

September 8, 2021

The Correct Posture in the Task of Theology: A Heart of Humility and Worship

1. The Inseparability of Life and Theology – Galatians 5:22-26

The False Dichotomy of Theology and a Life of Devotion

Williams Ames (1576-1633) – “Theology is the doctrine or teaching of living to God” (*The Marrow of Theology*, 77).

John Owen (1616-1683) – “We can come to a definition of theology as: ‘The doctrine of God with regard to Himself, His works, His will, His worship, as well as our required obedience, our future rewards and punishments, all as revealed by God Himself to the glory of His name’” (*Biblical Theology*, 17).

Charles Hodge (1797-1878) – “Holiness is essential to correct knowledge of divine things, and the great security from error” (*Lecture to Theological Students*, 112).

2. Faithful Reason

What is the relationship between faith and reason?

Metaphysics - _____

Epistemology - _____

Ethics - _____

Augustine (354-430) – “God will help us, and make us understand what we believe. We can be sure we are treading in the path pointed out by the Prophet who says, ‘Unless you believe you will not understand’.... Our hearts need to be cleaned first by believing, that we may be able to see with them” (*The Problem of Free Choice*, 38).

3. Prayer and Study

What is the role of prayer in the act of studying to know God?

Richard Baxter (1615-1691) – “Many a tailor goes in rags, that maketh costly clothes for others; and many a cook scarcely licks his fingers, when he hath dressed for others the most costly dishes” (*The Reformed Pastor*, 7).

B. B. Warfield (1851-1921) – “Sometimes we hear it said that ten minutes on your knees will give you a truer, deeper, more operative knowledge of God than ten hours over your books. ‘What!’ is the appropriate response, ‘then ten hours over your books, on your knees?’ Why should you turn from God when you turn to your books, or feel that you must turn from your books in order to turn to God? If learning and devotion are as antagonistic as that, then the intellectual life is in itself accursed, and there can be no question of a religious life for a student, even of theology” (*Works*, 1:412).

4. Humility and Repentance – Psalm 25:9

Repentance needs to happen not only when we recognize our sinful actions but also when we recognize our false or weak thoughts about God.

C. S. Lewis (1898-1963) – “In God you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. Unless you know God as that – and, therefore, know yourself as nothing in comparison – you do not know God at all. As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you” (*Mere Christianity*, 124).

Concluding Thoughts

1. Worship is the only proper response to God's revelation to humanity and the task of theology is to rightly see his revelation so we can rightly respond to him in worship for who he truly is.
2. Life and theology are inseparable because the aim of theology is to teach us how to respond to God with our lives.
3. Faith, reason, prayer, study, humility and repentance are key characteristics for every theologian.

Reflection from this Week:

- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/doctrine-and-life/>
- Read the quote from the blog above and consider/journal how doctrine influences how we worship. Consider the doctrine of the Trinity and explain if you think this doctrine has any influence on your life – in the way you live for God and worship God.

Preparation for Next Week:

- <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/natural-revelation>

Resources for Going Further:

Gregory of Nazianzus, *On God and Christ*

Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*

Thomas Watson, *The Great Gain of Godliness*