

**Prolegomena 1**

- Various names and attributes are used to describe God. These are either essential characteristics true to God or they describe God in his relation to the world (Creator, Redeemer). As Christians we must grow in our knowledge of God that comes to us by revelation. Christian faith is intellectual and experiential. As rational creatures we have ability to know God and to live our life to God by Christ.

**Prolegomena 2**

- Theology is human speech about God. Theology requires 3 factors **1) human observer/speaker**, the subject **2) object of investigation**, God is the object **3) an avenue of access to the object by the subject.** Humanity >>> (access/avenue) >>> God In **theology the order is reversed God the object reveals himself to us the subject.** God >>> (access/avenue) >>> Humanity
- Theology is the Science of God (**Thomas Aquinas**) theology is the science of God and of the relations btw God and the universe (**BB Warfield**), begins by establishing the existence of God, having a human mind that is capable of knowing God, and having a God that is accessible
- Theology is the Science of Revelation – God as revealed in his Word (**Berkhof**), revealed ectypal knowledge (**Kuyper**), God reveals himself in facts found in Bible (**Hodge**), **1. Bible is instrument to understand God not the object of Theology.**
- Theology is the science of Faith/Religion (Schleiermacher), Dogmatics = systematic theology
- Theology is the Science of Relation btw God and creation/humanity
- **Theology is a secondary description that meets human needs, it helps us understand and to teach the truth of God.**

**Prolegomena 3**

- Is Theology a Science? – Thomas Aquinas = Theology is the queen of all sciences
- Kuyper and Dooyeweerd = Theology is science no different than any other science and should be taught in University b/c of unity of all sciences,
- FM Ten Hoor = Theology needs to be taught by the church, involves thinking God's thoughts and is derived from his revelation in scripture, Cosmology is scientific study of the cosmos apart from God after the Fall.
- Kant – noumenal and phenomenal
- Karl Barth – rejects natural theology and general revelation
- Theology does not deal with universal faith phenomena, but with the historically particular knowledge of God given to the Christian church. We come to know God through the Canon/Scripture, the community story, our personal life story, and the ongoing story as God reveals the story of salvation and restoration. It meets the deepest needs of our soul.

**Prolegomena 4**

- Method and Organization of Theology – sources for reflection are Scripture, Christian tradition, and experience. We take this stuff and construct our theology. **Apriori-** a deductive method, speculative, cause to effect, assumed laws to facts, Plato. **Aposteriori-** an inductive method, empirical, effect to cause, from empirical facts to laws, Aristotle.
- Speculative/Apriori Theology – Schleiermacher = religion is a feeling of absolute dependence, Ritschl = kingdom of God is a social brotherhood of all humanity
- Inductive/Empirical Theology – Hodge = mind does not create order, only recognizes order

- Synthetic Method of Theology – Bavinck and Berkhof = starting point is God and everything is looked at in light of its relation to God. Logical order is in the 6 Loci, Doctrine of God, Man, Christ, Salvation, Church, and Eschaton/Last Things. There are various opinions on the order and organization of these.

### **Prolegomena 5**

- problem of revelation, the only way that we can come to know God is if he reveals himself to us. Kierkegaard = revelation comes from outside ourselves, goes against enlightenment thought about human autonomy
- General Revelation, Natural Theology, and Common Grace become issues.
- Calvin = God reveals self through cosmic work of HS **1**. Creation and World – maintains order and gives life. **2**. All humanity – gives life, gifts, restrains evil **3**. In the Elect – sanctification.

### **Prolegomena 6**

- purpose of revelation is communion with God, through revelation our sin is uncovered and God's promise of grace is made known. We can see God's faithful keeping of his promise in the past and give us hope for the future. **3 modes of revelation** – Theophany, external manifestations. Prophecy, internal suggestions. Inspiration, concursive operation. **Models of Revelation** – Revelation as Doctrine, as history, as Inner experience, as Dialectical Presence, as a new awareness

### **Prolegomena 7**

- **a)** Special revelation is necessary because general revelation is inadequate to provide knowledge of salvation. **b)** Primacy of scripture over personal experiences, community/cultural consciousness, and over church tradition. **c)** nature and purpose of scriptural revelation is for God to manifest himself to particular people at certain times and places in order to enter into a redemptive relationship with him. **d)** Sufficiency and Perspicuity of scripture – sufficient and clear for its purpose **e)** Theories of inspiration are Dynamic/thoughts, Mechanical/dictation, and Organic/people used in personality and context

### **Prolegomena 8**

- Biblical authority – scripture has several layers of meanings which are represented by symbols and metaphors. They transform us and move us to action. Preachers need to preach scripture. Here is where the power is found. Theopneustos = scripture is passive

### **Prolegomena 9 & 10**

- Systematic theology looks at the breadth (unity of scripture, big picture), and the depth (historical tradition) Christianity is not just a set of ideas. It is an encounter of God with his people. Christianity is a history first and then a philosophy. Heretical Imperative –

### **Prolegomena 11**

- Tradition and the development of doctrine, problem is that these are not scripture. 3 elements of tradition 1. Interpretation of scripture = fundamental truths 2. Independent of scripture but confirmed by it = infant baptism, etc 3. Disciplines = dates for Easter and Christmas. Adolph von Harnack thought that philosophers had corrupted the purity of the gospel found in scripture with the creation of dogmas.

**Hermeneutics** – science that teaches us principles, laws, and methods of interpretation. Historical periods in hermeneutics – Pre-critical (before Schleiermacher), critical (after Schleiermacher), and Post-Critical (the messy present). Reformed hermeneutics involve grammar, literary, historical context, theological, canonical, and pneumatic Holy Spirit

**Theology and Ethics** - prophetic, narrative, and ethical must inform policy,

- Ethical systems – Unitarian, Father-Creation/Law (RCC, Calvinists), Son/imitate Jesus as the model (Anabaptists), HS-holiness/perfection (Quakers) A genuine Christian ethic will be Trinitarian by nature. Our Moral order stems from Creator's will, Jesus provides the model for a moral life, and the Holy Spirit gives us the power to move toward moral perfection.
- Theology is political – affects social life of the church and it affects the secular community.