

RENOVATING OUR THEOLOGY

maugansville
CHURCH

Small Group Guide

Based on the Sermon: "Renovating Our Theology"

1 Corinthians 3:1-9, 18-23

Overview

This sermon challenges every believer to examine the sources that shape their understanding of God. Drawing from Paul's letter to the church at Corinth, the message calls Christians to move beyond spiritual immaturity, resist the pull of human-centered theology, and return to Scripture as the primary source of knowledge about God.

Key Takeaways

- Everyone is a theologian. Theology is simply your understanding of God and how you express it. The question is not whether you have a theology, but whether it is being shaped by reliable sources.
- Garbage in, garbage out. The quality of our theology depends entirely on the quality of what we feed our minds. Social media algorithms, short-form video content, and personality-driven teaching are poor substitutes for Scripture.
- Spiritual immaturity has visible fruit. Paul identifies jealousy, strife, rivalry, and division as signs that a church or individual has not grown beyond the basics of faith. These are marks of the flesh, not the Spirit.
- Human teachers are servants, not the source. Pastors, authors, and online preachers are instruments God uses, but they are not the feast. They are the conduit, not the water.

- Scripture must be the primary diet. Just as a growing body needs solid food, a growing faith requires direct, personal engagement with God's Word, not a steady diet of content that someone else has already digested.
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Discussion Questions

Opening

1. Before this sermon, how would you have defined the word "theologian"? Did you consider yourself one? How has your thinking shifted?
 2. Where do you currently get most of your information about God -- sermons, books, podcasts, social media, personal Bible reading, or some combination? Be honest with yourself and the group.
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Digging Deeper

3. The pastor referenced Ecclesiastes 3 and the idea that God has placed eternity in the human heart. What does it mean to you that every person is born with some awareness of the transcendent? How does that shape the way you think about people who do not follow Christ?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 together. Paul describes the Corinthians as spiritual infants who are still drinking milk when they should be eating solid food. What does spiritual maturity look like in practical, everyday terms? What is the difference between someone who is still on milk and someone who has moved to solid food?
5. Paul asks pointedly, "What then is Apollos? What is Paul?" He answers that they are servants -- table setters, not the feast. How does our culture, including Christian culture, tend to elevate teachers and personalities in ways that can become spiritually dangerous? Have you seen this happen in your own life?
6. The pastor described social media algorithms as systems that show you what you want to see, not what you need to see. How does that dynamic apply to the way people consume theology and Christian content online? What are the specific risks?
7. Read 1 Corinthians 3:18-23. Paul warns against boasting in men and calls the wisdom of this world folly before God. What does it look like, practically, to

"become a fool that he may become wise"? Is there something you have believed or held onto that you may need to release in order to grow?

- 8. The pastor drew a distinction between reading books about the Bible and reading the Bible itself, and between listening to people talk about God and hearing from God directly. Do you agree with that distinction? Where is the line between helpful supplemental teaching and an unhealthy dependence on human voices?**
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Personal Reflection

- 9. The pastor offered a simple self-check: compare the time you spent on social media this past week to the time you spent reading Scripture. What did that comparison reveal about your priorities?**
 - 10. Think about a belief you hold about God. Can you trace it back to a specific passage of Scripture? Or does it come primarily from something you heard, read, or saw from another person? What does that tell you?**
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Practical Applications

This Week, Choose One:

- Set a specific time each day for personal Bible reading. Start small if needed, but make it a consistent, protected part of your routine. The goal is direct engagement with Scripture, not a devotional or commentary as the starting point.**
- Audit your media diet. For one week, track how much time you spend consuming Christian content online or on television versus reading the Bible directly. At the end of the week, evaluate honestly and make one concrete adjustment.**
- Pick one thing you believe about God and trace it. Open your Bible and find the passages that actually teach that truth. Let Scripture confirm, correct, or deepen what you believe.**
- Bring a passage to your group. Before your next meeting, each member reads the same chapter of Scripture independently and comes prepared to share one thing they noticed that they had not heard a preacher point out before.**

- **Pray before you open your Bible. The pastor prayed that the Holy Spirit would illuminate Scripture. Make that prayer a habit before every reading session, acknowledging that human understanding alone is not enough.**
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Closing Prayer Focus

Ask God to reveal where your theology has been shaped more by human voices than by His Word. Pray for a genuine hunger for Scripture. Ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher, and pray that your group would grow together in knowledge of who God truly is, not who others have told you He is.

"So let no one boast in men... and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's." -- 1 Corinthians 3:21, 23