

Theology: How it Works

APRIL 4, 2024



SERIES OVERVIEW:

When we talk about theology, a lot of times, it can get very academic or detached from the Christian life. Over the next seven weeks, we want to journey together to help us take the study of God (theology) and ask, "Why do I need to know this?" "What do I need to know about it?" and "What do I do with this?" so that it becomes very practical - out of the clouds and into our homes and lives.

MESSAGE TAKEAWAYS:

**EVERYTHING YOU LEARN ABOUT GOD SHOULD CULTIVATE A LOVE FOR GOD
LEADING YOU TO A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.**

**WHAT IS THEOLOGY? GOD THOUGHTS.
WHO DOES THEOLOGY? EVERYBODY!**

CONVERSATION QUESTIONS:

- Theology can seem like a deep academic word, but it is extremely important to all Followers of Christ. When you hear the word "theology," what are your honest first thoughts on the word? Is it exciting? Boring? Unknown? A mix of many thoughts?
- Today's sermon brings up 3 questions about theology that we must consider:
 - What is theology?
 - Who is a theologian?
 - Why does theology even matter in real life?
- Pastor Brannon mentions that we want to be a church that seeks and asks questions and pursues truth. Have you ever felt afraid or ashamed to ask questions about who God is and how this whole Christianity thing works?

Ground Rules for the Theology Series:

- We're going to be biblical
 - We're going to be clear
 - We're only going so deep
 - We're going to raise more questions than answers
 - We will always point to the Cross
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- One of the common objections to theology is the **practicality objection**. "How does this affect my daily life?" **READ James 1:22-25**. How does James teach how theology and practicality can co-exist and actually complement one another?
 - Another common objection is the **killjoy objection**. "Doesn't theology get in the way of worship?" Pastor Brannon comments that Christians should not make enemies of things that are not enemies. There is a difference between *childlike faith* and *childish faith*. We can experience deeper union and worship with Christ when we value theology. How has learning more and more about Jesus actually deepened your worship experience of God?
 - The last common objection to theology is the **divisiveness objection**. "Jesus unites, theology divides." **READ 1 Corinthians 11:18-19**. How do we, in love, contend for the faith and protect the church from false beliefs and doctrines? How have you seen this done well, and how have you seen this done poorly?

Brannon leaves us with 3 important terms to remember when talking and thinking about theology.

1. **Dogma**- Those conversations around the Christian life and faith that are within historic orthodoxy. "Essential to the gospel."
2. **Doctrine**- Convictions or beliefs within historic orthodoxy about which Christians may have differences. "Important, not essential."
3. **Preference**- Practices about the Christian life and faith that have no bearing on belief but arise from personal taste. "Interesting. Not important."

EXAMPLES

Dogma: the doctrine of the Trinity, divinity of Jesus, authority of scripture.

Doctrine (a range of conversations): predestination / free-will, the nature and practice of baptism and communion, women in ministry

Preference: worship style, carpet color, coffee in the sanctuary, etc.

- Hopefully, today was an encouragement that was helpful to unpack the reasons why theology (God thoughts) is important for all Believers. From today's message is there anything that you learned or that may have changed your perspective on theology and the importance of theology?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

As we continue on this journey, we would love to help you in any way we can. If you are wondering what next steps are right for you, please reach out, and we'd love to have a conversation with you or your group about the season you are in and the places Jesus has entrusted to you as you seek to be formed by His Word.

Meet with a Pastor: <https://ncchapel.churchcenter.com/people/forms/551596>