



GROUP GUIDE – MODULE TWO

DEVOTIONAL

Read 2 Timothy 2:15

In this verse, Paul is encouraging his young protégé Timothy to do theology and do it well. He tells Timothy to “be diligent” (or “work hard” or “do your best” etc. depending on your translation). He is asking Timothy to be willing to do whatever is necessary, even though it might not be easy. And the purpose for this is so that he would present himself to God as one who is proven – a workman with no cause to be ashamed. And then Paul adds a phrase that describes the characteristic activity that would ensure Timothy of being approved and avoiding shame. Timothy should rightly, accurately handle the word of truth.

In giving this command to Timothy, Paul not only communicates the importance of accurately handling the word, but also implies that it is not automatic. It is entirely possible for Timothy (and us) to wrongly, inaccurately work with God’s Word, and therefore to be ashamed and unapproved. For this reason, it is necessary that we take this task seriously and work skillfully as well as hard.

The material for this module is intended to help us to fulfill this task well. There are attitudes and tools and skills that will help us to do theology well, and to avoid certain pitfalls. If we learn and practice these things, it will be a benefit, not only for our own life, but for the people around us. And we will be able to present something to God that will please Him, and not something of which we will be ashamed.

Please, then, prayerfully consider how you can be an approved worker. In what ways can you improve your effort? Why will it be worth the effort? In what ways do you perceive that you lack skill and practice? What do you hope that this module’s material will provide to help with this lack? What difference do you hope it will make? And what things can you do to grow in this area?

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this module is on how to do theology for yourself. You will learn practical skills and approaches to use in your own study. Some of the topics to be covered in this module are the basis and authority for all theology, the various branches of theology that connect God’s revelation to practical application, some strategies for faithful Bible study, strategies for theological thinking and application, and then specific processes and skills to do theological work. There may seem to be a lot of material to be learned. But it is most important to see that it is all connected together because God is the foundation of it all. Ideally, you will understand all the concepts and begin to practice all the skills. The material for this module is meant to provide tools that will be used (with increasing skill the more they are used) in the coming modules ahead. And hopefully you will see the benefit and commit to use these skills and approaches for a lifetime of theological investigation.

MODULE TWO OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this module, the student will:

- Follow a systematic procedure for investigation and application of theological issues.
- Demonstrate a commitment to the primary functional authority of Scripture in all theological work.

MODULE TWO OUTCOMES

Cognitive Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, the student will:

- Describe the different branches of theological investigation
- Articulate the logical relationship and priority of the various theological disciplines
- Apply exegetically responsible procedures for theological investigation
- Describe a flexible process for theological investigation and application
- Follow a detailed and/or an abridged process to investigate a theological topic

Affective Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, the student will:

- Prioritize revelation from God over human reason, tradition and experience in doing theology.
- Appreciate regular Bible and theological study
- Value exegetical responsibility in all theological investigation
- Integrate intellectual investigation with appropriate affections and actions
- Value making theology practicable and actually putting it into practice

MODULE TWO CHECKLIST

Devotion	<input type="checkbox"/> Devotion Reflection & Discussion
Preparation	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Kopic pp. 41-121 <input type="checkbox"/> Find resources & Begin to research term project <input type="checkbox"/> Watch the Assigned Video Lectures
Reflection	<input type="checkbox"/> How to Do Theology Reflection & Discussion
Research & Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> Term Project - Part 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Theological Method Paper & Discussion
Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Review Slides <input type="checkbox"/> Review Quiz
Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Reflection & Discussion Questions

MODULE TWO ACTIVITIES

ONE: DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

Instructions:

The student will read and consider the devotional above. The student will then reflect and write on the following:

- What does the devotional say about the character and necessary activities of doing theology well? What would a lifestyle of good theology be like for a modern Christian?
- What kind of personal growth steps can you take to become a better theologian, and how do you hope this course can help?

The student will be prepared to discuss the devotional with the group and to encourage one another with their findings and insights.

TWO: VIDEO LECTURES

Instructions:

Students will interact with the video lectures on the course website. The student should actively engage with each presentation and not just passively watch. Blank Lecture notes are available on the course website to help the student engage with the Video Lectures.

THREE: TEXTBOOK READING

Instructions:

The student will read and interact with the assigned portions of the course textbook. The readings are listed on the Reading Schedule for module 2, which is posted in a separate document on the course website. Each Reading Schedule has two columns:

- The first column (labeled “Required Reading”) lists those portions of the textbooks which are necessary information for this module.
- The second column (labeled “Supplemental Reading”) lists those portions of the textbooks which are not absolutely necessary for this module, but which provide very helpful, supplemental information, should the student wish to get more out of this module.

In addition, the reading schedule document contains a study guide for all the required reading sections. The student may use this guide to aid their understanding and retention of the textbook material.

FOUR: HOW TO DO THEOLOGY REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

Instructions:

This discussion will help you process the large amount of material from this module. You will interact with different aspects of the process of moving from the Bible to application in theology and form your own skills and understanding of the whole. Ideally, you will demonstrate understanding of the separate theological disciplines and the theological process and formulate these thoughts in a way that would help you explain them to others. Ideally, you will thoughtfully interact in more depth with at least some aspect of the theory underlying theology, some aspect of the process of Bible study, and some aspect of application.

Choose 2-5 items that most stood out to you from this module's material. For each, reflect and write out a personal response which covers at least the following points:

- Describe the content and meaning of each item.
- Why did this item stand out to you as important for developing your theology?
- In what ways were you informed and/or challenged?
- How will this impact your discipleship and ministry?

The student should feel free to respond in whatever way is most appropriate for how they have been informed/challenged by the course material.

The student will be prepared to discuss their How to Do Theology response with the group and to encourage one another with their findings and insights.

FIVE: TERM PROJECT – PART TWO

Instructions:

This activity will continue the project that will span all five modules of this course. For this module's activity, you will refine the general category of topic into a specific theological question.

Ideally, your question should meet the following criteria:

- It is small enough in scope to do well in the limited scope of this course.
- It is a theological question that is directly addressed in the Bible as opposed to a historical or application question that is one or more steps removed from the Bible.
- It is not a simple yes or no question. Or if it asks to decide between two or more options, it inquires about the Biblical reasons for choosing one over the other(s).
- The question is clear and precise enough to give clear direction to your research, and to set limits so that your research stays on track. In other words, your question will help define when you have successfully answered the question.

Briefly write out the specific question which you will research. Double check that it meets the criteria and gives you direction for your research. Keep your question handy for reference when working on the related assignments in future modules.

The Group leader may ask each student to submit their question for comment, critique and suggestions before continuing with the next parts of the term project.

SIX: PERSONAL THEOLOGICAL METHOD PAPER

Instructions:

The goal of this activity is for you to design a process of investigating a theological question that is personally tailored for yourself – your unique needs and abilities. The student should demonstrate significant interaction with the course material without just restating it. The student should think through the process asking “How should I do this and why?” and give evidence of thoughtfulness in making the process relevant and workable in their own life. This process should be flexible enough to cover different issues while comprehensive enough to give definite direction how it should be done. This process should demonstrate how the student will understand, connect and apply the ancient truth of the Bible with their own life and ministry.

The student will write out a paper describing their personal process for investigation of a theological question or topic. And ensure that the following points are addressed:

- An outline of the process, breaking it down into distinct steps.
- An explanation of what each step is intended to accomplish and a description of the activities the student will do in each step.
- An explanation of the relationship between the steps and the reason the student has put the steps in this particular order
- A description of the desired outcome(s) of the process as a whole, and what the student desires to accomplish by following this process.

The Student should feel free to present this process in whatever manner is most beneficial for the student to use it as an ongoing guide and template for their own theological study (while still communicating clearly and fulfilling the guidelines of this activity)

The Student will be prepared to discuss their Personal Theological Method with the group and to encourage one another with their findings and insights.

SEVEN: REVIEW SLIDES

Instructions:

The student should take advantage of the review slides on the course website in order to help commit the course material to memory. The review slides are a summary of the key ideas of each course lecture put into memorable form to aid memorization. The student should not just attempt to memorize the summaries, but also to use the summaries as a framework to understand and learn the nature of the Theological task. The group leader may choose to use the review slides as the basis of a group review, possibly including a game/competition format.

EIGHT: REVIEW QUIZ

Instructions:

The student will complete the review quiz on the course website as a learning and review experience. This will give the student a good assessment of how well they have learned the course material. The quiz will primarily cover material from the Video Lectures, but material from the Textbook Reading may be included.

No notes or study materials should be used while completing the quiz. Because the quiz is randomly generated, it includes different questions each time. Therefore, it may be profitably taken more than once.

NINE: APPLICATION REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Instructions:

The student will thoughtfully consider and write in response to each of the reflection questions listed on the course website. The purpose of this activity is to help the student connect the course material with their own life and ministry. The student should prayerfully think through the difference the course material can make in their personal context.

The student will be prepared to discuss their response to the discussion questions with the group and to encourage one another with their applications and insights. The group may share encouragement and accountability in how to apply these insights.