
SCRIPTURE AS DIVINE REVELATION

Introduction to the Bible
Pastor Bucey

THEOLOGY AND REVELATION

- True religion is based on divine revelation. We do not depend upon ourselves to know everything. God has made himself and his will known to us.
- Initial observations:
 - Revelation is necessary
 - Revelation is the *principium* (basic principle, foundation) of theology
 - God is sovereign in revealing.
 - We are absolutely dependent upon this revelation.
 - Nonetheless, He is under no compulsion to reveal.
- Basic Exegetical Foundations (Matthew 11:25–27; Luke 10:21–22)
 - God reveals things that are otherwise hidden.
 - In verse 21 “you have hidden” stands in contrast to “you have revealed.”
 - Revelation is God’s open secret.
 - What is said to be revealed is hidden from the “wise and intelligent (learned/having understanding)”
 - *Faith* is required in order to appropriate revelation. We must become like little children, being humble and dependent.

GENERAL REVELATION

- General revelation is God’s revelation through the things that have been made (Psalm 19:1).
- According to Romans 1:18–20, God reveals several things through general revelation. It reveals God’s wrath. It also reveals God’s invisible attributes (his “God-ness”).

SPECIAL REVELATION

- Special revelation is God’s word. It is verbal (using words), but may be spoken, inscripturated (written down), or both.
- God spoke at creation and in the garden (Gen 1–2).
 - Special revelation is necessary, and it preceded the Fall into sin.
 - We should allow for the possibility that God has spoken to man and it was not recorded.
- God spoke through the prophets (Jeremiah 1:9; 1 Peter 1:10–12).
- God speaks in Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:16–21).

ATTRIBUTES OF REVELATION

- Revelation is founded upon God's being, and therefore, it must bear certain characteristics. Among other things, revelation is authoritative, self-attesting, self-authenticating, inerrant, infallible, and perspicuous.
- General revelation condemns and reveals God's wrath. We don't know the way of salvation from general revelation.
- Special revelation interprets general revelation.

REVELATION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

- Jesus Christ is the apex of the revelation of the Triune God (Hebrews 1:1–3; Colossians 1:15–19).
- In a sense, he is both general and special revelation.
 - The eternal God has taken to himself a human nature, which was created.
 - But he is also the Word of God, who *was* and *is* God from eternity.

THEOLOGY AND SCRIPTURE (NOTES FROM GAFFIN, ST 101)

- “Theology” (*theos* + *logos*)—“God Word” or “study of God”
 - Scripture and scripture alone is “theology” in the sense of the speaking of God.
 - It is the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture that must be understood in a strict authorial sense.
- Scripture has authority and leads us. Theology as a human endeavor should have the Bible as its central subject matter. Therefore, all theology is based on exegesis.
 - Theology has a vital interest in language—the language of the Bible and our own language.
 - Consequently, hermeneutics is vital.
- As Christians, we must maintain a radically non-speculative theology.
 - We should not go beyond what is written.
 - Yet we must also recognize that the teaching of the Word of God is not only the explicit statements, but the good and necessary consequence of them.
- Theology does not seek to be creative or constructive, but receptively reconstructive—thinking God's thoughts after Him (revelational epistemology).
 - The Bible is God's interpretation and our theology is the interpretation of God's interpretation.
 - The forces of theology are centripetal—pulling us toward the center which is Christ.
 - Calvin taught that scripture are the eyeglasses through which we see the world. Theology is optometry in that we are concerned with the composition of our lenses.