

Study Guide to Doctrine of the Knowledge of God

John M. Frame

Lesson 1, pp. 1-40

Key Terms

epistemology (2, 85)	lordship attributes (17)
object of knowledge (9f, 26)	Clark controversy (21ff)
lordship (12)	essential disproportion (24)
covenant (12)	quantitative difference (23)
transcendence (13ff)	difference in mode (23)
immanence (13ff)	accommodation (24)
wholly other (13)	qualitative difference (24f, 38ff)
wholly hidden (13)	true belief (26f)
control (15f)	secondary creation (27ff, 99f)
authority (16)	adequate idea (29f)
covenant solidarity (16f)	essence of God (30ff)
absolute authority (17)	thought content (37f)

Questions

1. "The nature of knowledge depends on the nature of the object of knowledge." Explain, evaluate (9ff).
2. "We cannot know God without knowing other things." Explain, evaluate (9f; also 62ff).
3. Show how Lordship is (or is not!) a central biblical concept (11f).
4. What are some of the problems in saying that God is "wholly other? (13f, 15f)" Why do people want to say that?
5. Same for "God is worldly (13f)."
6. Explain the rectangular diagram on p. 14, indicating the meaning of each corner and line.
7. "Only in Christianity (and in other religions influenced by the Bible) is there such a concept as a `personal absolute'" (17). Explain, evaluate.
8. "Everyone knows God" (18). What if someone says he doesn't?

9. "Even unfallen Adam might have erred" (20). State Frame's reasons for saying this and evaluate.

10. "Even a perfect creaturely knowledge would be limited" (21). Explain, evaluate.

11. Describe Van Til's position in the Clark controversy (21f).

12. Describe Clark's position in the Clark controversy (21f).

13. List some discontinuities between God's knowledge and ours (22-25).

14. "God's thoughts are self-validating" (22). Explain and evaluate.

15. List some continuities between God's thoughts and ours (25-29).

16. "We, too, gain our knowledge by knowing ourselves" (27). Explain, evaluate.

17. "Even the norms by which we think must be adopted by us" (27). Explain, evaluate.

18. Explain, evaluate Frame's argument that our thoughts are "secondary creators" (27f, 99f).

19. Do we know the essence of God? Why or why not (30ff)?

20. Do we know God in himself? Explain (32ff).

21. Does a piece of language have the same meaning for God as it does for a man who rightly understands it? Explain (33f).

22. Is all language about God figurative? Explain (34-37).

Lesson 2, pp. 40-49

Key Terms

knowledge of God (40-49)
wisdom (48f)
truth (48f)

presupposition (45, 125f)
ultimate presupposition ("

Questions

1. "Knowledge of God is a covenantal relationship." Explain, evaluate (40ff).
2. How is our knowledge of God a knowledge about God's lordship (40-41)?
3. What is meant by a knowledge subject to God's control (42)?
4. State some relationships between obedience and knowledge (42-45).
5. Show how "presuppositions" are related to the lordship of God over human thought (45, 125f).
6. "To know (God) is to be involved with him as a friend or as an enemy" (47). Explain, evaluate.

Lesson 3, 49-75

Key Terms

psychological repression (52)	application (66-68, 81-85, 93-98)
purely formal agreement (52f)	subject (69-71)
truth in isolation (53)	object (69-71; cf. 9f, 26)
proposition (26, 54-57)	brute fact (71, 78; cf. 28f,
assent (54-57)	68, 117ff, 140, 145)
fiducia (54)	fact (65ff, 71-73, above refs.)
conflicting assents (55f, 59)	interpretation (71ff)
rationalism (60f)	perspectives (73-75, 89f,
irrationalism (60f)	190-194)
covenant law (62f)	normative perspective (75)
meaning (66-68, 81-85, 93-98)	situational perspective ("
	existential perspective ("

Questions

1. How is the unbeliever's knowledge similar to the believer's (49f)?
2. How is it different (summarize) (49-59)?
3. "Unbelievers ought to know, but don't." Reply (51).
4. "Unbelievers psychologically repress the truth." Reply (52).
5. "Agreements between believers and unbelievers are purely formal." Reply (52f).

6. "Unbelievers may say things that are true in isolation, but these are always false in the total context." Reply (53).

7. "Unbelievers speak truth when they are unreflective, but there is no truth in their systems of thought." Reply (53f).

8. "The unbeliever's problem is that he doesn't believe enough propositions." Reply (54-57).

9. "The unbeliever knows facts about God, but rebels against him." Reply (57f).

10. May an unbeliever accept any true propositions concerning God (58f)?

11. Interpret the lines and corners of the rectangular diagram (14) in terms of rationalism and irrationalism (60f).

12. "Epistemology can be a branch of ethics." Explain, evaluate (63, cf. 73-75, 108f, 149, 248, 384).

13. "Knowing God involves knowing the law." Explain, evaluate (62f, cf. 9f). Also explain and evaluate the following:

14. "Knowing God involves knowing the world" (64).

15. "Knowing God involves knowing ourselves" (64f).

16. "We need the law to understand the world" (65f).

17. "We need the world to understand the law" (66-68).

18. "Meaning is application" (66f, 81-85, 93-98).

19. "The non-Christian loses the facts and the law" (68f).

20. "We know ourselves by knowing the world, and vice versa" (69-71).

21. "Only the Christian has the conceptual resources for distinguishing between persons and things" (71).

22. "Facts and interpretations are inseparable," (71-73, 99f).

23. How does the Christian avoid reducing subject to object, vice versa (70f)?

24. Can faith be "founded on fact" (71-73)?

Lesson 4, 76-100

Key Terms

theology (Kuyper) (76)	encyclopedia (91)
theology ("ballpark def.") (77)	bedrock (92, cf. 72)
theology (Schleiermacher) (77)	syntactic (94)
theology (Hodge) (77)	semantic (94)
objectivism (80)	pragmatic (95)
subjectivism (77)	behavioral def. (95)
theology (Frame) (81ff)	mental image " (95)
philosophy (85-87)	intention " (95f)
metaphysics (85)	understanding of original
value theory (85)	audience (96)
science (86f)	verification def. (96f)
apologetics (87)	use " (97)
neutral reasoning (87)	state of affairs (99)

Questions

1. "There is no one `right' definition of theology." Explain, evaluate (76).
2. Formulate and evaluate Schleiermacher's definition of theology (77).
3. Formulate and evaluate Hodge's definition of theology (77-81).
4. Why is it important to note that Scripture is language (79)?
5. "Theology is application" (81ff). Explain, evaluate.
6. "Meaning is application" (82-85, 93-98). Explain, evaluate.
7. Why is neutral reasoning forbidden (85-88)?
8. Describe and evaluate Frame's contention that perspectivalism is distinctively reformed (89f).
9. How does faith keep us from constructing a "crazy" world (100)?

Lesson 5, 101-139

Key Terms

knowledge (philosophical def.) (104)	sense experience (113)
justification (104)	sense-datum (118f)
normative justification (108)	paradox of analysis (114f)
situational " "	person-variable (119)
existential " "	foundationalism (128f)
rationalism (110, 111ff)	circularity (130-133)
a priorism (110)	narrow circle (131)
empiricism (110, 115ff)	broad circle (131)
subjectivism (110, 119ff)	paranoid analogy (132)
a priori (112)	coherence (133f)
	hierarchies (137ff)
	probability (136)

Questions

1. "You can have a reason without being able to give a reason." Explain, evaluate (105).
2. Is justification necessary to knowledge (104-106)?
3. Is epistemology absolutely necessary (106)?
4. "Epistemological questions depend on substantive questions." Explain, evaluate (105).
5. "A person cannot learn everything he knows from proofs." Explain, evaluate (105).
6. "Often the search for a foundation for knowledge is theologically objectionable." Explain, evaluate (106).
7. Refute rationalism. How does it lead to irrationalism (111-115)?
8. "The rationalist's difficulties have a spiritual origin." Explain, evaluate (114).
9. Refute empiricism (115-119).
10. "Religious thought is speculative, while scientific thought is based on fact." Reply (116f).
11. Is the possibility of scientific verification essential to knowledge? Why or why not (116)?

12. "The problems of empiricism are essentially spiritual." Explain, evaluate (119).
13. Refute subjectivism (119-121).
14. "God's lordship extends to our knowledge." Argue pro or con from Scripture (123-125).
15. "Non-Christians are neutral, but Christians are biased." Reply (126).
16. What is "odd" about religious beliefs (126-127)?
17. "Sacramento is the capital of California." Does Scripture justify that statement? How (128-129)?
18. Is this book foundationalist? Why or why not (129)?
19. How is belief in Scripture justified (129f)?
20. "Presupposing Christianity while arguing for it is circular and therefore fallacious." Reply (130-133).
21. Formulate and discuss the "problem of competing circularities" (132).
22. Is coherence a legitimate test of truth? Discuss (133-134).
23. Is certainty possible? How (134-136)?
24. Why do we sometimes fail to feel certain (136)?
25. Does probability play any role in the verification of Christianity (136)?
26. Does anything in the Bible take precedence over anything else? Discuss (137-139).

Lesson 6, 140-164

Key Terms

correspondence (141f)
 evidence (142)
 pragmatic theory (150)
 persuasion (151)

cognitive rest (152f)
dokimazein (154)
 seeing as (156-158)

Questions

1. Is correspondence a legitimate test of truth (141f)?
Why or why not?
2. Can evidence justify faith? If so, how do our presuppositions fit into this process of evidential justification (142-144)?
3. How does Scripture relate God's word to his works (144-148)?
4. "The unbeliever knows nothing truly." Comment, recalling our earlier discussion of this question (149, cf. 49-61).
5. "Truth is what works." Explain, evaluate (150f).
6. "Cognitive rest is like a feeling." Explain (152f).
7. Describe the role of the Holy Spirit in leading us to cognitive rest (153-158).
8. How does Scripture tell us to "prove" God's will (154).
9. What does DKG suggest as a possible response to an apparently irresolvable theological dispute (155)? Reply.
10. Explain the process of conviction of sin in terms of "seeing as" (156-158).
11. "There is a kind of knowledge possessed by the church rather than by the individuals within the church." Explain, evaluate (158-160).
12. Is the doctrine of "cognitive rest" a form of subjectivism? Discuss (161f).
13. Which perspective is ultimate (162-164)?
14. "Justification in apologetics is the same as in theology." Explain and evaluate (164).

Lesson 7, 167-68, 191-214

Key Terms

anti-abstractionism (171) pictures (204f)
 sentence-level exegesis (195) windows (204f)
 proof text (197) mirrors (204f)
 exemplarism (198) data (205)

<i>telos</i> (199)	warrants (205, n)
proposition (200, 26, 54)	backing (205, n)
speech act (203)	exegetical theology (206)
locutionary act (203)	biblical theology (207)
illocutionary act (203)	systematic theology (212)
perlocutionary act (203)	practical theology (214)

Questions

1. "There is... no such thing as a `theological method' in the sense of a series of definite steps by which all theological problems can be solved." Why not (168)?
2. List some perspectival relationships in theology (191f).
3. "God's Word tends to present relationships perspectively because it reflects the nature of God himself, I would surmise." Explain and evaluate (192).
4. "We must beware of assuming that there is one single `master context' that must always be in view." Explain and evaluate.
5. Discuss values and dangers in prooftexts (197).
6. Discuss values and dangers in the use of biblical characters as examples (198).
7. "...in one sense, the meaning of any text is indefinite." What sense is that? Evaluate.
8. Discuss values and dangers in the use of allegory (199).
9. How is the purpose of a text definite? Indefinite (199f)?
10. Is biblical "authority" the same as "inerrancy?" Is Scripture a "propositional revelation?" Discuss (200f).
11. Show how the authoritative aspects of Scripture are perspectively related (201).
12. Show how literary forms in Scripture are perspectively related (202f).
13. Show how the "traditional theological programs" are perspectively related 206-214).

14. List some values and limitations of biblical theology (207-212).
15. "Scripture is a redemptive history but not only that." Explain, evaluate (209).
16. "Biblical theology does more justice than systematic theology to the centrality of Christ." Reply (210).
17. "Biblical theology is more biblical than systematic theology." Reply (211).
18. "A preacher should never apply Scripture. He should simply narrate redemptive history and allow the listener to draw his own conclusions." Reply (211).
19. "Exegetical and biblical theology also depend on systematics." Explain, evaluate (213).
20. Discuss the meaning and value of the term "systematic" in the phrase "systematic theology" (213).
21. "'Exegetical,' 'biblical' and 'systematic' theology are all misnomers." Explain, evaluate (213).

Lesson 8, 215-241

Key Terms

family resemblances (218f)	distribution (236)
technical term (222)	static (236)
master metaphor (227)	dynamic (236)
false disjunctions (234)	relational (236)
dualisms (235f)	particle (236)
contrast (236)	wave (236)
variation (236)	field (236)
	systematic ambiguity (237)

Questions

1. "...there are many possible ways to refer to the world by means of language..." Explain, evaluate (217).
2. Is it always legitimate to demand a definition? Discuss (219f).
3. Is Scripture ever vague (221)?

4. Discuss values, limitations of the use of technical terms (222-226).
5. "Never use technical terms with non-Christian histories." Reply (222).
6. "Don't confuse technical definitions with Biblical uses." Describe the danger here (223).
7. "There is no one right set of technical definitions." Why? Evaluate (223f).
8. "Some technical definitions can actually mislead us." How (224)?
9. Describe and discuss the liberal distortion of Scripture through an illegitimate development of technical terminology (224f).
10. Discuss the "danger of trying too hard to eliminate vagueness from theology" (225).
11. ..."we should not seek to impose upon church officers a form of creedal subscription intended to be maximally precise." Discuss (225f, cf. 308f).
12. "Sometimes, metaphors come to our rescue in theology." How? Give an example (226f).
13. "Often, in fact, figurative language says more, and says it more clearly, than corresponding literal language would do." Discuss, using an example (228f).
14. "Use of a metaphor may be helpful in one context, misleading in another." Discuss, using examples (228).
15. Discuss possible cases in which there is "danger in using metaphors where more literal language is needed" (228f).
16. "Everything is comparable to God." Discuss (230f).
17. Do we need special technical terms to refer to God's transcendence? Discuss (231).
18. "The history of doctrine, too, has progressed very largely by negation." Explain, evaluate (232).
19. "...some doctrines have very little meaning except for their negative function of excluding heresy." Discuss, referring to examples (233).

20. "Everything is `a matter of' everything else." Discuss (234).
21. "Theologians should often use `not merely' instead of `not.'" Discuss. Can you think of any examples (234f)?
22. "The `dualism' critique often becomes... a word-level rather than a sentence-level critique." Discuss (235).
23. How are non-orthodox positions "systematically vague?" Can you give an example (237)?
24. Discuss values, dangers in labelling (237f).
25. "Thus we may think we have a clear idea of the meaning of the term, when all we really have is a feeling." Discuss. Try to think of an example (238f).
26. What methods will help us to recognize ambiguities (239)?
27. Why the "linguistic turn" in recent philosophy and theology (239f)?
28. "Language is an indispensable element of the image of God." Expound (240f).

Lesson 9, 242-301

Key Terms

logic (244)	dilemma (275)
argument (244)	a fortiori (276f)
implication (244)	throwaway argument (277)
inference (244)	irrelevant conclusion
entailment (244)	(279f)
premise (244)	ad baculum (281f)
conclusion (244)	comparative ad hominem
valid (245)	(282)
consistency (246)	circumstantial ad hominem
law of noncontradiction	(positive) (284ff)
(246, 258f)	circumstantial ad hominem
innate idea (249)	(negative) (286f)
convention (249)	argument from silence (287)
analytic (250, 268f)	appeal to pity (288)
synthetic (250 268f)	appeal to emotion (288ff)
Godel theorems (257)	appeal to authority (290)
law of excluded middle (259)	false cause (290f)
necessary condition	genetic fallacy (291f)

(261, 293)	efficient cause (292)
sufficient condition (261)	final cause (292)
causal priority (262)	formal cause (292)
teleological priority (263)	material cause (292)
instrumental priority (263)	instrumental cause (292)
moral/legal causality (263)	material implication (292)
pedagogical priority (263)	judicial/moral causality
supralapsarianism (264)	(292)
infralapsarianism (264)	necessary causality (293)
order of decrees (264)	multiple causation (293ff)
ordo salutis (265)	complex question (295f)
burden of proof (270)	equivocation (296f)
deduction (271)	amphiboly (297)
induction (272)	accent (297f)
reductio ad absurdum	fallacy of composition (298f)
(273)	fallacy of division (299f)
slippery slope (274)	denying the antecedent (300)
	affirming the consequent
	(300f)

Questions

1. "Implication is something that pervades our experience." How? Discuss (245).
2. "Logic is a hermeneutical tool." Explain, evaluate (247).
3. Define the nature of the logical "must" (247f).
4. "Logic is dependent on ethical values." Explain, evaluate (248).
5. What is the nature of logical certainty (249-251)?
6. Is it biblically legitimate to use logic in theology? Does such use of logic conflict with *sola Scriptura*? Discuss (251-254).
7. If you cannot handle the complications of formal logic, what is the next best thing to do? Why? Discuss (254).
8. Discuss some limitations of logic (254-260).
9. "We cannot learn all we know from logical proofs." Explain, evaluate (256).
10. "Apparent contradiction is insufficient ground for rejecting a position." Discuss (257f).

11. "Human logic is never a final test of truth." Why? Discuss (258).
12. "'Logical order' is an ambiguous expression." Explain (260-267).
13. Analyze the controversy between the supra- and infralapsarians (264f).
14. "Theological doctrines have a tendency to become analytic." Explain, evaluate using examples (267-270).
15. Give some examples of theological discussions in which the burden of proof is an important issue. Show why (270f).
16. Give examples of some of the argument types listed on 271-278.
17. Give examples of some of the fallacies listed on 278-301.

Lesson 10, 302-346

Key Terms

heretic (306)	perception (332)
progress in theology (three views) (307)	experience (332)
confession/theology distinction (309ff)	sensation (332)
historical theology (310)	emotions (335f)
dogmatics (311)	imagination (340)
naturalistic fallacy (313)	will (343)
heart (322)	habits (344)
reason (329f)	knowing how (345; cf. 44-48)
	knowing that (345; cf. 44-48)
	intuition (345f)

Questions

1. Describe a Protestant view of the relation between Scripture and tradition (304).
2. Why have a creed (304f)?

3. Why is it impossible to have a perfect creed (305f)?
4. Discuss the relation of creeds to church unity (306).
5. What is "progress in theology?" Distinguish a sound view of such progress from unsound alternatives (307f).
6. "...of all the forms of Protestantism, Reformed theology has been one of the most successfully `contextualized.'" Explain and evaluate (307f).
7. "Subscription to a `system of doctrine' is too vague." Reply (308f).
8. Discuss values, weaknesses of the "dogmatic" model of theology (311-314).
9. Define and discuss the "problem of confusing historical description with authoritative teaching" (312).
10. Discuss the theory that theology is an accumulation of facts to be passed from one generation to another (313f).
11. How does science help theology (314-318)?
12. Is theology queen of the sciences? Why or why not (316)?
13. "When a theologian appears to be selling out to `modern science,' it is necessary to examine his @UN(theological) rationale." Explain and evaluate (317).
14. In what ways is theology "personalistic" (319-322)?
15. Do you believe in "the resuscitation of Jesus' corpse? Why or why not? Discuss problems here (321).
16. "Theology should discuss only the issues, not personalities." Discuss (321f).
17. "Qualifications of teachers in Scripture are largely qualities of character." Show this by reference to some specific texts (324).
18. "Multi-perspectivalism enables you to build on the @UN(strengths) of your opponent." Explain, evaluate (328).
19. Discuss "the primacy of the intellect in theology" (328-332).

20. "Emotions contribute toward rational judgments." How? Evaluate (335-340).
21. "Reason and feeling are coterminous." Explain and evaluate (338).
22. "Emotion is part of Scripture's content." Explain, evaluate (339).
23. How, if at all, does imagination contribute to theology (340-343)?
24. How is "will" a perspective on knowing (343f)?

Lesson 11, 347-402

Key Terms

defensive apologetics (348)	sentence-level criticism (370)
offensive apologetics (348)	metatheology (380)
evidentialist apologetics (353)	Hartford Declaration (380)
traditional apologetics (353)	three functions of doctrine (Lindbeck) (381)
Pascal's wager (356)	epistemic rights (384)
scripturality (369)	epistemic obligations (384)
cogency (369)	evidentialist challenge (385)
edification (369)	classical foundationalism (386)
godliness (369)	basic beliefs (386, 398f)
clarity (369)	properly basic (386, 398f)
profundity (370)	situated rationality (395)
emphasis (as criterion) (370)	objective rationality (395)
comparability ("") ("")	point of contact (366)
terminology ("") ("")	expository paper (371)
word-level criticism (370)	party lines (371)

Questions

1. In an apologetic encounter, must we always talk about presuppositions (350f)?
2. Discuss how a reformed apologist can make use of the evidentialist literature (352-354).
3. How is rationalism irrationalistic (361; cf. 60f)?

4. How is irrationalism rationalistic (361f; cf. 60f)?
5. How are rationalism and irrationalism parasitic on Christianity (362f)?
6. How does unbelief encourage unclarity (363f)? Factual errors? Logical errors?
7. Discuss ambiguities in "point of contact" (366f).
8. What is Paul doing in Acts 17:16-34? Is this "neutral" argumentation? Why or why not (367f)?
9. "In writing theological papers, anticipate objections." Explain, evaluate (373f).
10. List the Lindbeck's three functions of theology. Analyze critically his proposal (380f).
11. Analyze critically the Plantinga-Wolterstorff defense of the rationality of Christian belief (380-402). _