

God Revealed: Part Two

by Bryce William Klassen

To recap, we are looking at the concept of *revelation*, which we have divided into two categories: *General*, and *special*. In Part One we saw that general revelation referred to how God reveals Himself to everyone via nature and even conscience. Today I want to explore special revelation with you. This occurs when God is more specific about who He is and what His plans are for the human race. Special revelation may be further categorized as follows: *Scriptural*, and *incarnational*. The opening lines of Hebrews are a perfect expression of the latter.

“In the past God *spoke* to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has *spoken* to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful *word*. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.” (**Heb 1:1-4**)

The author of Hebrews says that the exact representation of God’s being is His Son, through whom also He made the universe. John’s Gospel begins by saying, “In the beginning was the *Word*, and the *Word* was with God, and the *Word* was God” (**John 1:1**). Here, “Word” is not referring to something written, but the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ. However, that is not to diminish the importance of the Bible, which is the *written* Word of God.

In the past men were moved by the Holy Spirit to deliver the words of God (**2 Pet 1:19-21**). This resulted in both the Old and New Testaments. Hence why we often refer to the Bible as the Word of God, or as it is called in Latin, *verbum Dei*. Peter says that no Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation and that it is “completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts” (**2 Peter 1:19**). Paul tells Timothy that all Scripture is “breathed out” by God and “profitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every

good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17). Some may object that Peter and Paul only had the Old Testament to refer to. This is correct, but remember that Peter places Paul’s writings on par with the Old Testament and in 1 Corinthians Paul makes sure they know that he is speaking the commands of God, not Paul (2 Pet 3:16; 1 Cor 7:10-16).

Although the Bible was not officially canonized (in book form like it is today) until the fourth century, the post-apostolic church most certainly *did* acknowledge certain writings as inspired (God-breathed) Scripture. In fact, we could probably recreate the New Testament using their quotations alone! When the church did decide to officially acknowledge what was and wasn’t Scripture, they were careful to say that the books were not so much being chosen but *received*. In other words, they were acknowledging what God had already revealed! Therefore it was more a matter of recognition as opposed to declaration.

All of this theology talk might seem lofty and irrelevant, but learning who God is and how He moves in the world is important for us as Christians. Thomas Aquinas once referred to theology as the queen of the sciences. This may seem foreign to our modern ears, but in the 13th century it was widely acknowledged that the greatest intellectual pursuit was the knowledge of God and that God Himself was the fount of all knowledge. In addition, almost every major university in the West was founded with the intention of training clergy in the Word and preparing them for ministry. Since then theology is hardly recognized as the flagship department of most schools, which have forgotten their origins. Despite this, doing theology is as rewarding as ever because it concerns God and is as relevant as ever for the same reason. So take the time to think about these things and do some reading. There are plenty of introductory books out there meant to explain these things to a popular audience and from which you will benefit not just intellectually, but spiritually as well. I have included below several resources that are worth checking out! I want to end with a quote from C.H. Spurgeon regarding the study of God:

There is something exceedingly improving to the mind in a contemplation of the Divinity. It is a subject so vast, that all our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep, that our pride is drowned in its infinity. Other subjects we can grapple with; in them we

feel a kind of self-content, and go our way with the thought, "Behold I am wise." But when we come to this master science, finding that our plumbline cannot sound its depth, and that our eagle eye cannot see its height, we turn away with the thought that vain man would be wise, but he is like a wild ass's colt; and with solemn exclamation, "I am but of yesterday, and know nothing." No subject of contemplation will tend more to humble the mind, than thoughts of God...

In Love,
Bryce

Resources for Further Study

Everyone's a Theologian by R.C. Sproul

https://www.amazon.ca/Everyones-Theologian-R-C-Sproul-ebook/dp/B00IPLHY64/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1589311477&sr=8-8

Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem

https://www.amazon.ca/Systematic-Theology-Introduction-Biblical-Doctrine-ebook/dp/B000FC2KE2/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1589311544&sr=8-1

Christian Theology: An Introduction by Alister E. McGrath

https://www.amazon.ca/Christian-Theology-Introduction-Alister-McGrath-ebook/dp/B01JZW08FK/ref=sr_1_3?keywords=theology+introduction&qid=1589311606&sr=8-3

Knowing God by J.I. Packer

https://www.amazon.ca/Knowing-God-J-I-Packer-ebook/dp/B006NZ66RC/ref=sr_1_1?crid=4TF79H4M7BLA&keywords=knowing+god&qid=1589311710&srefix=knowing+god%2Caps%2C171&sr=8-1