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Mind Games Survival Course Manual



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Theology and the Student

Jerry Solomon

In this outline we discuss the crucial importance of theology in the life of a student. In doing so we will attempt to develop a basic theological framework-one that applies biblical truth to all areas of life and thought. This framework consists of the classic divisions of orthodox theology. We will also look at a simple method for studying the Bible for ourselves.

I. What is theology?

A. "Theology" = "Theos" (God) + "logos" (word, thought)

Theology can be defined as "the study of God" or "thinking about God."

2. What comes to mind when you hear the word "theology?"

For some Christians today, the pursuit of truth through theology is to be viewed as "outmoded and reactionary." {1}

For others, it is simply a boring exercise to be left solely to academicians.

2. The nature of theology

A. How does theology help us to "know" God?

The Greek language of the New Testament gives us two words for our word "to know." One is *oida*, which emphasizes factual, conceptual knowledge, and the other is *ginosko* which emphasizes personal and experiential knowledge. The ultimate goal of our theological (*oida*) knowledge is to experience (*ginosko*) Him in our lives (Phil. 3:8).

2. Theology thus holds primary importance with regard to practical living.

According to David Wells, in his book *No Place For Truth*, "Theology involves the cultivation of those virtues that constitute a wisdom for life." Theology, he says, should lead to spirituality, "a kind of spirituality that is now exceedingly rare-the type that is centrally moral in its nature because God is centrally holy in his being, that sees Christian practice not primarily as a matter of technique but as a matter of truth, and that refuses to disjoin practice from thought or thought from practice." {2}

3. Theology has certain limits.

Christian scholars often approach issues rationally and systematically. This, of course, is necessary to a certain point, and yet it would be unbiblical to think that through a theological system we can eliminate all difficulties. God tells us in Isaiah 55:9, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

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