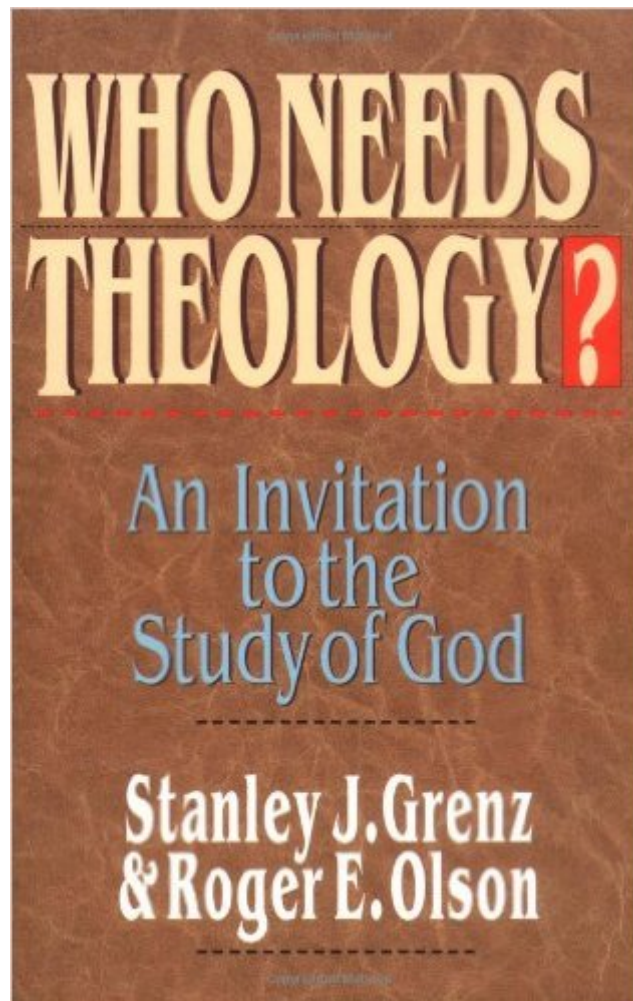


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Who Needs Theology?: An Invitation To The Study Of God



Synopsis

To many Christians theology is something alien, overly intellectual and wholly unappealing. Even seminary students are known to balk at the prospect of a course on theology. Yet theology--most simply, the knowledge of God--is essential to the life and health of the church. In this short introduction, Stanley Grenz and Roger Olson, two theologians who care deeply about the witness of ordinary Christians and the ministry of the church, show what theology is, what tools theology uses, why every believer (advanced degrees or not) is a theologian and how the theological enterprise can be productive and satisfying. Their clear, easily understood book is ideal for students, church study groups and individual Christians who want to strengthen understanding, belief and commitment by coming to know God more fully.

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Customer Reviews

One of the reasons I enrolled in seminary back in 1999 was to cure my theological ignorance. I was tired of being misled by autocratic pastors and high-sounding authors. After I began school, it didn't take long for me to see how naive I was about God. Although it raised all sorts of new questions, a seminary education was worth the time and money. That's because it forced me to continually ask myself the question used for this review's title, which Grenz and Olson claim is theology's fundamental query (94). However, not every Christian can attend a Bible college (or even wants to). Even so, he or she should have 1) a well-defined theology, and 2) critical thinking skills. "Who Needs Theology?" helps encourage the believer along this path. It is the authors' desire that Christians leave behind credulity and the half-truths of "folk" theology in favor of a more profound

lay, ministerial, or even professional level of theology. Of course, there are some pitfalls of theological study. A student can neglect their heart and embrace what the authors call "academic" theology, which is so cognitive that it has no practical worth. However, we should not be afraid of such detours. They can be avoided by remaining in community with other Christians and maintaining a personal relationship with God. "Who Needs Theology?" isn't overly dry and dense. The authors write in an accessible manner, and even use examples from the "Peanuts" comic strip to drive home some theological points. Their explanation of the differences between Christian dogma, doctrine, and opinion helped me understand these categories better. Practical advice is saved for the last chapter, where study resources and methods are recommended.

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