

Chapter 1 : Theology - Wikipedia

A theologian studies God and God's relation to the world. To become a theologian requires a rigorous discipline of academic study usually including knowledge of ancient languages, particular holy books, doctrinal studies, history and practical applications.

Oliver teaches systematic theology, and has been a professor at Fuller since Before he began teaching at Fuller Theological Seminary, he spent three years as the secretary to the Society for the Study of Theology, located in the UK, and he also spent time on the committee of the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion. Oliver has taught at the University of St. What is Christian studies? I guess it is the study of Christianity. I teach Christian theology in what is sometimes called a "confessional" context, namely, a seminary. I teach from within a particular religious tradition about the conceptual content of the beliefs held by that tradition -- in this case, Christianity. I suppose you could look at Christianity from the outside-in, so to speak. That might constitute "Christian studies. What do you find most interesting about Christian studies? Religious beliefs are very important to millions of people. They shape our societies and our communities in important respects. They form who we are as persons. What we believe about matters religious is, in an important sense, a matter of fundamental significance for many, many people. So to ask what I find most interesting about the study of Christianity is rather like asking what do you find most interesting about the most interesting things in life. It is all fascinating to me. But in particular, I am interested in the philosophical issues raised by Christian beliefs. For instance, if God is said to be a trinity, how can he be both one and also three at the same time? Or, if Jesus of Nazareth is said to be God incarnate, how can that be? How can one person be both fully human and fully divine at one and the same time? What is your least favorite aspect of Christian studies? But none that I find I dislike or that are my least favorite. Are there subfields of Christian studies that students might not be aware of? I am also interested in philosophical theology and the philosophy of religion, where philosophy and theology meet and intersect. There is church history, which I also love, read, and write about a little. And there is practical theology about how to be a minister , as well as Biblical studies the study of sacred texts in the Old and New Testaments. These are the main divisions in the study of Christianity, although there are other things one could include such as social-scientific study of religion e. What careers do students commonly pursue with a degree in Christian studies? I teach at a graduate school: Most people coming to seminary intend on some sort of service in the church, and they do an MDiv or MA degree to that end. Some intend on an academic career and end up doing a ThM or PhD. Others do theological education in order to help them think through their vocations in other fields -- and these can be very diverse, from managing fitness clubs to working on Wall Street! In the United States, the study of theology is usually a graduate program e. You can do things like a major in religion in some universities and colleges, or a major in Biblical studies. There are very few places where you can study Christian theology as an undergraduate. Often, people begin their study of theology as a graduate student, and this can be without a background in theology just as someone might go to law school with an undergraduate degree in, say, history. What personality traits do you think a student should have in order to be successful in a Christian studies program? There are some things that are not peculiar to the study of theology that would help, such as a strong work ethic, application, focus, the ability to juggle different commitments school, job, family -- that sort of thing. If a "successful" student is one who ends up doing what they set out to study, then in addition a clear sense of vocation, being able to work with people of different abilities, ages, and so on in placements would also be vital. What electives would you recommend that a student in a Christian studies program take? This depends on the course of study. Some are fairly prescribed e. Some have more scope for choice e. In addition to a good grounding in the core subjects of Biblical studies OT and NT , church history, systematic and philosophical theology, moral theology, and practical theology, much will depend on what the student excels at, or what they like in particular. I think theology is vital and fascinating. But others might prefer to do an in-depth study of a Biblical text or its reception, or consider a particular period in history, and so on. So much depends on the student. But if you want to major in, say, practical theology, then taking electives in that area is an obvious

thing to do. What study tips would you give to a student to help him or her succeed in a Christian studies program? Manage your time and other commitments carefully. Do you think Christian studies is a subject that can be studied online, or is a traditional class environment ideal? You can study it online like you can study a lot of different things online these days. But I personally do not think online study is ideal. In fact, I think online study is potentially isolating and lacks important dimensions that you can only get in the classroom and in a physical community. Although I think we must embrace new technologies and integrate them into our learning environments, I do worry that the pace of change and the effects this has on learning communities does not necessarily make for a better educated, more rounded individual. Technology is a tool, nothing more. It is not a solution. What subjects should a prospective student of Christian studies understand before entering a formal college program? People come from a variety of different educational backgrounds and this can mean they bring a particular perspective to theological study that can be enriching and helpful. Traditionally, people have studied the arts liberal arts before doing theology. There are great benefits to this because such a training gives you a grounding in how to read texts, how to attend to history and tradition and language -- all things that are vital to theological study. But in a technological age, who is to say that a background in biology might not also be of great use if say you want to end up focusing on Christian approaches to medical ethics? What pieces of advice, or caution, would you offer to a prospective student of Christian studies? Look carefully into which course best suits you. The quality of the school is important. But this devolves in large part upon the quality of its resources. The two most important resources for any theology student as far as the institution they study at goes are the library facilities and the faculty. However, if you have great library facilities and average faculty, that will have a significant impact on your studies. The quality of the people who teach you is vital. You can often ascertain if they are good teachers from website or from asking current students. Ideally, you want good teachers who are also cutting-edge researchers. If the faculty are not writing very much or not writing books that are discussed, reviewed, used as texts, or published with the best publishers, you might want to look elsewhere. For theology, you also want to consider the theological orientation of the school. This will make a big difference to your education too if it is a confessional school.

Chapter 2 : Faith and Theology: Ten propositions on being a theologian

This is why you observe that in the psalm indicated David so often complains of all sorts of enemies For as soon as God's Word becomes known through you, the devil will afflict you, will make a real [theologian] of you."

The English equivalent "theology" Theologie, Teologie had evolved by Definition[edit] Augustine of Hippo defined the Latin equivalent, theologia, as "reasoning or discussion concerning the Deity"; [7] Richard Hooker defined "theology" in English as "the science of things divine ". The study of these assumptions is not part of theology proper but is found in the philosophy of religion , and increasingly through the psychology of religion and neurotheology. Theology then aims to structure and understand these experiences and concepts, and to use them to derive normative prescriptions for how to live our lives. Theologians use various forms of analysis and argument experiential , philosophical , ethnographic , historical , and others to help understand , explain , test, critique , defend or promote any myriad of religious topics. As in philosophy of ethics and case law , arguments often assume the existence of previously resolved questions, and develop by making analogies from them to draw new inferences in new situations. The study of theology may help a theologian more deeply understand their own religious tradition , [10] another religious tradition, [11] or it may enable them to explore the nature of divinity without reference to any specific tradition. Theology may be used to propagate , [12] reform, [13] or justify a religious tradition or it may be used to compare , [14] challenge e. Theology might also help a theologian to address some present situation or need through a religious tradition, [15] or to explore possible ways of interpreting the world. There, however, the word refers not to John the "theologian" in the modern English sense of the word butâ€”using a slightly different sense of the root logos, meaning not "rational discourse" but "word" or "message"â€”one who speaks the words of God, logoi toy theoy. It is in this last sense, theology as an academic discipline involving rational study of Christian teaching, that the term passed into English in the fourteenth century, [26] although it could also be used in the narrower sense found in Boethius and the Greek patristic authors, to mean rational study of the essential nature of God â€” a discourse now sometimes called theology proper. They suggest the term is less appropriate in religious contexts that are organized differently religions without a single deity, or that deny that such subjects can be studied logically. Jewish theology is linked to ethics and therefore has implications for how one behaves. Christian theology is the study of Christian belief and practice. Such study concentrates primarily upon the texts of the Old Testament and the New Testament as well as on Christian tradition. Christian theologians use biblical exegesis, rational analysis and argument. Theology might be undertaken to help the theologian better understand Christian tenets, to make comparisons between Christianity and other traditions, to defend Christianity against objections and criticism, to facilitate reforms in the Christian church, to assist in the propagation of Christianity, to draw on the resources of the Christian tradition to address some present situation or need, or for a variety of other reasons. Gardet [34] Hinduism[edit] Within Hindu philosophy , there is a tradition of philosophical speculation on the nature of the universe, of God termed " Brahman ", Paramatma and Bhagavan in some schools of Hindu thought and of the Atman soul. The Sanskrit word for the various schools of Hindu philosophy is Darshana meaning "view" or "viewpoint". Vaishnava theology has been a subject of study for many devotees, philosophers and scholars in India for centuries. A large part of its study lies in classifying and organizing the manifestations of thousands of gods and their aspects. In recent decades the study of Hinduism has also been taken up by a number of academic institutions in Europe, such as the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies and Bhaktivedanta College. Krishnology Buddhism[edit] Some academic inquiries within Buddhism , dedicated to the investigation of a Buddhist understanding of the world, prefer the designation Buddhist philosophy to the term Buddhist theology, since Buddhism lacks the same conception of a theos. Jose Ignacio Cabezon, who argues that the use of "theology" is appropriate, can only do so, he says, because "I take theology not to be restricted to discourse on God In that latter sense, Buddhism is of course atheological, rejecting as it does the notion of God. Outline of theology As an academic discipline[edit] The history of the study of theology in institutions of higher education is as old as the history of such institutions themselves. For instance, Taxila was an early centre of Vedic learning, possible from the 6th

century BC or earlier; [37] the Platonic Academy founded in Athens in the 4th century BC seems to have included theological themes in its subject matter; [38] the Chinese Taixue delivered Confucian teaching from the 2nd century BC; [39] the School of Nisibis was a centre of Christian learning from the 4th century AD; [40] [41] Nalanda in India was a site of Buddhist higher learning from at least the 5th or 6th century AD; [42] and the Moroccan University of Al-Karaouine was a centre of Islamic learning from the 10th century, [43] as was Al-Azhar University in Cairo. It is possible, however, that the development of cathedral schools into universities was quite rare, with the University of Paris being an exception. In the early medieval period, most new universities were founded from pre-existing schools, usually when these schools were deemed to have become primarily sites of higher education. Many historians state that universities and cathedral schools were a continuation of the interest in learning promoted by monasteries. This meant that the other subjects including Philosophy existed primarily to help with theological thought. This was the basis on which Friedrich Schleiermacher, a liberal theologian, argued for the inclusion of theology in the new University of Berlin in Harvard, [55] Georgetown, [56] Boston University, Yale, [57] and Princeton [58] all had the theological training of clergy as a primary purpose at their foundation. Seminaries and bible colleges have continued this alliance between the academic study of theology and training for Christian ministry. As an academic discipline in its own right[edit] In some contexts, scholars pursue theology as an academic discipline without formal affiliation to any particular church though members of staff may well have affiliations to churches, and without focussing on ministerial training. Religious studies[edit] In some contemporary contexts, a distinction is made between theology, which is seen as involving some level of commitment to the claims of the religious tradition being studied, and religious studies, which by contrast is normally seen as requiring that the question of the truth or falsehood of the religious traditions studied be kept outside its field.

Chapter 3 : How to Become a Christian Scholar

After a few years, they may become full professors, and eventually become deans of the religious studies department. In some settings, a theologian can move on to an administrative role, such as principals of private schools or presidents of seminaries.

Vanhooser August I was delighted to receive your letter asking about the best route to becoming a theologian. Let me confess up front: I need to underline the point: Theology is neither a nine-to-five job nor a career. To know and speak truly of God is a vocation that requires more than academic or professional qualifications. The image you should have in mind is not the professor with a tweed jacket, but rather the disciples who dropped everything to follow Jesus. Theology is the study of how to speak truly of God and of all things in relation to God. God cannot be empirically examined. God is the creator of all things, not to be identified with any part of the universe or even with the universe as a whole. Speaking of God thus poses unique challenges. If God had not condescended to communicate to creatures something of his light, we would be in the dark. Only God can make himself known. There is a prior divine self-communication to which all theologians are accountable. There are theologies of marriage, the body, leisure, the imagination, and so forth, but they are theological only to the extent that they relate their objects to God, their author and finisher. Theology is thinking hard about what God has taught about himself and all things in relation to himself. The realityâ€”grading papers, committee meetings, critical reviews, etc. Theology ranks very low on the totem pole of academic status. If you aspire to speak of God, do so to please God, not people cf. There are already plenty of people, too many, who speak of God for the wrong reasons, which means they are not speaking truly of the one true God. Yet even the demons believeâ€”and shudder James 2: Becoming a theologian involves not only coming to know God theology is simultaneously art, science, and craft , but also becoming a certain kind of person, one whose created intelligence has been illumined by the Holy Spirit. Knowing God, the gospel of God what God has done in Christ , and all things in relation to God and the gospel is to know reality. It awakens disciples to reality. All this to say: I affirm your general aspiration, but have you prayerfully considered whether academic theology is your vocation rather than, say, doing theology in the church, perhaps as a pastor or priest? As to learning how to think theologically, let me begin with four adjectives Trinitarian, biblical, catholic, and systematic that qualify Christian theological thinking. Each describes a theological habit of mind that has proved useful in getting the understanding faith seeks. Becoming a Christian theologian means developing a Trinitarian habit of mind. On the one hand, everything begins with divine initiatives, the speak-acting of God. God speaks; God speaks himself; God speaks himself through himself. Commit this patristic adage to memory, in Latin and English: Why is there something rather than nothing? Because God the Father created all things in and through the Son in the Spirit. Why is there good news rather than no news silence? Second, the best way to stay focused on the subject matter of theology is to stay focused on Scripture. Roman Catholics enthusiastically agree. Given the fragmentation of theological studies in the modern university, I fear that you may find it challenging to establish your biblical bona fides. There are better ways of reading the Bible theologically. Those who look at the biblical text analyze it from a critical distance. In contrast, those who look along the text enter into its strange new world. The Bible is not an object to examine under this or that hermeneutical microscope. God addresses us in Scripture and requires our response, and that means we do theology in the first and second person cf. The third thing you must do to acquire a theological habit of mind is to read the Word of God with and for the people of God. You may be tempted to say something original about God. Let me urge you to make sure your brilliant insights are in line with the consensus of the catholic tradition. Those who swim against the stream of Christian tradition risk subverting the logic of the gospel. To become a theologian is to enter into a centuries-long conversation, started by who knows? The best theologians are apprentices to Scripture and to the consensual tradition of its interpretation. That tradition, viewed theologically, is the result of the Spirit leading the whole Church into all truth John And speaking of Nicaea, every aspiring theologian should study the way Athanasius read Scripture to see how the logic of the gospel gave rise to Trinitarian theology. Catholicity is a well-known mark of the Church; it

ought also to characterize theologians. Let the gospel be the center of your thinking, but let catholic tradition fill out its content and fix its circumference. Evangelical and catholic are bedfellows, not rivals. The Bible is much more than a collection of truths to be organized into a comprehensive system. That way leads to what we might call hard systematic theology. There are things that theologians must make known, but they primarily concern what God has said and done in history. Doctrines such as the Trinity or the atonement are typically either identifications of key persons or elaborations of the meaning of key events in the story. You might learn these four habits of mind by apprenticing yourself to an established theologian, dead or alive, and reading all his or her works. Wisdom is the virtue that regulates and balances all the other virtues, so let me provide a sketch of the wise theologian by describing three pairs of contrasting qualities. First, faith and reason. Theologians need to believe firmly and think clearly. Anselm says we must believe in order to understand. Every science has to start somewhere, with some given; theology starts by believing that God has spoken in Scripture the written Word and Christ the revealed Word. Only those who read the Bible in faith can read it as Scripture authoritative divine address. In general, theologians do well to reason from, not to, Scripture. Logic is but ethics honesty applied to the life of the mind. In this sense, reason is neutral. It does not legislate what Christians can believe but rather tells us what follows from the articles of faith revealed in Scripture. Reason exercises a ministerial function in theology. Reason is best viewed in terms of created, fallen, and redeemed human intelligence. Notice what I just did: Relating things to the triune God by thinking biblically is the reflex of a mature theologian. As the Apostle Paul warned, knowledge puffs up 1 Cor. The best remedy for this is constant prayer. Theologians must never be content with living at second hand. Unless we are praying to God, we are talking, as it were, behind his back. Second, joyful truth-speaking and hopeful truth-suffering. To become a theologian, you must be willing to bear true witness and call out false witnesses, casting down idols and ideologies. Karl Barth is right: Fortunately, present-day Western theologians need fear nothing more than metaphorical crucifixion in the courts of academic or popular opinion. Many people resent being told they are not lords of their own lives. Paul speaks about both in connection to his ministry. By the way, if and when you need a booster shot in your rhetorical right arm, you may often find inspiration in the display of bold theology in *The International Journal of Systematic Theology* and sometimes in *First Things*. That, incidentally, is why Augustine is one of my favorite theologians: He published a whole book rehearsing his theological mistakes the *Retractions*. Thielicke has some powerful things to say about the temptation to treat truth as a prideful possession. Instead of embarrassing themselves and bringing disgrace on theology, they ought to shut up and listen. You asked for summer reading recommendations. So there you have believing and behaving as a theologian. Let me conclude with a few words about belonging. Where and with whom are you most likely to flourish as a theologian? There is much to be said for reading Scripture in the original languages and for pastoral experience. In one of his own letters to an aspiring theologian, C. Lewis readily acknowledged that some are called to be theological teachers cf. And, of course, on one level, all Christians should be biblically and theologically literate. Not everyone can be a doctor, but we should all know first aid. The serious point is that whatever your location, your theology should build up the Church in the knowledge and love of God so that it can worship in spirit and truth John 4: Worship the Lord in holy splendor. Sound doctrine prompts doxology.

Chapter 4 : Becoming a Pastor Theologian: New Possibilities for Church Leadership by Todd Wilson

Becoming a theologian means accepting an invitation. America This Week September 26, Becoming a theologian means accepting an invitation. Photo by Alex Block on Unsplash.

Contact The Highest Paying Theology Careers For those students who are interested in studying religion, a degree in Theology is the perfect choice. However, when most people think of a theology degree they automatically assume the only available job is that of minister. As more people than ever before look at religion and spirituality as a major part of their lives, theology degrees have allowed many people with religious training to enter a number of mainstream careers. Just like regular public schools, these schools all need qualified teachers to help students learn. As a result, many theology degree holders are finding excellent paying jobs in these schools. Opportunities are available at the elementary, middle and high school levels, with many teachers being given the chance to teach theology classes to students. In these positions, they are able to teach several classes per semester in such areas as Religious History, Christian Education, Philosophy of Religion and other areas. However, many degree holders begin their college teaching careers as adjunct faculty, teaching part-time at first in order to gain experience and establish a name for themselves in their chosen field. Minister Yes, the vast majority of those with degrees in Theology do still choose to enter the ministry. While most ministers choose to be employed at a church of certain religious affiliation such as Methodist or Baptist, others choose to minister in hospitals or for worldwide relief agencies helping those in third-world nations overcome poverty, hunger and many times war. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assignments can vary, ranging from being the religion reporter for a television news channel to writing a weekly column for a local newspaper. Topics can be anything from reporting on local religious services to interviewing high-ranking church officials regarding intriguing and sometimes controversial issues. These jobs can be both rewarding and difficult at the same time, for administrators are trying to find common ground with church leaders and parents of children attending the school. In these jobs, having a background in Christian Education is a huge plus. Directors hire teachers and other personnel, give their approval to various programs and usually work with a board of directors to make sure the school accomplishes its goals of Christian Education. Social Worker Because theology so often emphasizes helping others, many people choose to enter the field of social work to help different populations of people live better lives. Some choose to become members of the Salvation Army, helping organize food drives and work in homeless shelters. The outlook for jobs in this field is quite good, with expected annual job growth slated to be 38 percent. Others choose to work for state and local agencies in various capacities or are employed by private organizations, many of which are considered faith-based agencies and are often affiliated with a specific religious denomination. Volunteer Recruiter Many organizations such as hospitals, schools and other non-profit organizations rely on volunteers in order to accomplish many of their tasks. As a result, it is vital they be able to not only recruit enough volunteers to fully staff all their programs, but maintain them as well. One of the biggest problems many organizations have is convincing volunteers to stay on the job, and that is where having a solid volunteer recruiter comes into play. As organizations have begun to understand the importance of their volunteer staff, the job of volunteer recruiter has gained much prominence. Those who possess Theology degrees, are excellent public speakers and have a true passion for a certain cause can excel in these positions. Spending much of their time speaking to groups, their goal is to sign up as many people as possible as volunteers, make sure they receive proper training and encourage them to continue volunteering for many years. As federal, state and local budgets continue to shrink, less and less money is being made available to help social service agencies cope with the additional people requesting assistance. This is where the job of a fund-raising specialist comes in. Many theology graduates are finding employment today as fund-raisers for social service agencies, making the rounds of government offices as well as corporate offices to arrange donations to their agencies. Much like a minister giving a sermon, fund-raisers are assigned the task of showing others how their funding would be put to best use, and their public speaking and sales skills are put to the test each time. Bible Translator With the world becoming closer every day, there is a growing need for Bible translators to help bring the Scriptures to

many third-world nations. Requiring a mastery of Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic many relief organizations are hiring Bible translators to work with native populations in remote areas such as New Guinea and the jungles of South America. Salaries for these jobs are growing, since the demands are great. So for those with an interest in history, anthropology and sociology this can be a fascinating way to put their theology training to excellent use. So whether you wish to be in a comfortable office or in a jungle hut for a decade, there are numerous jobs available for those possessing Theology degrees. And for anyone who has studied the life of Jesus, they know there is no better way to make a living than to walk in His steps. Find the school for you!

Oliver Crisp is a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary. Oliver teaches systematic theology, and has been a professor at Fuller since

Important Books Christian theology is a rich and complex topic of study. Throughout history, many scholars have attempted to distill the words of the Bible and the works of earlier theologians to understand the growth and meaning of the faith. No current scholar could possibly read all of the significant books that are relevant to Christian theology. However, there are a few books that have achieved such insight and lucidity that anyone interested in Christian theology should take the time to read them. The books here could not possibly represent all of the important works for Christian theologians to read. But it is a start. This is not a ranking of these books, but a starting place for Christian theologians who want a deep understanding of both historic and modern theology.

A Handbook for Students and Pastors This substantial revision of a highly successful textbook takes into account the latest advances in methodology and resources. For more than two decades, Stuart has been providing a reliable step-by-step guide on how to write an exegetical paper on the Old Testament.

Stuart Order The Book Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation This accessible text, which combines hermeneutical theory with practical steps for exegesis, has been translated into eight languages and has been used in a variety of settings to teach students how to study the Bible responsibly.

Virkler Order The Book The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation This book provides the first complete guide for students to the present state of biblical studies. The twenty-one specially commissioned chapters are written by established scholars from North America and Britain, and represent both traditional and contemporary points of view.

A Textbook of Hermeneutics was published in and since then, over , copies have been put into circulation. The book helps readers get to the root of theological issues and gain a better understanding of Biblical interpretation. By detailing the views typically held by evangelicals in the past, the book is aptly equipped to contrast them to contemporaries. The book is also known for its intent focus on pre-Romantic figures, a subject breached on a much less frequent basis. The accurate interpretation of theological and historical issues in the bible depends on rigorous adherence to correct translation, grammatical and lexical veracity, and conscientious scholarship.

Carson Order The Book Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible The Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible has been an impressive resource for those looking to reaffirm their knowledge relevant to Christianity. The book has helped by including all the most important names, theories, and concepts in biblical interpretation.

Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology is written by a pair of prominent Bible scholars that have authored this engaging read that helps advanced-level students get the guidance needed. The book helps reinforce the material by ending each chapter with useful exercises and assignments.

Andreas Kostenberger Order The Book New Horizons in Hermeneutics New Horizons in Hermeneutics is an important read for gaining an understanding of hermeneutics, specifically looking at the implications related to the Old and New Testaments. The book expresses impressive depth and elaborates so extensively on subjects that it requires an advanced understanding of hermeneutics to be the most effective. Since there have been a variety of methods used to approach biblical interpretation, this book gives unparalleled insight into how conclusions are made on interpretations.

A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation has long been heralded as one of the preeminent reads on hermeneutics. It won the Critics Choice Award in , so has significant support as a renowned read.

Osborne Hermeneutics Hermeneutics breaks down the topic of hermeneutics by extensively discussing various aspects of phenomenology and existential philosophy. The award-winning book has been used as a study resource for countless students, reinforcing its established use.

VanGemeren Beginning Christian Apologetics Christian apologetics is the use of rational arguments, historical documents and artifacts, and other objective information to defend the faith against criticism and objection.

Christian Apologetics Christian Apologetics focuses on a systematic approach to methods for defending Christianity, while also supplementing with sound reasoning.

A Study of the Rational Justification of Belief in God God and Other Minds is the name of a book by Alvin Plantinga which

re-kindled serious philosophical debate on the existence of God in Anglophone philosophical circles by arguing that belief in God was like belief in other minds: The philosophical argument has been developed and criticized by Plantinga and others in the succeeding 40 years. The book aims to combat some of the views presented in the publication and maintain that Christian faith can be maintained in such a rigorous environment as Harvard. *Essays in Christian Apologetics* Fundamentals of the Faith: *Essays in Christian Apologetics* details how Christianity and Catholicism are able to further explain the relevance in our lives and how to aptly apply it to the ever-changing circumstances of contemporary living. By examining the fundamental questions from some of the most acclaimed thinkers, the book is able to best illustrate a wealth of points on the subject matter. *The Reconciliation of Faith and Reason* is a notable philosophy of religion text that explains how two seemingly opposing elements are able to actually work in harmony to produce astonishing results within each of us and a society. The book is dense with intellectually rigorous essays that aim to dissect some of the most important issues of today. The word ecclesiology can be used to mean the study of the literal structures of church buildings, but is also used more broadly to discuss the metaphorical structure and nature of the church. The book gives a wonderful view about what exactly it means to foster a relationship with Jesus Christ. *An Extraordinary Guide to Understanding the New Testament* gives a fascinating new perspective to some parts of the New Testament that have been misinterpreted over time. *The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry* is the perfect read for those interested in becoming involved in the leadership of a church. It details what the exact purpose of a pastor is and how to best work into the role. *How the Church Protects the Name of Jesus* is perfect for those church officials looking to gain a better understanding of how to foster a stronger connection between Jesus and a congregation. *The Crisis of Authority in American Evangelicalism* is an interesting read that explains how evangelicals are often presented with ideological dilemma that is particularly hard to resolve, namely due to contradictory beliefs. The book tries to define the problem and guide readers toward a solution. Molly Worthen *Order The Book* *History of Christian Doctrines* *History of Christian Doctrines* is a read that soars from the beginning as it explains various components of Christian doctrines that have changed and been developed over time. *An Introduction to Christian Doctrine n Historical Theology*, Gregg Allison offers students the opportunity to study the historical development of theology according to a topical-chronological arrangement, setting out the history of Christian doctrine one theological element at a time. *An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* has been a wonderful read for those looking to gain a more thorough understanding of the Word of God, redemption, Jesus Christ, and many other areas. The book makes it easier than ever to apply the concepts to modern-day life. The book is heralded as a classic when it comes to theology and being a well-versed theologian. The book is merely situated to provide a strong foundation so that the reader can use it to frame various problems in their own life. *Evans Order The Book* *Christianity: First published in to critical acclaim, winning the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award, The Gnostic Gospels* has continued to grow in reputation and influence over the past two decades. It is now widely recognized as one of the most brilliant and accessible histories of early Christian spirituality published in our time. *Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* looks at all the moments that have defined Christianity today and ultimately what it says the religion and culture as a whole. This edition features a wealth of updates designed to bring readers closer to God through a more comprehensive understanding of the religion. In the face of shrinking attendance and lagging spiritual growth, pastors and church leaders are understandably discouraged and demoralized. But the first step to turning things around is hope. Church health expert Gary McIntosh offers this hope by showing church leaders the first things they need to do to make a new start for their church. Dorothy Sayers lays out age-old doctrines without prettying-up or watering-down. She brings them vividly to life by showing how the Bible, history, literature, and modern science fit together to make religion not only possible but necessary in our time. We are concerned with being relevant to the culture and ultimately growing at a steady rate. While these issues are certainly legitimate, they also create a danger that our churches will be shaped more by these extrabiblical goals than by the biblical mandate of God. Utilizing the Scriptures, theology, and Baptist history, this comprehensive work addresses all aspects of the church—both theological and practical. *Forming a Church of Spiritual Purpose, Presence, and Power* details how a church can best align themselves with God

and claim its blessing. Not only does the book empower individuals to find Christ, but also expand on this to allow it to flow through a congregation. A Textbook on Ecclesiology outline the most crucial issues the church is facing today and how to best go about addressing them. The essays touch on wide-ranging subjects, which can prove surprisingly insightful. How to Stop Worshiping Christ and Start Following Jesus explains how the integrity of biblical scholarship has been eroded in recent years. The book looks to reframe Christianity away from personal salvation and back onto core concepts. Ecumenical, Historical, and Global Perspectives is an essential read for understand exactly what the church is and what components comprise it and define it. The book is comprehensive and details expressions of the Christian church in both contemporary and traditional contexts. Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us explains how churches and other organizations can use Christian values to nurture communities and create environments intuitive to growth. A History of the Development of Doctrine, Vol. A history of the Development of Doctrine is a massive book that chronicles how the Christian doctrine has developed from the first century to the twentieth. Its attention to detail is what makes it such an impressive read and is a wonderful reference tool. The book touches on the life of Christ, while then touching on every notable event up to the present. Including all original Hebrew words, it also has the Greek words and scriptures to help paint a thorough picture of the Bible. The book gives overviews on important topics, which makes it a good read to supplement other reads. A Chronicle of His Life and the Origins of Christianity In the Footsteps of Jesus starts with discussions about Jesus and his birth to various travels, along with his trial and death. Jean-Pierre Isbouts Beginning New Testament Theology A scholar could dedicate his or her entire life to understanding the New Testament and its ramifications for modern theology. This is an unbelievably dense topic, and the books in this category are a good place to start digging into it. Making Sense of New Testament Theology: The results of their labors are often disappointing. Adam suggests the problems many sense in New Testament theology arise from a mismatch of method and goals. The book goes in-depth to explain some of the broad-sweeping concepts of the Bible, while aiding those who do not have knowledge of Greek or Hebrew. A Historical and Theological Introduction This capstone work from widely respected senior evangelical scholar Donald Hagner offers a substantial introduction to the New Testament. The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New In this comprehensive exposition, a leading New Testament scholar explores the unfolding theological unity of the entire Bible from the vantage point of the New Testament. Beale examines how the New Testament storyline relates to and develops the Old Testament storyline. Magnifying God in Christ is a significant study of the latter half of the Bible, namely as they search for themes that concern redemptive history and the kingdom of God. The book focuses extensively on how religions have been created over time to inform the reader on other aspects of Christianity. A Canonical and Synthetic Approach understands the undertaking that studying the New Testament can be and makes it easier to understand by breaking down various components of it. Thielman Beginning Old Testament Theology The contents of the old testament have been the subject of scholarly scrutiny for thousands of years, and attempting to understand the faith and the context of Christianity as revealed in the old testament is a worthwhile pursuit for any biblical scholar. It gives valuable insight, while expressing notable brevity. A Theology of the Old Testament gives a refined perspective on theology related to the Old Testament. The book casts wonderful light on some of the most pressing issues of our time, which opens the door for lasting truths. Many scholars have now taken it on themselves to record and explain the historic significance of the many women of the Bible.

Chapter 6 : The Highest Paying Theology Careers - Theology Degrees

The roles of pastor and theologian have gone their separate ways. Throughout much of the church's history, these two roles have been deeply intertwined, but in our contemporary setting, a troubling bifurcation between them has developed.

Actually, there is no such thing as a theologian, anymore than there is such a thing as a Christian. Theologians are not solitary creatures. Theology is the outcome of good conversation, the conversation of friends. Though "the rabies theologorum" you could be forgiven for thinking the opposite! Which is why, in the interest of world peace, it is probably wise that theological conferences are held infrequently. Theologians are like horse manure: The theologian is a servant of the word: Thus "but only thus" is she also a servant of the church, *creatura verbi Divini*. The theologian, therefore, is not an academic but an ecclesiademic. He may work in a university but he is not of the university. He must be multilingual, but he must remember that his hometown is Jerusalem, not Athens. So he must hang loose to criteria of academic respectability. Submission, for example, to the idea that theology must never be homiletical, or that a theologian should not begin a lecture with prayer, suggests a Babylonian captivity. To switch biblical geography, the theologian must not hanker after the fleshpots of Nile College. Can a theologian be an unbeliever? Theology is *fides quaerens intellectum*: Furthermore, one can speak about God only as one speaks to God. Prayer is the epistemological precondition of theology, which to issue in *pietas* must begin with invocation. Since the 12th century the notion has been around that the theologian is a speculator in ideas, and since the Enlightenment that he is a specialist in certain distinct areas of enquiry. And the notion that the theologian can be biblical, historical, dogmatic, pastoral without all these disciplines encroaching on each other is a cloven fiction indeed. Theology with Aquinas, Calvin, Barth is thus a very spiritual matter, and a very practical, very ethical matter. In fact the theologian, as a student of the humanity of God, is the quintessential humanist. She will have in her sights not only God but also the good, God in his perfections and humanity in its perfectibility, *i*. And as humans can only flourish in community "in the polis" a question that one should always ask about a theologian is: How does her theology politic? All good theology is always contextual theology. Which is not to say that the context sets the agenda of the theologian, because contexts never come neat, they are not self-interpreting: Rather it is to say that the theologian works at the interface of text and context, and seeks to address specific text to specific context. The letters of Paul "all occasional, none systematic" are the paradigm for the theologian. The theologian will be a person who, off his knees, can think on his feet. If the Holy Spirit is a dove, the theologian is a cuckoo, free to squat in any nest "and steal the eggs. Incurably kleptomaniacal, while the theologian may not long for Egypt, he may certainly rip off the Egyptians. Strictly speaking, all believers are theologians, because all believers, willy-nilly, think about God. The only question is whether we think well or poorly. Ultimately, of course, theologians do not know what they are talking about. So they should exercise meticulous word-care "and not talk too much. I often think that books of theology should contain occasional blank pages, to signal the reader to pause, in silence and wonder. There will be no theology in the eschaton. Quite right "and presumably he spoke to Calvin only to compare errors.

Chapter 7 : Theologian Careers | The Princeton Review

1. Actually, there is no such thing as a theologian, anymore than there is such a thing as a Christian. Theologians are not solitary creatures. Theology is the outcome of good conversation, the conversation of friends. Though - the rabies theologorum - you could be forgiven for thinking the.

For example, he refers to Apuleius as "the most notorious of us Africans," [24] [28] to Ponticianus as "a country man of ours, insofar as being African," [24] [29] and to Faustus of Mileve as "an African Gentleman". There he became familiar with Latin literature, as well as pagan beliefs and practices. He tells this story in his autobiography, *The Confessions*. He remembers that he did not steal the fruit because he was hungry, but because "it was not permitted. I loved my own error" not that for which I erred, but the error itself. At the age of 17, through the generosity of his fellow citizen Romanianus, [36] Augustine went to Carthage to continue his education in rhetoric. The need to gain their acceptance forced inexperienced boys like Augustine to seek or make up stories about sexual experiences. Though his mother wanted him to marry a person of his class, the woman remained his lover [41] for over fifteen years [42] and gave birth to his son Adeodatus b. In, Augustine ended his relationship with his lover in order to prepare himself to marry a ten-year-old heiress. He had to wait for two years because the legal age of marriage for women was twelve. By the time he was able to marry her, however, he instead decided to become a celibate priest. By the time he realized that he needed to know Greek, it was too late; and although he acquired a smattering of the language, he was never eloquent with it. However, his mastery of Latin was another matter. He became an expert both in the eloquent use of the language and in the use of clever arguments to make his points. The following year he moved to Carthage to conduct a school of rhetoric and would remain there for the next nine years. However, Augustine was disappointed with the apathetic reception. It was the custom for students to pay their fees to the professor on the last day of the term, and many students attended faithfully all term, and then did not pay. Manichaean friends introduced him to the prefect of the City of Rome, Symmachus, who while traveling through Carthage had been asked by the imperial court at Milan [46] to provide a rhetoric professor. Augustine won the job and headed north to take his position in Milan in late. Thirty years old, he had won the most visible academic position in the Latin world at a time when such posts gave ready access to political careers. Because of his education, Augustine had great rhetorical prowess and was very knowledgeable of the philosophies behind many faiths. Like Augustine, Ambrose was a master of rhetoric, but older and more experienced. Augustine arrived in Milan and was immediately taken under the wing by Ambrose. Within his *Confessions*, Augustine states, "That man of God received me as a father would, and welcomed my coming as a good bishop should. More interested in his speaking skills than the topic of speech, Augustine quickly discovered that Ambrose was a spectacular orator. Eventually, Augustine says that he was spiritually led into the faith of Christianity. Although Augustine accepted this marriage, for which he had to abandon his concubine, he was deeply hurt by the loss of his lover. He wrote, "My mistress being torn from my side as an impediment to my marriage, my heart, which clave to her, was racked, and wounded, and bleeding. However, his emotional wound was not healed, even began to fester. Alypius of Thagaste steered Augustine away from marriage, saying that they could not live a life together in the love of wisdom if he married. Augustine looked back years later on the life at Cassiciacum, a villa outside of Milan where he gathered with his followers, and described it as *Christianae vitae otium*" the leisure of Christian life.

Chapter 8 : Some of the People and Events to Blame for My Becoming a Theologian | Catholic Moral Theology

You become a theologian when you are able to address the nebulous and critical issues concerning Christianity. Wesley7 UTC #5 Did you know, in the Russian Orthodox Church there is St. John the Theologian who was the disciple and apostle of Jesus Christ.

Anyone who wants to become a theology teacher will need a strong academic foundation and active membership with the associated church, parochial school or religious organization. This will be useful when applying for theology teaching jobs at the elementary, middle and high school levels. There are many types of accredited theology degrees available through distance education programs. For instance, a campus ministry degree will provide an appropriate balance between pastoral and historical theology. Students of this program will gain an understanding theological contexts, concepts, systems and dimensions. Students will be able to integrate and evaluate historical facts and church knowledge through academic papers and projects. A Catholic theology degree student may learn about early, medieval, renaissance, Victorian and modern church history. These graduates will be well-suited to teach basic church history to middle and high school students. A specialization in scripture will introduce students to the Old Testament and New Testament canons. Students may elect to focus on a single area of study, such as the Gospels or the Apocrypha. Learning about scriptures means that these future theology teachers will be able to explain chronological errors between the synoptic Gospels and emphasize the importance of Pauline Literature on the early church. This degree can be used to study the original Jewish Pentateuch, Old Testament Poetry and associated historical texts. Gain the Right Experience Teaching in any secular education job will provide excellent employment experiences and references, but working for a parochial school and organization is best. First, you should volunteer to teach youth or children at your church or organization. This will provide excellent networking opportunities and professional recommendations for your future job. Consider working as a teacher assistant in a private parochial school. This will show you how theology teachers create educational environments that are conducive to the academic learning and spiritual maturation processes. Theology teacher assistants will help plan an instructional content and programs that are designed to meet both individual and group needs. They may use appropriate instructional methods, organizationally approved materials and proper classroom management skills during learning activities. Theology teacher assistants will attend internal training and be exposed to professional development standards. This will prepare them to pursue career growth and remain current in standards and methods. Senior theology teacher assistants may provide guidance, counseling, discipline and encouragement to students. They may review performance against conduct standards and achievement expectations. The advantage of working in this type of environment is that the collective attitude of teachers and staff is positive, supportive and uplifting. Knowing how to confer with parents and guardians about sensitive and important issues will help with future job applications. In the end, readers should note that there are pros and cons to teaching in religious schools. While these teachers are not paid as well as public school teachers, they working conditions and personal benefits compensate for the pay disparity. Because enrollment in private religious school is voluntary, theology teachers have much more control over the discipline and development of their students. Find the school for you!

Chapter 9 : Letter to an Aspiring Theologian by Kevin J. Vanhoozer | Articles | First Things

Becoming a Theologian A background project I'm chipping away at during is volume 1 of Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics. For Christmas I got the paperback study edition, which is definitely worth getting over the first edition for the translation of all the Greek and Latin quotes.

Faith is necessary for theologians because our object of inquiry is God. A scholar may develop an extensive understanding of what others have said and thought about God without any concern for actually encountering God. And if you pray truly, you are a theologian. Although there is and has always been disagreement about the ways in which speech must be disciplined for this task, what unites theology throughout the ages is its attempt to employ human language and reasoning logos within the larger task of seeking to know and love God. Within the Christian theological tradition, there is an abiding acknowledgement that the object of inquiry which the theologian pursues is at the same time pursuing the theologian. What theologians undertake to discover is a being who perpetually renders itself discoverable in innumerable and indefinite ways, most of all for the Christian in the person of Jesus Christ. So if I am to call myself a theologian, I disclose not only my belief in a God I take to be real, but more importantly my belief that this God has revealed himself within history and that this God continues to pursue me throughout my own history. My first glimpse of God was the love which my parents shared with one another. It was a life-giving love centered upon a common faith that despite all the challenges of living out a common life together, they could entrust themselves to one another and find a path to their salvation through one another. The true character of this love was revealed most poignantly to me when my mother was on her deathbed, emaciated and disfigured by the effects of aggressive cancer treatment. As the options dwindled, my father became more and more desperate, trying every possible medical and spiritual avenue to avoid losing my mom. One afternoon, as he was venting his frustrations to God before a simple wooden crucifix, he heard God interrupt his stream of thoughts almost as if he were speaking audibly: Hospitality and community were also key parts of my religious formation. My mother grew up in the Church of God Anderson, IN and decided early on in my childhood to try to start a new congregation together with a few other couples in the area. The result was a church community that met for over ten years in the ballrooms of the local Sheraton hotel. For many of those years we did not even have a pastor, and depended upon the national office to send us preachers each week to fill the pulpit. These preachers would almost always stay with our family, and we developed deep and lasting friendships with many of them. We survived from week to week by collecting enough money in the offering plate to rent the ballroom again next Sunday, and on special occasions when someone requested baptism we also rented out the swimming pool for an hour. Yes, I was one of those baptized in that Sheraton pool, complete with a high school lifeguard looking on, twirling his whistle. We used to have Sunday school in the guest rooms, many of which for some reason featured beds that could fold up into the wall. You can just imagine what trouble a bunch of wound-up young boys would get into with those things! I dare not even mention the hotel video arcade! From age 5 until I left for college, my father was my Sunday school teacher. I often wonder now how he got away with following me through my entire religious education, but perhaps he was concerned that other parents might have to deal with my bad behavior and intentionally subversive questions. Each Sunday I helped my dad carry all the Bibles he would distribute to the class, and on many occasions I would help my mom carry all the communion supplies which it was her task to manage. I remember now with a slight shudder how I would gorge myself after church with the leftover bread-bits and shot glasses of grape juice. My childhood church was in many ways a ramshackle affair, but it not only served as a vehicle for my evangelization but also gave me a clear sense of the vital connection between evangelization and concrete community. For better or worse, our small band of families journeyed together and depended upon each other for our spiritual nourishment and growth. I knew relatively early that I wanted to study theology, and perhaps pursue it into the ministry or academia. My quest to understand the truths of faith began with the reading of Scripture, but soon led to books and conversations that eventually cultivated in me a deep love for Christian literature. Towards the end of high school, a family friend one of the preachers who regularly visited our home suggested that I might think about

pursuing Theology in college. During my years in college, I was deeply formed by teachers and mentors who served as exemplary models of Christian scholarship and discipleship. Chief among these mentors was Edward P. Mahoney, a priest and philosophy professor specializing in late medieval Platonism. Many took him to be a grump because, well, he was quite grumpy a good bit of the time, but he was a loyal and constant mentor to several of us on campus who showed interest in studying philosophy from a Christian perspective. His best line, though, came in response to a doctrinal novelty I once proposed to him: Though my childhood denomination admirably emphasized ecclesial unity, it woefully lacked any theological account of history and ecclesial tradition. So I knew I would need to look outside the Church of God for resources to understand the irreducibly historical character of the Christian faith. My experience of God up to that point in my life was inextricably linked to concrete experiences and relationships, and it was at this critical juncture most of all that I yearned for the consistent tangible embodiment of the Gospel through time. So looked not to the realm of ideas but to concrete signs to guide me. There I came into contact with African-American Catholicism, and also had my first experience with Jesuits. Rose Wright, my RCIA instructor, was the undisputed matriarch of the parish, and without her guidance and care I do not think I would have become Catholic. Coming to the end of this brief reflection, I cannot help but think I have been too rambling and autobiographical. As Pope Francis himself has been fond of emphasizing of late, the faith is transmitted not so much through the ether of ideas and Zeitgeists as it is through real contact between real people. We need others, we need each other, if we are one day to reach the goal of our common theological quest.