

Course Syllabus For Lectures

Knowledge is a necessary foundation for faith and holiness (what man is to believe and what duty is required). Where ignorance reigns, there is confusion of life as well as thought.

Doctrine: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever."

- I. The first part of man's chief end is to glorify God.
 1. The nature of glorifying God: It is strictly declarative
 - a. By the heart
 - b. By the lips
 - c. By the life
 2. How it is man's chief end
 - a. The end God aimed at in creation
 - b. It should be man's goal
 - c. It is included in all other purposes
 - d. It is the main or principal end
 - e. It is the ultimate, or last end
 3. The extent of this glorifying God
 - a. The end of our natural actions
 - b. The end of our civil actions
 - c. The end of our moral and religious actions
 4. The reason for it

God is the first principle, therefore he must be the last end. His is first and last, alpha and omega. God is our creator, preserver and benefactor. Our existence is altogether derivative from him. To make anything else our first and chief end is to make that our god.

- II. The second part of man's chief end is the enjoyment of God forever. This is man's chief happiness and that which he seeks as his chief good (*summum bonum*).
 1. The nature of this enjoyment
 - a. An imperfect enjoyment of God in this life:
 - (1) In union with him, i.e. a special saving interest in Christ's covenant.

- (2) In communion with God, which is a participation in the benefits of the saving relationship of union.
- b. A perfect enjoyment of God in heaven when this world no longer exists
 - (1) An intimate and immediate presence with him in glory
 - (2) The beatific vision – seeing him as he is
 - (3) A perfect union with him, when he will be our God perfectly and fully.
 - (4) An immediate, full, free, and comfortable communion with him
 - (5) Full joy and satisfaction resulting from these things forever.
- 2. The order of the enjoyment
 - a. No man can fully glorify God without taking him for his supreme happiness.
 - b. Glorifying is put before enjoying because the way of duty is the way to enjoyment of God.
- 3. That it is man's chief end in point of happiness
 - a. Consider what man is:
 - (1) A creature that desires happiness, and cannot fail to desire it.
 - (2) He is not self-sufficient; he is conscious of many wants and desires and therefore seeks something outside himself in order to be happy
 - (3) Nothing but an infinite good can fully satisfy the desires of an immortal soul because, whatever good he finds in the creature he can still desire more
 - b. Consider what God is:
 - (1) God *is* the chief good. Some persons, angels, things, etc. are good; but only God is the chief good, for he is the fountain of all other good things and persons.
 - (2) God is *all* good. There is nothing in him but what is good such that he is without any imperfection. All that is good finds its first source in him, so that the soul, finding him commensurate to its desires, needs nothing besides him; and there should not and cannot fully rest in any person or thing but God, who alone is able to satisfy all its desires, and afford it that happiness for which it earnestly pants.