

**Lecture 2 – What is Theology? (cont.)**

*“Be careful when you go to seminary that it doesn’t undermine your faith.”  
Many giving ‘advice’ to sincere believers going to seminaries*

**Key Terms**

*Sapientia, scientia, praxis, objectivism, subjectivism, homoousios, homoiousios*

**Objectives**

- \*List and describe definitions of theology in the early church.
- \*Discuss the need and purpose of theology.
- \*Explain the importance of the different branches of theology.

**What is Theology? (cont.)**

## IV. Objections to Theology

A. Does the study of theology undermine our faith? Where does our fear of theology come from?

B. Commitments about the nature of theology

Objection 1: God and His Word are to be enjoyed, not studied. This objection can come from a bias toward subjective and emotional understanding of the faith, that Christianity is about feelings, not facts.

Objection 2: Doctrine divides people and causes strife.

- a. Christians are called to judge what is true.
- b. Example: Council of Nicea (325 A.D.)

*“The primary purpose of truth, of theology is not to divide, nor to unite, but to discover and protect the truth.” Martin Luther*

Objection 3: Theology leads to nothing but useless speculation.

Objection 4: It’s all just your interpretation.

Objection 5: Truth is self-evident.

C. Psychological dispositions which function as objections

1. Laziness
2. Fear of subjecting our biases to criticism
3. Irrelevant to life in the “real world”

## V. What is Systematic Theology?

A. The branches of theology

1. Exegetical theology
2. Biblical theology
3. Historical theology
4. Systematic theology
5. Practical (or pastoral) theology

B. Characteristics of systematic theology

1. Synthetic
2. Topical
3. Contextual
4. Prescriptive

- a. A peculiarly ecclesiastical discipline (a theology done for, by, and under the

church)

b. A peculiarly confessional discipline (a theology done in light of the historic response of the people of God to the Word of God)

C. The traditional loci of systematics

1. Prolegomena: includes theological method and epistemology (often including the doctrine of Scripture)
2. Theology proper: the doctrine of God
3. Anthropology: the doctrine of man
4. Hamartiology: the doctrine of sin
5. Christology: the doctrine of Christ
6. Soteriology: the doctrine of salvation
7. Pneumatology: the doctrine of the Holy Spirit
8. Ecclesiology: the doctrine of the church
9. Eschatology: the doctrine of last things
10. Hermeneutics: the science of biblical interpretation
11. Ethics: the study of the principles of right conduct
12. Apologetics: the study of the defense of the Christian faith

D. The exegetical-theological method

### **Questions & Answers**