

## *Library Classification Systems*

### *Introduction*

Books are placed on library shelves according to a classification scheme. A basic familiarity with those systems is vital for the student so they can find materials efficiently within the collection. Students of The Master's Seminary will encounter the two main systems: (1) The Library of Congress Classification System [LC], and (2) The Dewey Decimal System [Dewey]. The seminary utilizes the LC system while The Master's College utilizes the Dewey system.

The Dewey Decimal System is designed for the library user and browser. It has a logic flow, and once the ten basic categories are memorized, a student can generally find what they are looking for. The LC system is not designed with the library patron in mind. The LC system is really designed for a "closed stacks" library where patrons do not "browse" the collection but rather hand a page a request for a book, who would then retrieve it for the patron. As a result the LC system is rather notorious for strange and often logic defying "call numbers."<sup>1</sup>

We have listed the LC and Dewey systems both in total and then more detailed sections for Biblical Studies and Theology. A more detailed explanation of the LC system is available on the Seminary web site at <http://www.tms.edu/lcssystem.asp>. We have also added a section here to explain the call numbers for Biblical Commentaries in the LC scheme. That section is also available for reference on the Seminary web site at <http://www.tms.edu/lccomm.asp>. There are a couple of other classification systems in use including, The *Bliss Classification System*, the *Colon Classification System*, the more widely used *Universal Decimal Classification System*. For systems particular to theological libraries the *Union Seminary Classification System* is the most well known (formerly used by the Grace Theological Seminary library), although it is now little used and will be only be encountered by students who happen into an archive or part of an unconverted collection. There was a *Westminster Seminary Classification System*, (based on the Union system) but that system is now entirely defunct, Westminster Seminary eliminated it itself more than a decade ago and we are unaware of any institution that currently uses it at any level.

The question is always asked about a personal system for office and files. Keeping track of ones own library and personal files is obviously important. In this course we will be recommending that students invest in a computer program called Pro-Cite, which is a personal bibliographic database (see <http://www.procite.com>). This system will allow for search based on key word or any other criteria. It also allows for direct interface through the Internet to other library systems so that they can be search and records imported.

Personally, we recommend that individuals, especially pastors, use the Dewey system as a basis for their own filing system. It is easy to use, if you enlist the aid of others in either setting up or maintaining the system; most people at least have a working familiarity with Dewey. For those who wish a more elaborate system, Dr. Rodney Decker of Baptist Bible College and Seminary, has put together a quite detailed system, which he recently updated to a third edition. It can be found at <http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/documents/LibClassSystem3.pdf>. The most important aspect of a personal system is that it be *functional*; that is, it can handle a library up to perhaps 5,000 volumes, and that the categories can be expanded as necessary. It should also be *friendly*; that is,

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<sup>1</sup> The "Call Number" is the number of the classification system (Dewey or LC) assigned to that particular book. No two books in a collection will (when they are properly catalogued) have the same "Call Number." Biblical and Theological Studies in the LC system can be particularly maddening. For instance, works on warfare in the Biblical era might be found in either the *BR* section in "Bible Backgrounds"; or it might be found in the *DS* section for the "History of Israel" or in the little-used *U* Section for "Military Science." There is often no particular rhyme or reason. Of particular note to students are Greek and Hebrew reference and word study works. They may either be located in the *BS* section of the *PA* section. Students should check both locations.

you don't have to spend hours explaining it to someone (like your secretary) on how it works. It should also be *feasible*; that is, it shouldn't require the investment of months of your life to create and implement.

### *The Library of Congress Classification System (Overview)*

#### Class    Description

A            *GENERAL WORKS*  
(General encyclopedias, reference books, periodicals, etc.)

B            *PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION*  
B-BJ    Philosophy, including BF, Psychology  
BL-BX    Religion

C            *AUXILIARY SCIENCES OF HISTORY*  
CB        History of civilization (General)  
CC        Archaeology  
CD        Archives  
CJ        Numismatics  
CR        Heraldry  
CS        Genealogy  
CT        Biography (General)

D            *HISTORY: GENERAL AND OLD WORLD*  
(Including geography of individual countries)  
D        World history, including World Wars  
DA        Great Britain  
DB        Austria  
DC        France  
DD-      Other individual countries

E-F            *HISTORY OF AMERICA*  
(Including geography of individual countries)  
E 1-143        America (General)  
E 151-857      United States (General)  
F 1-957        United States: States and local  
F 1001-1140    Canada  
F 1201-        Other individual countries

G            *GEOGRAPHY, ANTHROPOLOGY, FOLKLORE, ETC*  
G        Geography (General)  
GB        Physical geography  
GC        Oceanography  
GN        Anthropology  
GR        Folklore  
GV        Recreation

H            *SOCIAL SCIENCES*  
HA        Statistics  
HB-HJ    Economics  
HM-HX    Sociology

J            *POLITICAL SCIENCE*  
JA-JC    Political science

JF-JQ Constitutional history and public  
 JS Local Government  
 JX International law

*K LAW*  
*L EDUCATION*

*M MUSIC*  
 M Scores  
 ML Literature of music  
 MT Musical instruction

*N FINE ARTS*  
 NA Architecture  
 NB Sculpture  
 NC Graphic arts  
 ND Painting  
 NK Decorative arts

*P LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE*  
 P Philology and linguistics  
 PA Classical languages and literature  
 PC Romance languages  
 PD-PF Germanic languages, including PE, English  
 PG Slavic languages and literatures  
 PQ Romance literatures  
 PR English literature  
 PS American literature  
 PT Germanic literatures  
 PZ Fiction in English, Juvenile literature

*Q SCIENCE*  
 QA Mathematics  
 QB Astronomy  
 QC Physics  
 QD Chemistry  
 QE Geology  
 QH Natural history  
 QK Botany  
 QL Zoology  
 QM Human anatomy  
 QP Physiology  
 QR Bacteriology

*T TECHNOLOGY*  
 TA General engineering, including general civil engineering  
 TC Hydraulic engineering  
 TD Sanitary and municipal engineering  
 TE Highway engineering  
 TF Railroad engineering  
 TG Bridge engineering  
 TH Building construction  
 TJ Mechanical engineering  
 TK Electrical engineering, Nuclear engineering  
 TL Motor vehicles. Aeronautics. Astronautics  
 TN Mining engineering. Mineral industries. Metallurgy

TP Chemical technology  
 TR Photography  
 TS Manufactures  
 TT Handicrafts. Arts and crafts  
 TX Home Economics

*U MILITARY SCIENCE*  
*V NAVAL SCIENCES*  
*Z BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LIBRARY SCIENCE*

*Note Regarding Biographies:* Lives of individuals, illustrative of any subject, are normally classified with that subject, e.g. Albert Einstein is classified in QC16.ES. Otherwise, they are classified with general biography in CT. Only a few individuals within any category will have distinctive call numbers assigned exclusively to them.

***Library of Congress Classification System (Biblical and Theological Studies)***

***BR CHRISTIANITY***

1-44 General divisions  
 45-85 Collections of Christian Writings  
 100-139 Christianity in relation to special subjects  
 140-1599 Church History  
 1600-1653 Special Topics  
 1690-1725 Biography

***BS THE BIBLE***

1-680 General  
 700-1830 Old Testament (Backgrounds, Introductions, Commentaries)  
 1900-2970 New Testament

***BT DOCTRINAL THEOLOGY***

1-97 General topics  
 98-180 God  
 198-590 Christology  
 695-748 Creation (including Man)  
 750-810 Salvation. Soteriology  
 819-890 Eschatology. Last Things  
 899-950 Future State, Future Life  
 960-985 Invisible World  
 990-1039 Creeds, Confessions, Catechisms  
 1095-1255 Apologetics  
 1313-1480 History of specific doctrines and movements

***BV PRACTICAL THEOLOGY***

1-4 General  
 5-535 Worship  
 590-1450 Ecclesiastical Theology  
 1460-1612 Religious Education  
 2000-3705 Missions

4000-4470 Pastoral Theology  
 4485-5099 Practical Religion. The Christian Life

*BX DENOMINATIONS AND SECTS*

1-9 Ecumenical Movement  
 100-189 Eastern Churches. Oriental Churches  
 200-750 Orthodox Eastern Church  
 801-4795 Roman Catholic Church  
 4800-9499 Protestantism

***The Library of Congress Classification System (Biblical Commentaries)***

The LC system can be a little intimidating (and confusing) for those who are used to the Dewey Decimal System. Since a major portion of the collection is dedicated to Biblical studies we have detailed the LC arrangement for Biblical commentaries to assist those in both locating materials and to help them become familiar with the numbering sequence that is generally followed.

<b>Old Testament</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BS 1235 Genesis</li> <li>• BS 1245 Exodus</li> <li>• BS 1255 Leviticus</li> <li>• BS 1265 Numbers</li> <li>• BS 1275 Deuteronomy</li> <li>• BS 1295 Joshua</li> <li>• BS 1305 Judges</li> <li>• BS 1315 Ruth</li> <li>• BS 1325 I-II Samuel</li> <li>• BS 1335 I-II Kings</li> <li>• BS 1345 I-II Chronicles</li> <li>• BS 1355 Ezra</li> <li>• BS 1365 Nehemiah</li> <li>• BS 1375 Esther</li> <li>• BS 1415 Job</li> <li>• BS 1419 Psalms</li> <li>• BS 1465 Proverbs</li> <li>• BS 1475 Ecclesiastes</li> <li>• BS 1485 Song of Solomon</li> <li>• BS 1515 Isaiah</li> <li>• BS 1525 Jeremiah</li> <li>• BS 1535 Lamentations</li> <li>• BS 1545 Ezekiel</li> <li>• BS 1555 Daniel</li> <li>• BS 1565 Hosea</li> <li>• BS 1575 Joel</li> <li>• BS 1585 Amos</li> <li>• BS 1595 Obadiah</li> <li>• BS 1605 Jonah</li> <li>• BS 1615 Micah</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BS 1625 Nahum</li> <li>• BS 1635 Habbakkuk</li> <li>• BS 1645 Zephaniah</li> <li>• BS 1655 Haggai</li> <li>• BS 1665 Zechariah</li> <li>• BS 1675 Malachi</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>New Testament</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BS 2575 Matthew</li> <li>• BS 2585 Mark</li> <li>• BS 2595 Luke</li> <li>• BS 2615 John</li> <li>• BS 2625 Acts</li> <li>• BS 2665 Romans</li> <li>• BS 2675 I-II Corinthians</li> <li>• BS 2685 Galatians</li> <li>• BS 2695 Ephesians</li> <li>• BS 2705 Philippians</li> <li>• BS 2715 Colossians</li> <li>• BS 2725 I-II Thessalonians</li> <li>• BS 2745 I-II Timothy</li> <li>• BS 2755 Titus</li> <li>• BS 2765 Philemon</li> <li>• BS 2775 Hebrews</li> <li>• BS 2785 James</li> <li>• BS 2795 I-II Peter</li> <li>• BS 2805 I-III John</li> <li>• BS 2815 Jude</li> <li>• BS 2825 Revelation</li> </ul>

Other than the Book of Psalms (which is organized differently to account for commentaries on individual Psalms), each book of the Bible has a fairly consistent numbering system.

Beyond the basic four digit number there are decimal numbers, all of which have convey different information about the individual book in terms of content and dating. Using *The Book of Hebrews* as an example here is how the LC System classifies different commentaries:

- **2775** All Commentaries Written before 1950
- **.2** Critical Commentaries (1950-2000)
- **.3** Commentaries (1950-2000)
- **.4** Sermons, Meditations, Devotions (1950-2000)
- **.5** Other (1950-2000)
- **.52** Critical Commentaries (2001- )
- **.53** Commentaries (2001- )
- **.54** Sermons, Meditations, Devotions (2001- )
- **.55** Other (2001- )
- **.6** Special Topics in Hebrews A-Z

Biblical Commentaries are created either as "stand alone" volumes or as an individual work in a larger set or series. In the LC System a commentary may also be shelved in a location reserved for *Sets*. There are different numbers for sets of commentaries covering the entire Bible (e.g. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*), just the Old Testament (e.g. *The New International Commentary of the Old Testament*), or just the New Testament (e.g. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*).

The "Set" Numbers for the LC System are as follows:

- BS 490 - BS 491.5 Whole Bible Commentary Sets
- BS 1150 - 1151.5 Old Testament Commentary Sets
- BS 2340 - BS 2341.3 New Testament Commentary Sets

In the Master's Seminary Library commentaries from sets will normally have a copy in the individual book number and another copy in the "set" number.

### ***The Dewey Decimal Classification System (overview)***

000	<i>GENERALITIES</i>
010	Bibliography
020	Library & information sciences
030	General encyclopedic works
040	
050	General serials & their indexes
060	General organizations & museology
070	News media, journalism, publishing
080	General collections
090	Manuscripts & rare books
100	<i>PHILSOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY</i>
110	Metaphysics
120	Epistemology, causation, humankind
130	Paranormal phenomena
140	Specific philosophical schools
150	Psychology

160	Logic
170	Ethics (Moral philosophy)
180	Ancient, medieval, Oriental philosophy
190	Modern Western philosophy
200	<i>RELIGION</i>
210	Natural theology
220	Bible
230	Christian theology
240	Christian moral & devotional theology
250	Christian orders & local church
260	Christian social theology
270	Christian church history
280	Christian denominations & sects
290	Other & comparative religions
300	<i>SOCIAL SCIENCES</i>
310	General statistics
320	Political science
330	Economics
340	Law
350	Public administration
360	Social services; association
370	Education
380	Commerce, communications, transport
390	Customs, etiquette, folklore
400	<i>LANGUAGE</i>
410	Linguistics
420	English & Old English
430	Germanic languages German
440	Romance languages French
450	Italian, Romanian, Rhaeto-Romanic
460	Spanish & Portuguese languages
470	Italic languages Latin
480	Hellenic languages Classical Greek
490	Other languages
500	<i>NATURAL SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS</i>
510	Mathematics
520	Astronomy & allied sciences
530	Physics
540	Chemistry & allied sciences
550	Earth sciences
560	Paleontology Paleozoology
570	Life sciences
580	Botanical sciences
590	Zoological sciences
600	<i>TECHNOLOGY (APPLIED SCIENCES)</i>
610	Medical Sciences and Medicine
620	Engineering & allied operations
630	Agriculture
640	Home economics & family living

650	Management & auxiliary services
660	Chemical engineering
670	Manufacturing
680	Manufacture for specific uses
690	Buildings
700	<i>THE ARTS</i>
710	Civic & landscape art
720	Architecture
730	Plastic arts & sculpture
740	Drawing & decorative arts
750	Painting & paintings
760	Graphic arts, Printmaking & prints
770	Photography & photographs
780	Music
790	Recreational
800	<i>LITERATURE AND RHETORIC</i>
810	American literature
820	English & Old English literatures
830	Literatures of Germanic languages
840	Literatures of Romance languages
850	Italian, Romanian, Rhaeto-Romanic
860	Spanish & Portuguese literatures
870	Italic literatures, Latin
880	Hellenic literatures, Classical Greek
890	Literatures of other languages
900	<i>GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY</i>
910	Geography & travel
920	Biography, genealogy, insignia
930	History of the ancient world
940	General history of Europe
950	General history of Asia and the Far East
960	General history of Africa
970	General history of North America
980	General history of South America
990	General history of other areas

### *The Dewey Decimal Classification System (Religion Detailed)*

200	<i>RELIGION</i>
201	Philosophy of Christianity
202	Miscellany of Christianity
203	Dictionaries of Christianity
204	Special topics of general applicability
205	Serials on Christianity
206	Organizations of Christianity
207	Study & teaching of Christianity
208	Christianity among groups of persons
209	History & geography of Christianity
210	<i>NATURAL RELIGION</i>
211	Concepts of God
212	Nature of God

213	Creation
214	Theodicy
215	Science & religion
216	Good & evil
217	
218	Humankind
219	Analogy
220	<i>BIBLE</i>
221	Old Testament
222	Historical books of Old Testament
223	Poetic books of Old Testament
224	Prophetic books of Old Testament
225	New Testament
226	Gospels & Acts
227	Epistles
228	Revelation (Apocalypse)
229	Apocrypha & pseudepigrapha
230	<i>CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY</i>
231	God
232	Jesus & his family
233	Humankind
234	Salvation (Soteriology) & grace
235	Spiritual Beings
236	Eschatology
237	
238	Creeds & confessions of faith
239	Apologetics & polemics
240	<i>CHRISTIAN MORAL AND DEVOTIONAL THEOLOGY</i>
241	Moral theology
242	Devotional literature
243	Evangelistic writings for individuals
244	
245	Hymns without music
246	Art in Christianity
247	Church furnishings & articles
248	Christian experience, practice, life
249	Christian observances in family life
250	<i>LOCAL CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS ORDERS</i>
251	Preaching (Homiletics)
252	Texts of sermons
253	Secular clergyman & duties
254	Parish governmental & administration
255	Religious congregations & orders
256	
257	
258	
259	Parochial activities
260	<i>SOCIAL AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL THEOLOGY</i>
261	Social theology
262	Ecclesiology
263	Times & places of religious observance

264	Public worship
265	Other rites, ceremonies, ordinances
266	Missions
267	Associations for religious work
268	Religious training & instruction
269	Spiritual Renewal
270	<i>HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE CHURCH</i>
271	Religious congregations & orders
272	Persecutions
273	Doctrinal controversies & heresies
274	Christian church in Europe
275	Christian church in Asia
276	Christian church in Africa
277	Christian church in North America
278	Christian church in South America
279	Christian church in other areas
280	<i>CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS AND SECTS</i>
281	Primitive & Oriental churches
282	Roman Catholic Church
283	Anglican churches
284	Protestants of Continental origin
285	Presbyterian & related churches
286	Baptist, Disciples, Adventist
287	Methodist churches
288	Unitarianism
289	Other denominations & sects
290	<i>OTHER COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS</i>
291	Comparative religion
292	Classical (Greek & Roman) religion
293	Germanic religion
294	Religions of Indic origin
295	Zoroastrianism
296	Judaism
297	Islam & religions derived from it
298	
299	Other religions