

Theological Education - Pastoral Training

([Jer 18:1-10](#),[1 Cor 1:18-29](#),[Mat 13:10-17](#))

The word theology comes from two Greek words 'theos' meaning God and 'logos' meaning the word. Therefore theology is the science of God like Biology which comes from 'bios' and 'logos' is the science of living creatures. I feel theology is the science of eternal life because the source of eternal life is God. Therefore everybody who wants to know what life is and live should do theology. In the 23 years of my ministry I have found many unable to give answer to the question 'what is life?' (Do you know the answer? If you don't, you too have to do Theology). The reason people don't know is, they have never bothered to know it. The Bible tells us that only those who have the Son (Jesus Christ) have life and that knowing God and Jesus Christ is life ([1 John 5:12](#), [John 17:3](#)). So in theology we learn about God through His word. Further the Bible tells us that man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God ([Mat 4:4](#)). Therefore everybody should do theology in order to live according to God's definition because the Bible also tells us that we perish if do not have the knowledge of God ([Hos 4:6](#)).

God has given to the church, Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists. Pastors and Teachers as ministry gifts for the edification of the church, for the work of ministry and leading His people to maturity helping them to attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ through faith and the knowledge of the Son([Ep4:11-13](#)). The faith and the knowledge of the Son can be had only from the Bible. Therefore in theology we learn to know about God and know God in our day-to-day life from the inspired scriptures and are instructed in righteousness that we are thoroughly equipped unto all good works ([2 Tim 3:16,17](#)). In theology we will also be trained to preach,

teach and admonish so that we serve the people of God effectively by shepherding them as good shepherds.

The beginning of all theology is God who has revealed Himself to us in His son Jesus Christ; otherwise there can never be any theology at all. The Son of God came into the world and died for our sins and then rose again for our justification while God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself ([Rom 4:25](#), [2 Cor 5:19](#)) thus inaugurating the plan of salvation of mankind and has called some to complete it. This is today's Epistle lesson. To those who responded to His call and followed Him to learn He taught them everything about what they have to do and how they have to do. This is today's gospel lesson. It is He who prepares His servants to communicate His word which alone contains divine truth to His people. This is today's Old Testament lesson.

The Epistle Lesson: [1 Cor 1:18-29](#): The first stage in Theology is, knowing Jesus as our Savior.

Theology is the science of knowing God. God has revealed Himself in nature ([Rom 1:18](#)) and completely in His son Jesus Christ. Therefore nobody can know God without knowing Jesus Christ. Therefore to know God and the things concerning His kingdom we should know Jesus. i.e. we should know that He came to save us by taking our punishment, curse and death on the cross and confess our sins to Him and accept Him as our personal savior. Then He will forgive our sins. When we follow Him as our master and Lord He teaches everything. He trains, moulds and sends us into the world to do His work. Therefore to do theology the minimum qualification is B.A (Born again) and nothing else. God is not looking for strong and wise people. He is looking for people who respond to His call and follow Him. Many pursue theology without this experience and become Pastors. When they do not know what it means to be saved how then they can lead others to salvation.

If Pastors don't have the experience of being crucified with Christ, dead with Christ and raised with Christ like Paul they cannot preach Christ crucified. They cannot fulfill the purpose of salvation. Today many work as Pastors to get their wages for financial gain. They don't have any reward when the Lord comes ([Rev 22:8](#)). If we want to serve the Lord to receive the crown of life like Paul we must first become the Disciples of Christ. How can we go and disciple others when we ourselves are not His disciples ? But those who follow Him like Peter, James and John He makes them and trains them to fulfill His mission as fishers of men according to His promise. This is today's Gospel lesson.

The Gospel Lesson: [Mat 13;10-17](#): The second stage in Theology is, knowing Jesus as our Teacher.

These days we find many Pastors and Christian workers strutting around with doctorates in theology. But What good will it be to have a doctorate if they're not approved by God; also, if they do not know how to rightly divide the word of truth they will not lead people into all truth ([2 Tim 2:15](#)). These are like the Pharisees of Jesus time whom He called "blind leading the blind" whose end thereof is destruction. But true servants of God are the real Spiritual doctors who can heal peoples' spiritual blindness, deafness and softening the hardness of heart with the balm of the word. But in these days there are very few physicians of this cadre. Even in the days of Jeremiah also God could not find such type of qualified physicians . That is why God said in [Jeremiah 8:22](#)

Are there no healing ointments in Gilead? Isn't there a doctor in the house? So why something can't be done to heal and save my dear, dear people? (Message Bible)

God's word is the medicine ([Ps 107:20](#)). It is like the double edged surgical knife that heart surgeons use([Heb 4:12](#)). I pity The so called self-

styled ministers of God for though they have doctorates and call themselves doctors of theology yet, they don't know how to prescribe the right medicine and do spiritual 'open heart surgery'. Therefore instead of saving people they are killing them! These days we also find many preachers claiming to be Hindu converts who instead of preaching on the excellencies of Christ they are closing the doors for evangelism wherever they go, by criticizing other faiths. That is why Peter said to make sure of one's calling and election ([2 Pet 1:10](#)). So those who pursue theology without knowing Jesus as their master and teacher i.e without becoming His disciples by taking His yoke to learn of Him may acquire degrees but they can never know the mysteries of God and His kingdom and hence they can never teach them to others. But true Servants of God will always be called to *know* their God like Jeremiah and Paul. That is today's Old Testament lesson.

The Old Testament Lesson: [Jer 18:1-10](#): The final stage in Theology is, becoming like Jesus.

It is always good to go to a theological college to do theology. But we should go to those colleges where they teach Jesus as the only savior and the Lord and the Bible is taught as the final authority in matters of faith and conduct . Because the triune God of the Bible is the only true God, real theology is, knowing this God. Interestingly, in India we find many writing very good books without going to any theological colleges. After studying the texts, I believe they labored on their knees seeking the Spirit's wisdom to interpret. They mastered **kneeology** and God taught them real theology. The teachers in the school of **kneeology** are God the Father ([Isaiah 28:23-29](#)), God the Son ([Mat 11:28,29](#)) and God the Holy Spirit ([John 15:25](#)). These divine teachers train their pupils by teaching obedience in different life situations. Jeremiah was one such obedient pupil. When he was asked to go to the potter's house, he never questioned God, "what does theology got to do with pottery?" He simply obeyed and God taught him how to deliver His

message to His people. That day God has taught Jeremiah an important lesson in Anthropology that men are like clay in His hands. Jeremiah learnt that truth that he was nothing but clay in a Sovereign God's hands and hence did whatever God asked him to do. He became a prophet par excellence. Only obedient preachers can deliver God's message to His people in a way they can understand.

God calls His servants to show Himself to the world in through them. That is the ultimate goal of all theological education. When we submit ourselves as clay into the hands of God and follow Him He will form us into vessels for the use of his honor and make us fishers of men. Jesus is God's word incarnate. He wants all his servants also to become His word incarnate so that people can see Him in them and know Him through them. We can never know God completely on earth. Our conferring of degrees in theology will be in heaven only, when we receive the final degree WDGFS (Well done good and faithful servant) and by that time we will be completely like Him. Till that time life is, knowing God ([John 17:3](#)) i.e doing theology. So let us all do theology and live. May God help us! Amen!

Life Application:

Nobody can say I don't need theology because all those who wish to live godly and go to heaven should be students of right theology. What good it is for a man to gain many degrees and even the world if he doesn't know [how](#) to save his own soul.

1. To do theology one should earn B.A (Born Again) first.
2. Without becoming the disciples of Jesus we can never earn WDGFS.

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