

Part 1. Man and Theology

Lesson 2: Introduction to Christian Theology

Lesson Summary

Christian theology is the study of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, the Church, and the end times. It provides a framework for how Christians understand their faith, shaping both belief and daily life. Sound theology depends on accurate interpretation of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16–17), using a literal, historical-grammatical approach. Charles Ryrie emphasized that theology is for everyone (Col. 1:9–10), not just pastors or scholars, because it strengthens faith, equips believers for service, and safeguards against error. Dispensationalism explains God’s unfolding plan through history, distinguishing Israel and the Church (Rom. 11:25–26). Essential doctrines such as the Trinity (Matt. 28:19), Christ’s deity (John 1:1, 14), atonement (1 Pet. 2:24), and salvation by grace (Eph. 2:8–9) form the foundation of Christianity, while key doctrines like election (Eph. 1:4–5), sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3), and perseverance (John 10:28–29) guide maturity. Ultimately, theology is both practical and vital for spiritual growth.

Key Takeaways

- Theology covers six key areas: God, Christ, Spirit, salvation, the Church, and end times (Matt. 28:19–20).
- Hermeneutics matters: interpret Scripture literally and contextually (2 Pet. 1:20–21).
- Ryrie’s emphasis: theology is essential for every believer, not just leaders (Col. 1:9–10).
- Dispensationalism: God’s plan unfolds in distinct ages (Heb. 1:1–2; Rom. 11:25–26).
- Essential doctrines secure salvation: Trinity (Matt. 28:19), deity of Christ (John 1:1, 14), resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3–4).
- Core doctrines grow maturity: election (Eph. 1:4–5), sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3), perseverance (John 10:28–29).

Questions & Answers

1. **Q:** What are the six main areas of Christian theology?
A: God, Christ, Holy Spirit, salvation, the Church, and end times (Matt. 28:19–20).
2. **Q:** Why did Charles Ryrie say theology is for every Christian?
A: Because it deepens faith, clarifies Scripture, and equips believers to live faithfully (Col. 1:9–10).
3. **Q:** What is hermeneutics, and why is it important?
A: It’s the principles of interpreting Scripture accurately; misinterpretation leads to false doctrine (2 Tim. 2:15).
4. **Q:** What is the dispensational view of history?
A: God has administered His plan in distinct ages, keeping Israel and the Church distinct (Rom. 11:25–26).
5. **Q:** Name two essential doctrines necessary for salvation.
A: Examples: The Trinity (Matt. 28:19), deity of Christ (John 1:1, 14), salvation by grace (Eph. 2:8–9), the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3–4).

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6. **Q:** How do “core doctrines” differ from “essential doctrines”?

A: Essentials are required for salvation; core doctrines guide growth and maturity (2 Pet. 3:18).

7. **Q:** How does theology impact daily Christian living?

A: It shapes moral choices, strengthens worship, and equips believers to stand in truth (Rom. 12:1–2).

“Theology equips every believer to know God, guard truth, and live faithfully.”