

Theology 501 Examination 1

**An Exam
Submitted to Dr. Steve Tracy
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Scottsdale, Arizona**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
Theology 501**

**by
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The Nature, Task, and Method of Theology:

1. What is David Wells' definition of theology.

“Theology is the sustained effort to know the character, will, and acts of the triune God as He has disclosed and interpreted these for His people in the Scripture, to formulate these in a systematic way in order that we might know Him, learn to model our thoughts after Him, live our lives in His world on His terms, and by thought and action translate His truth into our own time and culture.”

2. Which aspect of Wells' definition is most essential for the theological task, and why?

The Constructive Task of Theology requires us to take the truths we declare orthodox through the Critical Task of Theology and bring them to our contemporary culture, thus Wells' statement that best lends itself to this task is his call to “... formulate these in a systematic way in order that we might know Him, learn to model our thoughts after Him, live our lives in His world on His terms, and by thought and action translate His truth into our own time and culture.”

3. According to Wells, what is the goal of theology with respect to God and the Body of Christ?

According to wells, the goal of theology in relation to God is to help us “know the character, will and acts of the triune God”, and in relation to His Body, to “interpret these for His people” in order that they might live their lives and thoughts accordingly.

4. What are 4 of the 6 reasons we need systematic theology today?

It is the pastors duty to propagate sound theology and correct theological error. It is imperative for knowing God, for our relationship with God is theologically based.

It is imperative for understanding all of creation.

We live in a secular, post-Christian society where many unbiblical, destructive beliefs abound.

5. Which is the most important reason to you and why?

I believe theology is essential to our main task while residing on earth-- to share the Great News of God's Love and Salvation through Jesus Christ offered to every person in this lost world. Many people are disheartened by the illogical and often misrepresentative attitudes of Christians. So the most important reason above for theology, to me, is its role in teaching sound theology and correcting theological error in the Church and in the minds of the unsaved, so they might truly know the heart of their God. (I guess that's kind of a hybrid of 2)

6. What are the six points of Lewis and Demarist's Integrative Theology?

*Identification of the argument (in the classic sense) under consideration.
Identification of the various solutions to the problem which have been proposed throughout the course of Church history.*

*Evaluation of the relevant data.
Organization of the relevant data of general and special revelation into a coherent doctrine and correlating it to other doctrines arrived at using the same methodology.*

Evaluation of the doctrinal conclusions arrived at in step 4 as one interacts with contrary theological, philosophical, and religious views.

Application of the doctrinal conclusions to specific life situations.

7. Which one of Lewis and Demarist's six points is the most contestable and why?

Evaluation of the doctrinal conclusions arrived at in step 4 as one interacts with contrary theological, philosophical, and religious views.

There will be many contrary theological, philosophical, and religious views that are wrong.

8. According to Wells, what should humble the theologian?

A sense of the greatness and grandeur of our God.

World Views: The Universe Next Door

1. What is a worldview?

A set of a priori assumptions (which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of our world

2. In one or two sentences, explain the following six tenets for **each** of these worldviews: Deism, Naturalism, Existentialism, Eastern Pantheistic Monism, and New Age.

- a.) The nature of humanity
- b.) Ultimate reality
- c.) The nature of history
- d.) The afterlife
- e.) The nature of God
- f.) The basis for morality

*In **Deism**, God is the Transcendent First Cause of creation including human beings. The universe is in its normal state, so, as seen in general revelation, whatever 'is' is right, for history shows linearly what God has determined beforehand.*

*In **Naturalism**, God does not exist, but instead, matter is eternally existent and the ultimate reality. Human beings are complex machines, but some forms of naturalism, like Secular Humanism, give human beings special value. History is a linear stream of events linked by cause and effect without purpose, and death is the end of personality and individuality. Humans determine ethics.*

***Existentialism**, borrows all the tenets of Naturalism, except human nature is defined by choices we make to be 'human'.*

***Eastern Pantheistic Monism** states that God is all reality, and every human being is the soul of the cosmos, now and after death. Events and time are illusion; so history is meaningless and cyclical.*

***New Age** thinking denies the existence of a transcendent deity, places the prime reality within an individual self, sees death as the transition to another form of life, and the cosmos as a united continuum of spirit and matter.*

3. What are the bridges that lead to nihilism?

Necessity and chance, the great cloud of unknowing, what 'is' provides no basis for what 'ought', and the loss of purpose.

Reformed Theology

1. In one or two sentences, explain John Calvin's role in the formulation of Reformed Theology.

Though Martin Luther was used of God to begin the Protestant Reformation, John Calvin is considered the father of Reformed Theology due to his Biblical doctrine formulated and recorded in the Institutes of the Christian Religion.

2. In one or two sentences, explain the following Reformed distinctives:

- a.) Sola Scriptura

The Scriptures, alone, are the basis for all theological truth.

- b.) Soli Deo Gloria

God sovereignly creates, sustains, and guides all of creation so that all things might give Him alone glory.

- c.) Definite election

God chose in eternity past to elect some to salvation.

- d.) Limited atonement

Christ died to pay the penalty for only the elect's human sin.

- e.) The Church as the covenant people of God

The Church is understood to be the 'Israel'-recipient of the Old Testament promises.

Lutheran Theology

1. What are the three Lutheran distinctives?

*It is 'catholic';
It is Evangelical;
It is Incarnational.*

2. In what sense is Lutheran theology “catholic”?

Luther never intended to break away from the universal Church of his time.

3. In what sense is Lutheran theology truly Evangelical? How is the concept of “alien righteousness” related to this?

*Lutheranism asserts that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, and both are needed to account for the fact that man cannot **do** anything acceptable before God, thus God must impart to us an “alien righteousness”.*

4. In what sense is Lutheran theology “incarnational”? What does this mean for the use of logic and the presence of tension or apparent contradictions in theology?

Infinite God entered ordinary finite flesh and died. Since this defies human fallen reason, and God is revealed the most to us at the foot of the mystery of the Cross, and reason does not lead us to God in Christ there, then reason is a whore. Theology must not be held captive to any prevailing logic, but to the revelation of Scripture; even if articles of faith drawn from Scripture may appear to violate canons of human logic.

Arminian, Wesleyan Theology

1. Identify and explain the Arminian response to each of the points of Calvinism expressed in the TULIP acrostic.

Total Depravity – Through Christ's atonement, prevenient, grace enables all sinners to cooperate with the Holy Spirit and respond to God.

Unconditional Election – Conditional election based on God's foreknowledge of who would respond to the Gospel.

Limited Atonement – Unconditional atonement – Christ died for all human beings, not just for the elect.

Irresistible Grace – Humans can resist God's Grace.

Perseverance of The Saints – Believers can fall away from Grace and lose their salvation through apostasy, denial of Christ, ongoing sin, unrepentant sin, or extreme sin.

2. In one or two sentences, explain the following Wesleyan doctrines:
a.) Prevenient grace

The universal work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of sinners between human conception and spiritual conversion that enables sinners to respond to the Gospel.

- b.) Entire sanctification

a crisis experience where one becomes perfected in love and ceases from sinning

- c.) Holiness

*... is greatly emphasized. We are saved **for** good works and they should always follow conversion. Saves from sin and restores to original righteousness.*

- d.) Sin

a willful violation of God's known law

Liberal Theology

1. What are the chief affirmations of Classical Liberalism?

*Classical Liberalism is characterized by:
the rejection of religious belief based on authority alone and a general anti-dogmatic emphasis;
a rejection of the Bible as a supernaturally inspired, inerrant document;
a view of itself as the liberator of Christianity from erroneous, pre-scientific views which harm the Christian faith and drive modern people away from Christianity;
an emphasis on the immanence of God;
an emphasis on accepting all truth (particularly scientific truth) as God's truth;
an acceptance of religious pluralism;
a view of theology as simply "reflection on the language and idea of faith";
an emphasis not on the creeds, but on the spirit of Christianity;
and an emphasis on freedom and liberation from oppression.*

2. Why is liberalism termed "modernism"? How does this relate to the rescuing of Christianity by liberalism?

Liberalism attempts to make Christianity palatable to 'modern', scientifically thinking, men and women who could not otherwise accept religion.

3. What is liberalism's posture toward the creeds and the spirit of Christianity?

Liberalism does not emphasize the creeds, but instead, the spirit of Christianity, often in terms of 'the love of God' and 'the social gospel'.

Pentecostal, Charismatic Theology

1. What do Pentecostals and Charismatics believe about the following subjects?
Explain and contrast their views.

- a.) The role of tongues

Pentecostals believe that tongues are a universal initial experience for all true believers and evidence the time they are baptized with the Spirit. Charismatics believe tongues are important, but not necessary for salvation, for not all are given the gift from God.

- b.) The nature of gifts

Both agree that supernatural spiritual gifts are being given by God for use in the Church today.

- c.) The nature of sanctification

Pentecostals believe sanctification is a 2 stage process-- the second stage is the filling with the Holy Spirit. Charismatics believe it to be a continual 1 stage process.

- d.) Healing

Pentecostals teach that God will physically heal a believer who has faith. Charismatics, though they often emphasize the miraculous gifts of healing, deny that God always wants to heal believers.

2. How does Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement differ with regard to:

- a.) The age of the movement

Pentecostalism is almost a century old, while the Charismatic Movement is only about 40 years.

- b.) Denominational affiliations

Pentecostalism is mostly found in FourSquare, Assembly of God, Church of God, and Pentecostal Holiness denominations, whereas most Evangelical denominations include some strand of the Charismatic Movement.