

Class 1 - The Revelation of God

MAIN QUESTION: How is God knowable? To what extent? Why is this the first question we must ask in a study of the Bible?

Need for Revelation

Creation (Gen 1:26-27) –

- God had a way of having us grow in His image as His children
- His plan has *always* been to grow in relationship with us

Fall (Rom 1:18-25) –

- That ability to know God is separated and fractured, so relationship is fractured
- It now requires something outside our own capabilities, an act of God to move beyond the fractured barrier
- Worshipping the work of our own hands – the golden calf is another way of grabbing the fruit for ourselves

Redemption (Rom 1:16-17) –

- We know Him now through His word & works
- Revelation – Relationship – Redemption = restored image

Progressive Revelation – an unveiling

General Revelation – works of God in nature (see again Rom 1 :19-20)

Special Revelation – the words and works of God in redemptive history (Rom 1:16-17)

- Seeks to restore the brokenness that now effects general revelation
- Important for knowing who God is...and who God is not!
 - Apologetics: If all “revelations” (supposed or otherwise) in all religions say the same thing or are equal pointers to the Light, then how do we reconcile religions that claim God wants child sacrifices with religion that says God is love and He will actually sacrifice Himself for us?!?!)

Special Revelation in the OT = word, works

- Select individuals encounter God’s presence, then become representatives for God and people. God works through these individuals who encounter Him. They are called out for purpose
- Typologies – initial revelation (often in the OT) become a “type” for greater revealing in further revelation (NT). (This will be important for later classes)

Special Revelation in the NT = Living Word & His works

- Revelation is complete in the person of Jesus Christ (John 14:9)
 - Being is revealed by being (if God=person, then person reveals Him perfectly)
 - *Revelation* is then tied to our *relationship* with Christ
- Now the entire community is called out for redemptive purposes (priesthood of all believers)
 - Spirit in the OT – fell on prophets, priests, kings, judges
 - Spirit in the NT – Joel 2:28

- Written word is an account of the living word. It informs our relationship with Christ. That is the purpose of Scripture.

Purpose of Revelation - Why does God want to make himself known (restore the relationship)?

- Ultimately – it brings Him glory
 - Glory = defined as *the revelation of who God is*, in majesty & splendor (unveiling, manifestation of God)
 - We know the God we are in relationship to (and why He is to be worshipped)
 - Exodus 24:16-17, 33:18-22; John 17:24
 - So what does the revelation of redemption reveal about who God is (glory)
- Fulfills His Sovereign purposes for His creation (Know God = Transformation/conformed to His image. 1 John 3:1-2)
 - GOD *DESIRES* RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS CREATION! (Parent-Child)
 - Divine plural (a vocative device for God’s majesty like in Islam, the angelic hosts, or plurality in the unity of divine family)
 - Divine plural – still a seed of revelation to plurality in personhood (Islam got this from Jewish scriptures)
 - Angelic hosts don’t create
 - Trinity means God is relational within Himself, creative within Himself, and loving within Himself, so...He did not *need* to redeem us, He *desired* to!

ENCOUNTER: SPEND TIME IN PRAYER & LECTIO DIVINA (with the verse covered in class)