election. Wasn't too keen on how the large segment of the Church which does not hold such a rigidly reformed view are characterized in that chapter as well - a wee bit condescending. So maybe the subtitle should be "twenty basics that every reformed christian should know." Otherwise, it's good!

Call it a primer on systematic theology. Wayne Grudem's 1264-page Systematic Theology was first published in 1994. In 1999, Jeff Purswell edited it down to a 528-page version, titled Bible Doctrine.

Now, Zondervan has published a 144-page version, edited by Wayne's son, Elliot, titled *Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basics Every Christian Should Know*. Here are the topics covered in this new version: What is the Bible? What is God like? What is the Trinity? What is creation? What is prayer? What are angels and demons? What is man? What is sin? Who is Christ? What is the atonement? What is the resurrection? What is election (or predestination)? What does it mean to become a Christian? What are justification and adoption? What are sanctification and perseverance? What is death? What is the church? What will happen when Christ returns? What is the final judgment? What is heaven? I think that this would be an ideal book for Sunday School classes, and especially for memberships classes--as well as a wonderful tool for discipleship in the faith. Review and application questions are included to facilitate discussion. I taught it to a group of 30 people over 20 weeks with ages ranging from 10-90 and everyone got something out of it.

Grudem's *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* is my "go-to" book for questions on almost any point of doctrine. It is thorough yet accessible, easy to read yet well referenced. I love it. His *Christian Beliefs: 20 Basics Every Christian Should Know* is helpful as well, but for very different reasons. **POSITIVES:**- Perfect for new Christians.- Lots of helpful Scripture references.- Great questions for review and application (at the end of every chapter).- Helpful appendices on Historic Creeds and Suggested Further Reading. **NEGATIVES:**- Not great for non-Christians (or skeptics) because much of what is written leaves a skeptic's questions unanswered.- Not great for mature Christians. I find myself going back to his *Systematic Theology* often because *Christian Beliefs* doesn't provide a full defense for many of its arguments. I would highly recommend this for new converts, but don't think it's as helpful for skeptics. For the seasoned Christian, Grudem's *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* is a must!

It's vital for all believers to know what the WHOLE of Scripture has to say on the great doctrines of the Bible; this book will provide serious Christians with this understanding. Simple and very readable it will unlock many of the difficult passages of the Bible, particularly from the Reformed theological perspective.

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