



GREATER MOUNT OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

• OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA •

ADULT VBS

FAITH. JUSTICE. WISDOM. LIBERATION.

*Imparting the Word
to Impact the World.*



THEOLOGICAL
CONSTRUCTS



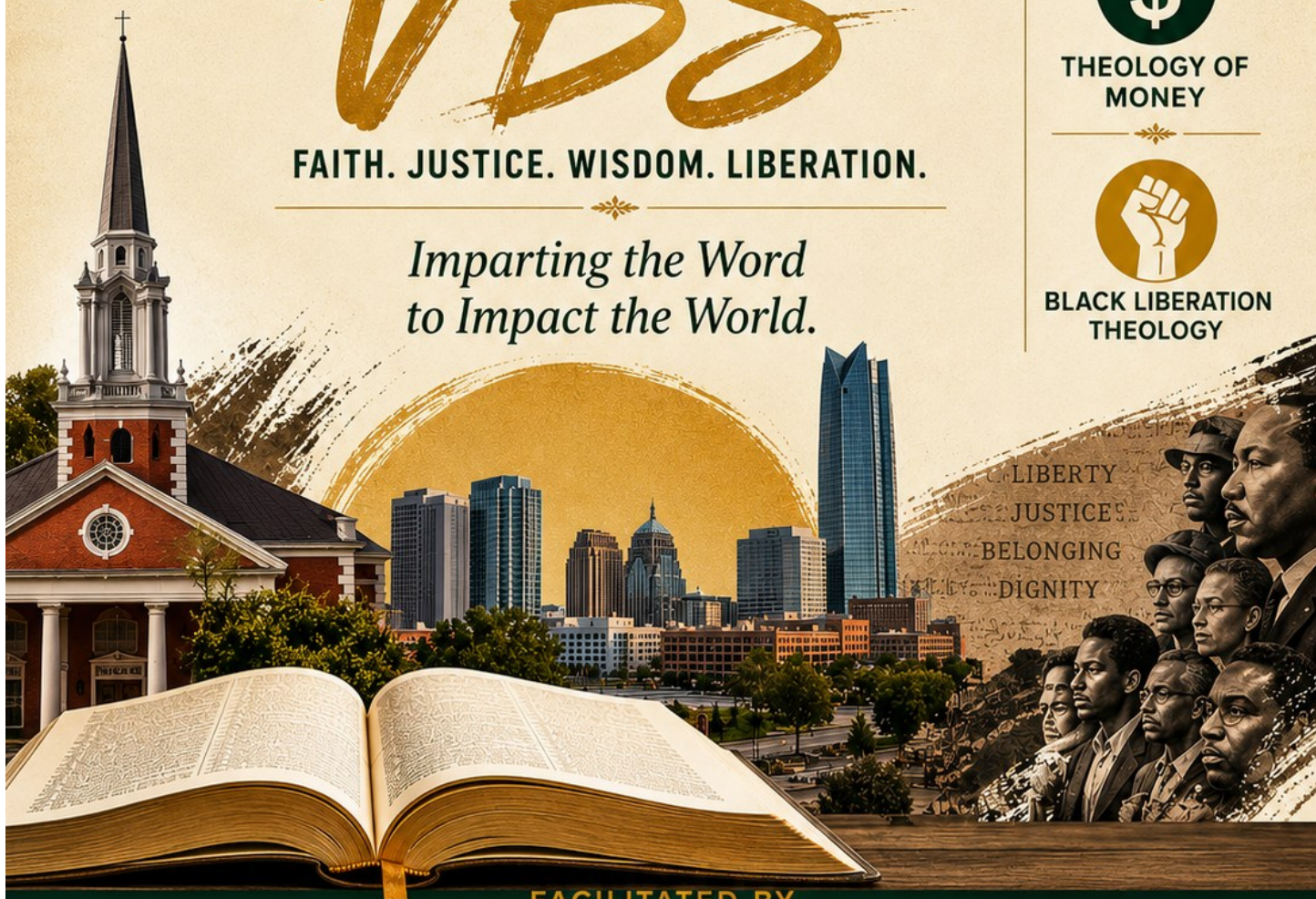
THEOLOGY OF
POLITICS



THEOLOGY OF
MONEY



BLACK LIBERATION
THEOLOGY



FACILITATED BY
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STUDY. DISCERN. DO JUSTICE. LOVE MERCY. WALK HUMBLY.

MICAH 6:8

DAY 1 THEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTS

Theology, in the most basic sense, is the study of God. In the expanded sense, it is how we view the world, shape our lives, and practice our faith and religion. Theology, however, goes beyond religion and can actually examine all reality – the entire universe, consideration of the known and unknown, and all of human history.

In the expanded sense, everyone is a theologian. Anyone who has ever formed a conscious thought about the world in which they live and the phenomenon that governs everything has thought a theological thought. Even if they deny the existence of God, their atheism or agnosticism is actually a theological construct.

In traditional Christian theology, the goal is to center on God as He has revealed Himself in the Bible as the ultimate subject and the foundational source for all that we believe about the supernatural; Jesus Christ as the center of all truth; and the Church. There are several branches of theology that are often codified into four primary divisions:

Biblical Theology - focuses on how God's revelation unfolds chronologically throughout specific biblical books, authors, or eras

Systematic Theology - focuses on core doctrines and organizes the teachings of the bible into logical, coherent categories.

Historical Theology - focuses on how the church and theologians have understood, debated, and interpreted religious beliefs throughout history. It traces the development of doctrine from the early church fathers and the Reformation to modern times, helping believers learn from past successes and controversies.

Practical Theology - focuses on the application of theological truths to everyday life, ministry, and the community. It connects head knowledge to heart and hands, guides our spiritual formation, and instructs believers on how they should function in society.

Practical theology is where the rubber meets the road. It moves us beyond just having biblical knowledge and information, understanding doctrines, or engaging in the academia of church history, and presents us with a charge to live out our faith in everyday life.

Most of us understand the plan of salvation as presented in the Bible, and we know how to be saved, and we have a good indication, based on what the Bible says, of whether or not we are saved.

Most of us believe that God is the creator and sustainer of everything: our world and all it contains, and whatever other universes and worlds may exist. Most of us believe that God created humanity in His own image, gave humanity dominion over the earth, but remained sovereign over everything. God has always been God eternally, and has never stopped being God even momentarily, and will always be God eternally.

Most of us believe that the One whom we call Jesus is, in fact, God in the flesh. We believe that in the incarnation, God Himself became human, but also remained fully God. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life. Jesus came to earth to redeem and reconcile humanity and reveal the will of God.

Most of us believe that Jesus died on the cross and that His shed blood was the atoning payment for all of our sins. Jesus paid the penalty by giving his life for our lives and with that the wages or penalty of sin was and still is death have actually been paid by Jesus.

Most of us believe that by placing our trust in Jesus Christ, as the scripture has said, we have inherited not only eternal life but also the righteousness of Christ. We are justified by faith. The Bible clearly states that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Most people who identify themselves as Christians would say that, for the most part, that is what they believe; it would, in some way, be included in their codified statement of faith if they had one. It is also part of their theological construct.

1. A theological construct is a framework or conceptual model developed to organize, interpret, and explain divine truths and our religious experiences.
2. It helps us as believers to structure spiritual ideas that are sometimes abstract and obscure into understandable doctrines and practical applications.
3. Our theological construct allows us to actually live out our faith in every aspect of our lives.

4. Living out our faith is important and necessary to experience the full abundance of life that Christ provides to all who abide in Him.
5. Theological constructs are usually developed using a combination of four primary sources that form a necessary hierarchy from which understanding flows: Scripture, church tradition, reason, and experience.
6. At the top of the hierarchy is scripture. What the bible says carries the greatest weight in all theological matters
7. The Bible is God's inspired word. It is God-breathed or theopneustos.
2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
8. The bible is the first and final authoritative source, and the only infallible source for all Christian belief and practice.
9. God Himself caused certain particular men to speak and write in such a way that their utterances were, and remain, His utterances through them.
10. What God has said through scripture in the past, He still says to us now in the present.
11. Our theological constructs have to recognize that God's authority is expressed through the authority of Scripture to demand and command, and not just suggest.
12. When we speak of the inspired word of God as first and final authority, we are referring to the canon.
13. The canon of scripture is the official list of texts recognized as divinely inspired and authoritative within a religion.
14. We view the sixty-six books of the bible from Genesis to Revelation as canon, that is, they met certain criteria to be accepted as inspired.
15. The criteria to recognize writing as canon included whether it was widespread in the early church, whether it fit the orthodoxy of the early believers, and whether it was written by an apostle or their close associate.
16. We don't presume that God has not or does not inspire outside of Scripture, but that our greatest authority is in the canon of Scripture we have.
17. Our theological constructs are also formed and influenced by tradition. There are church traditions and local traditions.

18. Church tradition is defined as the unwritten and accumulated teachings, practices, and living experiences passed down within the Christian community.
19. Church traditions are things carried from the time of Christ and the Apostles, such as creeds, liturgies, and styles of church governance.
20. The Catholic and Orthodox churches put a high value on Church Tradition, even elevating it to be equal with Scripture.
21. However, Church Tradition is always subordinate to the canon of Scripture.
22. However, even Protestant churches make errors in how they view local traditions.
23. Local tradition is defined as teachings and practices passed down from one generation to another that also sometimes begin to become sacred and nonnegotiable.
24. Local traditions are really preferences that dictate how a local congregation desires to have church.
25. Local traditions are things like what time the church starts, when communion should be, what the dress code is, what we have always done, and how we've done it. etc.
26. Tradition often speaks when the bible is silent, and often personal preferences attempt to override biblical authority.
27. But tradition is also helpful in keeping us biblically grounded and preventing us from misinterpreting scripture and venturing out into the dangerous theological deep.
28. Tradition allows us to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. (Jude 3)
29. Our theological constructs are formed and influenced by human logic and reason.
30. We utilize the intelligence and wisdom that God gave us to understand divine concepts.
31. We can know God and know His will as He has revealed it to us in His word and through His Spirit by utilizing reason.
32. Reason is what allows us to analyze, articulate, and defend matters of faith, clarify doctrines, and resolve perceived contradictions. (1 Peter 3:15)
33. Our theological constructs are also shaped by experiences, both personal and corporate.
34. In a theological construct, experience refers to subjective and lived realities that involve our emotions, the things that have happened to us, and even our cultural interactions that influence how we see and interpret the divine.

35. Often, what we really believe about God's actions on our behalf is not just what the bible says, and not just what tradition says, and not just what we can wrap our minds around, but often what we have actually experienced. (*Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him.* - Psalm 34:8)

A great illustration of how to build a theological construct appears in Acts 15. A theological and doctrinal crisis had arisen in the church over whether Gentile believers had to be circumcised and follow the Law of Moses to be saved. This sparked the need to construct a theology regarding how salvation works under the New Covenant. At the Jerusalem Council, church leaders developed their theological construct to reach a doctrinal conclusion concerning the matter.

- **Peter's Appealed to Experience:** Peter argued that God had already accepted the Gentiles by giving them the Holy Spirit, concluding: "*But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.*" (Acts 15:11).
- **James offers Biblical Proof:** James framed the experience that Peter spoke of with Old Testament scripture. He quoted the prophet Amos to support the theological construct that God intended to include the Gentiles, aligning their present reality with prophetic scripture "*And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: ¹⁶ 'After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; ¹⁷ So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the LORD who does all these things.*" (Acts 15:15-17).
- **The Final Construct:** The leaders built a theological framework that separated the moral requirements of the Gospel from the ceremonial requirements of the Old Testament Law. They formalized this into a unified doctrine stating that salvation is by grace alone, not through adherence to the Mosaic Law at all. "*Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, ²⁰ but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. ²¹ For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.*" (Acts 15:19-21).

➤ **Modern Relevance:** The Jerusalem Council demonstrates how a theological construct is formed: reading God's Word, observing how it applies to a given situation, and combining scriptural truths into a consistent, overarching framework. This is what believers must do even today to determine how we will live the life we have been saved to live.

Our theological construct should be formed to address every issue and concern that faces us, whether it's an issue in the church, like women in ministry, an issue in our society, like how we should vote, or even an issue of economics, where we should shop, or where we should definitely not shop. All of these are matters of theology, in which what we believe about God, His word, and His intent for us should shape how we live.

DAY 2 BLACK LIBERATION THEOLOGY

And the Lord said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. ⁸ So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. ⁹ Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰ Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." - Exodus 3:7-10

Black liberation theology is a theological construct that interprets the bible through the lived experience of Black people in general, and African Americans in particular. It focuses on liberation from all forms of bondage and injustice, whether social, political, economic, or even religious.

Black Liberation Theology has its modern roots in the Liberation Theology movement that began in the 1960's in South America, which attempted to reconcile the teachings of Christ to the mistreatment of the poor and marginalized people by those in power, and some of its methodologies were developed by Reverend James H. Cone and Reverend Albert Cleage, Jr.,(who coined the term 'Black Liberation Theology'), and others. However, Black Liberation Theology has been a part of the African American diaspora since 1619, when the first enslaved Africans arrived here in what was then the British Colonies. Africans, who already knew God and had received salvation through Jesus Christ, prayed to God, and He often answered with a call to biblical and spiritual resistance, in the tradition of Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, Denmark Vesey, and many others, in different ways.

Black Liberation Theology seeks to understand God's active solidarity with the oppressed, how Jesus sides with the marginalized, and how the Gospel is fundamentally a message of liberation, not only from sin, but from the symptoms of sin, like systemic racism, social injustice, and institutional poverty.

1. Black Liberation Theology is about being able to see ourselves correctly as *Imago Dei*, image bearers of God, wonderfully and fearfully made in His image. (Psalm 139:14)
2. Black Liberation Theology is about countering the false narratives about blackness, African ancestry, and how we relate to God historically.
3. Black Liberation Theology is about restoring the humanity and dignity of those oppressed, and dismantling white supremacy and its derivatives as the standards of the Christian faith.
4. Black Liberation Theology seeks to expose white Christian Nationalism as unbiblical, sinful, and racist.
5. It is an active critique of the ways the traditional white church, and its whitewashed theology, has historically justified, ignored, or failed to address the systemic dehumanization of Black Americans.
6. It views the struggle for racial and economic justice not as separate from religion, but as the active realization of the Christian gospel in the modern world.
7. Black Liberation Theology is a construct that sees God as a liberator who always stands on the side of the marginalized and oppressed.
8. Black Liberation Theology also exposes the marginalization and oppression of those who are marginalized and oppressed.
9. Sometimes people have been in bondage spiritually, mentally, and emotionally for so long that liberation is foreign and frightening, and the oppression is normal.
10. This is a construct that is deeply rooted and connected with the idea that God sets captives free from bondage spiritually, emotionally, economically, and physically.
11. Black Liberation Theology closely identifies the African American struggle with the biblical story of the Hebrews in Egyptian bondage.
12. In Exodus, God is revealed as a God of justice who hears the cries of the enslaved and actively overthrows oppressive imperialistic systems.
13. Black Liberation Theology expresses the deep hope in the God who remembers His people, rescues His people, and redeems His people. (“*And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have **remembered** My covenant. ⁶ Therefore, say to the children of Israel: ‘I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will **rescue** you from their*

*bondage, and I will **redeem** you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. – Exodus 6:5-6)*

14. The Bible repeatedly describes God as one who delivers the needy, who helps those who are helpless, and hears the cries of His people. (*For He will deliver the needy when he cries, The poor also, and him who has no helper. – Psalm 72:12*)
15. In the New Testament, the ministry of Jesus is viewed as the ultimate model for liberation.
16. Jesus centers His mission on breaking the chains of systemic disadvantage.
17. Jesus begins His earthly ministry by declaring that He is the embodiment and fulfillment of Isaiah 61, a liberation prophecy. (Luke 4:21)
18. Jesus says in Luke 4:18-19, “ The Spirit of the LORD *is* upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to *the poor*; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to *the captives* and recovery of sight to *the blind*, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”
19. Christ says Himself that God’s mission is liberation for the poor, the brokenhearted, the captive, the blind, and the oppressed.
20. If liberation is the ministry of Christ, Black Liberation Theology says that it should also be the concern and ministry of Christians.
21. Christians should be concerned about promoting the advancement of the gospel by how we love and uplift others, and not preventing the advancement of the gospel through how we harm, hurt, and hate.
22. We must make a conscious and intentional effort to be who Christ called us to be and represent Him well as His ambassadors.
23. Individually and collectively, the church should stand with Christ and stand for the things of Christ.
24. Our Christianity is not only about our personal holiness but also about societal righteousness, equality, and justice.
25. Black Liberation Theology agrees with Jesus in comparing how we treat others with how we regard Christ, both collectively and individually.
26. When we are in solidarity with the marginalized people, we are in solidarity with Christ.

27. Jesus identifies directly with the poor, the outcast, the marginalized, and the oppressed.
(Matthew 25:44-45)
28. Black Liberation Theology is a call to transformative justice where our faith is not just a belief system but a catalyst to action.
29. Micah 6:8 says, “He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?
30. The practice of religion and having functional faith is a call to action. Isaiah 58:6-7,
*“Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke?
⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor
who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself
from your own flesh?*
31. Lived faith is not just waiting until we all get to heaven, but trusting that God will change things and make life right here and now.
32. David said that he would have fainted unless he believed he would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. (Psalm 27:13)

Suggested Reading

These books can give you a greater insight into Black Liberation Theology

Reverend James H. Cone

God of the Oppressed

Black Theology and Black Power

The Cross and the Lynching Tree

A Black Theology of Liberation: 50th Anniversary Edition

Reverend Howard Thurman

Jesus and the Disinherited

Reverend Albert Cleage, Jr.

The Black Messiah

DAY 3 THEOLOGY AND POLITICS

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. ⁴ For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. ⁵ Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. ⁶ For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. ⁷ Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. – Romans 13:1-7

There are clear commands in the word of God on how we, as believers, should view government. Paul says in Romans 13 that believers should obey and submit to the government because the government is:

- Instituted by God. (Rom. 13:1)
- To be a servant of God. (Rom. 13:4)
- To be an administrator of justice. (Rom. 13:4)
- Given for our good (Rom. 13:4)

However, governments can never bring about perfect justice. Sometimes, governments are the perpetrators of horrific evil. So, how should one react and respond to a government that is corrupt and evil?

1. Submission to government authority should never be blind.
2. Biblically, we are to obey God over man. (*But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men. – Acts 5:29*)
3. When a government mandates actions that contradict God's moral law, believers are obligated to practice civil disobedience.
4. The Hebrew midwives in Egypt disobeyed the Pharaoh because they feared God. (*But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive. – Exodus 1:17*)

5. When xenophobia, racism, and envy caused political shenanigans in Babylon, despite Darius' dumb decree, Daniel prayed to God as he always had. (*Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. – Daniel 6:10*)
6. There is a personal and communal responsibility for believers to impact the world and convert it to the kingdom of Christ.
7. We do this not by attempting to make Christianity the religion of the state, but by carrying out the great commission to make citizens of the state, citizens of the kingdom of Christ.
8. A lived, practiced faith impacts every area of a believer's life, and this is especially true in politics.
9. Whether we vote or not, and how we vote, reveals our actual theological construct much more than our stated declarations of faith.

Jesus says in Matthew 7:21-23, “*Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”*

The context of this statement is from a warning about hypocrites and false prophets, who were really wolves in sheep's clothing. These people were so-called religious leaders who claimed to speak for God but were actually leading people away from God's purpose. And the evidence of their deception was in their actions, their fruit, or the result of their actions revealed who and what they were.

10. We often see political duplicity and religious gullibility played out, especially in partisan politics.
11. The political parties have attempted to conscript the church and procure her for their own purposes.
12. Believers should be engaged in the political process, but not be used by politicians.

13. Because all politics and politicians are imperfect and flawed by sin, there is no party of Christ.
 14. We should understand that politics is about compromise, but we can't make compromises of faith.
 15. There are theological litmus tests that we should use as the lens through which to view every policy and politician.
 16. We have a prophetic mantle and an obligation to speak truth to power and stand on biblical truth.
 17. There are some things that my theological construct forces me to consider regarding politics, policies, and politicians.
 18. Do they dishonor God by oppressing people and taking advantage of and/or causing others' misfortune?
 19. Ignoring or exploiting the needy isn't merely social injustice; it is a direct affront to God. (*He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, but he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.* – Proverbs 14:31)
- **Withholding fair wages.** - *You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. -Leviticus 19:13*
 - **Exploiting, defrauding, or taking advantage of others' weaknesses.** - *Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, Who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, "Bring wine, let us drink!"*
² *The Lord God has sworn by His holiness: "Behold, the days shall come upon you When He will take you away with fishhooks, and your posterity with fishhooks.*
³ *You will go out through broken walls, each one straight ahead of her, and you will be cast into Harmon," Says the Lord. - Amos 4:1-3*

- **Refusing to help when it is in one’s power to do so.** - *But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?* - **1 John 3:17**

- **Oppressing the widow and the orphan provokes God’s wrath.** *“You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. ²³ If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; ²⁴ and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.”* – **Exodus 22:22-24**

- **Leaders will be judged for their oppression of the people.** *The LORD stands up to plead, and stands to judge the people. ¹⁴ The LORD will enter into judgment With the elders of His people and His princes: “For you have eaten up the vineyard; The plunder of the poor is in your houses. ¹⁵ What do you mean by crushing My people And grinding the faces of the poor?” Says the Lord GOD of hosts.* – **Isaiah 3:14-15**

LET’S DISCUSS

What should be our theological response to some of the political hot issues of the day?

- ∇ Why or why not should we have a theocracy and not attempt to have separation of church and state in the government?

- ∇ Should Christians oppose or support mandated prayer in public schools?

∇ Should the government be able to suppress the truth and restrict and revise historical facts?

∇ Should the government be involved in controlling the reproductive rights of citizens?

∇ What should be the theological response to the immigration crisis?

∇ What should be the Christian action concerning Capital Punishment?

∇ What is the theological response to climate control and environmental issues?

∇ How should believers respond to gun control measures?

For everyone, our theology will shape our politics, or our politics will shape our theology; they are inextricably intertwined. The challenge is to be so theologically engaged that our desire to follow and please God supersedes, surpasses, and permeates every aspect of our lives. Our theological construct should shape not only our religious practices but also our politics and worldview. Sometimes, it is our political understanding and engagement that becomes the fruit-bearing that we are known for. Our politics often becomes one of the most visible ways that we let our lights shine.

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. – 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

DAY 4 THEOLOGY AND MONEY

A proper theology has God at the center and the Bible at the forefront of all our choices and decisions in every aspect of life. God and our desire to please Him and live for Him should be primary, not peripheral. God's rule over our lives and all of creation is what the Kingdom of God is about.

Jesus talked about the **Kingdom of God** or the Kingdom of Heaven more than any other subject. However, the second most common topic that Jesus spoke about was money and possessions. He talked about money more than He taught heaven, hell, and prayer combined. Jesus taught that money is a profound spiritual test rather than just an economic tool.

*“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. – **Matthew 6:24***

1. The fact is that our theology is most often affirmed or betrayed in matters of personal finance, because that is the area where life intersects most frequently. Money matters come up daily.
2. When we speak of theology and money, we are talking about how our belief in God, or what we believe about God, impacts and dictates economics and finances.
3. In one sense, theology and economics are more political than personal. At the macro level, we are concerned with the politics and policies that shape national and global economies.
4. We must consider theologically the impact of the acquisition and/or exploitation of natural resources, the distribution of wealth and how we address disparities and poverty.
5. Our view of God and how we respond to His will for not only our lives but also to His purpose for all of creation requires us to personally consider the broad view of economics.
6. A broad view requires us to be theologically mindful about how goods and services are made, sold, and used.
7. We need to ask what our part is in the economics of ecology and conservation, or the economics of wages and labor?

8. The theology of money is about the economy, but it is also, and maybe more, about our personal finances.
9. Finance, broadly speaking, is about how we manage the money we possess.
10. Our theological construct, what we believe about God, should be the catalyst for every financial decision.
11. There are only five things we can do with money: give it away, spend it, save it, invest it, or waste it.
12. Our theology concerning money will help us avoid being wasteful or frivolous with how we manage the finances in our control.
13. Many times, believers limit God's direction regarding money to only the Sunday morning offering plate.
14. A biblical theology concerning finances definitely includes our giving, tithes, and offerings, but it is more than just the act of giving.
15. Our theology should foster and encourage our generosity. Jesus never measured the amount given, but the sacrifice made. (Luke 21:1-4)
16. Our giving is an indication of our connection to and trust in God, but not the only indicator.
17. Our theology should dictate if we spend, how we spend, and even where we spend and with whom we do business.
 - Does the business promote and practice honesty and integrity? (Proverbs 11:1)
 - Does the business have fair labor practices? (James 5:4)
 - Does the business help the needy and vulnerable in the community? (Deuteronomy 15:10-11)
18. Our theology should, in the same manner, dictate how, where, and with whom we save and invest for the future.
19. When Jesus says in Matthew 6 not to lay up treasures on earth, it wasn't a prohibition against saving, but a warning to prioritize eternal spiritual worth over temporal material wealth.
20. The bible encourages savings and being prepared for the future. (Proverbs 6:6-11; 21:5; 21:20)
21. The bible encourages investing wisely. (Ecclesiastes 11:1-2)

- 22. The bible encourages paying the bills that you owe. (Romans 13:8)
- 23. The bible encourages staying out of debt. (Proverbs 22:7)

LET'S DISCUSS

- ∇ Why is money often the most difficult discipline in many people's walk of faith?

- ∇ What are ways that we can be better in living out our faith financially

WHAT TO DO WITH MONEY

- ∇ Honor God with tithes and offerings. (Proverbs 3:9-10)
 - Invest in ministry. (Galatians 6:6)
 - Support those who are struggling. (Proverbs 19:17)
- ∇ Pay your bills and provide for your family. (1 Timothy 5:8, Psalm 37:21)
 - Plan for the future. (Proverbs 13:22)
 - Manage debt responsibly. (Romans 13:8, Luke 14:28)
- ∇ Live life to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:17)
 - Practice contentment. (Proverbs 10:22)
 - Enjoy the fruit of your labor. (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20)

