

Theological Equipping Class

Knowledge and Authority in Christianity | January 5, 2020

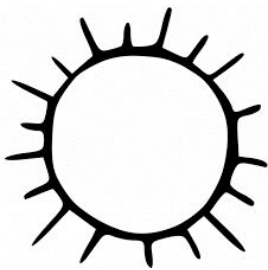
Why this is important?

Historical Analysis

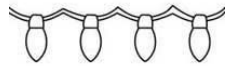
Epistemology: how do we know what we know?

1 - 550 Patristic Period

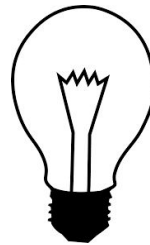
Sources of Authority:



Revelation



Tradition



Reason



Experience/feelings

550 - 1500 Medieval Period

1500 - 1600 Reformation

1600 - 1950 Enlightenment and Modernism

Tenets of Modernism:

- The inviolability of reason (Descartes "I think therefore I am")
- The assurance of progress
- The goodness of man

1950 - Present (Postmodernism)

What happens in the early 20th century to challenge the tenets of modernism?

Three Thoughts on Thinking

1. God desires and even commands that we think and study.

- *Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. (2 Timothy 2:7)*
- *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2)*
- *Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. (1 Corinthians 14:20)*
- *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete. (2 Corinthians 10:4–6)*
- *My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. (Proverbs 2:1–5)*

2. Thinking is a discipline and labor.

3. Our ability to reason/think/know has been affected by sin.

- *Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. (Ephesians 4:17–18)*
- *For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. (Romans 1:21)*

Three Unbiblical Cultural Assumptions

1. Truth and love are at opposite ends of a spectrum.

- *For my own part, I tend to find the doctrinal books often more helpful in devotion than the devotional books, and I rather suspect that the same experience may await others. I believe that many who find that 'nothing happens' when they sit down, or kneel down, to a book of devotion, would find that the heart sings unbidden while they are working their way through a tough bit of theology with a pipe in their teeth and a pencil in their hand. (CS Lewis)*
- *Sometimes we hear it said that ten minutes on your knees will give you a truer, deeper, more operative knowledge of God than ten hours over your books. What! Than ten hours over your books on your knees? (BB Warfield)*

2. Tone or form is more important than (or as important as) content.

3. Confidence in a position is a sign of pride.

- *Lifelong learning? always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. (2 Timothy 3:7)*