

Part 1. Humanity 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 believers 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 every believer (Col. 1:9–10), not just pastors or scholars, because it strengthens faith, equips for service, and guards against error. Dispensationalism explains God’s unfolding plan throughout history, distinguishing between Israel and the Church (Rom. 11:25–26).

Essential doctrines such as the Trinity (Matt. 28:19), the deity of Christ (John 1:1, 14), the atonement (1 Pet. 2:24), and salvation by grace (Eph. 2:8–9) form the foundation of Christianity. Core doctrines—such as election (Eph. 1:4–5), sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3), and perseverance (John 10:28–29)—guide believers toward spiritual maturity. Ultimately, theology is both practical and vital for growth in godliness and service to Christ.

Both men and women are called to know God deeply, stand firm in truth, and walk in holiness. While this series emphasizes equipping men for spiritual leadership, the study of theology strengthens all believers who seek to live under the authority of Scripture and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Key Takeaways

- **Theology covers six key areas:** God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, the Church, and the 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 only for leaders (Col. 1:9–10).
- **Dispensationalism:** God’s plan unfolds in distinct ages, maintaining His purposes for both Israel and the Church (Heb. 1:1–2; Rom. 11:25–26).
- **Essential doctrines secure salvation:** the Trinity (Matt. 28:19), the deity of Christ (John 1:1, 14), the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3–4), salvation by grace (Eph. 2:8–9).
- **Core doctrines develop maturity:** election (Eph. 1:4–5), sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3), perseverance (John 10:28–29).
- **Theology shapes daily living:** it forms convictions, strengthens worship, and equips believers to stand firm in truth (Rom. 12:1–2).

Questions & Answers

1. **Q: What are the six main areas of Christian theology?**
A: God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, the Church, and the 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).

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3. **Q: What is hermeneutics, and why is it important?**

A: It's the study of how to interpret 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 redemptive plan in distinct ages, keeping Israel and the Church distinct while revealing His unfolding purpose (Rom. 11:25–26).

5. **Q: Name two essential doctrines necessary for salvation.**

A: The Trinity (Matt. 28:19), the deity of Christ (John 1:1, 14), salvation by grace (Eph. 2:8–9), and the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3–4).

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

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

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

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

Theology equips every believer—man or woman—to know God, guard truth, and live faithfully under the Lordship of Christ.