

This Page:  
**Theology and the Student**  
 I **Nine areas of theology**

## Mind Games Survival Course Manual



Table of Contents

# Theology and the Student

Jerry Solomon

## III. Nine areas of theology

### A. Bibliology-the Doctrine of the Bible

Scripture, collecting in our minds the otherwise confused notions of Deity, dispels the darkness, and gives us a clear view of the true God. {3}

1. Issues in Bibliology:
  - a. Special Revelation (John 5:39)
  2. Inspiration (2 Tim. 3:16)
  3. Canonicity (Jude 3)
  4. Authority and application (1 Thess. 2:13)
2. Challenges to the Bible:
  - a. Relativism  
 More than 80% of Americans (according to a recent survey) believe the Bible is the inspired word of God [and yet] 70% say that each individual must determine what is right and wrong. {4}
  2. Liberalism  
 We are not to say that the Bible IS the word of God; Scripture *contains* the word of God.

### 2. Theology Proper-The Doctrine of God

St. Augustine was once watching a boy fill a beachside hole with ocean water. It made him think of his struggle to understand the Trinity. "I realized I had been trying to put the infinite into the finite." {5} Our thoughts about God are filled with wonder as we attempt to contemplate Him.

1. Issues in Theology Proper:

- a. General Revelation-(Rom. 1:18-20)
  2. The Trinity-(Gen. 1:26 and Deut. 6:4)
  3. Essence of God-self-existence (Exod. 3:14), spirit (John 4:24), eternal (Gen. 21:33), immutable (Heb. 1:11-12), holy (Isa. 59:1-2)
  4. Attributes of God (expressions of His essence)-wise (Rom. 11:33), glorious (Psa. 19:1), omnipotent (Job 42:2), omnipresent (Psa. 139:7-12), righteous (Psa. 19:9), good (Psa. 36:3), love (1 John 4:7-16).
2. Challenges to Theology Proper:
- a. Cults  
The obvious conclusion is that Satan is the originator of the trinity doctrine.{6}
  2. Experience-oriented religion  
Francis Schaeffer points out the parallel between experience-oriented religious groups and liberals.

The liberal theologians (likewise) don't believe in content or religious truth. They are really existentialists using theological, Christian terminology. Consequently, not believing in truth, they can enter into fellowship with any other experience-oriented group using religious language.{7}

### 3. Christology-The Doctrine of Christ

The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the Eternal Son of God, became a man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man in two natures, and one person forever.{8}

1. Issues in Christology:
  - a. Deity (John 1:1,14,18; 10:30)
  2. Humanity (Rom. 15:8-9)
  3. Hypostatic Union-the theological term for Christ's person, consisting of the union of two distinct natures (Phil. 2:1-11)
  4. Ministry on Earth (Matt. 5-7)
  5. Death/Atonement (see Soteriology section)
  6. Resurrection (1 Cor. 15:12-19)
  7. Ascension (Mark 16:19)
2. Challenges to Christology:
  - a. Historical challenges
    1. Docetism (denied Christ's human nature, affirmed His divine nature)
    2. Ebionism (affirmed human, denied divine)
    3. Arianism (affirmed human, reduced divine)
    4. Apollinarianism (reduced human, affirmed divine)
    5. Nestorianism (held that Christ was two persons-human

and divine)

6. Eutychianism (held that Christ had one mixed nature, neither fully human nor fully divine)

2. Modern challenge--The "Jesus Seminar"

Jesus lived on in the hearts of followers old and new, but he did not physically rise from the dead. Taken down from the cross, his body was probably buried in a shallow grave-and may have been eaten by the dogs.{9}

3. Personal challenges-the human heart  
"Abort Christ!"{10} (Kurt Cobain, leader of the rock band Nirvana).

#### 4. Soteriology-The Doctrine of Salvation

Mercy there was great and grace was free; pardon there was multiplied to me; there my weary soul found liberty, AT CALVARY.{11}

1. Issues in Soteriology:

- a. Election (Rom. 8:28-30)
2. Atonement (Isa. 53:5). Includes sacrifice (Heb. 4:14), propitiation (Rom. 1:18 and 3:25), reconciliation (Rom. 5:6-11), redemption (Gal. 3:13 and 4:5)
3. Regeneration (John 3:3,7)
4. Conversion (Matt. 18:3) e. Grace and Faith (Eph. 2:8,9)
5. Justification (Rom. 8:33-35)
6. Sanctification (Eph. 5:26-27)
7. Glorification (Rom. 8:18-25, 30)

2. Challenges to Soteriology:

- a. Universalism

I like to think of God as all-forgiving-not the fire-and-brimstone type who damns people to hell.  
{12}

2. Syncretism

In general, America's religious faith in 2000 will be a combination of existing faiths. Known as syncretism, this approach to spirituality was quite common in Old Testament times (and earned the stern rebuke of the prophets). Americans, never quite satisfied with their options, and rarely pleased with old traditions and old rules, will create their own religions. They will mix and match the best of each faith to which they are exposed and emerge with a synthetic faith. {13}

## 5. Anthropology-The Doctrine of Man

I cannot understand, Lord, how You can bother with mere puny man, to pay any attention to him! And yet you have made him only a little lower than the angels, and placed a crown of glory and honor upon his head (David in Ps. 8:4-5).

1. Issues in Anthropology:
  - a. Creation-in Image of God (Gen. 1:26-27)
  2. Constitution-a dualistic being (Gen. 2:7)
  3. The fallenness of man (Gen.3; Rom.3:10,12,23)
2. Challenges to Biblical Anthropology:
  - a. Materialism

Mental states are physical states of the brain. That is, each type of mental state or process is numerically identical with some type of physical state or process within the brain or central nervous system. At present we do not know enough about the intricate functionings of the brain to actually state the relative identities, but ... brain research will eventually reveal them. {14}

### 2. Secular Humanism

If in 4 million years mankind has made such anthropological progress, one can only wonder what the next millennium will bring. {15}

### 3. Nihilism

I don't believe all people have a spiritual dimension. I don't believe there is any destiny for us. {16}

### 3. Application Question:

How would a biblical view of Anthropology affect your approach to psychology?

## 6. Pneumatology-The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is the most neglected truth in all of church history. {17}

1. Issues in Pneumatology:
  - a. The deity of the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3,4)
  2. The personality of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30)
  3. Ministry of the Holy Spirit at conversion, including indwelling

(Rom 8:9), baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), regeneration (John 3:5), and sealing (Eph. 5:13)

4. Ministry of the Holy Spirit after conversion, including filling (Eph. 5:18), guiding (John 16:13), and comforting (Acts 9:31)

## 2. Challenge to Pneumatology: New Age Spirituality

MOMENTUS is about ... governing your gift of holy spirit into reality.{18}

## 3. Application Questions:

Are you "filled" with the Holy Spirit? How do you know?

## 7. Ecclesiology-The Doctrine of the Church

The holiest moment of the church service is when God's people, strengthened by preaching and sacrament, go out into the world to be the church. We do not go to church, we are the church.{19}

### 1. Issues in Ecclesiology:

- a. The universal church (Eph. 1:22-23)
2. The local church (Rev. 2:1; 3:1,7,14)
3. Church government (I Tim. 3:1-7)
4. Sacraments/ordinances (Rom. 6:1-5, 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

## 2. Challenge to Ecclesiology: Privatization

There is no such thing as religion, there's only God, which is truth. Organized religion is a lie ... particularly the Christian church.{20}

## 8. Angelology-The Doctrine of Angels and Demons

To us the (angel) is a thin, half-real body that can go through walls and rocks: to himself he goes through them because he is solid and firm and they are like cloud.{21}

### 1. Issues in Angelology:

- a. Nature of angels--created by God (Col. 1:15-17), the basic meaning of the word angel is "messenger." They have the appearance of adult human males (Gen. 18:1-2), and yet they are probably sexless (Mark 12:25).
2. Evil angels-Satan was the highest angel until his fall (Ezek. 28:12-19), seducing one-third of all angels to follow him in rebellion against God (Rev. 12:4).
3. Role of angels-They exist as God's messengers; they engage in spiritual battle; and they guide and protect humans (Ps. 91:11-12).

## 2. Challenge to Angelology: Contemporary secular romanticism

Much of the contemporary romance with angels sees them as somewhat independent, if not totally autonomous, but a messenger is on a mission from someone higher, in this case from God ... or Satan. {22}

## I. Eschatology-The Doctrine of the Last Things

Precisely because we cannot predict the moment, we must be ready at all moments. Our Lord repeated this conclusion again and again; as if the promise of the Return had been made for the sake of this conclusion alone. Watch, watch, is the burden of his advice. {23}

1. Issues in Eschatology:
  - a. The Second Coming (Matt. 24:37)
  2. The rapture of the church (I Thess. 4:13-18)
  3. Tribulation (Rev. 7:14)
  4. Millennium (Rev. 20:6)
  5. Resurrections (Rev. 20:5)
  6. Judgments (Rev. 20:4)

### 2. Application Question:

Are you living with the idea that Christ could return any day?

---

©1998 Probe Ministries

[Table of Contents](#)



[Return to Probe Home](#)