

Theology is the study of God.
As with any of the “ologies”,
there is a tremendous amount of work and time involved, no matter the discipline.
That being said,
it does appear that the study of God,
seems to up the ante just a bit doesn't it?

I mean,
we are talking about something that no one can see;
a being that is beyond all beings;
a concept that people have been struggling with for thousands of years;
on top of it,
no one can be 100% certain that their particular views are absolutely right,
hence,
the need for faith.

The def. of faith is believing in something that one cannot prove or see as if it were so.
Theology is hard work.

That being said,
as St. Paul states today in his epistle to the Phillipians,
“we must continue to work out our faith in fear and trembling.”

Thats right,
whether we admit it or not,
unlike biology or musicology,
theology is something we all partake in.
Even the atheist is a theologian.

Every person we come into contact with,
has something to say about “god.”
By not saying something about God,
speaks volumes!

It means that you either don't believe in God,
which is a theological statement,
or,

it means that God is not important enough for us to spend time getting to know what we
believe about God.

Today,
I would like all of us to think about what it is we have to say about God.
If someone were to approach you and ask what you believe about God,
would you have something to say?

As the holy scriptures tells us,
“always be prepared with an answer for the hope that is in you.”

And that something that you might have to say,
is it a well thought out idea?

I can't tell you how many times I have heard someone make a theological point about
their belief,

and it has clearly not been thoroughly investigated.

There are even those that don't think it matters what you believe,
because it is a private issue.

Well,
anyone that has spent time in the Word of God knows that is not true.
The great commandment,
“that we should love the Lord God with all our heart, soul and mind,
and that we should love our neighbors as ourselves”
as well as the great commission,
“that we are to preach the gospel to all people, baptizing them in the name of the father,
son and holy spirit, and to make disciples of all people”
shows us that our faith is not a private matter.
Jesus declares numerous times,
that our faith is a very public thing.
You and I are called to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ,
to be theologians that having something to say about who we claim God to be,
and the role He plays in our own lives.
We are ALL called to be evangelists,
calling people to come and have an intimate relationship with their creator.
When we don't do these things,
we are making very real theological statements.
When we invite our friends and family to church,
we are saying something about God.
When we pray the daily office,
which we offer here M-F,
we are saying something about God.
Every time we come and receive the blessed sacrament,
we are saying something about God.
When we feed the poor,
we say something about God.
When we give sacrificially with our offerings,
we say something about God.
When we stand up for those that are oppressed,
we say something about God.
When we fudge on our taxes,
we say something about God.
When we lie,
we say something about God.
When we gossip,
we say something about God.
Are you hearing what I am saying?
All that we say and do,
is an outward manifestation of our theology.
If I speak the truth to someone in love,
it is because I believe that there is a truth and that God is love,
and that each of my brothers and sisters in Christ,
have been created in the image of God.
Our theology matters,
in every aspect of our lives.

We practice our theology 24 hrs. a day, seven days a week,
not just on Sundays.

By tithing,

we are claiming something theologically,

that we believe all that we have comes from God anyways and God will always provide
for us.

If you are here today,

and you claim that Christ is your Lord and savior,

are you living like you believe that?

Are we doing those things that Christians should do?

Are we praying on a regular basis?

Are we studying our bibles?

Are we doing all that we can to be disciples.

The Marks of Discipleship group that is meeting is wrestling with the question,
what does it mean to be a disciple?

Our theology is not simply an academic discipline;

it is a way of life.

So many problems that the church has today,

is because they have forgotten the importance of doing theology.

Since the beginning of the early church,

there has been a primacy given to engaging in theological discourse.

In fact,

it was so important that people would risk their lives for a given theological position.

If you look at the end of your bulletin,

you will see some theological definitions.

Terms like "theotokos,"

and homoousios.

These are theological concepts that you and I now take for granted,

even though we may not know what they mean,

but in the first few centuries of Christianity,

what you had to say about some of these theological terms,

could cost you your life.

Just another reason we have a responsibility to study theology...

to honor the lives of our forbears in the faith!

Another reason to study theology especially from the early church,

is that you will see our church today still struggles with some of the heresies of the first
three centuries.

One example comes from our epistle reading today.

St. Paul states that "Christ emptied himself of His divinity,

by taking on our humanity.

This concept is referred to as "kenosis."

The def. of which is in your bulletin.

There was much debate about this idea,

because it struck right at the heart of the matter of who Jesus is.

The statement that came out of this debate is the christological statement from the
council of Chalcedon,

which too is in your bulletin,
and at the back of our prayerbook for that matter.
The statement declares that Christ is fully human,
and fully divine,
two natures,
in One person.

If we agree with the council of Chalcedon,
then we are required to live our lives a certain way.

For the next few weeks we will be digging deeper into the council of Chalcedon,
and the statement which emerged from it.

We will talk about why the terms in your bulletin are so important,
and how they impact our lives today in how we engage the world.

In closing let me say this,
theology is not a spectator sport!

What we believe about God, the trinity, sin, Jesus Christ etc...
has tremendous ramifications.

Next time someone asks you what you believe about God,
what will you say?

Amen.