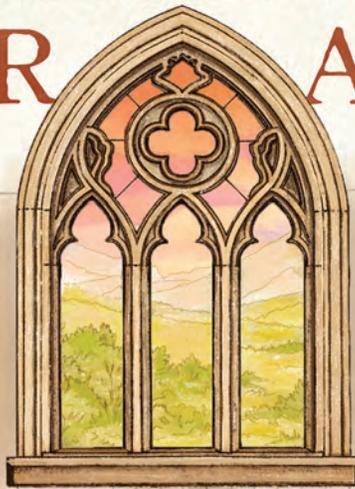


S T U D Y G U I D E



SINCLAIR B. FERGUSON

THEOLOGY FOR ALL



DOCTRINE FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

S T U D Y G U I D E

Theology for All

Doctrine for the Christian Life

Sinclair B. Ferguson



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

Renew your Mind.

LIGONIER.ORG | 800-435-4343

Copyright © 2026 Ligonier Ministries

421 Ligonier Court, Sanford, FL 32771

Email: info@ligonier.org

All rights reserved.

No reproduction of this work without permission.

Printed in China.

Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	5
<i>Study Schedules</i>	7
1. <i>Why Theology Is Important</i>	9
2. <i>The True and Living God</i>	16
3. <i>God the Trinity</i>	23
4. <i>God the Lord</i>	31
5. <i>God the Creator</i>	38
6. <i>God the Ruler of History</i>	45
7. <i>Man as the Image of God</i>	53
8. <i>God's Image, Male and Female</i>	60
9. <i>The Doctrine of the Word of God</i>	67
10. <i>Temptation and Fall</i>	74
11. <i>The Nature of Sin</i>	81
12. <i>The Judgment of God</i>	88
13. <i>The Promise of Redemption</i>	95
14. <i>The Covenant of Grace</i>	102
15. <i>The Incarnation</i>	109
16. <i>The Person of Christ</i>	116
17. <i>The Finished Work of Christ</i>	124
18. <i>The Ongoing Work of Christ</i>	132
19. <i>Chosen in Christ</i>	139
20. <i>Union with Christ</i>	146
21. <i>The New Birth</i>	153
22. <i>Effectual Calling and Faith</i>	160
23. <i>Repentance</i>	167

24.	<i>Justification</i>	174
25.	<i>Adoption</i>	182
26.	<i>Sanctification</i>	190
27.	<i>Perseverance</i>	197
28.	<i>Christ's Church</i>	204
29.	<i>Pictures of the Church</i>	211
30.	<i>Leadership in the Church</i>	218
31.	<i>The Ministry of the Word of God</i>	225
32.	<i>Baptism</i>	232
33.	<i>The Lord's Supper</i>	239
34.	<i>The Return of Christ</i>	246
35.	<i>The Resurrection and Final Judgment</i>	253
36.	<i>Glorification</i>	260

Introduction

Theology isn't just for scholars or pastors—it's for every Christian, and it shapes how we live every day. God's Word is the ultimate authority for faith and life, and theology arises out of God's Word, so it has deep implications for what we are to believe and how we are to live. In this teaching series, Dr. Sinclair Ferguson provides the biblical foundations for the basics of the Christian faith and practically applies them to the Christian life to show why they matter. Each session looks at a key theological topic to cover the whole range of systematic theology from the character of God and the nature of humanity to the person and work of Christ, the application of salvation, the life of the church, and the hope of glory.

This study guide is a companion to the video teaching series. Whether you are using the DVDs, streaming the videos on Ligonier.org, or going through the course in Ligonier Connect, this resource is designed to help you make the most of the learning experience. For each message in the series, there is a corresponding lesson in this guide. Here is what you will find in each lesson:

INTRODUCTION	<p>The introduction is a brief paragraph that summarizes the content covered in the lecture and considered in the study guide lesson.</p> <p>How to use: Use the introduction to each lesson to get a sense of the big picture before watching the video. Refer to these statements as you work through the study guide to remind yourself of what you have already covered and where you are headed.</p>
LEARNING GOALS	<p>The learning goals are the knowledge and skills that the study guide lesson will endeavor to equip you with as you work through the lecture content.</p> <p>How to use: Familiarize yourself with the goals of each lesson before engaging its contents. Keeping the overall purpose in mind as you watch each video and reflect on or discuss the questions will help you get the most out of each lesson.</p>
KEY IDEAS	<p>The key ideas are the major points or takeaways from the lecture.</p> <p>How to use: Use these ideas to prepare yourself for each lesson and to review previous lessons. They describe specifically the knowledge that each lecture is communicating.</p>

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	<p>The questions are the guided reflection and/or discussion component of the lesson that is intended to help you prepare for, process, and organize what you are learning.</p> <p>How to use: Reflect on individually or discuss in a group the questions in the order in which they appear in the lesson. The time stamps in the right margin indicate where the answers to questions during the video can be found.</p>
PRAYER	<p>The prayer section offers suggestions for how to close the lesson in prayer with respect to what was taught in the lecture.</p> <p>How to use: Consider using each lesson's prayer section as a guide to personal or group prayer. These sections follow the ACTS prayer model, which you can learn more about in R.C. Sproul's Crucial Questions booklet <i>Does Prayer Change Things?</i> This helpful guide is available as a free e-book at Ligonier.org.</p>
REVIEW QUIZ	<p>The review quiz is a set of six multiple-choice questions that appears at the end of each lesson.</p> <p>How to use: Use each quiz to check your comprehension and memory of the major points covered in each lecture. It will be most beneficial to your learning if you take a lesson's quiz either sometime between lessons or just before you begin the next lesson in the study guide.</p>
ANSWER KEY	<p>The answer key provides explanations for the reflection and discussion questions and answers to the multiple-choice questions in the review quiz.</p> <p>How to use: Use the answer key to check your own answers or when you do not know the answer. Note: Do not give in too quickly; struggling for a few moments to recall an answer reinforces it in your mind.</p>

Study Schedules

The following table suggests four plans for working through the *Theology for All* video teaching series and this companion study guide. Whether you are going through this series on your own or with a group, these schedules should help you plan your study path.

	Extended 38-Week Plan	Standard 36-Week Plan	Abbreviated 18-Week Plan	Intensive 12-Week Plan
Week	Lesson			
1	*	1	1 & 2	1-3
2	1	2	3 & 4	4-6
3	2	3	5 & 6	7-9
4	3	4	7 & 8	10-12
5	4	5	9 & 10	13-15
6	5	6	11 & 12	16-18
7	6	7	13 & 14	19-21
8	7	8	15 & 16	22-24
9	8	9	17 & 18	25-27
10	9	10	19 & 20	28-30
11	10	11	21 & 22	31-33
12	11	12	23 & 24	34-36
13	12	13	25 & 26	
14	13	14	27 & 28	
15	14	15	29 & 30	
16	15	16	31 & 32	
17	16	17	33 & 34	
18	17	18	35 & 36	
19	18	19		

	Extended 38-Week Plan	Standard 36-Week Plan	Abbreviated 18-Week Plan	Intensive 12-Week Plan
Week	Lesson			
20	19	20		
21	20	21		
22	21	22		
23	22	23		
24	23	24		
25	24	25		
26	25	26		
27	26	27		
28	27	28		
29	28	29		
30	29	30		
31	30	31		
32	31	32		
33	32	33		
34	33	34		
35	34	35		
36	35	36		
37	36			
38	*			

* For these weeks, rather than completing lessons, spend your time discussing and praying about your learning goals for the study (the first week) and the most valuable takeaways from the study (the last week).

Why Theology Is Important

INTRODUCTION

Theology matters. As Christians, we ought to know what we believe. Knowledge has eternal consequences, and at the very heart of our transformation into the image of Christ is the renewal of our minds. In this lesson, Dr. Ferguson introduces this teaching series and explores three key passages that teach why theology is important.

LEARNING GOALS

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to:

- Describe the goals of this teaching series
- Identify key biblical texts that emphasize the importance of theology
- Understand how theology connects to the Christian life

KEY IDEAS

- The basic principle of Christian theology is that we want to know the gospel that we love as much as we can and to describe it as well as we can.
- Understanding Christian doctrine gives us stability in the Christian life, equips us for serving others, and expands our ability to know even more deeply.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

Take a moment to answer the following questions. They will prepare you for the lecture.

- What is your goal in undertaking this study on the doctrines of the Christian faith?

- Why is theology important?

Scripture Reading

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

—Psalm 19:7–11

- What reasons does Psalm 19 provide for why we ought to know God's Word?

During the Video

Answer the following questions while you watch the video. They will guide you through the lecture.

Three Key Texts

0:00–12:38

- How does Romans 12:1–2 stress the relevance of theology?
- What should be a goal of our theological study, according to Jeremiah 9:23–24?
- How does John 17:3 teach us the ultimate purpose of theological knowledge?

The Importance of Theology

12:38–23:19

- What is the first reason that theology is important?
- What is the second reason that theology is important?

After the Video

Answer the following questions after you have finished the lecture. They will help you identify and summarize the major points.

- What are some common themes between the three texts that help situate how we ought to think about theology?

If you are in a group, have the members discuss which of these passages of Scripture most resonates with them and inspires them to deeper study.

- What are some challenges you might face in dedicating time to theological study, and how could you overcome them?

If you are in a group, have the members share their answers and discuss what their devotional life is like, encouraging one another to continued faithfulness.

- What additional reason did Dr. Ferguson provide for why theology is important besides its providing us with a firm foundation and answers for others?

If you are in a group, have the members relate some instances when this effect of theology has been produced in their own lives. Ask: When has theology provided you with clarity or practical guidance in a difficult situation?

PRAYER

Commit what you have learned from God's Word in this lesson to prayer.

- Praise God for His wisdom and our ability to know Him as His image bearers.
- Confess ways that you have neglected to study or have allowed your feelings to come between you and God.
- Thank God for revealing Himself through His Word so that we might know His will for our salvation.
- Ask God for the discipline and desires to go deeper into His Word, that you might be increasingly transformed into the image and likeness of Christ.

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. What analogy or analogies were used to describe how we should think about Christian doctrine?
 - a. Knowing anatomy as a physician
 - b. Learning a language in a foreign country
 - c. Caring about the players and rules of a game
 - d. Both a and c
2. Which of the following passages relates to boasting in the Lord?
 - a. Jeremiah 9:23–24
 - b. Psalm 102
 - c. John 17:3
 - d. Romans 12:1–2
3. Dr. Ferguson believes that Christians can exhaust the depth of biblical knowledge, learning all that it is possible to know.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. What point was made about the importance of theology by using Psalm 102?
 - a. Its leading to eternal life in Jesus Christ
 - b. Its providing us with stability through our feelings
 - c. Its expanding our mind to retain more truth
 - d. Its equipping us to serve others
5. According to Dr. Ferguson, how does understanding Christian doctrine help in practical ministry and service?
 - a. It allows believers to argue effectively in debates.
 - b. It helps in answering theological questions and equipping others.
 - c. It replaces the need for personal spiritual experiences.
 - d. It ensures uniformity in worship practices.
6. What benefit did Dr. Ferguson mention in relation to knowing the basics of Christian doctrine and listening to sermons or other teaching?
 - a. It gives us a more academic approach to the Bible.
 - b. It sharpens our ability to judge whether a teaching is biblical.
 - c. It helps believers better remember and organize biblical truths.
 - d. It frees us from having to listen as closely because of what we already know.

Answer Key—Why Theology Is Important

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

What Do You Think?

These are personal questions. The answers should be based on your own knowledge and experience.

Scripture Reading

- What reasons does Psalm 19 provide for why we ought to know God's Word?
Scripture is God's special revelation of His truth. To know the Word of God, therefore, is to know theology. Psalm 19 highlights the benefits of knowing God's Word or law. It revives the soul, grants wisdom, brings joy, enlightens, warns, and rewards. It is itself true, righteous, desirable, and precious.

During the Video

Three Key Texts

- How does Romans 12:1–2 stress the relevance of theology?
Romans 12:1–2 teaches us about our call to live sanctified lives and how God accomplishes this in us. We are transformed in the Christian life through the renewal of our minds. Christian doctrine informs and thus transforms our minds.
- What should be a goal of our theological study, according to Jeremiah 9:23–24?
We do not seek to be merely puffed up in our study of theology, but there is a proper place for boasting in the Christian life, according to Jeremiah 9:23–24. God directs that the one who boasts ought to boast in this: "that he understands and knows me."
- How does John 17:3 teach us the ultimate purpose of theological knowledge?
John 17:3 gloriously reveals the substance of eternal life: to know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ" whom He has sent. As Christians, we are to fill our minds with the substantial knowledge of theological truth so that we might better know the blessings of eternal life in Christ.

The Importance of Theology

- What is the first reason that theology is important?
The Christian life cannot be lived out on the basis of feelings alone. Our feelings are variable and unreliable. Sometimes we can undergo doubt and despair,

as is the testimony of the Psalms. Knowledge of Christian doctrine and theology, however, provides us with something solid and substantial. Knowledge of the unchangeability of God gives us stability in a changing world.

- What is the second reason that theology is important?

Theology equips us for Christian service and witness. Knowing Christian doctrine provides us with what's necessary to answer questions about our faith, whether inquisitive or hostile.

After the Video

- What are some common themes between the three texts that help situate how we ought to think about theology?

One theme that may come to mind is the importance of knowledge. Knowledge is the means by which we are transformed through the renewal of our minds in Romans 12:1–2. The Lord calls us to know Him in Jeremiah 9:23–24, and that is the foundation of our boasting. John 17:3 also connects to knowledge, for knowledge leads to eternal life. This helps us see another theme in these passages: Knowledge is personal; it is an intimate relationship with God.

- What are some challenges that you might face in dedicating time to theological study, and how could you overcome them?

While answers to this question are personal, Dr. Ferguson offered many reasons that we ought to study theology that can help us overcome our challenges when we take them to heart. First is the realization that theology is important. It is not an irrelevant intellectual exercise but is a commitment of the heart to know God. Because theology also helps us overcome our fickle emotions, we can understand the importance of setting aside time for theological study no matter what is happening in our lives. If we also consider how theology equips us to serve others, we can become motivated in our study out of obedience to the law, loving our neighbors as ourselves.

- What additional reason did Dr. Ferguson provide for why theology is important besides its providing us with a firm foundation and answers for others?

In addition to providing us with stability and equipping us to serve others, theology also expands our minds by helping us retain and understand the teaching of Scripture more effectively. Dr. Ferguson said that by having a solid grasp of Christian doctrine, we create “Velcro strips” in our minds that enable us to remember and organize truth.

REVIEW QUIZ

1. **D.**

The importance of knowing the basics of the Christian faith was likened to our knowledge of a sport that we love. Just as we make the effort to know the players or

the rules of a game, so it's natural to desire to know our faith deeply. Christian doctrine, in its application, was also likened to a physician's knowledge, because like a physician's knowledge of the body, our understanding of Christian doctrine can help us identify what needs to be remedied in our lives or someone else's.

2. **A.**

Jeremiah 9:23–24 specifically instructs that we should boast not in wisdom, strength, or riches but in knowing and understanding God, emphasizing the importance of an intimate knowledge in our relationship with Him.

3. **B.**

We cannot fully exhaust the depths of theology because God is the fundamental object of our study. This is why Gregory the Great compared the Bible to a river, one such that a lamb could wade in it yet deep enough that an elephant could swim in it.

4. **B.**

Psalms 102 was used to illustrate how understanding God's unchanging nature offers stability and hope amid changing circumstances and feelings, highlighting the importance of theology for emotional stability. The Psalms are rich with deep theology that couples with and measures their depth of overwhelming emotion. Throughout them, the psalmists always find repose in God.

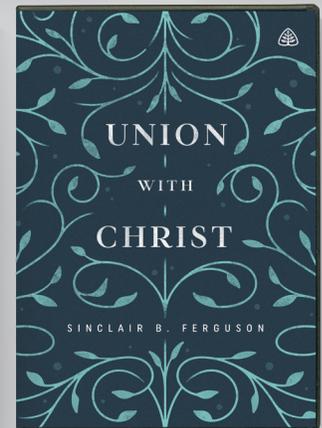
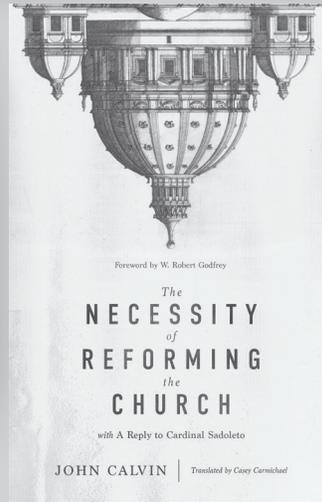
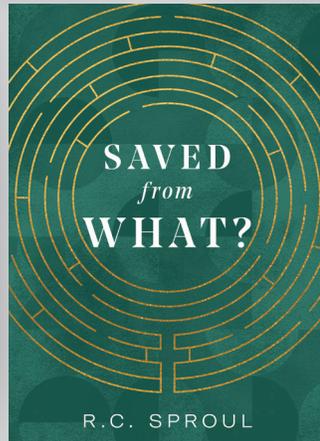
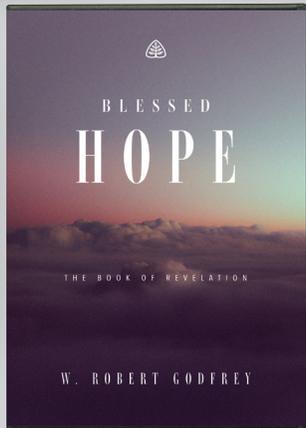
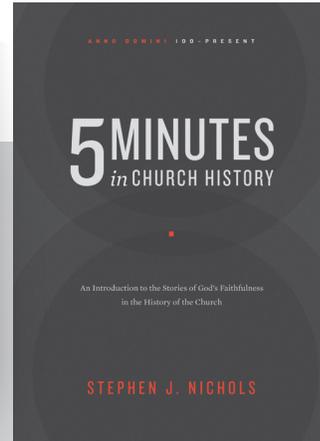
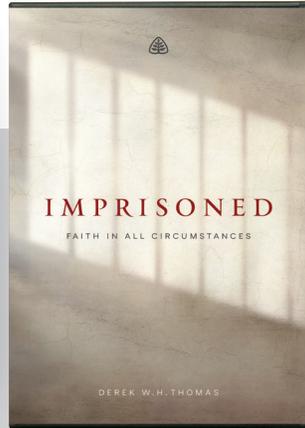
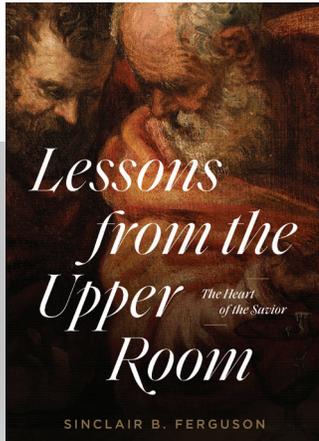
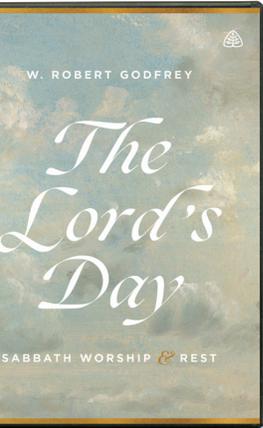
5. **B.**

One of the primary reasons that theology is important has to do with our service to others. Understanding doctrine equips us with the knowledge necessary to effectively answer questions, whether inquisitive or hostile, and to apply these truths to the circumstances of others' lives.

6. **C.**

While understanding Christian doctrine certainly gives us an ability to identify false doctrine more readily, our own ability to build on our knowledge and categorize new information more easily was a focal point of this lecture.

We want to see men and women around the world connect
the deep truths of the Christian faith to everyday life.



Order your copy of this title, download the digital version,
or browse thousands of resources at Ligonier.org.