

Theology Proper

The Source of Theology – Lesson 2

- Where does man go to learn about God? What source can teach us the truth about who God is. Today there is such a wide range of views on God because there are such a wide range of sources people turn to. This lesson will help us understand what the true and false sources of theology are.
- **Lesson overview:**
 - ↳ Man's need for Revelation
 - ↳ 2 Categories of Revelation – General and Special
 - ↳ False sources of Theology

I. Man's need for _____

A. Because of the _____, man broke fellowship and contact with God. Man use to walk and talk with God in the garden, and unless otherwise initiated by God, man would forever be separated from God, His truths, and any knowledge of Him. God is inaccessible to man without revelation, man cannot “discover” God on his own.

B. Scripture

1. **1 Timothy 6:15-16** - *"Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light **which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see:** to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."*
2. **Isaiah 55:8-9** - *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."*
3. **Job 11:7** — *"Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"*
4. **Romans 11:33-36**

C. Definition of Revelation: *"The _____ from God to man of truths which man **could not** discover for Himself, and which God wanted recorded in Scripture. A divine _____ of God to man in some form of communication."*

- **"Revelation is ...the divine act of communicating to man what otherwise man would not know (L.S. Chafer, I, 48)**

II. 2 Categories of Revelation

- All revelation from God can be summarized into 2 categories: _____ (natural) Revelation and _____ (supernatural) Revelation
- A. General Revelation (Natural)** - *The manifestation of God to man through nature and history, and is accessible to all rational men (excludes infants, mentally disabled).*
 - **There are 2 main avenues General revelation is given:**
 1. _____
 - a. _____ - *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth _____, and*

night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their _____ is not heard."

- b. _____ - "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:"

c. **Psalm 104; Ps. 29:1-5; Ps. 8:1-4; Isaiah 40:12-14**

- d. **NOTE:** Because God's glory is revealed in creation, man has always had the tendency to "_____ the creature (creation) more than the Creator".

- **Romans 1:23-25 — 23;** "And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. **24;** Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: **25;** Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."

2. _____ of man

a. **There are 3 types of life:**

- 1) _____ — _____
- 2) _____ existence - (awareness of surroundings, reaction to those surroundings); _____ have this.
- 3) _____-conscious existence - (self-awareness). _____ alone have self-conscious existence; we know we exist. We have a moral framework given to us by God.
- 4) _____ — "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. **27;** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

- b. This "image" of God is not speaking of physical "form" of God, (as God is a Spirit and doesn't have a body as we do-John 4:24, Luke 24:39, 1 Timothy 1:17). The Bible is not talking about man created in the "form" of God, rather it is speaking of the likeness of God in that God has intellect, reason, emotion, and will. Man was created with the capacity to reason, we have a will, we have emotion, we have an intellect. Man has also been created in God's image morally. This separates us from the animal kingdom; they have "instinct" but they do not have rational and morality.

- _____ - "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: **15;** Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"

3. **What is the purpose of General Revelation?**

a. _____ God

- **Psalm 19:1 —** "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."

b. Leaves man _____ in his sin.

- **Romans 1:20** – *“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”*

c. Prepares the way for _____ revelation

- 1) The Bible comes to man with the assumption that man knows there is a God; the Bible never makes an attempt to prove God’s existence. The reason being is natural revelation has already proclaimed the reality of God’s existence.
- 2) The Washington Times released an article in 2006, *“Americans still hold faith in Divine creation”* The article goes on to say, *“Much of the nation still takes stock in the book of Genesis. _____ out of 10 Americans believe God guided creation in some capacity. A Gallup Poll reveals that _____% think God created man in his present form sometime in the past 10,000 years, while 36 percent say man developed over millions of years from lesser life forms, but God guided the process. Only 13 percent of Americans think mankind evolved with no divine intervention.”* In 24 years of polling Americans 7 different times, the evolutionary propaganda has not persuaded the majority of Americans. Only 13% have accepted its ridiculous claims. *“There has been surprisingly little change over the last 24 years in how Americans respond,”* pollster Frank Newport said. (The Washington Times, “America still holds faith in Divine creation”, June 8, 2006 Article.)
- 3) The only person who can look at the world and say, *“There is no God”*, is found in **Psalms 14:1**; *“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.”*

B. Special (supernatural) Revelation

- What channels did God use to bring special revelation to man? (Ryrie Page 71-73)

1. _____

- a. Casting lots was done _____ times in the OT and _____ times in the NT. Nothing is said of “what” these lots were; they could have been a stone of some kind like flipping a coin; a dice-like device, or sticks of different lengths. This was done most often when Joshua divided up the land. It allowed the people to know God’s will in a matter (Joshua 14-21). Certain functions in the temple were determined this way (1 Chron. 24:5, 31, 25:8-9, 26:13-14); lots were used by the men in the case of Jonah (Jonah 1:7). In the NT it seemed to be a game that was used as seen with the soldiers casting lots for Jesus’ garments (Matt. 27:35); the 11 disciples used this method in replacing Judas (Acts 1:26).
- b. No where in the NT are Christians told to follow this method for decision making. Today we have the completed Word of God and Holy Spirit and do not need lesser methods of discerning God’s will.

2. Urim & Thummim

- a. The Urim (“lights”) and Thummim (“perfections”) were some kind of gemstone that the High Priest carried on his priestly garments. The high priest had a beautiful breastplate that had _____ stones in it each engraved with the names of the twelve _____ of Israel. The top of the breastplate opened at the top like a pouch and these two gemstones

are believed to be carried inside this pouch and used, like the lots, to determine God's will.

b. Exodus 28:30, Lev. 8:8, Numb. 27:21, Deut. 33:8 1 Sam. 28:6, Ezra 2:63

3.

a. *“God apparently used dreams to communicate many times during the OT period, and He will do so again at the time of the second coming of Christ (Gen. 20:3, 6; 31:11-13, 23; 40-41; Joel 2:28). Nonbelievers as well as believers experienced God-given dreams (Gen. 20:3; 31:24). Though a common experience, dreams were used by God in this special way to reveal truth.”* (Ryrie, Basic Theology, pg.71)

b. Genesis 20:3-6 – (King Abimelech was going to sleep with Sarah, Abraham's wife, but God warned him in a dream.)

c. I Samuel 3 – God spoke to the child Samuel.

4.

a. *“In a vision the emphasis seems to be on what is heard, whereas in a dream, it is on what is seen. Also, the human being involved seems to be more active in receiving a vision (Isaiah 1:1; 6:1; Ezekiel 1:3).” (Ryrie, pg. 72).*

b. Numbers 12:6 - " And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream."

5. **(Theophany)** – _____ *manifestations of God in the Bible that is tangible to human senses.*

a. _____ God (Natural Theophany)

- Exodus 13:21-22 – *Pillar of cloud by day, pillar of fire by night.*

b. _____ God (Auditory Theophany)

- Exodus 19:1-3 – (spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai)

c. _____ Theophany

- Genesis 32:24-30 (Jacob wrestles Angel of the Lord)

6. _____ acts of God

a. God's plagues against Pharaoh & Egypt - Psalm 135:7-9

b. The Rainbow after the flood - Genesis 9:12-19)

7. - “One who speaks on behalf of another.”

a. Amos 3:7 – “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”

b. Hebrews 1:1 – “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,”

c. Isaiah 28:25c – “well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,”

8. _____ - He is God incarnate, the eternal Word made flesh, He is the revelation of God in all He did. The “theophanies” are only a flash of lighting compared to the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

a. Hebrews 1:1-2 – “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;”

b. John 1:14, 17-18 – “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. **17**; For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. **18**; No man hath seen God at any time; the

only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

c. John 14:7-11

9. _____ of God

a. The one true source of theology is _____

- 1) Divine revelation must be the source from which we receive knowledge of God.
- 2) (Strong) *"God himself, in the last analysis, must be the only source of knowledge with regard to His own being and relations. Theology is therefore a summary and explanation of the content of God's self-revelations."*
- 3) *"The only reliable proof of the existence of the true God consists of statements from and about him in his inspired Word. God must not be excluded from testifying about Himself. Quite the contrary, his testimony, given by his own inspiration, must be accepted as unique and perfectly reliable. Scripture alone is inspired, or "breathed out by God (Gk. Theopneustos, 2 Tim.3:16), so one must first look to the Bible alone for evidence that is pure and that transcends the limitations of human intellectual finiteness and corruption. Other evidences of God's existence – for example, those in the created realm (Rom. 1:19-20) – must be evaluated and accepted only as long as they align with the Bible's statements about God." (Biblical Doctrine, MacArthur & Mayhue, pg.144).*
- 4) **Isaiah 44:8, 45:5, 22, 46:9 — 8;** *"Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any. 45:5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 45:22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. 46:9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,"*
- 5) We believe in the "objective Word" not the "subjective Word".
 - i. Objective sticks with the truth and facts, subjective allows for feelings and opinions to affect the truth and allow it to be interpretively changed to the readers subjective positions.
 - ii. Culture, personality, opinions, political correctness, backgrounds, denominationalism, etc., does not determine the meaning of Scripture, the Word determines the meaning; it is objective.

b. _____

- 1) **Definition:** Inspiration refers to *"the supernatural guidance of the writers of Scripture by the Spirit of God, so that what they wrote was the Divine Word of God, transcribed accurately, reliably, and without error."*
- 2) **The 2 elements to inspiration are:**
 - i. The scriptures did not come from the will of or origin of man. Man did not write what he thought he should.
 - ii. Rather God the Holy Ghost supernaturally moved the writers of Scripture to pen down the words of God accurately, reliably, and without any error.

c. Scripture

- 1) **2 Peter 1:20–21 — 20**; *“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21; For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”*
- 2) **2 Timothy 3:16–17 — 16**; *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*
- 3) **Did the human writers of scripture Believed that what they wrote was from God?**
 - i. **Deuteronomy 4:2** - Moses said, "These are the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances, which the _____ your God commanded to teach you.
 - ii. **Acts 28:25** - "Well spake the *Holy Ghost* by Isaiah the prophet unto our fathers."
 - iii. **Mark 12:36** (Jesus quoting from Psalm 110:1) – *“For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.”*
 - iv. **1 Thessalonians 2:13 — 13**; *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”*
 - v. **Galatians 1:11-12** - *“But I certify (or make known) to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man (or according to man) v12-For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, **but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.**”*
 - vi. When you combine all the authors of Scripture, they declare some _____ times that they are writing the Words of God.
 - vii. **Over _____ times** the New Testament directly quotes the Old Testament, and there are at least _____ references to the Old Testament in the New

d. Because of Inspiration – Whenever the Scriptures speak, _____ speaks.

- 1) **In the Bible, God and Scripture are used interchangeably** – when the Scripture spoke, God spoke, when God spoke, He spoke Scripture.
- 2) **Galatians 3:8 —** *“And **the scripture**, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.”*
 - i. God spoke to Abraham – but Paul calls Gods Words “Scripture”; the point is – when Scripture spoke, it is God speaking.
 - ii. Paul goes onto again personify Scripture as God in **Galatians 3:22** – *“But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”*
- 3) **Romans 9:17 – “For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh,** *Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power*

in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.”

- 4) Jesus used the Scripture to reveal truth about Himself.
 - i. After Jesus rose from the dead, He veiled his identity to the two men on the road to Emmaus, these 2 men were sad because of Christ’s death; what did Jesus use to prove this was supposed to happen?
 - ii. **Luke 24:25–27 — 25**; *“Then he said unto them, **O fools, and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken: 26**; Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? **27**; And **beginning** at **Moses** and **all** the prophets, he expounded unto them **in all the scriptures** the things concerning himself.”* (John 17:17:12:48)
- 5) What did Peter use to identify the truth about God on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2? _____
 - i. **Acts 2:16 — 16**; *“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel”* (quotes Joel – v.17-21)
 - ii. **Acts 2:25 — 25**; *“For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:”* (quotes David – v. 25-28, 31, 34-35)
- 6) What did Paul use to identify the truth about God?
 - **Acts 17:1–3 — 1**; *“Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: **2**; And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, **3**; Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.”*

C. What is the purpose of special revelation?

1. To allow man to _____ and enjoy God.
 - a. **1 John 5:20** – *“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”* (Animals don’t have this)
 - b. God not only gave us the ability to know Him, but gave us His revelation which actually allows us to know Him.
2. To _____ man and restore communion with him.
 - a. **2 Timothy 3:15** — *“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*
 - b. **Psalm 19:7–** *“The law of the LORD is perfect, _____ the soul.”*
3. To _____ God
 - a. God is revealed and put on display through His Word which brings glory to God.
 - b. **Revelation 1:1; Eph. 3:21, 1 Cor. 1:20-21**

III. False sources of Theology

- A. _____ – holds that reason is to be the ultimate source of all religious truth, while Scripture is authoritative only so far as its revelations agree with previous conclusions of reason or can be rationally demonstrated.
1. God's word is helpful unless it conflicts with the mind of "smart men" who "know better". Rationalism ultimately deifies man over God's Word.
 2. **Example:** have you ever asked someone, "Do you believe the Bible?" and they reply, "I believe most of it." Or "I believe some of it."
 3. **2 Corinthians 3:5**
- B. _____ - This is the belief that the believer can be led and instructed by an "inward divine influence," and that such religious knowledge by "direct communication from God" is sufficient warrant to ignore or reject the clear truth revealed in the Scriptures.
1. **Deuteronomy 13:1-5**
 2. **I Kings 13**
- C. _____ - You can't deny that it is true, because it happened to me" (or "to my father" or "To my Aunt Chloe"), this is the final source of truth for many.
1. This is especially strong in the Charismatic/Pentecostal Churches.
 2. **2 Peter 1:16-21**
- D. _____ – For many, the foundation of truth is, "what has the Church historically held". The Roman Catholic church has elevated tradition – consisting of the apocryphal books, the writings of the Greek and Latin Church fathers, and the massive body of Church council pronouncements and papal decrees – to the level of authority said to be equal to but in fact superior to the Scriptures.
- **Mark 7:6-9**
- E. _____
1. This holds that the source of understanding God is the magic moment of 'encounter' when an individual is touched by 'eternity'. Man, living in time, is somehow sovereignly zapped from a supratemporal realm in some kind of an existential moment when he meets God and has 'revelation'.
 2. **Isaiah 8:19-20 — 19;** *"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? 20; To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."*
- **Note:** As a believer in Jesus Christ, whenever we have a question, we must always ask: "what does the Bible say"; God's Word alone must be the final authority of our faith.

• Weekly Assignments

- Read: Basic Theology (Charles Ryrie) pages 31-38
- Read "Biblical Doctrine" (MacArthur/Mayhue) pages 50-65, 143-146
- Study for test over lesson 2