

Why Bother with Theology?

1. Why Bother with Theology?

- Falling in love
- “Knowing about” and “Knowing”

1. Why Bother with Theology?

- Protection from cunning and crafty teaching.

“ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.”

(Ephesians 4:14)

2. Why Theology and not the Bible?

- Fact versus Meanings
- Theology is shaped by Church History

3. How will we do it?

- Two Greek words:
 - a) Theos
 - b) Logos
- On our knees

3. How will we do it?

- With mind and heart

“Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. But the man who loves God is known by God.”

(1 Corinthians 8:1-3)

3. How will we do it?

- With mind and heart

“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”
(Jeremiah 17:9)

“A mind in love with Christ”

(Jonathan Edwards)

“If we are empty-headed before we are Spirit-filled, we will be empty-headed afterwards.”

(RT Kendall)

Authority

Authority is the right or power
to require obedience

Sources of Authority

- i) The Creeds
- ii) The Historic Confessions
- iii) The mind of the Church
- iv) Christian experience
- v) Christian reason
- vi) The inner voice
- vii) The Bible

Sources of Authority

- i) **The Creeds** (i.e. Apostles' Creed)
...but, too brief
- ii) **The Historic Confessions**
i.e. 39 Articles (1571)
or Westminster Confession (1647)
...but, too biased

Sources of Authority

- iii) **The mind of the Church**
(Christian consensus)
...but, too open to fashion

*"Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints."
(Jude 3)*

Sources of Authority

iv) Christian experience

...but, too subject to opinion because it starts in the wrong place

"Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;"

(Psalm 95:6)

Sources of Authority

"One of you will say to me: "Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?" But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'" Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?"

(Romans 9:19-21)

Sources of Authority

v) Christian reason

...but, too fallen

"The LORD said to Job: "Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!" Then Job answered the LORD : "I am unworthy, how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer - twice, but I will say no more." Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm."

(Job 40:1-6)

Sources of Authority

"Then Job replied to the LORD :

"I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?'

Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know.

"You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak;

I will question you, and you shall answer me.'

My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.

Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

(Job 42:1-6)

Sources of Authority

vi) The inner voice

...but, too open to error

"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

(Jeremiah 17:9)

Sources of Authority

"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!"

(Galatians 1:6-8)

Sources of Authority

"You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Have you suffered so much for nothing if it really was for nothing?"

(Galatians 3:1-4)

Sources of Authority

vii) The Bible

"The ultimate source of authority is the Triune God Himself as He is known to us through the words of the Bible"

(Milne)

- a) God has taken the initiative
Heaven to Earth **not** Earth to Heaven
e.g. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel.

Sources of Authority

- b) God has come to us Himself in Jesus Christ, the God-Man, eternal word and wisdom of God.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

(John 1:1)

Sources of Authority

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.'" Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

(John 14:6-9)

Sources of Authority

"It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption."

(1 Corinthians 1:30)

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

(Colossians 2:2-3)

Sources of Authority

"I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

(Revelation 19:11-16)

Sources of Authority

- c) Our knowledge of God comes from what He has revealed of Himself in the Bible.