

## What We Believe: Knowing and Loving our Doctrines

Adult Sunday Studies 2023-24

1 | Introduction and the Purpose of Theology

### Why Theology? Its Beauty, Purposes, and Dangers

#### Why Theology?

*Rom. 12:1-2 - I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

#### 1. To Know God

1. What's the difference between knowing *about* God and knowing God?
2. "It would be odd if we told our spouse or other loved ones that we wanted to spend time with them and experience their fellowship regularly but did not want to know anything about them - their characteristics, accomplishments, personal histories, like and dislikes, and plans for the future." - Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith*

#### 2. To Love God

1. Jesus Christ came not merely as a teacher of Truth, but as the Truth Himself! Compared to the Greek concept of philosophical knowledge, "the biblical idea is to have the reality of something practically interwoven with the inner experience of life. Hence 'to know' can stand in the biblical idiom for 'to love,' 'to single out in love.' Because God desires to be known after this fashion, he has caused his revelation to take place in the milieu of the historical life of a people. The circle of revelation is not a school, but a 'covenant'. To speak of revelation as an 'education' of humanity is a rationalistic and utterly unscriptural way of speaking. All that God disclosed of himself has come in response to the practical religious needs of his people as these emerged in the course of history." - Horton

### 3. To Discern the False from the True Gospel

1. *2Tim. 1:12-14 - "But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. 13 Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you."*
2. Consider all the times that Paul's main concern is right doctrine! Why would he be so passionate about it?

### 4. To Glorify God

1. *Col. 3:16-17 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."*

### Our Challenge - Applying our Theology

*1Cor. 8:1-3 - "Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up. 2 If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. 3 But if anyone loves God, he is known by God."*

- **How can we grow in knowledge without growing in pride?**
- **How can we grow in knowledge while also growing in love and prayer?**
- **How can we be theologically deep yet also relationally connected and vulnerable?**

## WHERE ARE WE GOING? THE BIG PICTURE

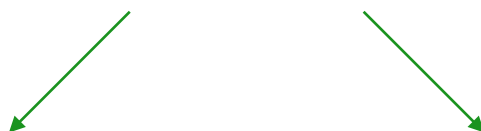
### Part 1 - Doctrine of Revelation and God's Being

1. **The Knowledge of God** and Apologetics - How Could the Finite ever Know the Infinite?
2. **Who is God** and Why Exactly Does That Matter? Doctrine of God, His Decrees, Providence, and Human Suffering

### Part 2 - Doctrine of Creation and Anthropology

1. **What is this World** and How Does it Relate to God? - Creation
2. **Who is Man**, Why is He Here, and "What have you done?!"? - Humanity and sin

### Part 3 - Doctrine of Redemption - How does God save humans?



#### 1. Redemption Accomplished

1. *Eternal Decrees, "Covenant of Redemption"*
2. *Christ our Mediator*
  1. Person of Christ
  2. Work of Christ
    1. Christ's Life and Death - Substitutionary Atonement
    2. Christ's Resurrection
    3. Christ's Ascension/ Pentecost

#### 2. Redemption Applied

1. *New Nature*
2. *United to Christ our Mediator*
  1. Means of Grace
    1. Church
    2. Private Disciplines
  2. Justification
    1. Repentance and Faith
  3. Sanctification
    1. Sanctifying Faith and Repentance
    2. Good Works/ The Law/ Freedom/ Perseverance
    3. Calling and the Three Spheres
  4. Glorification

## 2023-24 Schedule for “What We Believe: Knowing and Loving Our Doctrines”

### Of God & His Revelation

1. Sept. 17 - Intro, Prologomena, Epistemology
2. Sept. 24 - Revelation - General and Special
3. Oct. 1 - Special Revelation, Biblical Interpretation
4. Oct. 8 - Biblical Interpretation, cont.
5. Oct. 15 - Doctrine of God
6. Oct. 22 - Doctrine of God, cont. (decrees, providence, suffering)

### Of Creation & Humanity

7. Oct. 29 - Creation
8. Nov. 5 - Creation in Gen. 1-2
9. Nov. 12 - Humanity
10. Nov. 19 - Original Sin
11. Dec. 3 - Biblical Covenants

### Of Redemption Accomplished

12. Dec. 10 - Person of Christ
13. Jan. 7 - Person of Christ, cont.
14. Jan. 14 - Work of Christ (Incar. and Atonement)
15. Jan. 21 - Work of Christ, cont. (Resurrection and Ascension)
16. Jan. 28 - Consummation & Judgment [it’s so connected to the work of Christ!]

### Of Redemption Applied - Where

17. Feb. 4 - Means of Grace - Church
18. Feb. 11 - Means of Grace - Church Gov’t
19. Feb. 18 - Means of Grace - Prayer

### Of Redemption Applied - How?

20. Feb. 25 - Effectual Calling & Regeneration
21. March 3 - Saving Faith
22. March 10 - Repentance
23. March 17 - Justification
24. March 24 - Adoption
25. April 7 - Sanctification
26. April 14 - Assurance & Perseverance
27. April 21 - Good Works, the Law of God, Christian Liberty
28. April 28 - Calling & Spheres
29. May 5 - Sexuality & Gender
30. May 12 - Sexuality & Gender, cont.
31. May 19 - Church & State