



The (True) Story of the Cross

Chapter 12

Tim Keller's

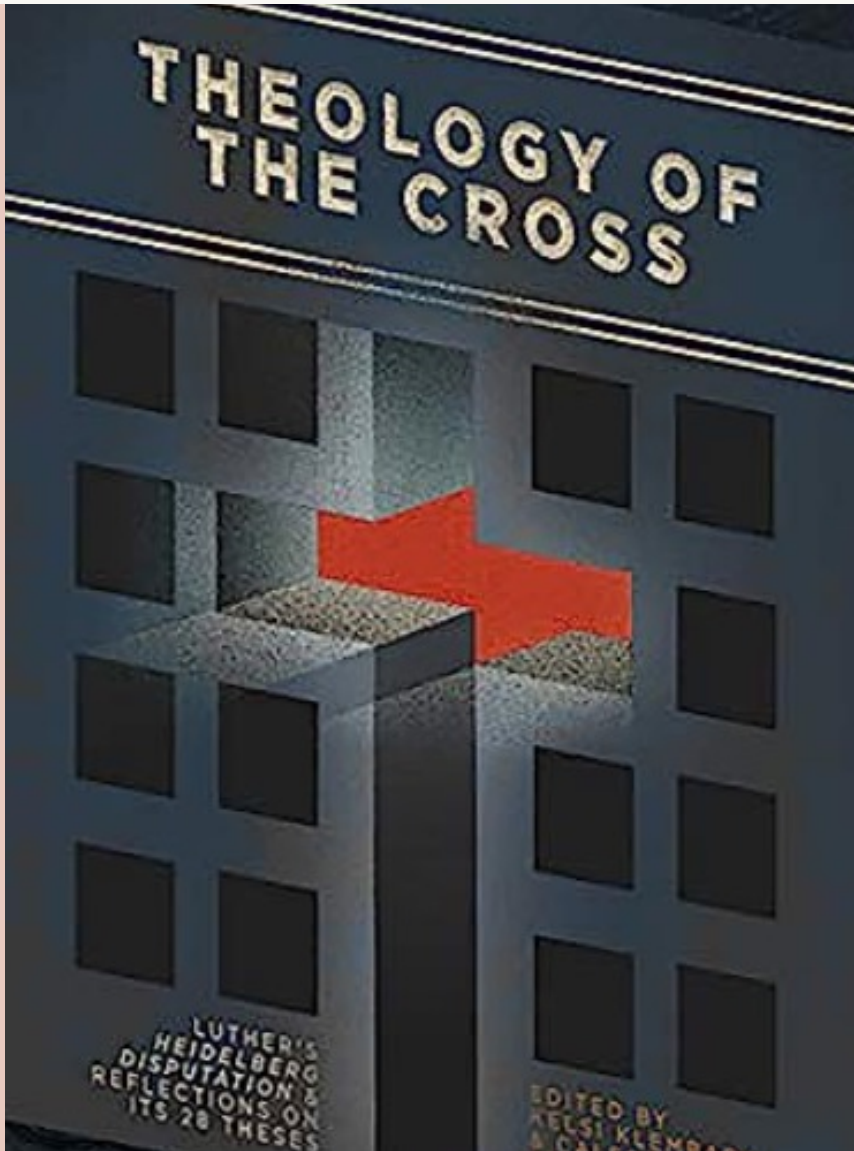
The Reason for God



The Theology of Work

Integrating Faith with Work Involves Four Different Theological Streams:

- 1. The Evangelical Stream:** Helps us deal with the troubles and trials of work - where we need Jesus in our hearts to strengthen, comfort, help us cope with adversity and failure and keep us humble.
- 2. Mainline Christian Stream:** Principally focused upon Justice and how work addresses Justice.
- 3. The Reformed Stream:** Work is completely subsumed by worldview. There is no neutrality. All effort reflects a point of view. Everything we do reflects our grounding in faith or our lack of it. We transform our work by laboring out of a Christian worldview.
- 4. The Lutheran Stream (Heidelberg Disputation):** Work is approached from the perspective of Christ's suffering on the Cross.



Heidelberg Disputation

- **19. That person is not worthy to be called a theologian who thinks the invisible things of God are observable from events which have actually happened** (Rom. 1:20; 1 Cor. 1:21-25). The invisible things of God are virtue, godliness, wisdom, justice, goodness, and so forth. The knowledge of all these things does not make one worthy or wise.
- **20. Conversely, a person is worthy of being called a theologian who understands the visible and ordered things of God after fixing his sight on the passion and cross of Christ.** The observable and visible things of God, that is His humanity, weakness, and foolishness, are the opposite of the invisible. The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:25 calls them the weakness and foolishness of God. Because by works men abused the knowledge of God, to the contrary, God desired to be known in suffering, and to reject wisdom of invisible things by means of the wisdom of visible things, so that those who did not cling to God as present in his works should cling to Him as He is hidden in His suffering.
- **21. A theologian of glory says that evil is good and good is evil. A theologian of the cross says that a thing is what it actually is.** This is clear: He who disregards Christ disregards God hidden in suffering. For this reason that theologian prefers works to suffering, glory to the cross, strength to weakness, wisdom to folly, and, in general, good to evil. These are whom the Apostle Paul calls "enemies of the cross of Christ," for they hate the cross and suffering and love works and their glory.

What it (God) Actually Is

Luther is saying we must not make God over in our own image.

We must listen to him when he tells us who he really is.

He principally reveals who he is through suffering and the cross.

Examples of "What it is"

Power: For humans power means "getting things done" but for God power means the cross. So, when we talk of the "all powerful God" we tend to cast God's power in human likeness when in fact the power is power through overcoming suffering and death. No human power is like that.

Wisdom: For human s wisdom means "knowing how to get things done." God's wisdom is supremely seen on the cross – doing for humanity what humanity was incapable of doing, loving the unlovely, the unworthy – putting himself where the unworthy should be. In the wisdom of the world that is "nuts!"

Movers and Shakers..

Don't hang out

- Don't hang out with losers.

Avoid

- Avoid the weak unless it means exploiting them.

Seek out

- Seek out power brokers and "influencers."

Pursue

- Pursue labor among the powerful and affluent.

Climb

- Climb the corporate ladder.



Challenging the Wisdom of the World

In Christ Crucified we are called to climb down to serve the needy and make time for family, children and community. This challenges the “wisdom of the world.”

1 Corinthians 1:20-24 ²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Seeing all Things Through the Cross and Theologians of Glory

- ♦ If we fail in our work to related to the world around us through the suffering, weakness and mortality of the Cross, then we risk becoming Theologians of Glory claiming that only we few “elect” and “elite” know the glory of God.
- ♦ We don't want to ever become theologians of Glory.





The True Story of the Cross

- ♦ **First**, real forgiveness is costly suffering.
- ♦ When we have the opportunity to forgive we're faced with three options:
 1. make them pay for what they've done and don't forgive them;
 2. forgive part of what they've done and absorb part of the loss ourselves while also making them repay some of it;
 3. or absorb all the cost which is what God did in Jesus.

The second reason we cannot abandon the cross is that real love is a personal exchange which the cross so supremely depicts.

“In the real world of relationships it is impossible to love people with a problem or a need without in some sense sharing or even changing places with them.”

Life-changing love involves substitutional sacrifices, period.

The True Story of the Cross