

“Petrus van Mastricht’s remarkable *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, now being published in its first full English translation, is marked by a methodological program wherein each theological topic is treated in the fourfold order of exegetical foundation, dogmatical exposition, elenctical elucidation, and practical application. Here we discover one of the richest fruits of the Dutch *Nadere Reformatie* for the history of Reformed theology, combining scholastic rigor with earnest piety. Now in English, this work promises to open new avenues into an understanding of Continental Reformed thought, even as it offers theological wisdom for the contemporary church.”

—J. Mark Beach, professor of doctrinal and ministerial studies,
Mid-America Reformed Seminary, Dyer, Indiana

“A new appreciation has grown in our time for the great post-Reformation theologians of the Reformed tradition, and Petrus van Mastricht was a towering giant among them. Jonathan Edwards thought he was better than Francis Turretin! Mastricht’s magnum opus *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, however, is virtually unknown and unquoted today, accessible only to competent and determined Latinists. This translation does for Mastricht what Giger and Dennison did for Turretin—it provides a readable, critical, annotated English translation that puts Mastricht within easy reach of pastors, seminarians, and other students of theology. A sound and experiential divine, who (it may surprise you to learn) interacts with and criticizes Kabbalah and Islam as well as Descartes and Socinians, Mastricht is always concerned to show that true theology is practical and never merely notional. Truth is unto godliness.”

—Ligon Duncan, chancellor and CEO, John E. Richards
Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology,
Reformed Theological Seminary

“The very title of this work, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*, indicates why, three centuries ago, Petrus van Mastricht’s work appealed to Scottish ministers who studied under him or read his theology. Not least of these was his student James Hog, who would later famously republish *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. In making van Mastricht’s classic available in English for a new generation of students, pastors, and scholars, the Dutch Reformed Translation Society and Reformation Heritage Books are giving a great gift to the Christian church as a whole, and to students, pastors, and scholars in particular.”

—Sinclair B. Ferguson, Chancellor’s Professor of Systematic Theology,
Reformed Theological Seminary, and teaching fellow,
Ligonier Ministries

“Translating Petrus van Mastricht’s *Theoretico-practica theologia* is a courageous endeavor that deserves respect. This large book, a unique synthesis of theoretical and practical aspects of theology, is an important specimen of seventeenth-century Reformed thought and piety. Complete editions have been available for a long time, but only in Latin (1682–1724) and in a Dutch translation (1749–1750). None of these texts are as informative as the present English translation; based on the Latin original, it keeps an eye on the eighteenth-century Dutch translation and provides ample background information.”

—Aza Goudriaan, associate professor of historical theology,
Free University of Amsterdam

“It is reckoned by many that the Reformed faith came to its richest expression in the writings of the Dutch theologians of the seventeenth century. Among these the theoretical-practical theology of Petrus van Mastricht is a foremost production. Jonathan Edwards claimed that it ‘was much better than any other book in the world, excepting the Bible, in my opinion.’ Its English translation and publication is a notable achievement.”

—Paul Helm, professor of the history and philosophy
of religion, emeritus, King’s College, London

“With each translation of the formative Reformed theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries comes the possibility of our churches being renewed by forgotten treasures. This is one of those gold mines. So important is van Mastricht that even Descartes felt obliged to respond to his critiques and Jonathan Edwards drew deeply from the well of his *Theoretical-Practical Theology*. It is a distinct pleasure to recommend this remarkable gem.”

—Michael Horton, J. Gresham Machen Professor of Systematic
Theology and Apologetics, Westminster Seminary California

“The release of this publication is one of the most important events in contemporary scholarship. Mastricht was the favorite theologian of Jonathan Edwards, the preeminent American religious mind. So Mastricht was not just one of the most significant Reformed thinkers; he also exercised inordinate influence on ‘America’s theologian.’ All scholars and readers interested in Reformed theology and the inner workings of Edwards’s mind will want to procure this series.”

—Gerald McDermott, Anglican Professor of Divinity at
Beeson Divinity School and coauthor of
The Theology of Jonathan Edwards

“What if you could have a systematic theology that approached something like Turretin’s precision and Brakel’s devotion while, by design, helping men preach better? It would look like Mastricht. This has long been my favorite system of theology, and I have never been so eager to endorse and promote a book.”

—Ryan M. McGraw, Morton H. Smith Professor of Systematic Theology, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

“Scholars and students alike should welcome this translation of Mastricht’s *Theoretico-practica theologia*. Mastricht’s work represents the full achievement of the Reformed orthodox theological program of developing an exegetical, doctrinal, elenctic or polemical, and practical approach to Christian doctrine. Whereas other theologies of the era, like Brakel’s *Christian’s Reasonable Service* or Turretin’s *Institutes*, embody one or two of these emphases, Mastricht provides the full spectrum of Reformed orthodox thought and does so on a highly detailed and carefully defined level. The translation is a significant achievement.”

—Richard A. Muller, senior fellow, Junius Institute for Digital Reformation Research; P. J. Zondervan Professor of Historical Theology, Emeritus, Calvin Theological Seminary

“Any serious student of Reformed theology needs to sit at the feet of Petrus van Mastricht. The challenge has been that to do so you needed to know Latin or Dutch. Thanks to the herculean efforts of the folks at the Dutch Reformed Translation Society and Reformation Heritage Books, English readers can now learn the art of ‘living for God through Christ.’”

—Stephen J. Nichols, president of Reformation Bible College and chief academic officer of Ligonier Ministries

“Van Mastricht is one of the greatest of the Reformed Orthodox, exerting a profound influence on subsequent theologians, including Jonathan Edwards. His grasp of the tradition, his ability to interact with contemporary issues, and his careful articulation of orthodoxy exemplify the best of Protestant theology after the Reformation. Yet the lack of an English translation has meant that he has been known more by reputation than by content in the Anglophone world. Here at last is an English translation which will allow a whole new audience of pastors, theologians, and laypeople to draw once again on this profound theological source.”

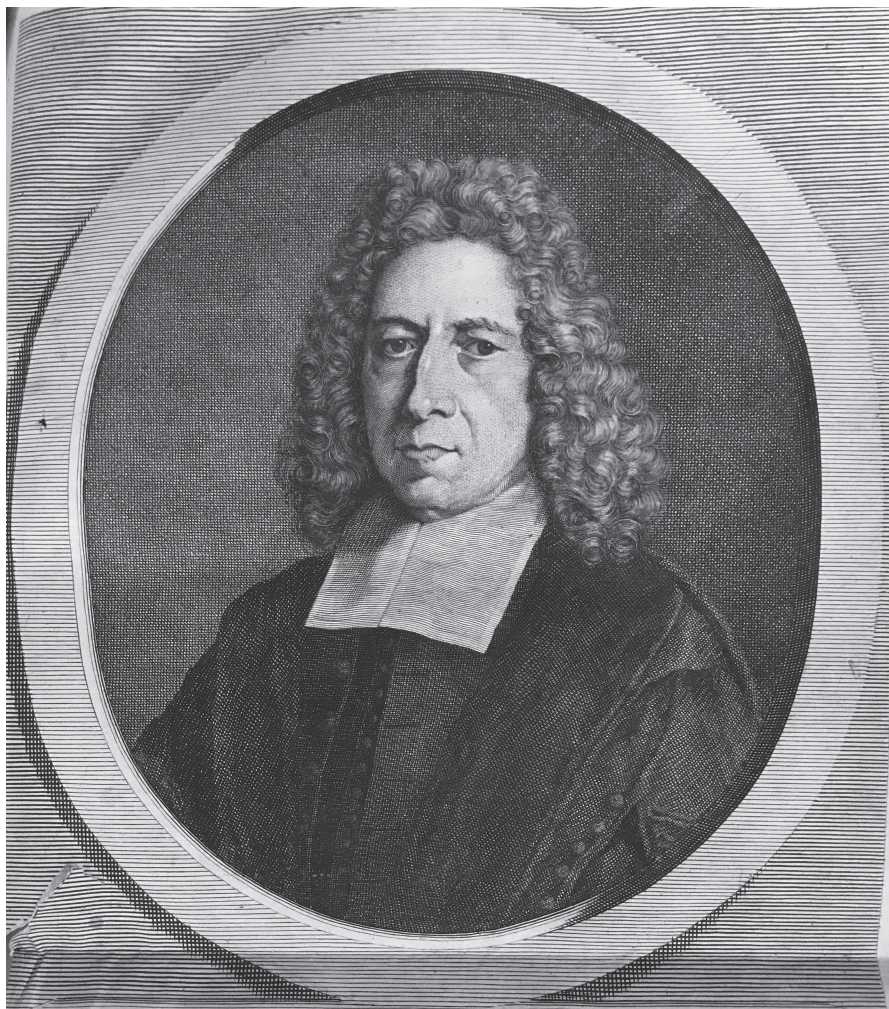
—Carl R. Trueman, professor of biblical and religious studies, Grove City College

“Mastricht’s magnum opus is suited for the school (scholastic) in its definitions, divisions, brevity, and clarity; suited for wider instruction in its frequent recourse to catechetical interrogation and response; and especially suited for truth and godliness in its decidedly biblical-exegetical foundations and eminently spiritual applications. In his manual Mastricht holds together—and yet carefully distinguishes—what many before and after him are prone to separate. Developed when Reformed instruction for the ministry of the gospel was in full flower, the result is a deeply gratifying and wholistic account of Christian theology as ‘the doctrine of living for God through Christ.’”

—Theodore G. Van Raalte, professor of ecclesiology and associate librarian at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary

Theoretical-Practical Theology

Volume 1: Prolegomena



P E T . V A N M A S T R I C T .
PHILOSOPH. ET THEOL. DOCT. ET PROFESSOR,
in Academijs: Francofurt. ad Oderam, Duisburg. et Ultraiectionâ.

ΣΥΝΟΛ
*Orar a ἀρχῆ; ῥότῃ. donalōs
ἐστῖ.*

Theoretical-Practical Theology

Volume 1: Prolegomena

by
Petrus van Mastricht

Translated by Todd M. Rester
Edited by Joel R. Beeke



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CHAPTER ONE

The Nature of Theology

Teach and exhort these things. If anyone teaches a different doctrine, and it does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the doctrine that is according to godliness, he is puffed up, knowing nothing.

—1 Timothy 6:2–3

The first of the prolegomena of theology concerns the nature of theology.

I. We will demonstrate our theoretical-practical theology, consistent with the nature of any discipline, in two parts: the prolegomena and the system. Thus, with respect to the prolegomena, three are set forth in the first book: the nature, rule, and distribution of theology. And since the nature of something is not made known to us in any way more clearly than in its exact definition, which presupposes that which is defined (*definitum*),¹ in this chapter, after a preliminary discussion of the method of teaching theology, we will contemplate the

1. The issues involved in the distinction are found in, among others: Aristotle's discussion of "first principles" or "basic truths," definition, and demonstration, Aristotle, *The Organon: Posterior Analytics | Topica* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), 4.1–10; Boethius in *De Topicis Differentiis* in Migne, *Patrologia Latina (PL)*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris, 1841–1855), 64.1173–1216, for a critical English translation with notes and commentary, see Boethius, *De Topicis Differentiis*, trans. Eleonore Stump (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978); also note Stump's essay, "Dialectic and Boethius's *De Topicis differentiis*," 179–204; see "The eight properties of the definitum and of the definition" in Jean Buridan, *Summulae de dialectica: An Annotated Translation with a Philosophical Introduction*, trans. Gyula Klima (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001), 8.2.1. There is a broad history of scholarship, discussion, and debate on how one correlates the necessary and accidental attributes in the *definitio* and the *definitum* as it correlates to logical extension and comprehension, especially as to whether these are *in ipsa re* or simply *in nostra cognitione*. It is sufficient for our purposes to state that a definition is the criteria of predication or a list of essential, delimiting attributes, and a *definitum* is that to which the definition applies. In short, the underlying reality is the *definitum* and the terminological criteria is the *definitio*. In this chapter, Mastricht engages the classical distinction between the definition and the thing defined, that is, the *definitio* and its *definitum*. The Dutch translation seeks to convey the distinction with the terms *beschryve* and *beschryving*.

definitum, which is theoretical-practical Christian theology,² and then its definition by which it is “the doctrine of living for God through Christ.” We will lay as the foundation for all these things the exegesis of the aforementioned text, 1 Timothy 6:2–3.

The Exegetical Part

It is built upon the text.

II. In this text, the apostle, who is about to put the finishing touch on this epistle, gives Timothy a most serious admonition regarding true and false theology: encourage the former and flee the latter. In this the following points are clear:

- A. A certain exhortation concerning the good that must be pursued: “teach and exhort these things.”³ In this two things are shown:
 1. The subject encouraged,⁴ namely, “these things”⁵—which is to say, “those things that I have taught you, not only in the immediately preceding words, but throughout this entire epistle, and indeed throughout the entire course of my ministry, while I declared the entirety of sacred theology, as much with my living voice as in my writing” (see Acts 20:27). Here the whole of Christian theology is commended to Timothy, which is indicated not only by the antithesis in the following phrase (“if anyone should teach otherwise”),⁶ but also by the parallel of 2 Timothy 1:13.
 2. The duty of exhortation,⁷ which concerns how theology must be related, is twofold, namely:
 - a. He should “teach,”⁸ that is, he should inform the intellect, in part by the exposition of true dogmas and in part by the refutation of false ones.

2. Given the interplay and discussions throughout medieval logic up to Mastricht’s time on the nature of the relationship between the *definitio* and the *definitum*, for lack of a better term in English for “that which is defined,” *definitum* will be utilized as a technical term from this point forward.

3. ταῦτα διδάσχε καὶ παρακάλει

4. παραινετικόν

5. ταῦτα

6. εἰ τις ἕτεροδιδασκαλεῖ

7. παραινέσεως

8. δίδασκε

b. He should “exhort,”⁹ that is, by moving the will, so that what the intellect perceives is carried over into practice, for it is the chief end of theology and its highest apex. For the root word παρακαλεῖν means to call someone to his duty. And since I chiefly call someone in order to rouse him from his lethargy, to spur him on when he is sluggish, to lead him with gentle words, or to comfort him in his grieving, so then the word frequently means “I exhort,” “I plead,” and “I comfort.” And the “Paraclete”¹⁰ is the one who does all these things (John 14:16). Johann Tarnov says in his *Four Books of Biblical Exercises*, “All these sorts of things breathe the spirit of praxis, yet at this point one should note that the twin duty the apostle desires to be carried out concerning the same object is plural in number: ταῦτα, ‘these things.’ That is, one should point out that theory and praxis must be conjoined not only in the entire body of theology, in such a way that these two, as it were, should constitute the two essential parts of theology, but also in each of its integral parts, in such a way that each article of theology has its own theory as well as its own praxis.”¹¹

B. An admonition concerning fleeing evil, namely, false teachers and false doctrines. Here the apostle notes three things:

1. False doctrine, of which he teaches four chief criteria¹² by which one may distinguish it from true doctrine:
 - a. False doctrine teaches something erroneous,¹³ that is, it teaches something different or in a different manner than what he in fact personally taught along with the other apostles. That is, false doctrine is whatever is contrary to the apostles and the prophets (Isa. 8:20; Eph. 2:20; Gal. 1:8–9; 6:16).

9. Παρακάλει

10. παράκλητος

11. See Johann Tarnov, *D. T. O. M. A. Johannis Tarnovii...Exercitationum biblicarum libri quatuor, quorum III. Miscellaneorum Et IV. Dissertationum: in quibus verus et genuinus sensus locorum Scripturæ multorum ex verbo Dei, textuq[ue] authentico diligentius inquiritur ac defenditur; Cum Indicibus* (Lipsiae: Ritzschius, 1640).

12. κριτήρια

13. ἔτεροδιδασκαλεῖ

- b. It does not remain in the things they taught¹⁴ (the Vulgate: “it does not rest”),¹⁵ that is, it changes them by adding to them or subtracting from them (Deut. 4:1–2; 12:32; Rev. 22:18–19).
- c. It fails to teach the sound words of Christ or about Christ. This occurs either when it simply does not teach Christ as the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24) or, if it does teach Christ, when it does not do so soundly, but by peddling the word (2 Cor. 2:17), whether concerning his person, his offices, or his benefits.
- d. It does not deliver a doctrine that is “according to godliness.” By contrast¹⁶ to these points, Paul teaches a careful definition of true theology, in which:
 - i. The genus is “doctrine” because it ought to be taught, by appropriation (John 6:45), while not only any other kind of science but even natural theology is rather learned than taught. And it ought to be taught, I say, not only by men but also by God, not only externally by the Word but also internally by the Spirit, and for this reason let us listen as those taught by the Lord (Isa. 54:13).¹⁷
 - ii. The difference is in the words “according to godliness.”¹⁸ You might call it the doctrine of rightly worshiping God, which is elsewhere expressed synonymously¹⁹ as living for God through Christ (Rom. 6:11), for which reason theology is called “the word of life” (Acts 5:20). Therefore, it appears that Christian theology is best defined as the doctrine of living for God through Christ. Several things will be said about this in their places.
2. False teachers: “He is puffed up, knowing nothing,” and so forth (1 Tim. 6:4).
3. The fruits and effects of both false doctrines and false teachers: it is from them that envy, contentions, and the like occur, concerning which we have no need to say more in this place.

14. Μὴ προσέρχεται

15. *non acquiescat*

16. κατ' ἀντίθεσιν

17. למורֵי יְהוָה

18. κατ' ἐυσέβειαν

19. συνονύμως

FIRST THEOREM—The Method of Theology

The Dogmatic Part

Theology must be taught in a certain order.

III. From what has been said, it is apparent by way of introduction, that theology must be taught according to a certain method, and it must be the kind of method in which theory and practice always walk in step together. In fact, they must walk together in such a way that theory precedes and practice follows in every one of theology's articles. For the apostle commands Timothy (1) to teach just as much as to exhort all the heads of theology. First he should certainly teach, and then he should exhort. For this reason, (2) the covenant is spoken of as a "covenant ordered in every respect"²⁰ (2 Sam. 23:5); not only is it called such because the covenant of grace is itself most well ordered,²¹ but also because its records,²² in which theology is preserved, present themselves as set down in a most suitable manner. For this reason, (3) the apostle says that the approved "worker"²³ is the one who "rightly divides the Word of truth"²⁴ (2 Tim. 2:15). But one cannot rightly divide what has not been rightly constructed. (4) The worship that theology propounds is called "reasonable"²⁵ (Rom. 12:1) because it has been arranged according to the laws of right reason. (5) Many illustrious and remarkable examples of methodical arrangement found throughout the Scriptures argue this main point. If you want to contemplate what must be done, consider the Decalogue, which is striking for its amazing method. If you want to look for what must be petitioned, consider the Lord's Prayer. If you want to seek what must be believed, then consider not only Hebrews 6:1–2 as a brilliant catechism, but the entire system of theology in most of the Pauline epistles. I would add (6) that the whole biblical text, without doubt, is a "covenant ordered in every respect." And (7) since the heads of theology are scattered throughout the whole corpus of Scripture, it is surely necessary to gather and arrange them according to a suitable order and method. For this reason, (8) from the very first beginnings of the Christian church, when doctrinal heresies began to creep in, Christian theology immediately began to be arranged methodically into a system, as is evident not only in the more illustrious creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, the Ephesian, the Chalcedonian, and others—but also in the individual writings of the first

20. ברית ערוכה בכל

21. εὐτακτότατον

22. Latin: *instrumenta*; Dutch: *denkeschriften*.

23. ἐργάτην

24. ὀρθοτομοῦντα τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀλεθείας

25. *rationalis*, λογικός

fathers; for example, in the eight books of Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata*, the four books of Origen's *On First Principles*, the seven books of Lactantius's *Divine Institutes*, the five books of Gregory of Nazianzus's *On Theology*, the books of Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* and his *Enchiridion*, Rufinus's *Commentary on the Apostles' Creed*, Theodoret's *Epitome of Divine Dogma*, Prosper of Aquitaine's little book of *Sentences*, the four books of John of Damascus's *On the Orthodox Faith*, the four books of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, and what commentators on those books have written, such as Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Scotus, Bonaventure, and others; see especially Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*. And, finally, see the work of those theologians who escaped from the papacy: Zwingli, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Bullinger, Musculus, Aretius, Vermigli, Ursinus, Zanchi, and a thousand others who were occupied to the utmost with rendering the heads of theology into systems.

The need for method in theology is confirmed by three reasons.

IV. In addition to the reasons from Scripture, method in theological matters is urgently demanded for the following reasons: (1) The nature of God, who, since he is not a "God of confusion,"²⁶ has conducted and does conduct all his works in the most orderly way possible, and desires all things to be done "decently and in order"²⁷ (1 Cor. 14:33, 40). Surely for this reason he conferred on rational creatures the principles of order and method, that he might show that he is the author of all order and method, and also that he might direct us to preserve order and method, certainly in general, but especially in matters of great importance. And without a doubt, theological matters are of this sort. To that end, he also inspired the writing of his Scriptures by amanuenses in an order according to his choice, and yet certain and logical. This order has been shown, by the logical analysis of both testaments provided by learned men, to be clearer than the sun. (2) The nature of this theology, which, since it embraces diverse dogmas scattered throughout the vast corpus of Scripture that are among themselves mutually consistent, ordered, and aiming at the same goal, certainly requires those dogmas to be collected and constructed in a manner mutually consonant with one another. Method consists in this sort of activity. (3) The benefits of this method, which, if they belong to any science, at the least belong to the most outstanding science of all. Then what is a method for? A method brings clarity to the topics that must be taught, and produces understanding when, through a knowledge of logical consequences, it makes it easy to remember since it strings

26. ἀκαταστασίας θεός

27. εὐχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν

together subjects as with a chain by which something may be recovered easily enough if it should drop out. Additionally, a method produces brilliance and elegance in argument. For without method, there arises, according to Philo, “knowledge without knowledge.”²⁸ Would you have any right to deny such benefits to theological matters?²⁹

The sort of method that must be employed is explained.

V. You might ask, by what method, then, is theology most suitably taught? A method is nothing but an apt arrangement of the different topics according to the dependence they have upon each other, first with respect to themselves in how they mutually coexist, and then with respect to us in how we understand them. This is necessary so that the method of theology corresponds not only to the topics that must be taught—by it, for example, more general matters are placed ahead of specific ones and simpler matters ahead of complex ones—but that it corresponds also to the comprehension and use of the students. At this point, different people follow a different method, which we will not criticize. We approve, out of all methods, the one that the apostle not only commends in this text to Timothy, when he wishes that theological matters first be taught and then admonished, that thereby practice be perpetually joined to theory, but also employs everywhere throughout his epistles, especially those he wrote to the Romans, Ephesians, Hebrews, and others. By this method, I say again, practice should be joined to theory, not only in the whole corpus of theology, in such a way that the first place is especially reserved for the things that must be believed and the second for the things that must be done, but also that in each member of theology, practice should walk in step with theory in a continuous agreement.³⁰ Let me say more precisely what I desire and will pursue, God willing, to the best of my ability, namely, that the heads of theology should be (1) positively proved from the Scriptures, confirmed by reasons, and explicated in all their members, which is like a solid foundation for the entire structure; (2) elenctically vindicated against the artifices of all opponents, for without that

28. ἐπιστήμη ἀνεπιστημόνως: cf. Philo, “Peri to Ceiron twi Kreittoni | *Quod eo deterius potiori insidiari soleat*” in Philo of Alexandria, *Philonis Alexandrini Opera quae supersunt*, ed. Leopoldus Cohn (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1896), 1.241 §7. Colson and Whitaker render the fuller phrase οὐδ’ ἄλλην τινὰ κατ’ ἀρητὴν ἐπιστήμην ἀνεπιστημόνως as “or any other virtue-governed knowledge in a spirit of ignorance,” Philo of Alexandria, “The worse attacks the better” in *Philo: Volume II*, trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929), 214–15.

29. θεολογουμένοις

30. συμβιβάζει

vindication the constructed foundation neither stands sufficiently on its own nor becomes sufficiently rooted in the hearts of those who theologize;³¹ and (3) practically applied, without which the prior points will be entirely and plainly useless.³² For just as practice without theory is nothing, so theory without practice is empty and vain. For that reason, in his most wise counsel, the Savior joins them together: “If you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them” (John 13:17).

The Elenctic Part

Must theology be taught according to a certain method?

VI. It is asked, must theology be taught according to a certain method? As an example of excess, the Scholastics, according to their philosophical theology, loved the philosophical method of Aristotle—whether it was his analytic or synthetic method—to the point of distraction. As an example of deficiency, the Anabaptists, enthusiasts, and fanatics, due to ignorance and hatred of philosophy, reckon that all method should be eliminated from theological matters. One after another of our Reformed theologians, in proving their own points, opposed such persons. The Reformed, against the Anabaptists and enthusiasts,³³ demand a method, but not, precisely speaking, a philosophical one. They demand a natural method, that is, a method that is suitable for theological matters, and for assisting the judgment and strengthening the memory—however much that method might otherwise depend on the discretion of the writer. We have previously demonstrated such a method in §§III–V, and in this method we are supported by the continual practice of the God-breathed³⁴ Scriptures, which follow diverse methods according to the matters arising in them. The enthusiasts raise the following objections: (1) Theology surpasses the capacity of reason and thus also a logical method. I respond that it does indeed surpass the capacity of a corrupted reason, but not the capacity of a reason illuminated by the Word and Spirit, which judges spiritually, and thus also orders and arranges spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:10, 12, 13, 15). (2) Theology transcends all the sciences, and likewise transcends the laws of method. I respond that it does transcend the natural sciences, but does it therefore also transcend all order? Does theology really exclude order? (3) Method detracts from the simplicity of theology, as does the subtlety of artificial logic. I respond that, first, this objection does indeed

31. *animis* θεολογοῦντων

32. ἄχρηστα

33. Latin: *Anabaptistas et Enthusiastas*; Dutch: *Wederdopers en Quakers*

34. θεοπνεύστων

refute the excess of the Scholastics, but it does not, however, refute the method that is natural to theological matters.³⁵ Second, this objection is false, for order does not change the matter ordered or detract in any way from its perfection. If the order detracts from theology, it is not the method that is at fault, but the ignorance of the artisan who contorts theology to his own perverse rules rather than prudently adapting his method to theology.

The Practical Part

The first use is for censuring, noting: 1. Those to be censured

VII. Now we turn to practice. In the first place, the sort who deviate from the right path are (1) those who teach theological matters,³⁶ whether from a professor's chair or a preacher's pulpit, without any method; or (2) those who, though they have some kind of method, work hard to hide it, and therefore act as if they have none at all; or (3) those who, although they show some method, it is not suitable to the topic; or (4) even if it is suitable to the topic, nevertheless it is not suitable for the student; or, finally, (5) even if it is suitable for the student, nevertheless it is suitable only to his intellect for speculation, but not to his will for action.

2. Arguments for censuring

Those who deviate in these ways (1) incur the mark of disorder³⁷ and confusion, which is hated by God (1 Cor. 14:33, 40); (2) deprive their theological discourses of charm and elegance; and (3) render themselves useless³⁸ to their hearers when they simultaneously hinder their intellect and memory by their lack of method.³⁹

The second use is for exhortation. 1. The duty

VIII. In the second place, the apostle rightly exhorts all Timothy's (that is, all doctors and ministers) to pursue a method by which they equally teach and apply the heads of religion, and moreover that they first teach, then apply. In this manner, (1) they prove that they are sons of God, inasmuch as they are his imitators, since he is the God of order, not of confusion, whereas those of the

35. θεολογουμένοις

36. θεολογοῦμενα

37. ἀταξίας

38. ἀκάρπους

39. ἀμεθοδεία

contrary view prove that they are agents of Satan, who is the author and patron of confusion.

2. Motives

(2) These Timothy's show themselves to be workers approved and unashamed,⁴⁰ since they can rightly divide⁴¹ the Word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). (3) By a brilliant and elegant method, they render the doctrine of God pleasing to their hearers. As Philo said in his treatise, *The worse attacks the better*, "work is not good of itself, but, adorned with art, it is good."⁴² (4) They make the doctrine of God not only pleasing and welcome, but also useful and fruitful. For by the precision⁴³ of their method, they assist the intellect of their hearers, strengthen their memory, kindle their zeal, and so forth. "For," according to Fulgentius, "an investigation of the truth deserves a high regard, or at least it does not fail to achieve its desired effect, if the mind strives toward understanding along the right lines."⁴⁴

3. Mode

So that teachers may pursue the method more properly, I would recommend that three things must be observed, namely, that the method be consistent with the following: (1) The topic to be handled. (2) The capacity of the hearers. Thus, a topic is treated in one manner with beginners, using a catechetical method, and in another manner with the more advanced, using a systematic method—that is, partly constructively⁴⁵ (by definitions, divisions, canons, and arguments) and partly deconstructively⁴⁶ (by the refutation of objectors). It is treated in one way with the mature, using an exegetical and textual method in which catechetics and

40. Δοκίμους *item* καὶ ανεπαιξύντους ἐργάτας

41. ὀρθοτομεῖν

42. Mastricht cited as: "Ὅτι οὐχ ὁ πόνος κατ' αὐτὸν, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τέχνης ἀγαθός, *Tract. quod deterius potiori insidietur*. cf. "Ὅτι οὐχ ὁ πόνος κατ' αὐτὸν, ἀλλ' ὁ μετὰ τέχνης ἀγαθὸν in "Peri to Ceiron twi Kreittoni | *Quod eo deterius potiori insidiari solet*" in Philo of Alexandria, *Philonis Alexandrini Opera quae supersunt*, ed. Leopoldus Cohn (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1896), 1.241 §7.

43. ἀκριβεῖα

44. Cited in Mastricht simply as "in Fulgentius, book 1, chapter 3." "S. Fulgentii ad Trasmundum regem Vandalorum Libri Tres," *PL* 65.227. Fulgentius's Latin reads, "Magnum bonum confert inquisitio veritatis, quae tamen tunc desiderato non frustratur effectu, si rectis ad veri cognitionem lineis animus innitatur." (The investigation of the truth confers a great good, or at least it does not fail to achieve its desired effect, if the mind strives for a knowledge of the truth along the right lines.) Mastricht's citation differs at these points: "Magnum enim locum meretur inquisitio veritatis... si rectis ad cognitionem lineis, animus annitatur."

45. κατασκευαστικῶς

46. ἀνασκευαστικῶς