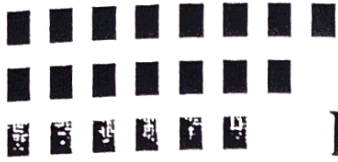


SHOULD WE KICK



OUT THE DOOR?

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“Boy, it looks like these fellows want to kick theology right out the door,” commented a young pastor as he completed his reading of one of the latest volumes on church growth.

Theology has fallen on bad times. A few years ago, an enthusiastic and bubbly pastor from a neighboring church visited the office of our Christian school administrator. Dropping himself into a chair, he fell into conversation. Commenting on the various viewpoints of the different denominations, the pastor stated, “What we ought to do is forget all this theology stuff. We ought to just concentrate on loving Jesus.”

The above comment well summarizes the thinking of many contemporary Christians and, sadly enough, Christian leaders. They want to concentrate on the emotional and inspirational aspects of the Christian faith and minimize doctrinal differences.

Because it seems to be a spiritual approach to vexatious problems, many lay people have been caught up in this viewpoint. Pastors who seek to preach on theological truths often find themselves opposed by their people. It reminds me of a dear brother in one of my congregations years ago. He remarked, “You preach too much on theology. You ought to give more devotional messages, like from the book of Romans.” A few devotional thoughts from the greatest theological treatise in the Scriptures!

Why bother with theology? This good question deserves an answer.

The “down-home” theology of everyday life. Janet was puttering around in her flowerbed, and from behind her came a voice.

“Hi, I’m Marge, your new neighbor. Won’t you come over and have a glass of iced tea with me?”

Janet was only too glad for a little break from her arduous labors and she consented. Soon they were seated in the cozy kitchen, sipping their tea. On the table was a book entitled *The Book of Mormon*. Janet had heard of this book. Other conversation revealed that Marge and her family were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, otherwise known as The Mormons.

“You know,” Marge said, “Mormons are Christians too.”

“Well,” Janet replied, “what do you believe about the Lord Jesus Christ?”

“Oh, He was a good man and a great teacher,” was Marge’s response. “Of course, He was not God as some churches believe, but it is not necessary to believe He was God.”

Janet scurried about in her mind to come up with a proper reply. She had always felt matters of this sort were the dominion of the men and pastors of the church. It should not concern housewives such as she was. However, she longed to say something helpful from the Bible but did not know what to say. She recalled Bible passages she had heard her pastor cite, proving Jesus was the Son of God. At this moment, she could not remember any of them. Her meager knowledge of theology had failed her.

Matt munched hard on his sandwich while he contemplated a possible answer to his friend’s inquiry. The lunch companion, he had just discovered, was an advocate of the New Age philosophy. New Agers do not believe in a personal God but find God within themselves.

“What do you guys believe about God?” his friend asked. Matt, who had confessed earlier that he was a member of a fundamental Bible-believing church, searched his mind, thinking about this question. Matt remembered that his church had recently offered a course in Theology Proper: the Doctrine of God. To his shame, he had declined to enroll. Theology, in his estimation was dry, dead, and cold, with little practical value. Now he fervently wished he had taken the classes. It was embarrassing that he could not present a simple biblical reply to his friend’s question. His sandwich seemed to lose its taste, and he only wished the lunch hour would soon be over.

Jeremy sat in the van with the other members of his high school basketball team, as they rode down the turnpike to the gym where they would be playing their game that night.

“Hey, Jeremy,” asked Tom, “aren’t you one of those Christians? I’ve been wondering if the stuff they have been teaching about evolution in our science class is really true. What do you think?”

There it was! Right out of the blue! The question presented a wonderful opportunity for Jeremy to tell about the Creator of the universe and His love for man. But Jeremy had never paid too much attention to his youth pastor who had tried to instruct them in such matters. His mind was always drifting toward the basketball court, his girlfriend, or what he was going to have for lunch. He wished now he had paid more attention. He found himself stuttering and stammering in answer to Tom's question. He was unable to seize the opportunity God had given him.

Many Christians have the notion that theology is for the classroom, the intellectually elite, the professors, theological students, and the pastors. Average believers do not see the practical benefit of theology. In this, they are greatly mistaken. Theology (systematized Christian doctrine) is an essential part of any believer's daily life.

Does the believer wish to pray? Then, knowledge of theology is necessary. While on earth, our Lord was asked by His disciples for instruction in prayer. He said, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matt. 6:9). Notice that in this opening statement of what we commonly call The Lord's Prayer, there is considerable theology. God is assumed to be a Person. He is holy. He is not a part of the universe but is a separate entity. He rules over all. He is sovereign. One will note by studying the great prayers of the Bible that those who uttered them, knew the things of God and had knowledge of the character and purposes of God. They knew theology.

As illustrated above, effective witnessing is dependent upon a knowledge of theology. Even to give the simple plan of salvation requires a knowledge of theology. The atoning work of Jesus Christ, which is at the heart of the Gospel, is a great theological truth in itself.

Does not a Christian need daily comfort from the Lord in the midst of trials and tribulations? A deep, certain, and biblical knowledge of God, His character, and purposes is essential for the believer to have victory in the hour of trial. Many centuries prior to Christ's coming to earth, Job, beset with many trials, evidenced a tremendous knowledge of theology. In Job 13:15, he cried triumphantly, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And again, in the midst of tremendous physical and emotional pressure, Job said, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).

The Christian needs daily guidance from the Lord. In order to obtain this, he must have a biblical understanding of God and His ways. He must be acquainted with theology. "He leadeth me," said the great psalmist David (Psa. 23:2). Surrounding this certain acknowledgment, however, requires knowing a great deal of truth about God. David did not make this utterance without a full knowledge of the Lord Jehovah Who was his daily Shepherd.

Theology is for the workplace. It is for the housewife. It is for the student. Theology is the study of God and His works. No believer can afford to neglect it. It is vital to the triumphant Christian walk.

THEOLOGY DEMOTED

Theology has taken a backseat in recent years. It has been treated as a naughty child, a chief disrupter of the unity of the Church. Once, theology was known as the "Queen of the Sciences." The queen has been dethroned in the minds of many. In some theological seminaries, where men are trained for the ministry, theology no longer has the preeminent place it once held. The number of required theology courses has been decreased in order to make way for the "how to" courses that are supposed to be more practical. In Sunday school and local church Bible institutes, the course "How to Overcome Discouragement," will be crowded with students, while the course "The Doctrine of Sanctification," will have a few hearty students in attendance.

For a glimpse into the mind of a contemporary Christian, take a walk through a Christian bookstore. You will observe many volumes on personal relationships, how to raise your children, how to get along with your spouse, how to improve your self-image, and how to have victory over various and sundry psychological problems. Volumes on Christian doctrine and theology will be crowded on a few small shelves in a remote part of the bookstore. When asked to explain this, a Christian bookstore manager stated, "We feature what the public wants. People do not want books on doctrine, they want self-help books."

Why has theology lost her crown? Certainly one of the evident reasons is because our current Christian society is enamored with the study of personal relationships rather than objective truth. This reflects the trends in our secular society. The emphasis is on how to get along with people. Few

seem to recognize that the more knowledgeable one is about God and the more deeply does one love Him, the better one will be able to handle relationships with others.

The tremendous emphasis upon feelings in our society militates against appreciation for objective theological truth. The question at hand is not "What are the facts?" but "How do I feel about this issue?" Major life decisions are made on the basis of feelings rather than fact. This approach was initiated by Satan in the Garden of Eden with the first couple. Eve, in viewing the forbidden fruit, had good feelings about it. In Genesis 3:6, Eve "saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes." Following her feelings instead of God's specific word, the verse goes on to say, she "took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." Adam followed her in disobedience and thus, the whole human race was plunged into sin. Eve set a pattern many follow today.

The reaction against dogmatism. Ours is a day in which dogmas, especially religious dogmas, are heartily disliked and rejected by many. The term, *dogma*, implies fixed truth, something that is unchangeable. Its concepts are contrary to the modern mind. This is a day when everyone must be "open" to all viewpoints. According to some, no viewpoint has the right to say that it alone is truth. Systematic theology sets forth propositions as divine truth and thus, fixed and certain. Man, with his evolutionary concept of truth, is not in harmony with this approach, thus the current antipathy to theology as a whole. Bible-believing Christians, however, must always remember that the Church is the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Christ declared that He is "the truth" (Jn. 14:6). Our Lord also declared, "Thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). The Christian faith is not one of a number of viable religious systems from which men may pick and choose as they desire. It is the **only** true system of divine thought.

A threat to Christian unity. The growth of the ecumenical emphasis has become a menace to traditional Christian theology. Historically, Christian theologians have set forth what they felt to be the teachings of Scripture in a systematized form. This has naturally produced divisions, because not every theologian taught the same thing. While there was agreement on the basic truths of Christianity, there was disagreement on many other points. Presbyterians, for instance, taught a view concerning the government and ordinances of the local church different from that taught by the Baptists. Because of this, there arose Presbyterian schools and agencies and Baptist

schools and agencies. The same was true with the other denominations. Many current church leaders are pushing an ecumenical agenda and making a strong plea for what they call "Christian unity." Hence, they view theology as the culprit that produced denominational divisions in the first place. Their sentiments would be expressed by the old slogan found in the early ecumenical movement which said, "Doctrine divides; service unites."

Emphasis upon emotions rather than intellect. Many view theology as cold, hard, and overly intellectual. It is the opponent, they think, of a warm-hearted, personalized, and caring Christianity. Those who are concerned about doctrine are supposedly not concerned about people. In reply, it should be noted that it is always possible to go to extremes. The Bible is a balanced Book, and the Christian should be a balanced person. There is a place for both the head and the heart. As our Lord walked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus following His resurrection, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them all the scriptures" (Lk 24:27). He thus instructed their minds concerning His truths. After He departed from them, their comment was, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Lk. 24:32). Our Lord's instruction contained the balance between the head and the heart that should be our goal.

In recent years, particularly with the rise of the charismatic movement, there has been a rush to a more emotional type of worship. Carried along with this emphasis, many believers are more concerned about "feeling good" than they are about "thinking right." They measure the success of their worship experience not by whether what they have seen and heard is in accord with God's written Word, but rather by whether it has made them "feel good." Many things, however, may make us "feel good," but they may not be scripturally true. The early Christians emphasized the truth of Scripture rather than their personal experience. The Bereans "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

The requirement to think. A study of theology requires the use of the mind. It requires careful thought and meditation. Regrettably, we are not living in an age of thinkers. Persons can sit in front of a television set for hours, watching the inane junk that passes for entertainment and never once have to think. We have raised a generation of people attuned to entertainment instead of thought. The study of theology requires thought.

It, therefore, is repugnant to some who flee from a suggestion of such a thing. However, what greater occupation can we engage in than that of thinking about God and His works?

Paul exhorts us to “seek those things which are above” (Col. 3:1). In other words, we are to think about God and His Christ. We are to be theologians.

The church suffers from a lack of sound theology. Pastors preach little doctrine. The reason may be that they feel it will alienate people and empty their pews. Comparatively few lay people energetically pursue the study of theology. They are thus bereft of the help they need to face the buffetings of life. They also become prey to and are “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14) that blows about so freely.

We need to put the crown back on theology and seat her upon her proper throne. We need a revival of hunger and thirst after the knowledge of the true and living God that will drive us to a study of His Person and work. We need to return to a strong and vigorous study of theology and once more to make it the “Queen of the Sciences.” Christ said “thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Mk. 12:30). A Spirit-controlled mind will guard the believer from untheological emotional excesses.

WHY STUDY THEOLOGY?

“Theology is such a bore,” said Joanne, as she munched her ham sandwich. It was a beautiful spring day, and some Christian students at the local university were seated on the campus lawn in between classes, eating their lunch.

“I know it,” said Barry as he fetched a cookie from the recesses of his lunch box. “Jay asked me the other day if we ought to try to have some theological discussions at our next monthly meeting. I told him I didn’t think so. If we start discussing things like that, we will drive everyone away.”

“Yeah,” Rose chimed in, “some people get all excited about how the angels operate, but they can’t seem to get along with one another. We need to put the practical first.”

Sipping his coke, Jeff put in his two cents by saying, "I like the way we have our meetings now, with a lot of choruses with the drums and all. That's really exciting."

This conversation reveals many erroneous concepts Christians have concerning theology. It is high time we speak to some of these incorrect concepts and seek to dispel them. The word, *theology* comes from two Greek words which mean literally, *words about God*. The Greek word, *logos*, used in the New Testament, refers not only to the individual words used in conversation but to rational discourse and to the organized way of communicating ideas.

Theology is "God talk." It is the study of God, His Person and work. A study of God is not reserved merely for the great intellectual, the dedicated scholar, or the pastor or the Christian leader. Every Christian ought to be involved in the study of God. No greater pursuit can there be for the human mind!

Why study theology? Is it important? Is it vital for the average Christian?

The knowledge and appreciation of the True and Living God. Interestingly enough, the Bible does not begin with an appeal to human emotion. It begins with an objective theological statement concerning the nature and work of God. What more profound statement could challenge our minds than the opening proposition of Holy Scripture! "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Here is a thought to ponder! Here is a message to challenge the greatest human intellect! The Bible begins with a majestic introduction to the Lord of the Universe. It is a great theological statement and a foundational one.

It was from the depths of His heart that our Lord prayed for His people in John 17:3, "that they may know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." It is through the study of theology that one comes to know the true God. Systematic theology leads from one great truth to another and enables one to thus attain a complete knowledge of the Almighty. One cannot adequately serve a God Whom he does not know. One cannot love a God Whom he does not know. One cannot properly worship a God Whom he does not know. Theology is foundational to all these relationships with God.

Systematic theology, as its title indicates, systematizes all the biblical truths concerning the various aspects of God, His Person, and His work. We can come to a greater understanding and appreciation of our Creator and Heavenly Father. Without such a process, we simply have a jumble of unconnected facts, rather than an orderly arrangement of truth.

The development of an intimate knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's great objective should be ours: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10). But, as is well illustrated in this same book of Philippians, one cannot have an intimate fellowship with a person whom one does not truly know. In Philippians 2, Paul has given us a great theological statement concerning the Person of Christ. Having examined and contemplated the mysteries of the incarnation, Paul is now ready to adore that Incarnate One. Many today want to have a "worship experience" without the requisite theological knowledge that must accompany it. The Bible presents in detail the great facts concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: His preexistence, His virgin birth, His deity, His miraculous works, His vicarious atonement, His triumphant resurrection, His high priestly ministry, and the promise of His glorious return. All of these subjects are theological in nature. They contain some of the most profound doctrine found in the whole Bible. There are many urgent theological questions that confront the one who studies Christology, the doctrine of Christ. To say that one is simply going to "love Jesus" without proper consideration of these tremendous doctrines is folly. One must know Who He is, what He has done, what He is doing, and what He will do in the future.

Jesus requested in His intercessory prayer, "that they may know . . . Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Jn. 17:3). The study of Christology is one of the most extensive of all theological studies.

A grasp of the total redemptive plan that spans the ages. God has provided a wonderful Savior and salvation for all mankind. The story of how God did this begins in the opening chapters of the Bible. It is concluded in the great chorus of hallelujahs in the book of Revelation. God's plan of salvation includes many aspects: election, atonement, justification, sanctification, and glorification, to mention a few. We often speak of the *simple plan of salvation*. We mean by this that God does not require complicated works on the part of the unbeliever to receive His

mercy. Salvation is by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9), and thus is *simple*. However, in fairness, we must note that the plan of salvation is far from *simple* if comprehended in all of its various aspects. It ranges from eternity past to eternity future. When a sinner receives Christ as Savior, he does not grasp all the complicated theology that lies behind his redemption. Obviously, God does not require this. All God asks is that a sinner believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in order to obtain salvation.

However, as we grow in Christ, and as we continue our study of His Word, we begin to realize all the great divine wisdom that planned and secured our salvation. This segment alone of divine revelation involves theological truth that can engage our hearts and minds for the rest of our lives. The more one understands the theological basis of salvation, the more one appreciates the Savior.

Strength and maturity in the Christian faith. Paul, in particular, complains often about the shallowness of the spiritual lives of believers. He says that too many are “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14). False *winds of doctrine* blow unsteady Christians from their moorings. When learned scribes and Pharisees revealed doctrinal ignorance, Jesus declared, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures” (Matt. 22:29). Though they were professional students of the Word of God, they did not have their theology straight.

One wonders how supposedly solid Christians can go *haywire*. They will go on for years in a sound fundamental church, and then, perhaps suddenly, they will go off into a false cult or new evangelical church that is not doctrinally sound. I have noticed that many people go theologically “berserk” in the retirement sunshine of Florida or Arizona. Having been active in a solid fundamental church for most of their lives, they flee for retirement to the land of grapefruit and shuffleboard. However, somehow they fail to take their theology with them. They attend a nonfundamental church and do not seem to see any problem with it. People do this because they lack theological convictions. Many who are longtime members of a fundamental church do not really understand or, perhaps do not fully embrace the theological teachings of that church. They attend there because their family has had a longtime association with the church, or because they like the pastor, have established friendships there, or for a variety of other nontheological reasons.

The writer of Hebrews notes that believers to whom he was writing who had been Christians for a long time and had “need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat” (Heb. 5:12). The *strong meat* to which he refers is solid, sound doctrine. It is the “meat and potatoes” of the Christian faith. That kind of spiritual nourishment produces people who can stand while the winds of doctrine blow about them. In 1 Peter 3:18, believers are encouraged to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Protection against false doctrine. Before the apostolic age was even completed, the apostle John was warning that “many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 Jn. 4:1). In 1 Timothy 4:1, Paul declared that “in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” Since the inception of the Christian church, Satan has sought to corrupt true Christian doctrine and continues to do so. These attacks upon sound doctrine come not only from theological liberals, but also from professed evangelicals. I have been in the Gospel ministry for over fifty years. Within that span of time, I have seen attacks mounted from within the evangelical camp on the following doctrines:

1. The eternal Sonship of Christ
2. The necessity of salvation by faith alone
3. The pretribulation rapture of the church
4. Eternal punishment of the ungodly
5. The necessity of conscious faith in Christ in order to go to Heaven
6. The full and complete inerrancy of Scripture
7. The finality and sufficiency of Scripture

Sadly, when men arise with such teachings as these, they seem to find a ready ear among evangelicals. Without a doubt, this can be explained by the lack of theological knowledge prevalent among God’s people. “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). More and more, people are becoming conscious of the necessity of maintaining good physical health. To have good health, one must have a good diet. Instead of a regular consumption of greasy fast-food items, one should be eating a more balanced diet, containing ingredients that would fight off diseases and infections and insure one of a longer and healthier life. So it is in the spiritual realm. Paul exhorts us to be “nourished up in the words of faith

and of good doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:6). Too many believers are ill-nourished, lack depth, and especially are ignorant of great theological truth that would make them spiritually robust and able to withstand the encroachments of false teaching.

In 2 Timothy 1:13, Paul exhorts, “Hold fast the form of sound words which thou has heard of me” which is based upon apostolic teaching. The word *form* used here indicates there was a systematized pattern of theological teaching given in the early churches. His exhortation to *hold fast* indicates there are those who will try to take it from us. The lack of theological knowledge by believers is resulting in the weakening of the Church.

Each local church a bastion of theological truth. In 1 Timothy 3:15, Paul, in writing to his young friend, Timothy, refers to the local congregation as “the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” The phrase, *the truth*, is used a number of times in the New Testament to refer to that collection of doctrines we refer to as “the Christian faith.” If a local church is to maintain that faith, it must have a consistent pulpit ministry that emphasizes biblical theology. The pastor is exhorted to teach sound doctrine. In recent years, pastors have neglected the teaching of this sound doctrine because they feel people do not wish to hear it. They are more concerned with gathering numbers than they are with preaching the whole counsel of God. Some churches are growing rapidly, but their people are virtually ignorant of basic elements of biblical theology. Preaching should not be geared to what people desire to hear. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” (2 Tim. 4:3). Preaching is to be an exposition and application of sound, biblical doctrine.

Every aspect of the life and ministry of the local church should have a solid doctrinal basis. Children growing up in the church are to be taught the great doctrines of the faith. Obviously, this should be on the child’s level of understanding. Ministries to teens should be more than just emotional hype. The church should be more than an entertainment center for teens. It should be the place where they get their feet set on the solid rock of doctrinal teaching. Nor should the music of the church be exempted from good theology. Often, it is in the area of music where the greatest theological errors creep in. The rise of *Christian Contemporary Music* has become a menace to churches. Much of it was inspired and nurtured within

the charismatic movement, with an emphasis on the emotional rather than the theological and intellectual. For centuries, church music has been authored by skilled and spiritually mature leaders of the church. Composers had knowledge not only of music but of theology. In recent years, youngsters with guitars have become the musical *gurus* for the church. The difference of product is noticeable. There is a vast chasm, for instance, between:

Oh I feel so good, I feel brand new.
I am so happy that you feel so too.

and

Arise, my soul arise. Shake off thy guilty fears.
The bleeding sacrifice on thy behalf appears.
Before the throne my surety stands.
My name is written on His hands.

Teaching theology should permeate the ministry of the local church in the pulpit, Sunday school, youth groups, music department, and every area of the church program. The local church should be a Bible institute, in the sense that great doctrines of the faith are stressed.

Motivation of the believer toward a life of godliness. One of the most common objections to the study and preaching of theology is the complaint that it is “impractical.” In the minds of many, there seems to be a dichotomy between theology and practical Christian living. Along with this, the perception on the part of some is that if one is theological in his orientation, he will not be evangelistic. Theology and evangelism have been put at odds with one another. Such thinking is certainly not scriptural. It is ludicrous to suggest that the study of God and His works will make one a less dedicated and fervent Christian. The knowledge of the living God and His works will only serve to enliven the life of the believer. The inspired apostle speaks of the “truth which is after godliness” (Tit. 1:1). The phrase translated *which is after* means, *which leads to or results in* godliness. In other words, a knowledge of truth ought to lead to the practice of truth. Notice *the truth* produces a life of godliness in the power of the Holy Spirit. The so-called *deeper life* is not an emotional high but is a result of the application of theological principles to the believer’s life.

How can a believer live godly, for instance, if he is ignorant of the great doctrines involved in sanctification as taught in Scripture? It is the

sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit that produces godliness. Perhaps a classic example of the connection between the intellectual grasp of theological truth and the implementation of it in life is found in the book of Ephesians. In the first three chapters, Paul expounds the theology that undergirds the Christian life. Then, beginning in chapter four, he commands the believer to put these truths into practice. There is a strong connection between the head and the heart. All must guard against the danger of too much head and too little heart and vice versa. Hearts cannot burn if they do not receive proper fuel. Correct theological exposition of Scripture fuels that fire.

CONCLUSION

Are there good and sufficient reasons for the study of theology by the average Christian? Yes, there certainly are. Theology is not reserved for the private enjoyment of a few scholars or leaders. God has provided the mechanism for every believer to come to the full knowledge of the faith. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13). Someday, when clothed with glory and in the presence of our Lord, we shall fully know what now we are only partially learning.

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