

Biblical Theology

U1: Doctrine of Scripture - L1: Word of God

Revelation

- Definition: To reveal, uncover, unveil, lay bear, disclose, or make known.
- Revelation of Knowledge
 1. **The Source:** God is the revealer of all knowledge because he is the **source** of knowledge.
 2. **Divine Initiative:** Christian theology is **dependent** on God making knowledge known.
 - Humans are finite, God is infinite. We have a limit to knowledge, God does not.
 - Not a matter of human discovery, matter of God's self disclosure.
 - Man can never take credit for truth.
 3. **Scriptural Examples:**
 - *Psalm 19:1-4 – "Heavens Declare" without speech.*
 - *Romans 1:20 – "Invisible attributes" of God's witness.*
 - *Matthew 11:25-26 – Knowledge is dispensed at God's own discretion.*
 - *Mathew 16:13-17 – "Father revealed" what flesh and blood didn't.*
 - *Galatians 1:11-12 – "Revelation from Christ" not taught by flesh.*

General Revelation

- Definition: God's self manifestation through nature, history, and the inner being of the human person.
- Methods of General Revelation
 1. **Creation** – Physical universe reveals knowledge about God's eternal power and divine nature/attributes. (*Psalm 19:1-2, Romans 1:20, Matthew 6:25-34*)
 2. **Image of God** – Man was made in the image of God, distinct from all other creatures, with the ability to have dominion over the world, capacity to think, imagine, and feel, freedom to act, and moral sensibilities. (*Genesis 1:26, 1 Corinthians 11:7, James 3:9*)
 3. **Conscience** – Mankind's universal moral sensibilities reveal truths about God (*Romans 2:15-16, Romans 1:32*)
 - *For further reading from a philosophical / apologetically aspect read Chapter One: The Law of Human Nature in Mere Christianity, by CS Lewis.*
- Role and Value of General Revelation
 - General Revelation is sufficient in its ability to reveal God and hold man accountable, but it is not sufficient in its ability to save mankind.
 - General Revelation is sufficient in its ability to lead man to seek God.

Special Revelation

- Definition: God's manifestation of himself to particular persons at definite times and places, enabling those persons to enter into a redemptive relationship with him.
- Methods of Special Revelation
 1. **Miraculous Revelation** – Divine demonstration that defy nature.
 - Burning Bush, Red Sea, Empty Tomb, Walking on Water, etc.

2. **Verbal Revelation** – The Word of God

- **God's Decrees** – When the speech of God takes form. (*Genesis 1:3, Genesis 1:24, Psalm 33:6, Hebrews 1:3*)
- **Personal Address** – God's literal words in conversation. (*Genesis 2:16-17, Exodus 20:1-3, Matthew 3:17*)
- **God's Message Spoken by Men** – God's use of a messenger, ie. Prophets, Disciples, etc. (*Amos 3:7, Deuteronomy 18:18-20, Jeremiah 1:9*)
- **Written Form** – The Law / The Bible
 - Started with Moses, specifically the Law (*Exodus 31:18, Deut. 31:9-13*)
 - Continued with Joshua and prophets. (*Joshua 24:26, Isaiah 30:8*)
 - Continued by NT writers through Holy Spirit (*John 16:12-13, 1 Corinthians 14:37, 2 Peter 3:2*)

3. **Incarnation of Christ** – The Word Made Flesh (*John 1:1,14, Hebrews 1:1-2*)

- Role and Value of Special Revelation
 - Provides revelation of God's grace and mercy to save us.
 - Provides what we need to grow in intimate relationship with Him and be conformed.

Discussion Questions

1. Define the following terms:
 - General Revelation:
 - Special Revelation:
2. What part of General Revelation speaks to you most?
3. Why is the Bible, the Word of God, so vital to proper theology?
4. At the end of class, we saw a firsthand testimony of someone who was changed by God's General and Special revelation. What part of the video impacted you most?

Reading Assignment

Next week we will watch a video. Reading assignment for the following Sunday, January 5th: *Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem – Chapter 3: The Canon of Scripture.*