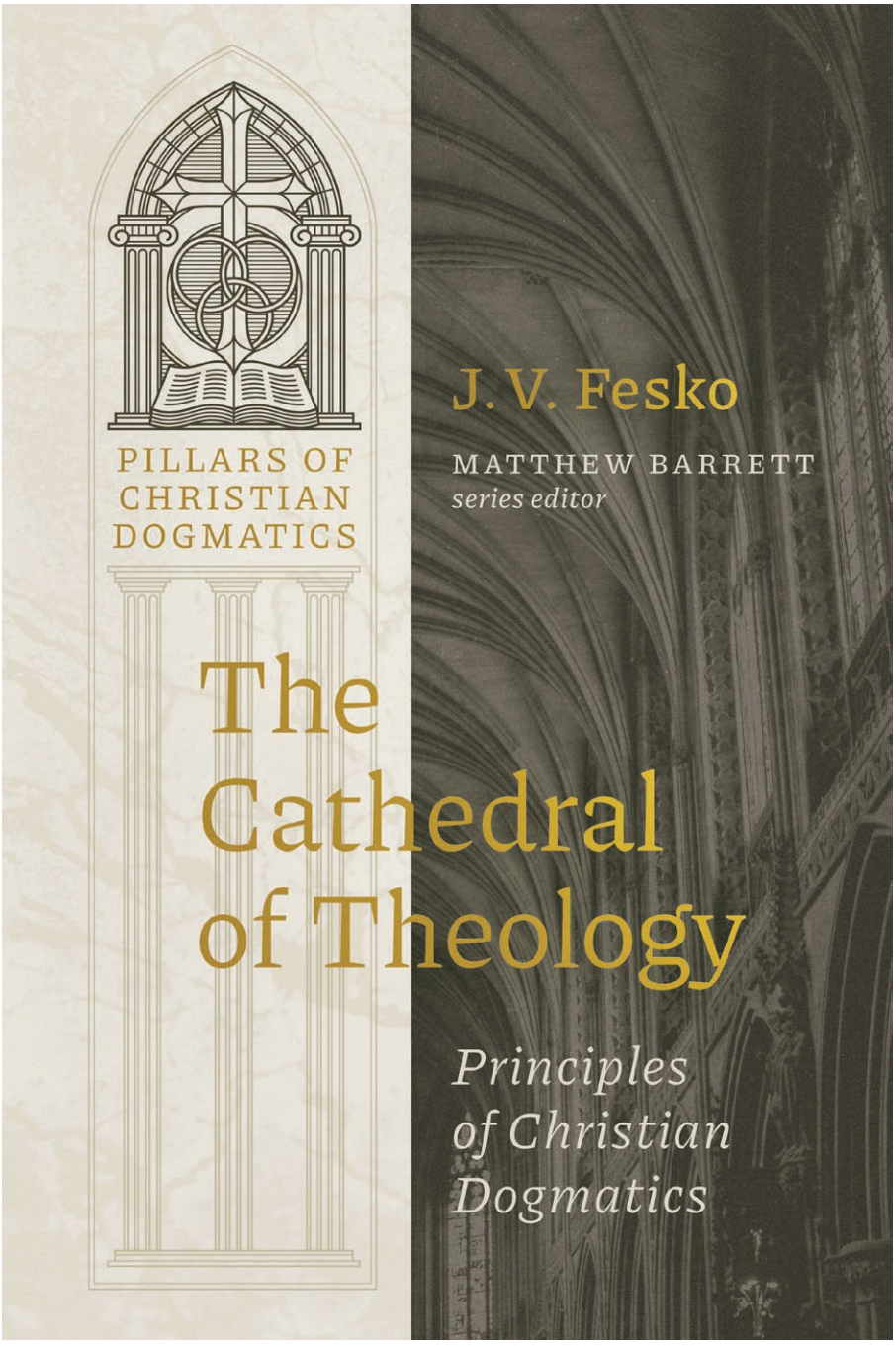

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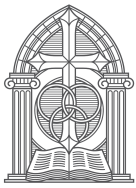

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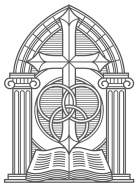

1

What Is Theology?

Alice wandered down the path and encountered a Cheshire cat grinning from ear to ear, festooned with long claws and many teeth. She timidly approached the cat and asked, "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to walk from here?" The cat responded, "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to." Alice said, "I don't much care where," to which the cat replied, "Then it doesn't matter which way you walk."[1]

Journeys can take us everywhere, but apart from a specific destination, our travels will ultimately take us nowhere. In this case, when we undertake the study of theology, we must first know what theology is so we know the goal of our pursuit. Defining what theology is sets the agenda for the entire discipline—it lays important stones in the foundation of a doctrinal cathedral. Where does the term *theology* originate? Why do we use the term if it does not occur in Scripture? How scriptural can our study of the Bible be if we begin with extrabiblical terms? Is theology primarily about God or humans? Who is the object of theology? What type of knowledge is theology? Is it knowledge? Is it experience? Feeling? Is theology more about knowledge or wisdom? Correlatively, we can also ask, Is theology primarily theoretical or practical? When we engage in the discipline of theology, do we merely contemplate the subject for its own sake, or do we primarily have concrete action as our goal? These are the various questions that attend the most fundamental question in the study of theology: What is theology?[2] This chapter first answers this question and then discusses the different kinds of, the object of, and the genus of theology. It goes on to examine whether theology is primarily theoretical or practical and concludes with summary observations about the nature of theology.

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[1]Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Macmillan, 1866), 89.
[2]Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena to Theology*, 2nd ed. (Baker Academic, 2003), 152-58.

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What Is Theology?

In the study of theology, we need to establish the meaning of the term so we can ensure we understand the nature of the discipline.[3] William Shakespeare (1564–1616) famously once wrote, "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," but in theology terminology plays a vital role in facilitating the communication of knowledge.[4] Theological terminology traces divine revelation in an effort to say something true about the God who has spoken. Adam named creatures in the garden (Gen 2:19), which said something about each animal's nature. Biblical names say something about the person, such as Jacob, which means "deceiver" (Gen 27:36). Likewise, theological terminology says something about the reality to which it corresponds. A rose by any other name might not smell as sweet.

In the history of theology there have been some who have objected to the term *theology* because it does not appear in Scripture. Moreover, the term itself has pagan origins. Aristotle (384–322 BC), for example, writes, "The school of Hesiod, and all the theologians [*theologoi*], considered only what was convincing to themselves, and gave no consideration to us."[5] Aristotle applies the term *theologian* to philosophers who study the cosmos and make philosophical claims about the various deities. Aristotle writes, "The speculative sciences, then, are to be preferred to the other sciences, and 'theology' [*prōtē philosophia*] to the other speculative sciences."[6]

Jewish rabbis call theology *hokmah*, "wisdom," and the church fathers called it *sophia*.[7] To designate theology as wisdom has scriptural precedent. We read in Job, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding" (Job 28:28). The apostle Paul echoes this Joban thread when he writes, "Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away" (1 Cor 2:6). In the pursuit of understanding God, his ways, and his revelation, James exhorts his readers, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him" (Jas 1:5).

[3]For a brief overview of the history of the concept of theology, see Abraham Kuyper, *Principles of Sacred Theology*, trans. J. Hendrik de Vries (Eerdmans, 1963), 228-41.
[4]William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, act 2, scene 2.
[5]Aristotle, *Metaphysics: Books I–IX*, trans. Hugh Tredennick (William Heinemann, 1933), 3.4.9 (p. 127), trans. altered.
[6]Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 6.1.10.
[7]Johann Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology and on Scripture* (Concordia, 2009), §5 (p. 18).

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There is, therefore, scriptural precedent for calling the discipline of theology *wisdom*, though this does not mean the term *theology* is entirely without precedent. At several points in the New Testament, authors refer to the "oracles of God": "The Jews," writes Paul, "were entrusted with the oracles of God [*logia theou*]" (Rom 3:2). The apostle Peter uses a similar lexeme, "as one who speaks oracles of God [*logia theou*]" (1 Pet 4:11), as does the author of Hebrews: "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God [*ta stoicheia tēs archēs tōn logiōn tou theou*]" (Heb 5:12).

These biblical texts begin to answer the question, What is theology? The specific term *theology* does not occur in the Bible, at least according to the *ipsissima verba* ("the precise words"), but the general concept does appear. Although our explanations of God's Word should trace the lines of his revelation as closely as possible, this does not preclude the use of extrabiblical terminology to clarify truths, avoid errors, or create biblically informed doctrinal rubrics to categorize the Bible's doctrines. During the christological controversies, the church used the extrascriptural term *homoousias* ("of the same substance") in contrast to the Arian use of *homoiousias* ("of like substance") to affirm the full deity of the Son.[8] The same holds true for extrabiblical terms such as *Trinity* or *original sin*. Just because a term originates outside Scripture does not automatically negate its use. The question is not whether a term originates within Scripture but whether the term, regardless of its origin, accurately reflects the concept it represents. In this case, even though Greek philosophers first used the term *theology* for their study of divine things, we can take the gold of Egypt and use it in the temple of God for sacred purposes. Therefore, what is theology?

Generally, *theology* is discourse of God and about God.[9] It is knowledge that comes from God, but it is also what we say about God. We need to distinguish these two aspects of theology because we cannot say anything about God that does not come from him. As Thomas Aquinas observes, "The object of the science is that of which it principally treats. But in this science, the treatment is mainly about God; for it is called theology, as treating of God. Therefore God

[8]On the development and reception of this terminology, see Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford University Press, 2009); John Behr, *The Way to Nicaea*, vol. 1 (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001).

[9]See John Webster, *The Domain of the Word: Scripture and Theological Reason* (T&T Clark, 2012), 133-49, esp. 133.

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is the object of this science."[10] Francis Turretin (1623–1687) describes theology with an aphorism he attributes to Aquinas as that which is "taught by God, teaches God and leads to him."[11] This means that theology embraces two chief subjects: the being of God and knowledge of his Word. Another way to delineate the knowledge of God is his being (theology), or *theologia*, and work (economy), or *oikonomia*.

These terms originate in classical Greek but found use among the church fathers. Basil of Caesarea (330–379) uses *theologia* as a mode of insight that looks past material reality into the nature of God. He uses *oikonomia*, on the other hand, to describe acts of ordering, in particular the works of redemption through the incarnation.[12] Basil writes concerning Luke's genealogy: "Luke for his part also approached the theology by going through the corporal origins."[13] Gregory of Nazianzus (329–390) similarly uses this pair of terms when he writes concerning the birth of Christ, "So much for our present philosophical reflections on God. For this is not the time for such things, since our present task is to speak not about God in himself but about what God has done for us!"[14] In the simplest of terms, *theologia* (lit. "speech about God") speaks of God's being and *oikonomia* of his works, but we should not mistake these terms for the later nineteenth-century terms of the *immanent* and *economic* Trinity. These terms owe their origins to post-Hegelian language and are used to contrast modes of divine existence rather than modes of contemplation about God.[15]

Given this data, we can define theology as the body of teachings concerning God and divine things revealed by him for his own glory and the salvation of

[10]Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (repr., Christian Classics, 1948), Ia q. 1 art. 7 sed contra. All translations follow this edition.

[11]Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., trans. George Musgrave Giger (P&R, 1992–1997), 1.1.8. Note that Turretin, Gerhard, Kuyper, and Pieper attribute this maxim to both Aquinas and Albert the Great, but Aquinas does not say it. It is arguably a summary of what he states. See Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology*, §2 (p. 17); Kuyper, *Principles of Sacred Theology*, 238; Franz A. O. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* (Concordia, 1950), 41-42.

[12]Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 220.

[13]St. Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius*, trans. Mark Delcoglian and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz (Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 2.15 (p. 150; see also 133-34n7).

[14]Gregory of Nazianzus, "Oration 38: On the Theophany," in *Gregory of Nazianzus*, ed. Brian E. Daley (Routledge, 2006), 38.8 (p. 120). See also Lewis Ayres, "Pro-Nicene Theology: Theologia and Oikonomia," *Zondervan Academic Blog*, December 1, 2016, https://zondervanacademic.com/blog/common-places-theologia-and-oikonomia-by-lewis-ayres.

[15]Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 220n102; also Bruce D. Marshall, "The Unity of the Triune God: Reviving an Ancient Question," *The Thomist* 74, no. 1 (2010): 1-32.

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fallen humans.[16] Or, as Augustine defines theology in his *City of God*, "a Greek word which we understand to signify reasoning or speaking about the divine."[17] Another theologian, Lutheran Johann Gerhard (1582–1637), states, "Theology (considered systematically and abstractly) is the doctrine drawn from the Word of God that instructs humans in true faith and devout living for eternal life. Theology (considered habitually and concretely) is the God-given habit [*habitus theodotos*] conferred on man by the Holy Spirit through the Word."[18] Note here that when Gerhard writes of theology "considered . . . abstractly," he means the knowledge of God considered apart from its actuality, versus theology considered concretely, which is the knowledge of God held by faith.[19] Still yet others define theology in a more practical direction, such as Petrus van Mastricht (1630–1706): "Christian theology is nothing less than the doctrine of living for God through Christ; in other words, the doctrine that is according to godliness."[20] Van Mastricht's definition highlights an aspect of theology that will be treated later in this text: whether theology is theoretical or practical.

Beyond the definition of theology as the body of teachings concerning God and divine things by him for his own glory and for the salvation of fallen humans, or *theologia* and *oikonomia*, there is another necessary distinction: the difference between false and true theology.[21] This distinction owes its origin to Stoic philosopher Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BC) and was later appropriated by Augustine.[22] False theology is the opinion of unbelievers about divine things. This does not mean everything that appears within a false theology is erroneous.[23] Even if on the whole it is inaccurate, some aspects of it may be true, and thus Christians should study it carefully and critically.[24] Conversely, true theology is God's knowledge of himself, known only to him.[25]

[16]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.1.8.
[17]Augustine, *City of God*, ed. Boniface Ramsey, trans. William Babcock, Works of St. Augustine I/6 (New City, 2012), 8.1.
[18]Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology*, §31 (p. 31); also, Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.2.8.
[19]Sebastian Rehnman, *Divine Discourse: The Theological Methodology of John Owen* (Baker Academic, 2002), 88.
[20]Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena*, trans. Todd M. Rester (Reformation Heritage Books, 2018), 3.31.
[21]Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:158-61.
[22]Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 56; Augustine, *City of God* 4-7.
[23]Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:282.
[24]Van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, 1:1.22; Kuyper, *Principles of Sacred Theology*, 305.
[25]Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology*, §§14-15 (p. 22).

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Different Kinds of Theology

Given that God is infinite and eternal and human beings are finite and temporal, we can speak of theology in terms of God's own self-knowledge and our creaturely knowledge of him, or *archetypal* and *ectypal theology*. Archetypal theology is God's own perfect, infinite, and absolute knowledge of himself. Ectypal theology, on the other hand, is the finite but true revealed copy of the divine archetype. God makes this finite but true theology available to humans through his creation, his Word, and chiefly the incarnation. The two divisions of ectypal theology are natural and supernatural. Turretin further divides these two categories into three different schools: nature, grace, and glory.[26] The school of nature (the book of creatures or nature) belongs to all people in the world. In the words of John Milton (1608–1674):

> To ask or search I blame thee not, for heaven
> Is as a book of God before thee set,
> Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
> His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years. . . .
> And for the heaven's wide circuit, let it speak
> The maker's high magnificence, who built
> So spacious, and his line stretched out so far;
> That man may know he dwells not in his own
> An edifice too large for him to fill,
> Lodge in a small partition, and the rest
> Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.[27]

God reveals the knowledge of his being and attributes in the creation (Rom 1:19-20), and humans can read this book of nature to acquire theological knowledge of God. Unlike the school of nature, which is available to all humans by virtue of their being created and dwelling in the world, God also reveals ectypal theology (special revelation) in the school of grace, also known as his book of Scripture. God specifically gives this revelation to the church, his people. The school of glory, also known as the book of life, is the beatific vision, whereby creatures know God by beholding him face-to-face in the face of Christ. We must drill down, however, into the matter of how the schools of nature and grace relate to each other.

[26]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.2.10.
[27]John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (Penguin Books, 2000), 8.66-69 (p. 169).

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As previously mentioned, all ectypal theology falls into a category of either natural or supernatural theology.[28] According to Geerhardus Vos (1862–1949), natural theology is the "teaching concerning God . . . that takes its content and method from nature." And *nature* refers to "all that is subject to the normal link between causes and effects, and that works according to fixed laws, from the beginning of the creation."[29] There are two important qualifications regarding natural theology. First, in a fallen world, this knowledge of God is insufficient for salvation. But second, this knowledge is sufficient to lead people to know God exists and he should be worshiped. The natural knowledge of God comes from two primary sources: innate and acquired knowledge.[30] God inscribes the knowledge of his law on human hearts, as those "who do not have the law, by nature [*physei*] do what the law requires. . . . They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts" (Rom 2:14-15). The creation also declares "the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. . . . There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard" (Ps 19:1, 3). In fact, concerning the knowledge of God in creation available to all people, "What can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made" (Rom 1:19-20).[31]

[28]Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:270-310.

[29]Geerhardus Vos, *Natural Theology*, ed. J. V. Fesko, trans. Albert Gootjes (Reformation Heritage Books, 2022), n29, 4-5. For early modern treatments of natural theology, see Matthew Barker, *Natural Theology, or, the Knowledge of God, from the Works of Creation; Accommodated, and Improved, to the Service of Christianity* (London, 1674); Pierre DuMoulin, *Oration in the Praise of Divinity* (London, 1649), esp. 12-13, 15-16, 18.

[30]Van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, 1:1.23.

[31]Contra Richard B. Gaffin Jr., who claims 1 Cor 2:6-16 is the "death blow to all natural theology" and thus "natural theology may have a place in Roman Catholic and Arminian theologies . . . but not in a theology that would be Reformed." Gaffin, "Some Epistemological Reflections on 1 Cor 2:6-16," *WTJ* 57 (1995): 123-24. Gaffin promotes what some Van Tillians call "revelational epistemology," which stands in opposition to realist approaches to knowledge. Van Tillians believe they have warrant for the rejection of realist epistemologies because the Reformers supposedly made changes to prolegomena. They cite Richard Muller's statement, "This view of the problem of knowledge [during the Reformation] is the single most important contribution of the early Reformed writers to the theological prolegomena of orthodox Protestantism" (e.g., K. Scott Oliphint, *Covenantal Apologetics: Principles and Practice in Defense of Our Faith* [Crossway, 2013], 129). The problem with this appeal is threefold: (1) The so-called Van Tillian revelational epistemology contradicts Scripture, as later parts of this book explain. (2) There is no evidence that Reformed orthodox writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries changed their views on epistemology, as evident from later parts of this book. (3) Muller has changed that very statement in a recent, minorly revised edition of his *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*. The appealed-to

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Pagan Roman orator and philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC) once observed that there is no nation so barbarous as not to acknowledge the existence of a deity.[32] Later early modern theologians, such as Calvin, Gerhard, Turretin, and Bernardinus de Moor (1709–1780), approvingly cite Cicero's statement.[33] That various religions exist around the world demonstrates that people know God exists, but, since the natural knowledge of God is insufficient for salvation, they neither wholly know him nor worship him. In the twentieth century, some have therefore claimed that the natural knowledge of God is purely condemnatory; that is, it renders sinners guilty before the divine bar because they refuse to acknowledge and worship God even though they know him through nature. Natural theology thus has no other function besides leaving unbelievers without excuse (Rom 1:20).[34] However, the supernatural knowledge of God that people receive by faith presupposes the natural knowledge of God drawn from the school of nature. In the simplest of terms, the school of grace presupposes the school of nature.

The idea that grace presupposes nature is a maxim reaching back at least to Thomas Aquinas, who observes, "Grace does not destroy nature, but fulfills its potential."[35] Because of the concept's associations with Thomas, many twentieth-century Protestant theologians have rejected it. However, early modern Reformed theologians promoted the idea.[36] John Owen (1616–1683), for example, observes, "The foundation of the whole, as of all the actings of our souls, is in the inbred principles of natural light, or first necessary dictates of our

quotation now reads, "This initial or preliminary nuancing of the problem of knowledge is among the most important contributions of the early Reformed writers to the theological prolegomena of orthodox Protestantism." Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 3rd ed., vol. 1, *Prolegomena to Theology* (Baker Academic, forthcoming), 108. PDF provided by Dr. Muller in an email to the author on March 3, 2023. Dr. Muller advised me that the next time the publisher prints the book, it will be the new edition, which will contain the revised language.

[32]Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.23.

[33]Calvin, *Institutes* 1.3.1; see also similar comments in Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology*, §7 (p. 19); Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.3.7; Bernardinus de Moor, *Continuous Commentary on Johannes Marckius' Didactico-Elenctic Compendium of Christian Theology*, trans. Steven Dilday, vol. 1 (L&G Reformation Translation Center, 2014), §12 (pp. 122-23).

[34]A view documented in David VanDrunen, "Presbyterians, Philosophy, Natural Theology, and Apologetics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Presbyterianism*, ed. Gary Scott Smith and P. C. Kemeny (Oxford University Press, 2019), 457-76, esp. 467.

[35]Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* Ia q. 1 art. 8 ad 2.

[36]David VanDrunen, "The Contemporary Reception of Aquinas on the Natural Knowledge of God," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception of Aquinas*, ed. Matthew Levering and Marcus Plested (Oxford University Press, 2021), 596-611.

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intellectual, rational nature."[37] The "inbred principles of natural light" are things such as the knowledge of God's existence, which all people possess by innate and discursive natural knowledge. All people know of God's existence, and they "hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom 1:18 KJV). Anyone can discursively engage natural revelation and determine through the principles of cause and effect that God exists. The existence of a creation proclaims the existence of the Creator.[38] In short, if something exists, then God must exist.

Dutch Reformed theologian Herman Witsius (1636–1708) explains the relationship between the schools of nature and grace:

> For as grace supposes nature, and makes it perfect, so the truths revealed in the Gospel are built on those made known by the light of nature. When a person under that glimmering light [of nature] has discovered that there is a God; that happiness consists in communion with him, and that in comparison of him all things are nothing; and that he is the rewarder of those who seek him; and that, if he is sought in a proper way and manner, he is not sought in vain; he has now a foundation laid, on which to build the gospel, which declares what that God is, in what manner he becomes propitious to men in Christ, how he is to be sought, and in what method he will certainly be found. And thus the knowledge he learns from nature being sanctified by the Spirit, better prepares the mind for embracing those truths which, though they surpass, are yet so far from destroying, that they perfect nature.[39]

This is not to say that nature is a stepladder to grace or that pagan false theology prepares the way or is a foundation for the grace of the gospel.[40] Rather, natural and supernatural knowledge work in concert—one cannot exist without the other.[41] Supernatural knowledge cannot function apart from natural knowledge, and natural knowledge requires supernatural knowledge to rightly know the triune God. Natural knowledge requires supernatural knowledge, but this does not mean its only function is to render sinners inexcusable.

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[37]John Owen, "The Reason of Faith," in *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold (Banner of Truth, 1995), 4:85.

[38]Owen, "Reason of Faith," 87.

[39]Herman Witsius, *The Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man: Comprising a Complete Body of Divinity*, trans. William Crookshank (London, 1838), 3.5.15. Note that Witsius and the Reformed, in contrast to Roman Catholic theologians, commonly suppose that grace presupposes nature in the postfall context, not for the prefall context. On this point, see Harrison Perkins, *Righteous by Design: Covenantal Merit and Adam's Original Integrity* (Mentor, 2024).

[40]Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 77.

[41]Abraham Kuyper, "The Natural Knowledge of God," trans. Harry Van Dyke, *Bavinck Review* 6 (2015): 73-112.

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The historic Reformed tradition has affirmed that natural theology has positive uses.[42] The natural knowledge of God serves as a testimony of the goodness of God to the creation. As Paul instructed the people of Lystra, "Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). Since God has engraved his law on the hearts of all people (Rom 2:14-15), the natural knowledge of God serves as a bond of external discipline, which restrains human corruption and sin.[43] The restraining function of the natural knowledge of God parallels the second use of the moral law: the civil use.[44] Once again, a person cannot achieve salvation through civic righteousness, but such virtue nevertheless is conducive for temporal peace and orderly societal and personal living. The natural light of God's knowledge is also something human beings alone possess in contrast to brute creatures, and the Spirit of God uses it to incite unbelievers to search for greater revelation (Rom 1:20). God's natural knowledge also speaks harmoniously with supernatural knowledge.[45] But regardless of these positive uses, it is one thing to know God is Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the cosmos and entirely another to know him as Redeemer. Therefore, Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531), for example, was in error to suggest that some of the great philosophers such as Socrates and Roman generals such as Scipio Africanus (d. 183 BC) were saved because of their heroic virtue.[46] Protestant theologians rightly took Zwingli to task for this claim.[47]

Supernatural knowledge is a higher form of revelation that is inaccessible to human reason and contains all necessary truths for salvation.[48] Supernatural theology receives the designation of *super-* (or above) because of its delivery mode—by the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures; moreover, it transcends human reason.[49] However, at this juncture there is a slight variation among

[42]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.4.4; Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:297-305.

[43]For the view that Paul speaks of Gentile Christians rather than natural law, see Simon J. Gathercole, "A Law unto Themselves: The Gentiles in Romans 2:14-15 Revisited," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 85 (2002): 27-49.

[44]Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:308.

[45]Van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, 1:1.17; Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:280.

[46]Ulrich Zwingli, *An Exposition of the Faith*, in *Zwingli and Bullinger*, ed. G. W. Bromiley (Westminster John Knox, 2006), 242, 275-76.

[47]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.4.21.

[48]Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 83.

[49]Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 84; Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.2.7.

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theologians regarding how to define revealed theology. Turretin argues that supernatural theology is "strictly 'revealed' because its first principle is divine revelation strictly taken and made through the word, not through creatures."[50] Vos makes this same distinction but adds greater detail when he explains the difference between natural and revealed theology. Revealed theology, argues Vos, comes to humans based on something new and extraordinary; it enters the world apart from the regular chain of causal events in nature. Thus, miracles often accompany revelation to authenticate it. The content of revelation always remains, but the revelatory act is temporary.[51] The incarnation of Christ is an example of Vos's point. The incarnation is a new and unusual temporary act that enters the world apart from the regular causal events of nature; the incarnation is temporary in the sense that Christ's earthly ministry has a specific, temporary time frame; the incarnation itself is not temporary. The content and truth of the Son's incarnation remain, but the specific act has passed. The natural knowledge of God, on the other hand, continually remains: "Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge" (Ps 19:2).[52]

Does this mean the natural knowledge of God is not divine revelation? Vos offers an important qualification when he distinguishes between *revelation* and *nature*. He explains that in the wide sense, both creation and Scripture reveal something about God. But in the narrow sense, revelation is God's intervention in nature whereby in a direct manner and through special means God gives people a knowledge of himself that they cannot obtain through nature.[53] Natural theology originates from the order of nature, whereas supernatural theology transcends the powers of nature and thus belongs to the order of grace, but both arise by divine revelation and are not a matter of mere human discovery.[54] The special modes by which God conveys his supernatural knowledge fall into three categories:

1. Hypostatic revelation, or, the essential revelation of the Word of God, the Son of God (see Ps 33:6; Lk 1:2; Jn 1:11, 14; Acts 20:32; Heb 1:1-2).[55]

[50]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.2.7; also Franciscus Junius, *A Treatise on True Theology*, trans. David C. Noe (Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), thesis 20 (p. 160); John Owen, *Theologoumena Pantodapa: De Natura, Ortu, Progressu, et Studio Veara Theologiae* (Oxford, 1862), 1.3.3; Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 84.

[51]Vos, *Natural Theology*, 4.

[52]Vos, *Natural Theology*, 4.

[53]Vos, *Natural Theology*, 5.

[54]Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:283.

[55]See John Owen, *Pro Sacris Scripturis Adversus Hujus Temporis Fanaticos*, in *The Works of John Owen*, ed. Thomas Russell (Richard Baynes, 1826), 4:538-602, esp. 546.

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2. The innate word of God, or *logos endiathetos* (lit. "internal discourse," or "thought").[56] An example of this appears in the creation account, where God thinks a thought, reflected by the statement "And God saw that it was good" (Gen 1:12). This is God's own internal discourse, which strictly speaking is not uttered by him but is nevertheless revealed in the Word.
3. The *logos prophorikos* (lit. "uttered discourse" or "speech"), which comes in two forms, the *verbum agraphon* ("the unwritten word") and the *verbum engraphon* ("the written word").[57]

Like other distinctions, these terms come from ancient philosophy, but the church fathers and later early modern Reformed theologians applied them to theology to distinguish the various forms of God's revelation.[58]

The Object of Theology

We have answered the question of what theology is: the discourse of God and about God, which signals what, or more specifically who, is the object of theology. God and divine things are the object of theology.[59] Such a statement may seem obvious but is necessary given claims from Immanuel Kant (1724–1804)—who argues that God cannot be known because he lies beyond the phenomenal realm in the noumenal realm—and the subsequent subjective turn that theology took in the hands of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834). Theology ultimately is not about an objective God "out there" but rather about a person's subjective feelings about God "in here," within the person. In Schleiermacher's hands, theology is not truly theology but rather anthropology or psychology. But if theology is the discourse of God and about God, then he is the sole object of theology. Saying that God is the object of theology does not mean we focus only on his being, or ontological status, though we must seek to understand God's being, and this is a strength of the work of Aquinas. Christians need to

[56]Owen, *Pro Sacris Scripturis*, 546-47; Junius, *Treatise on True Theology*, 201.

[57]Owen, *Pro Sacris Scripturis*, 546; Junius, *Treatise on True Theology*, 199, 201; Rhenman, *Divine Discourse*, 85.

[58]On the historical origins of this distinction, see Adam Kamesar, "The *Logos Endiathetos* and the *Logos Prophorikos* in Allegorical Interpretation: Philo and the D-Scholia to the *Iliad*," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 44 (2004): 163-81. For the use of the distinction in Clement of Alexandria, see *Stromata* 5.1 (*ANF* 2:445); Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 85-84.

[59]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.5.4; Owen, *Theologoumena Pantodapa* 1.2.1; Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 91; Calvin, *Institutes* 3.2.1; 2.6.4; Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:315.

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understand God's being, how he exists in the Godhead in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and then how the triune God relates to the creation. In addition to Aquinas's work on God's being, though, a greater dose of biblical revelation is desirable. More specifically, we need to think about God's being considering how he has revealed himself—how he has covenanted with his people in Christ.[60] As the object of theology, we seek to understand God's being and how we can know him, but we seek this knowledge through covenant and thus pursue a covenantal ontology and epistemology. God does not speak to human beings apart from covenant. Chapter eight explores the relationship between prolegomena and covenant.

The Genus of Theology

When we consider the genus of theology, we define the principal category into which it falls, both objectively and subjectively.[61] Considered objectively, the genus "doctrine" most adequately describes theology, because God teaches it and the church studies it. The Scriptures make this point in several places. Jesus says, "If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority" (Jn 7:17). Paul contrasts good doctrine, or teaching, from "different doctrine" that "does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness" (1 Tim 6:3-4; see also Rom 6:17; 1 Tim 4:6). If we think about the genus of theology as subjective, then we cannot categorize it according to common intellectual habits. Aristotle lists the common intellectual habits as intelligence, knowledge, wisdom, prudence, and art.[62] None of these intellectual habits perfectly categorize the genus of theology, because theology is not chiefly about knowing; it is about believing. Moreover, these intellectual habits are natural, whereas theology rests on a foundation not of reason but of revelation, which is supernatural and given by God.

At the same time, the inadequacy of these intellectual habits does not mean theology entirely rejects them. The intellectual habit that comes the closest to belief is wisdom. Aquinas explains that according to Aristotle,

[60]Owen, *Theologoumena Pantodapa* 1.4.10; Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 84; Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:311-24.

[61]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.6; De Moor, *Continuous Commentary*, §29 (pp. 208-10).

[62]Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 6.3.1; Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 96, 101-2; Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:324-40.

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wisdom seeks the highest cause of something.[63] The difference between Aristotle and the Bible, however, is the difference between fallen human wisdom and divine wisdom. Paul writes, "Among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory" (1 Cor 2:6-7). Being subjective, God's wisdom is decisive for the genus of theology. In the process of constructing theology, we can draw from sources of natural knowledge, but God's special revelation, his wisdom, takes precedence. Turretin explains, "If theology takes some things from other systems, it is not as an inferior from superiors, but as a superior from inferiors (as a mistress freely using her handmaids). Theology does not so much take from others, as presupposes certain previously known things on which it builds revelation."[64] Such an understanding finds precedence in Augustine, who writes, "There is a difference between the contemplation of eternal things and the action by which we use temporal things well; the former is called wisdom, the latter science." By *science*, Augustine means knowledge (the meaning of the Latin term *scientia*), as evident in his appeal to Job 28:28, "Behold, piety is wisdom, but to abstain from evil is knowledge." Augustine comments, "In this distinction it is to be understood that wisdom pertains to contemplation, science to action."[65] Augustine's distinction between wisdom and action lies nestled within his understanding of the enjoyment (*frui*) versus the use (*uti*) of something; that is, we enjoy something purely for what it is in itself, whereas we use something for a purpose or specific end. When it comes to the creation, we are supposed to use the creation so we can enjoy God. This means seeking God is ultimately about enjoyment and wisdom—contemplation and worship—rather than seeking knowledge for its own sake.[66] Thus, the genus of theology is either doctrine (objectively considered) or wisdom (subjectively considered).[67]

[63]Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* IIaIIae q. 45 art. 1.
[64]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.6.8.
[65]Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Stephen McKenna, Fathers of the Church (Catholic University Press of America, 1963), 12.14.22; Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 96.
[66]Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* 1.1.7.
[67]See *CD* I/1:11; David K. Clark, *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology* (Crossway, 2010), 180, 208-15.

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Is Theology Speculative or Practical?

As we finalize the groundwork for understanding the nature of theology, one of the older questions is whether theology is theoretical or practical.[68] In classic works, the question has been framed as whether theology is speculative or practical. At first glance, this question may sound like a dead end. Who among us wants to speculate about God? Yet, modern versus ancient meanings of this word point us in a different direction. Before we proceed, we need to clear intellectual weeds away from our understanding of the meaning of *speculative*. A speculative (or theoretical) truth is one pursued for its own sake. Augustine argues that a *speculo* refers to a mirror, and the *speculum Trinitatis* is the knowledge of angels and saints or things that would otherwise be hidden from them.[69] Augustine draws this language from Paul, who writes, "For now we see in a mirror [Vg *speculum*] dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Cor 13:12). In a second passage, Paul writes, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding [Vg *speculantes*] the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:18). Thus Augustine writes,

> He [Paul] uses the word *speculantes*—that is, beholding through a mirror [*speculum*], not looking out from a watch-tower [*specula*]. There is no ambiguity here in the Greek. . . . For there the word for mirror, in which the images of things appear, and the word for watch-tower, from the height of which we see something at a greater distance, are entirely different even in sound.[70]

Aquinas takes this observation and definition and expands on it: "Now to see a thing in a mirror is to see a cause in its effect wherein its likeness is reflected. Hence 'beholding' would seem to be reducible to meditation." For Aquinas, meditation is not merely an idle consideration of truth but rather the acquisition of knowledge "for love of the thing seen"; or, more specifically, by "loving

[68]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.7; Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 96-97, 104-7; de Moor, *Continuous Commentary*, §28 (pp. 204-10); Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:340-54.

[69]André Rivet et al., *Synopis Purioris Theologiae/Synopsis of Purer Theology: Latin Text and English Translation*, ed. Henk Van Den Belt et al., vol. 2 (Brill, 2016), disp. 36.6 (p. 415n3).

[70]Augustine, *Trinity* 15.9.15.

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God we are aflame to gaze on His beauty."[71] For Aquinas, contemplation terminates on the love of God.

Turretin swims in the stream of this ancient question when he contrasts a theoretical versus practical system of theology: "A theoretical system is that which is occupied in contemplation alone and has no other object than knowledge." Is theology therefore speculative (or theoretical)? The term *practical* comes from the Greek term *praxis*, "to do or act"; a mode of action is *praktikos*. Turretin explains, "A practical system is that which does not consist in the knowledge of a thing alone, but in its very nature and by itself goes forth into practice and has operation for its object."[72] He then rehearses the different views of Henry of Ghent (ca. 1217–1293), Guillaume Durand (ca. 1230–1296), and Juan de Rada (ca. 1545–1608), who believed theology was purely speculative.[73] John Duns Scotus (ca. 1265–1308) maintained that theology was purely practical.[74] A tertium quid (lit. a "third option or thing") is one set forth by Bonaventure (1221–1274) and Albertus Magnus (ca. 1200–1280), who taught that theology is neither speculative nor practical but affective, which is higher than speculation and praxis.[75] Among these options, which view best represents the teaching of Scripture? The best answer is not impaled on the horns of a dilemma but happily includes both the speculative and the practical.

Aquinas notes that sacred doctrine includes both the speculative and the practical, though he maintains it is more the former than the latter because theology concerns divine more than human things.[76] Turretin takes a similar approach, though with a different emphasis: "We consider theology to be neither simply theoretical nor simply practical, but partly theoretical, partly practical, as that which at the same time connects the theory of the true with the practice of the good. Yet it is more practical than theoretical."[77] Turretin

[71]Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* IIaIIae q. 180 art. 3 ad obj. 2; q. 180 art. 1.

[72]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.7.3.

[73]Henry of Ghent, *Summae Quaestionum Ordinarium* (Iodoco Badio Ascensio, 1953), art. VIII q. 3 (fol. lxv recto); Guillaume Durand, *Sententias Theologicas Petri Lombardi Commentariorum Libri Quatuor* (Leuven, 1563), prologus, q. VI (fols. 9v-10r); Juan de Rada, *Controversariarum Theolologicarum* (Cologne, 1620), 1:34-56.

[74]Oleg Bychkov, "The Nature of Theology in Duns Scotus and His Franciscan Predecessors," *Franciscan Studies* 66 (2008): 5-62, esp. 34-60.

[75]Mikołaj Olzsewski, "The Nature of Theology According to Albert the Great," in *A Companion to Albert the Great*, ed. Irven M. Resnick (Brill, 2012), 69-104.

[76]Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* Ia q. 1 art. 4.

[77]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.7.2; also Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology*, §12 (p. 21); van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, 1:1.20.

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follows in Aquinas's footsteps but arguably does so under the influence of Alexander of Hales (1185–1245) and Bonaventure. Alexander, for example, writes, "Theology is more of a virtue than an art, more wisdom than knowledge. It consists more in virtue and efficacy than in contemplation and facts."[78] To support his claim, Alexander cites Paul: "My speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor 2:4). Similarly, Bonaventure writes, "The science of theology is an affective habit in between the speculative and the practical, and as its end involves contemplation, both in order to become good, but principally that we might become good."[79] Why do Hales and Bonaventure acknowledge that theology is both speculative and practical with an emphasis on affection? Turretin answers this question: "There is no mystery proposed to our contemplation as an object of faith which does not excite us to the worship of God or which is not prerequisite for its proper performance."[80] We do not engage in theology merely to ponder the triune God but ultimately to worship him.

Why is this question important? Are we not stating the obvious? Do we really need to get into this level of detail? The short answer is yes, we need to get into these details, and no, I am not stating the obvious. Is theology primarily about the Creator or the creature? If it is about the Creator, then establishing a firm foundation for the discipline of theology is a vital task. Historically, Socinian and Remonstrant theologians claimed theology was purely practical and nothing in theology was ultimately necessary for salvation unless it pertained to moral precepts and promises.[81] Remonstrant theologian Philip van Limborch (1633–1712), for example, writes, "Theology is not a matter of mere Speculation;

[78]Alexander of Hales, *Universae Theologiae Summa* (Cologne, 1622), pt. 1, q. 1, memb. 4, art. 2 (p. 5): "Unde haec scientia magist est virtutis, quam artis: & sapientia magis quam scientia: magis enim consistit in virtute & efficacia: quam in contemplation & notitia." See also Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology*, §12 (p. 21).

[79]Bonaventure, *Commentaria in Quatuor Libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi*, vol. 1, *In Primum Librum Sententiarum*, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 1 (Florence, 1882), foreword, q. 3 (p. 13): "Scientia theologica est habitus affectivus et medius inter speculativum et practicum, et pro fine habet tum contemplationem, tum ut boni fiamus, et quidem, principalius, ut boni fiamus." See also Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology*, §12 (p. 21).

[80]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.7.4. DuMoulin takes a slightly different tack and argues that theology is more speculative than practical (*Oration*, 24-25).

[81]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.7.2. Note that Socinian theologians were seventeenth-century antitrinitarian biblical rationalists. They were biblical in that they appealed to the Bible for their views rather than a bald rationalism that asserts its autonomy apart from Scripture. Remonstrants were seventeenth-century theologians associated with the views of Jacob Arminius

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nor is it a mixt Science, partly Speculative, and partly Practical; but it is a Science wholly practical, its very End being such."[82] In our own day, some such as Harvey Cox have characterized the speculative side of theology as an obstacle to true Christianity: "Taken literally, creeds continue to constitute more of a hindrance than a help to Christian faith."[83] Contrary to the purely practical bent of these claims, there is good scriptural warrant for recognizing the mixed nature of theology as both speculative and practical.[84]

The Scripture calls us to believe in God and do what he commands. God calls us in his law to be doers: "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (Jas 1:22). Hence, a purely speculative theology that ignores praxis sidelines scriptural truth. Conversely, the Bible also gives us things to be known and believed: "Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, justified by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (1 Tim 3:16, trans. mine). Just as we cannot separate heat and light from the sun, so too knowledge and practice should never be rent asunder. Jesus says about his teaching, "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (Jn 13:17), and the apostle John echoes Christ when he writes, "Whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected" (1 Jn 2:5). Likewise, Paul tells Titus that he is an apostle commissioned to teach the "knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness" (Titus 1:1). Consequently, theology is both speculative and practical, with an emphasis on the practical, chiefly through worship of the triune God.

These principles coalesce in Augustine's famous distinction between enjoyment (*frui*) and use (*uti*). Augustine writes,

> For to use is to take up something into the power of the will, but to enjoy is to use with the joy, not of hope, but of the actual thing. Therefore, everyone who enjoys, uses, for he takes up something into the power of the will and finds pleasure in it as an end. But not everyone who uses, enjoys, if he has sought after that which he takes up into the power of the will, not on account of the thing itself, but on account of something else.[85]

(1560–1609) and the 1610 Remonstrance that the churches in the Netherlands responded to with the 1618–1619 Canons of Dort.

[82]Philip van Limborch, *A Compleat System, or Body of Divinity*, trans. John Wilkins and William Jones (London, 1702), 1:1.1-3, esp. 2; van Limborch, *Theologia Christiana* (Amsterdam, 1686), 1:1.5.

[83]Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (HarperOne, 2010), 76.

[84]Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 1.7.2.

[85]Augustine, *Trinity* 10.11.17.

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According to Augustine, each *frui* implies an *uti*, though not every *uti* involves a *frui*.[86] This means we should not merely seek to do good things, which would simply be *uti* without the *frui* of God. Rather, we seek to do good things ultimately for the enjoyment of God. Think of the story of Scottish Olympic runner Eric Liddell (1902–1945), whose early life was captured in the 1981 film *Chariots of Fire*. In the movie Liddell's sister wants him to go immediately to China to begin his missionary work rather than waste his time on running. Liddell tells his disappointed sister he will run in the 1924 Olympic Games before he departs for China. Why? Liddell says to his sister, "God made me fast. I feel his pleasure when I run."[87] Liddell *used* running because it enabled him to *enjoy* God—his running inspired him to worship. We *use* the things of this world to *enjoy* God, and this is especially true of theology.

Theology is speculative, as we contemplate the being and works of God, but it is also practical, in that it should lead us to godliness, and the chief expression of our piety is to worship God—to love him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Deut 6:4-6; Mt 22:37-38). This is the profound truth captured in the first question and answer of the Westminster Shorter Catechism: "What is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."[88] All too often we do not use the things of this world and enjoy God. Instead, we use God and enjoy the things of this world. This backwards mentality colors the history of theology: We have used God and enjoyed our theology rather than using our theology to enjoy God. In the end, the apostle Paul captures the practical aim of our speculation about God: "If I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor 13:2). We behold God as through a *speculum*—our sight is never merely gazing but rather leads to action, to love.

Conclusion

We stand at the beginning of a journey and ask the Cheshire cat, "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to walk from here?" and the cat responds, "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to." Where do we want to

[86]Joachim Küpper, "*Uti* and *frui* in Augustine and the Problem of Aesthetic Pleasure in the Western Tradition (Cervantes, Kant, Marx, Freud)," *Modern Language Notes* 127 supplement (2012): S127.
[87]Hugh Hudson, dir., *Chariots of Fire* (Allied Stars and Enigma Productions, 1981).
[88]Also Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology*, 29: "The principal and highest end is the glorification of God."

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go as we embark on the journey of studying theology? What kind of foundation do we want to establish for our theological cathedral? If we strive to know God and his Word better and seek conformity to his will, then we cannot respond with Alice's indifference: "I don't much care where." Such a response rightly invites the cat's reply, "Then it doesn't matter which way you walk."[89] Nine theses summarize the nature of theology and point us in the direction we should go:

1. Theology is discourse of and about God.
2. There are two types of theology: archetypal and ectypal.
3. Archetypal theology is God's own perfect and infinite knowledge of himself.
4. Ectypal theology appears in the schools of nature, grace, and glory.
5. God reveals ectypal theology in creation, in his Word, and chiefly in the incarnation.
6. Ectypal theology has natural and supernatural sources, but the Word of God possesses interpretive authority for aiding the theologian in the proper interpretation of natural knowledge of God.
7. Natural and supernatural theology reveal that God is the sole object of theology.
8. The genus of theology objectively considered is doctrine and subjectively considered is wisdom.
9. Theology is both speculative (theoretical) and practical, with an emphasis on practice—chiefly to worship and love God.

These crucial waypoints set the course for a journey that does not allow for Alice's indifference, and they are vital stones in the foundation of any doctrinal cathedral. Therefore, when we ask, What is theology? our response should ultimately lead us to glorify our triune God. We cannot lay a solid foundation for doctrine apart from knowing what theology is, the different kinds of theology, and theology's object, genus, and speculative and practical character.

[89]Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 89.

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For Further Study

Augustine. *On Christian Teaching*. Translated by R. P. H. Green. Oxford University Press, 2008. Augustine's work is a classic in the field and one of the first to examine the topic of the study of theology.

Gerhard, Johann. *On the Nature of Theology and on Scripture*. Edited by Benjamin T. G. Mayes. Concordia, 2009. Gerhard's prolegomenon covers the full scope of the *locus* but also treats matters related to defining theology. Gerhard writes in the historic Lutheran tradition.

Turretin, Francis. *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*. Translated by George Musgrave Giger. Edited by James T. Dennison Jr. P&R, 1992–1997. Turretin covers prolegomena in the opening sections of his three-volume *Institutes*, so his treatment of the definition is brief but clear and to the point. Turretin writes in the historic Reformed tradition.

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