

An Introduction to Theology – Outline

I. What Is Theology?

- A. *A Definition:* Theology is the study of God. Because God is the center of literally *everything*, especially in the revelation of Himself in Scripture, theology extends to understanding His Being, His works, and His relation to man as revealed in the Bible.
- B. *Types of Theology (In Christian Circles):*
 - 1. Systematic Theology: Presents God's truth in an orderly fashion, on a topical basis.
 - 2. Dogmatic Theology: Presents truth as held and defined by various groups within Christendom.
 - 3. Biblical Theology: Presents different emphases and developments of doctrine according to certain writers and books in Scripture.
 - 4. Historical Theology: Presents theology as understood through and at different times in history.
 - 5. Practical Theology: Presents theology as relating to the Christian's life and conduct.
- C. *The Ten Main Emphases of Theology Include:*
 - 1. Bibliology: The Study of God's Word
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”
 - 2. Theology Proper: The Study of God's Being Specifically, including God the Father
 - a. Jeremiah 9:24 – “But let him that boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.”
 - 3. Christology: The Study of Christ's Person
 - a. 1 Timothy 3:16 – “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”
 - 4. Pneumatology: The Study of the Holy Spirit
 - a. 1 John 4:13 – “Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”
 - 5. Angelology: The Study of Angels
 - a. Psalm 104:4 – “Who makes his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire.”
 - 6. Anthropology: The Study of Man
 - a. Genesis 1:27 – “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”
 - 7. Hamartiology: The Study of Sin
 - a. Romans 5:12 – “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”
 - 8. Soteriology: The Study of Salvation
 - a. 1 Timothy 2:3-6 “God... Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and

men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

9. Eschatology: The Study of Last Things / End Times, and God's Purpose in the Ages
 - a. Romans 11:36 – "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."
10. Ecclesiology: The Study of The Body of Christ, as Well as the Local Church
 - a. *The Dispensational Church*: Ephesians 1:22-23 – "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
 - b. *The Local Assembly*: Acts 2:41-42 – "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

II. The Purpose of Doing Theology

- A. *It is the only appropriate response to God's purpose to reveal Himself.*
- B. *To know God*: "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." (1 John 5:20)
- C. *To come into the good of our salvation*. Theology is really an extension of our eternal life: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3)
- D. *To know the faith in order to defend it*: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3
- E. *Without Theology, we have nothing to believe.*

III. Theology: The Most Dignified Study

- A. Christ taught the first systematic theology lesson: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24:27)
- B. The knowledge of God permeates every aspect of life. Thus theology cannot but be important and useful.
- C. The knowledge of God is being occupied with the Most High – the Infinite One. How can such occupation not be preeminently dignified?
- D. God's wisdom (which is displayed in theology) is the only true wisdom there is.
 1. Man's wisdom is foolishness.
 2. God's wisdom is true.
 3. We take great expense to learn man-made ideas.
 4. Therefore, we should see the learning of God's wisdom as our greatest learning.

IV. Effects of Studying Theology

- A. *It Confirms Us in Our Salvation*: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." (Romans 6:17)
- B. *It Proves and Allows for a Proper Relationship with God*: "Whosoever transgresseth, and

abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 1:9)

- C. *It Gives Us a Standard of Judgment:* "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." (Romans 16:17)
- D. *It Sanctifies the Believer:* "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17)
- E. *It Preserves the Believer:* "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Timothy 4:16)
- F. *It Gives Hope to the Believer:* "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (James 1:12)
- G. *It Matures the Believer:* "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14)
- H. *It Qualifies a Man to Be a Teacher:* "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." (Titus 1:9)