



“at home, thinking”

seeds for a
Biblical worldview

“As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”
Proverbs 23:7 KJV

No. 12

Theology

I HAVE BEEN THINKING about theology. It is a word that scares some Christians, but it is also a word that excites others. Although not super popular in modern evangelicalism, theology was once known as the “queen of the sciences.”

Though rarely thought of as such, theology is technically, a science. The suffix “ology” is a Greek word meaning “science of.” or sometimes “study of.” Technically the suffix “ology” denotes a “branch of study” in a particular field. From that Greek origin we have derived such words as biology, geology, archaeology, zoology, and many others. Theology is thus literally “the science (or study) of God.”

Paul admonished Timothy to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (1 Timothy 2:15 KJV) Theology helps us to do just what Paul said. In the Greek, the word “dividing” in its transliterated form is Orthotomeo, which literally means to cut straight, to handle aright, to teach the truth directly and correctly.

In the study of biology, scientists divide life into categories and sub-categories: kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species. Through categorization, organisms—both plant and animal—are examined and studied and better understood.

Likewise, theologians have divided the study of God into several sub-

branches of their field of “science.” The most common among them are:

- Theology Proper: the study of God
- Anthropology: the study of man
- Soteriology: the study of redemption
- Eschatology: the study of things to come
- Ecclesiology: the study of the church

By dividing and categorizing the truths of Scripture in this way, theologians enable us to better understand God, His creation, and our place as fallen, yet redeemed sinners. Theology helps us to know God more fully.

“My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.”
(Proverbs 2:1-5 NIV)

thē-ōl'ə-jē

“... the means by which God gives us understanding to the things concerning Himself and our relationship to Him. In a broader sense, theology is Christ living out His life in our lives through His Spirit that we may know God as He knows God, and be One with the Father, as He and the Father are One. Theology properly understood is not just mental knowledge of the Bible. God is a living God, and His word is living. We know His word through a relationship with Him and a daily hunger and feeding on His word.”

The Apologia Project

On the downside, the temptation of theologians and the study of theology, is to limit our relationship with God to merely a cerebral one. Theology is not meant to be an end in itself, but rather a means to an end. In this case, the end is a fuller, deeper, richer understanding of, and relationship with the God we love and serve.



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