



**Martin Chemnitz**  
(1522-1586)

*“The human race has been so created and then so redeemed that we as the image and temple of God might celebrate the praises of God. For God wills to be known and worshiped. A clear (with regard to the knowledge of God) and firm (pertaining to our assent) knowledge of God would have continued in the minds of men if our nature had remained unimpaired. And afterward, after Adam and Eve had been received back into grace, there is no greater or better work of man than to have true knowledge of God, to pray to Him, and to proclaim Him, as it says in Ps. 149:1 and Ps. 118:17.”*  
**Loci Theologici**  
**Martin Chemnitz**  
(p.52)

### Introduction:

Being a Christian in this broken world is not an easy walk. We face trials both within and without as we battle with our own sin and then face attacks from the evil world ruled by satan. We struggle with sin that manifests itself in all sorts of ways, and we are inherently sinful even without the sinful acts, but the inherited sin leads to all sorts of sinful acts. We sin with our thoughts, words, and actions, we are afraid, we struggle with unbelief, and doubt, we covet, we lust, we hate, we choose the wrong over the right. We need help. Thanks be to God we are Christians. But what does that mean? How do we talk about all those things that Christians should be able to give an answer to if asked? We must start not with ourselves but with God. In *The Teachings of Christianity* we will look at...

➤ **QUESTION: What is Theology?**

- **Theology**

- **θεός** (theos) – God + **λόγος** (logos) – word, utterance. **Literally** - *Words about God.*
- The study of God.

➤ All Christians study **theology**, therefore, we are all theologians. God’s Word must be the source and norm of our study because **Scripture is the Word of God**. We can only know God as He has revealed Himself to us in His Word. Therefore Scripture is always the starting point, and it informs everything we say and do as it pertains to being a Christian.

➤ **Holy Scripture** is the only source and norm of **Christian doctrine**. Sinful man prefers to make his own *“heart the source and judge of Christian doctrine,”* trusting his own thoughts, feelings, and experience above what God has revealed in Scripture. Scripture must inform our thoughts, feelings, and experience and shape how we live and speak in the world.

➤ **QUESTION: How do we make our heart the source and judge of Christian doctrine?**

- **Doctrine**

- **διδασκαλία** (didache) – noun – *content of teaching, teaching*
- **διδασκαλία** (didaskalia) – noun – *teaching, instruction*

- **Scripture**

- **γραφή** – (graphe) – *writing, scripture*

➤ *To be held in bondage by one’s own false opinions is the most disgraceful form of human slavery. And the purpose for which Christ gave us His own Word through His Apostles and Prophets is to deliver us from the bondage of our own false notions in matters pertaining to our salvation and that of all men. Therefore our slogan dare never be: “Away from Scripture!” It must remain: “Into Scripture, into Scripture as the sole source and standard of theology!” Luther thanked God for the wonderful grace that he could at once discard all thoughts that came to him “without Scripture (Pieper, p.5-6).”*

✠ **Matt 15:9**

✠ **1 Timothy 4:6**

✠ **John 8:31-32**

➤ **QUESTION: In anyway can experience or reason be the standard of Christian doctrine?**

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*The Holy Spirit included in Scripture the sum of the whole heavenly doctrine, as much as is necessary for the church and suffices for the faith by which believers obtain life eternal. Jn 20:31. Paul ascribes two things to Holy Scripture. First, that it can make the man of God, that is, a teacher of the church (for they are called people or men of God) perfect, sufficiently equipped for every good work (which is namely necessarily required to perform the ministry of the church). 2 Titus 3:16-17. Second, that a believer might be made wise unto salvation through faith. 2 Titus 3:15. Since then, we have in Scripture the things that are necessary for salvation and life eternal, therefore in matters of faith it alone is properly sufficient for us (Enchiridion. Chemnitz, p.41)*

## Spiritual vs. Religious

- **QUESTION: Is anything wrong with this statement: "I am spiritual, not religious."**
- **Spiritual vs. Religious**
  - "Spirituality has no rules, whereas religion is wholly based upon pre-established beliefs and practices, rituals, and dogma. Spirituality simply lets you follow your heart. As opposed to telling you in black and white how the universe was created and why we are here, spirituality lets you discover these questions and answers for yourself.
  - For a **religious person**, the concept of God is predetermined, named, and comes with a set method on how to worship that God. A **spiritual person**, on the other hand, turns inward to find their truth and finds God within themselves and all of life.
  - Instead of ancient stories about angels and gods, spirituality encourages you to make your path and create your stories. This sets you on a journey of enlightenment and self-discovery to which the only limits can be set by yourself."

<https://blog.mindvalley.com/religion-and-spirituality/>

- \***TRUE OR FALSE** – To be "spiritual, not religious" is to have a god that doesn't talk.
- \***TRUE OR FALSE** – If we are only spiritual, in the end we will only hear the Law, the grace and mercy of God will be silenced. Why?

✝ 1 Corinthians 2:6-10

✝ Romans 2:15

- **Christians have a God who Speaks (Has American Christianity Failed? WolfmueLLer).**

✝ John 10:27

✝ Romans 15:4

✝ 2 Peter 1:19-21

✝ 2 Timothy 3:16

- Θεόπνευστος (theopneustos) – inspired by God – **God breathed.**

- **How is this more than just "words from God?"**

✝ Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4

- **QUESTION: How many religions are there in the world?**

✝ The religion of the Law, that is, the endeavor to reconcile God through man's own works, and the religion of the Gospel, that is, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, belief wrought through the Gospel by the Holy Ghost that we have a gracious God through the reconciliation already effected by Christ, and not because of our own works (χωρίς έργων νόμου).

✝ Romans 3:28

✝ Gal 3:11-12

- **QUESTION: How is the Christian religion the perfect religion?**

✝ 2 Corinthians 5:17-19

✝ 1 Corinthians 2:3-5

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**Martin Luther**

**True Christian theology** does not present God to us in his majesty, as Moses and other teachings do, but Christ born of the Virgin as our Mediator and High Priest. Therefore when we are embattled against the law, sin, and death in the presence of God, nothing is more dangerous than to stray into heaven with our idle speculations, there to investigate God in His incomprehensible power, wisdom, and majesty...If you attempt to comprehend God this way and want to make atonement to Him apart from Christ the Mediator...you will inevitably fall, as Lucifer did and in horrible despair lose God and everything. Therefore if you want to be safe and out of danger to your conscience and your salvation, put a check on this speculative spirit. Take hold of God as Scripture instructs you. Therefore begin where Christ began—in the Virgin's womb, in the manger, and at His mother's breasts. For this purpose He came down, was born, lived among men, suffered, was crucified, and died, so that in every possible way He might present Himself to our sight. He wanted us to fix the gaze of our hearts upon Himself and thus to prevent us from clambering into heaven and speculating about the divine majesty.

### True Christian Theology

- At the heart of true Christian Theology must be the person and work of Jesus Christ; His life, suffering, death, and resurrection. We cannot speak rightly about God without understanding from Scripture who Jesus is and what He did for us (Confessing the Gospel. Lump, p.11).
  - ✠ **Luke 24:27**
  - ✠ **Acts 8:32; 18:28**
- *What is Christ's knowledge unless it means to know Christ's benefits, the promises He has scattered throughout the world by the Gospel? To know these benefits is properly and truly to believe in Christ, to believe that He will certainly fulfill what God has promised for Christ's sake (Apology. Art. iv. para 101. Melancthon, p.98)."*
  - ✠ **Isaiah 53:11**
- *If we held that the work of Christ did not fully reconcile God but needs to be supplemented by the "infused grace," the keeping of the commandments of God and the Church, as Rome teaches, or by "the reshaping of man's life into its divine form," as the modern Protestants teach, we should thereby divest the Christian religion of its specific character and reduce it to the level of the religions of the Law; and the assurance of grace and of the sonship with God would be replaced by the monstrum incertitudinis (monster of uncertainty).*
  - ✠ **1 Timothy 1:15**
  - ✠ **2 Timothy 2:11-12**
- *But as long as we teach and believe that Christ's vicarious atonement has fully reconciled God and that we are thereby fully justified by faith (Rom. 3:28) and have peace with God (Rom. 5:1ff.), Christianity will be for us the absolute religion; we shall look for nothing better, nothing higher (Pieper, vol 1, p.36)."*
  - ✠ **Romans 5:1-2**
  - ✠ **Philippians 4:7**
- **QUESTION: What is the primary end or goal of right Christian theology?**
  - ✠ **Romans 5:17-18**
  - ✠ **1 Corinthians 15:17-22**
  - ✠ **John 6:40**

### Conclusion:

*The knowledge of God and the divine doctrine possessed by all Christians. Luther on this point: "These are words ('For God so loved the world,' etc., John 3:16) which no one can exhaust or fathom; and when they are rightly believed, they ought to make one a good theologian, or rather a strong, happy Christian, who can speak and teach aught of Christ, judge all other doctrines, counsel and comfort all men, and patiently bear all ills (Pieper, vol.1, p.45)."*

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