

Core Class, Year 3  
Lesson 1  
“What is Theology?”

### **Content and Purpose of Theology**

1. Paul and the Wisdom of God
  - a. Romans 12:2 - By the *renewing* of your minds...
    - i. A renewal for knowing \_\_\_\_\_ and true worship.
  - b. 1 Corinthians 1-2 - A new *kind* of wisdom...
    - i. This wisdom comes from \_\_\_\_\_ and is \_\_\_\_\_.
    - ii. Theology as a way of moving in the direction of the Spirit of God, and denying the pull of the spirit of the world.
  - c. Paul's three-tiered vision for theology:
    - i. Continual conformation to the life of Jesus; discipleship (habits of life)
    - ii. Communion with the Spirit of God; prayer and contemplation (heart/soul)
    - iii. Seeing all of life from the perspective given by God (mind)

Summary of John Webster's vision for theology:

If God is making all things new, and if the gospel is the news of that Redemption, then theology is habits and reflection which tries to **inhabit**, **imagine**, and **understand** the New World coming into existence through the gospel of Jesus.

### **The Goals of Theology**

1. Flourishing Redefined by Jesus
  - a. Ellen Charry “helping people *flourish* by loving and knowing God” (6).
  - b. The Beatitudes: the weirdest kind of flourishing
    - i. Theology for the sake of reimagining what we *want* for our lives.
2. A Living Theology
  - a. 1 John 2:3-6: Knowledge, love, and obedience all converge in our relationship to God, *theology is reflection for the purpose of bringing them all together*.
  - b. Theology is reflection that seeks to find answers to questions like: what does it mean for me to be obedient to God in a season in which I don't quite know what God expects of me? How can I pursue God with love and passion, and not leave out growing in deeper understanding? What does it look like to seek God's will and try to hear Him lead me during a season of very little quiet or downtime?

### **The Focus of Theology**

-God: Life and faith is about knowing and loving God, theology tries to support our knowing Him.  
-The gospel: the concentrated message of God's plan for all things.  
-The Bible: God's story of being in, with, and for the world; invites us to enter into this story with Him and His people  
-The Church: The creeds, confessions, doctrines, worship, and community guided by the God of the gospel.