

Lesson 1 – Why Study Theology?

1. What Theology Is

- a. *Theology* is the study of God and things related to God.
- b. The word, *theology*, comes from two Greek words:
 - i. *Theos* – the Greek word for God
 1. Other words that include *Theos* include
 - a. *Theocracy*
 - b. *Pantheon* – the ancient temple in Athens for all the gods
 - c. *Theism* – the belief in God
 - d. *Atheism* – the belief that there is no God
 - e. *Theophilus* (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1) – a name used in the Bible meaning “Lover of God.”
 - ii. *Logos* – The Greek word for “word,” or “study.”
 1. Other words that use *logos* include
 - a. *Logic, Logical*
 - b. *Anthology*
 - c. *Biology*
 - d. *Archaeology*
 - e. *Physiology*
 - c. Every religion has its own theology that describes its core beliefs.
 - i. *Biblical Christian Theology* is the study of God as most Baptists as well as many Protestants understand Him and His Word.
 - ii. *Liberal (Christian) Theology* is the study of God as understood by many protestant churches that do not believe in the inerrancy of the Bible.
 - iii. *Catholic Theology* is the study of God as Roman Catholicism teaches.
 - iv. *Muslim Theology* is the study of Muslim beliefs concerning their god Allah and their religion.
 - d. Theology, for the Christian, includes the study of
 - i. Who God is
 - ii. Who man is in relation to God
 - iii. How God decided to reveal Himself to man and communicate with man
 - iv. How man can enter into and maintain a right relationship with God.
 - v. God’s overall plan for His creation

did you know . . .

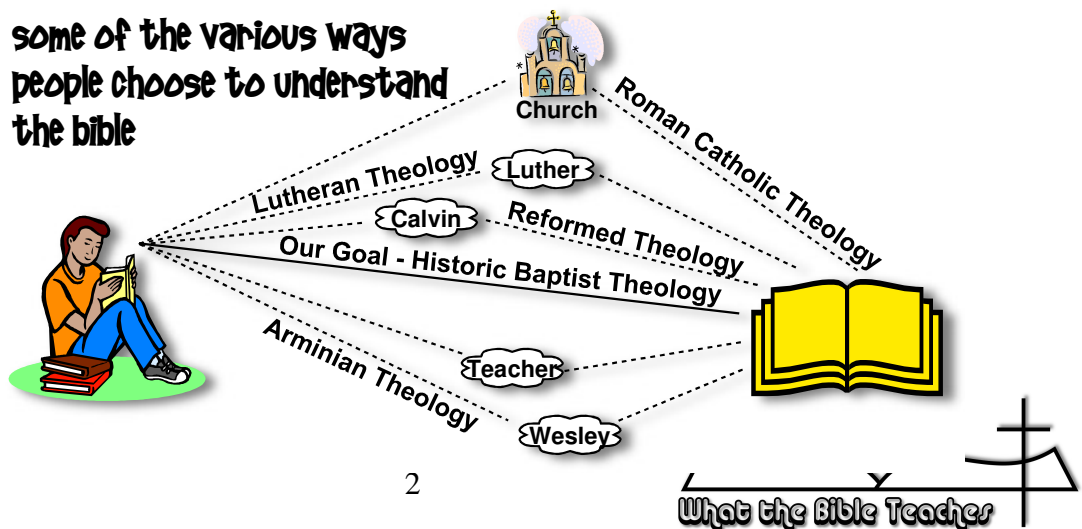
During the Middle Ages, Theology was called “The Queen of Sciences.”

2. The Importance of Theology

- a. If there is a God, it is important to know about Him.
- b. If God has any control over our well-being, it is important to know about Him.
- c. If God has any demands on us that determine our present and/or future well-being, it is an urgent matter to know what those demands are.
- d. If God has pleased to reveal His purpose for us to us, it is important for us to know
 - i. Who He is
 - ii. What His purpose is for us
 - iii. How we can gain His favor

- iv. How we can participate in His plan for us.
3. **God's Revelation of Himself – The Source of Christian Theology**
- a. God revealed Himself through nature
 - i. Psalm 9:1-6 – the witness of Nature
 - ii. Romans 1:19-20
 - iii. John 1:9 – everyone was born with a God-consciousness
 - 1. People with no religious training have a consciousness of a *higher power* of some kind.
 - 2. Every culture in recorded history has had a religion
 - 3. To become an atheist, a person has to suppress the God-consciousness they were born with.
 - 4. Atheism can be taught, but it cannot be legislated. Communist countries that tried to enforce atheism found that it didn't work. Millions of their citizens continued as theists, even if it meant death.
 - iv. This is called *General Revelation*.
 - 1. Every person in the history of the world has had access to this revelation.
 - 2. This General Revelation is sufficient to tell us a few things about God
 - a. That He exists
 - b. That He is powerful (Creation)
 - c. That He has wisdom and knowledge (the orderliness of Creation)
 - b. God revealed Himself through His Word
 - i. Scripture never attempts to prove the existence of God. It assumes its readers have seen the evidence of Creation and are smart enough and intellectually honest enough to know that He exists.
 - 1. Have you ever seen air? How do you know it exists? You have seen evidence of its existence.
 - 2. Have you ever seen radio waves? How do you know they exist? Every time you turn the radio on and listen to your favorite station, you have evidence they exist.
 - 3. Have you ever seen God? Then why do you believe in Him?
 - ii. Scripture takes the General Revelation of God and builds upon it in order to give us all the information we need to know in order to enter into a right relationship with Him, and to enjoy His presence and blessing forever.

some of the various ways
people choose to understand
the bible



4. The Study of Christian Theology Is the Study of the Bible

- a. The Bereans used their Bible to check Paul out (Acts 17:11)
- b. We need to check everything out (Isa. 8:20)
 - i. Some people follow their favorite theologian or Bible teacher
 - ii. *Check him out!!*
- c. (Theology and Theologians)