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FOR THE SOWER ISA.55:10 FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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POSITIVE BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Let no one be afraid of the word *theology* or hesitate to read this leaflet because this term is found in its title. There have been so many putrid theologies, some of them spun out of the corrupt minds of men, that the word that describes the bad as well as the good has fallen into disrepute. However, let it be recognized and admitted that every Christian has a theology. In fact, if he did not have one, he could not claim to be a Christian. For one to say he has no theology is the same as saying, "I believe nothing." If he says, as some do, "I have the Bible, and I need no theology," then let him understand that anything he gets out of the Bible becomes his theology. Others will say, "I have Christ, and I need nothing more," but the brief statement that Christ is all he needs is a declaration of his theology. Any declaration that anyone makes concerning God, His works, His words, or His ways is a declaration of his theology.

The proclamation of a bumper sticker that says "Jesus is coming" expresses one facet of the person's theology who placed it there. This is a declaration related to God, and since it is well attested to by plain statements in the Bible, it declares a Biblical fact or truth, yes, a Biblical theology. But when he adds to this statement, as some do, "It may be today," then he has added an erroneous, human, unscriptural declaration to his theology and it is no longer Biblical. According to the Bible, Jesus Christ is not coming today or tomorrow, there being too many events that must come to pass before Jesus Christ comes again. All one needs to do is ask the question: "Who comes first, Christ or antichrist?" and he will see what I mean.

So to all who may be unsure about the word "theology," let him face the fact that theology *becomes* the occupation of every Christian the moment he begins to think about, to develop, and then to communicate his Christian faith and principles. If his faith began with some truth from God's Word, as

it should, then let him remember that Jesus Christ declared, **"If ye continue in My word (*logos*), then are ye My disciples indeed"** (John 8:31). These words were spoken to those Jews who believed on Him, and to this He added, **"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."** Therefore, if we continue in His word, we will be constantly adding to our theology, and thus we will know the truth and find freedom from all the satanic, fleshly, and human lies that pass for Biblical theology today. Again I say, no Christian can avoid being a theologian.

The challenge to "define your terms" is usually a fair one, and it certainly is in regard to the title of this study. In this leaflet the word *theology* is used to designate a body of knowledge related to God. It comes into the English language from *Theos* which means God, and *logos* which means a word or an expression - not a single word, which may say nothing if it has no context, but a statement or declaration that says something. Thus when these two Greek words are put together they form the word *theology*, which means any statement or declaration that is made concerning God, His person, His works, His words, and His ways.

The word "Biblical" needs no definition in this study, and the word "positive" means that one has done the work that is necessary to know what the Bible says concerning the subject so that he can speak from a "thus saith the Word of God" standpoint, and know that he is not misrepresenting the sacred scriptures.

Of course there are many who feel that in order for one to be a theologian he must have certain qualifications and be well-versed in all the million and one opinions that so-called theologians have declared as their understanding of all matters related to God. It is held that we must consider all of this, strain out the unacceptable, add a few ideas of our own, and then hold and present this as being divine truth in regard to all matters of faith and practice. This, to me, is somewhat ridiculous, since most of these theologians do not believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and they reject its authority. So before we can accept the witness of any man we must examine his words in the light of the law and the testimony, for **"if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."** (Isa. 8:20).

Very early in my Christian experience (which began fifty-nine years ago) I became disillusioned, dissatisfied, and even disgusted with that great mass of opinions, ideas, and views that made up the greater part of "church

theology." The confusion that existed even within a single denomination was ridiculous. Out of this condition of mind there came to be within me a deep desire to establish for myself a positive Biblical theology in regard to all matters set forth in the Word of God. I determined to be a personal student of the Word in my own right, and to seek out diligently what the Bible had to say in regard to any matter that was related to God. I would come to my own conclusions after considering all the Biblical material that was available. Even if I could do this on only one subject, at least on that subject I could be positive and say, "Thus saith the Word of God."

This does not mean that I set aside or ignored the findings of all those men who had gone to the Bible for truth in times past. But I have ever kept in mind the divine directive, "**Put to the test all things, hold fast to that which is good**" (1 Thess. 5:21). However, in doing this my opinion was confirmed all the more that the theology of Christendom is not only an incongruous mixture, it is also an unholy mess, and very little of it is actually Biblical. Furthermore, I found that professing Christians everywhere were making statements concerning the God whom I honor, love, and serve that were libelous, degrading, and debasing, and the theology of Christendom did nothing to denounce and correct these falsehoods. Everyone was, and still is, afraid of "disturbing the flock." These facts have done much to set the course of my life and work, a course from which I have never veered, one of perpetual and progressive Bible study.

The truth set forth in God's Word is made up of an innumerable number of individual truths, all of which are in some manner related one to another. The only way to get "the truth" is to gather up one by one the actual facts of God's Word: "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little" (Isa. 28: 10). Even facts that seem to be insignificant and unimportant must be embraced and stored away in the God-given computer bank of our memory to wait for that day when suddenly we will need them in order to understand related truths that can then be added to our positive, Biblical theology.

The active believer in the Lord Jesus Christ who continues in the truth is bound to meet up with matters that challenge him in regard to what the Bible says about the problem he faces. The more active he is in study or service, the more he will be confronted with these matters. Most ministers display great skill in avoiding coming to grips with these, inasmuch as their efforts will provide them with no material for their Sunday morning message. "My

people are not interested in doctrine, so why should I bother with Biblical problems." These were the words of one minister to me. Another said, "My congregation is composed of simple people, and I give them only the simplest things." Such men as these will never possess or speak a positive Biblical theology, even when they speak on simple matters. They will not do the work that brings it forth.

A much better spirit, even a spirit of truth, is revealed by a missionary in a personal letter to me. He works among the Indians in South America and is pushed to the limit of his strength every day by his labors among these people. He says in part: "In my ministry to these people, nothing is more important in my teaching than conveying the TRUTH. I want only to teach what is true. I have a fever to know the Word in all its truth and power. It is not easy when you deal with primitive people and uneducated people to be motivated to serious Bible study. These people have to be taught the basic, simple things first. However, I have discovered that the more one knows and understands the Bible, the easier it is to simplify and explain."

I am not personally acquainted with the writer of the letter quoted above, but I am sure we are kindred spirits. And I know from long experience that he will find even as I have found that when one comes upon a Biblical matter that demands study, and if he carefully searches out for himself all the clues, bits, and pieces that pertain to it, even if it be only a simple truth, and when he has pieced all this information together, it will remain for the rest of his life in some way truer than anything he has simply read or has been merely taught. Furthermore, it will be more free from the onslaughts of doubt and attacks that come from the spiritual forces of wickedness among the most elevated.

Of course many will insist that such research and study is the work of scholars. This is true, but the scholars are not doing it. Bible study is the work of all believers, especially those who feel within themselves the deep urge to establish in their lives a positive, Biblical theology, and thus glorify God by holding, speaking, and walking in the truth that He has so freely given.

In view of the times in which we live, and the future which lies ahead as evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, before God assumes sovereignty, we who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ need a positive,

Biblical theology. We need to lay hold of orderly statements in regard to the record God has given of His Son, past, present, and future. This is what I am laboring to establish in my own life, and to pass it on to others who can check it out and make it their own if they wish to do so. This has been my impelling desire for over a half century. It is one that I can never get away from. And, of course, when one feels such an impelling desire, and also is sure it is from the Lord, he will not think of his shortcomings or his lack of ability to perform the task that God has laid upon his heart.

As I look at God's Word, I know of no sentence that describes it better than the one spoken by the Samaritan woman when she spoke of Jacob's well and said: "The well is deep." With this I agree. But not for one moment will I admit that I have "nothing to draw with." As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, I have God's holy Spirit as the earnest of my inheritance (Eph. 1:14). Since He is given so that I might "know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. 2: 12), I will put my hand in His and let Him lead me into the deep things of God (1 Cor. 2: 10).

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