

Building Your Theology

Journal Questions

LESSON
ONE

WHAT IS THEOLOGY?



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Journal Questions

1. How would you explain the term “theology” to someone who was unfamiliar with the concept?
2. Which approach to theology do you think is more valuable? Why?
3. Explain how you might successfully approach theology with a life orientation.
4. What does it mean to say that “our beliefs and our actions and our feelings form webs of multiple reciprocities”? Why is this concept important to understand as you begin the study of theology?
5. Dr. Pratt stated that, “because the deck of life is always shifting, balance can be nothing more than momentary synchronicity.” What does this mean, and what implications does it have for the study of theology?
6. How can we avoid the trap of intellectualism as we study theology?
7. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
TWO

EXPLORING CHRISTIAN
THEOLOGY



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Journal Questions

1. Should you believe all the doctrines in the Apostles' Creed? Why or why not?
2. What implications does the theological unity of all believers have for the way you view and interact with other branches of the church?
3. What positive influences has your theological tradition had on your theology? What negative influences has it had?
4. What are the emphases of your tradition? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these emphases? How might you change your emphases to counter these weaknesses without losing the strengths?
5. What are some of the strengths and dangers of Reformed theology? In what ways might your understanding of the tradition behind these lessons help you discern truth from error within them?
6. Reformed theology tends to insist that all life is religious. Do you agree or disagree with this idea? Why or why not?
7. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
THREE

RELYING ON REVELATION



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Journal Questions

1. How might your understanding of God through general revelation draw you closer to him?
2. How might understanding the similarities and differences between special and general revelation change the way a person does theology?
3. How does it make you feel knowing that sin still works within us to suppress and skew much of God's revelation? What hope does the Holy Spirit bring? How can we guard against theological errors caused by the noetic effects of sin?
4. Why is it necessary to approach the confidence that we have in theological positions analogically? Describe a situation in which a binary approach to confidence might cause problems in the church.
5. What impact have exegesis, community and Christian living had on your own beliefs? Which of these influences has been most important to you? Why?
6. What beliefs do you hold with the most confidence? What beliefs do you hold with very little confidence? Why do you assign these levels of confidence to these particular beliefs?
7. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
FOUR

AUTHORITY IN THEOLOGY



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Journal Questions

1. The writings of the early church fathers have influenced the church throughout its history. Is this good or bad? Should modern theology seek to move past these primitive views? Or should we rely strongly on the wisdom of those who have gone before us?
2. In what ways has this study helped you understand the historical controversy between Catholics and Protestants?
3. Why is it important to maintain a balance between the divine origin of Scripture and the human origin of Scripture?
4. What are some practical ways we can observe the principle of “always reforming” in the modern church? What are some areas in your own church that need to be reformed?
5. How should the concept of complex univalence influence us as we engage in modern theological discussions? What are some dangers of this approach to meaning? What are some of its benefits?
6. How can the model of the cone of certainty aide you in assigning priorities and levels of conviction to your understandings of scriptural passages that are not entirely clear?
7. What are the dangers of Traditionalism and Biblicism? Have you seen these extremes in the church today?
8. There were several “extreme” positions mentioned in this lesson. Did any of them describe your own approach to theology? Which ones? What practical steps might you take to adopt more responsible perspectives?
9. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?