

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY I

Class Notes for AIM Institute Directed Study Course

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AIM Institute
Theology I - Part I

Introduction

A. Read John 4:24

“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

1. Worship is a lifestyle expressed by our love, reverence, awe, submission and obedience to God.
2. Spirit – it is through our spirit that we have communion with God. When our spirit is joined to the Holy Spirit we are born again. This is how we experience God; hear His voice, feel His presence.
3. Truth – the person of Jesus Christ, His written word, and general revelation. This involves using our mind. Truth is true for all people, at all times in all places.
4. Spirit and truth are not contradictory. They are complementary.

B. Why Should You Take This Course?

1. Listen to “Imagine”. This song challenges you to think, exercise your mind. Written in 1971, these ideas are prevalent today.
2. Listen to “Crippled Inside”. All men are broken on the inside and are sinful. We do not live at peace with others or the world.
3. Listen to “Give Me Some Truth”. The peace-loving man is now angry. He is thinking about the big issues in life and does not like the answers. Everyone else is a hypocrite.
4. Listen to “How?” Anger gives way to despair as he realizes his thinking does not match reality. How do I go forward with life?
5. You need this course to begin to think, use your mind. Not shallow thoughts, BIG thoughts.
6. You need to think about the big issues of life and how to communicate them to others.
7. You need to understand how the issues of life are lived out in the world.
8. You are *not* learning or thinking just to gain theological information. You are learning and growing in Christ to bring healing to a broken world. (Just as we are being healed)
9. You need this course to develop a ‘Fear of the Lord’. The more you learn and know about God, the more you will reverence Him, be in awe of

Him, honor Him, and fear Him. Scripture says this is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom.

Proverbs 1:7

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;
Fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

Proverbs 9:10

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

Your identity and wisdom flow from a right relationship to God.

I. The Doing of Theology

A. What is theology?

1. Common features of religion

- a. There is a belief in something higher than individual human persons.
- b. A distinction between sacred and secular.
- c. A world and life view.
- d. A set of practices of either ritual or ethical behavior.
- e. Certain attitudes or feelings (guilt, awe, mystery).
- f. A relationship or response to a higher object.
- g. Certain social dimensions.

2. Religions are separated by their world and life views. A set of beliefs.

3. Christianity is a religion.

II Corinthians 5:17-19

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

This makes Christianity unique.

4. Christianity is named after our leader Jesus Christ.

5. To be a member of a group one must adhere to the teachings of the leader.

6. To be a Christian means that Jesus is the authority by which we conduct our lives.
7. The actual living out and personal practice of religion occur at the primary level of experience. This is discipleship – “Come follow Me”
8. The discipline that describes, analyzes, and organizes beliefs or doctrines is theology. This is a second level activity. The classroom is needed to develop our reasoning.
9. Theology is that discipline which strives to give a coherent statement of the doctrines of the Christian faith, based on the Scriptures, placed in the context of culture in general, worded in a contemporary idiom and related to issues of life. (This is the definition for systematic theology)

BEGIN SESSION 2

- a. Theology is Biblical.
 1. Old and New Testament
 2. General revelation
 - b. Theology is systematic.
 - c. Theology relates to culture and learning.
 - d. Theology must be contemporary.
 1. Expressing timeless truths
 2. In current language, concepts, thought forms
 - e. Theology is practical – how do we live, not just think.
- B. Locating systematic theology in the theological spectrum
1. Theological studies
 - a. Biblical theology (Biblical studies)
 - b. Historical theology (historical studies)
 - c. Philosophical theology (practical studies)
 - d. Systematic theology (doctrinal studies)
 2. Biblical theology
 - a. Forms the basis for systematic theology
 - b. Is exegesis, not eisegesis (to draw out, not read into)
 - c. The isolation and presentation of the unchanging Biblical teachings that are valid for all times.
 3. Historical theology
 - a. The study of the systematic theologies held and thought by various theologians throughout the history of the church.
 - b. Helps us to see our own presuppositions by studying various

interpretations of Biblical truths held by the church at different times.

- c. Will help us to evaluate particular ideas over a period of time. “Those who do not learn from the past are condemned to repeat it.” George Santayana

4. Philosophical theology

- a. To scrutinize the meaning of terms and ideas employed in theological tasks.
- b. To criticize arguments.
- c. Sharpen the message for clarity.

5. Systematic theology studies the doctrinal content of the Christian faith.

- a. Scripture (Bibliology)
- b. God (Theology)
- c. Man (Anthropology)
- d. Sin (Hamartiology)
- e. Christ (Christology)
- f. Salvation (Soteriology)
- g. Church (Ecclesiology)
- h. Last things (Eschatology)

C. The need for theology

1. If I love Jesus, do I need theology? Yes!
2. Theology is important because correct doctrinal beliefs are essential to the relationship between the believer and God.
 - a. Matthew 16:13-19

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

b. Romans 10:9-10

that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

3. Theology is necessary because truth will affect our experience.
4. Theology is needful because of the large number of alternatives to the Christian faith.
 - a. Eastern religions
 - b. Islam
 - c. Cults
5. The U.S. Treasury Department and banks initially study and review legal currency. Why? If you know what is true, you will spot what is counterfeit.

D. The method of theology

1. Characteristics of current theological scene.
 - a. The tendency for current theologies is to have a brief life span.
 1. Augustine, City of God, 800 years
 2. Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 300years
 3. Calvin, Institutes of Religion, 250 years
 4. Barth, Epistle to Romans, 22 years
 5. Bultmann, New Testament and Mythology, 13 years
 - b. No great movements around an idea or adherents. No great schools.
 - c. Few outstanding theologians.
2. Lessons to learn
 - a. The culture is changing rapidly. Let's step toward the timeless truths of scripture rather than an ultra-contemporary statement.

Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

- b. Keep our doctrinal formulations flexible enough to recognize and utilize insights from other Christian positions.
- c. Do not be quick to adopt a theological giant's position of a particular doctrine. What does Scripture say on the issue?
- 3. The process of doing theology
 - a. Collection of Bible materials
 - 1. Know your sources presuppositions (what they take for granted or assume)
 - 2. Do exegesis. What does the text say? What was meant by the writer or speaker. How would the text be understood by the original hearers?
II Timothy 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

- b. Unification of the Biblical materials
 - 1. What does the Bible as a whole say on this topic.
 - 2. Proceed on the assumption that the Bible is consistent and unified in its message.
- c. Analysis of the meaning of Bible teaching.
 - 1. When we know what the Bible states on an issue, then ask, what does it mean?
John 3:5, 8
Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- d. Examination of historical treatments
 - 1. May produce humility in us and cause us to re-examine our view.

- 2. Issue of suicide.
 - e. Consultation of other cultural perspectives
 - 1. Do we tie our Biblical understanding to government forms, politics or nation?
 - f. Identification of the essence of the doctrine
 - 1. Temple system vs. substitutionary sacrifice
 - g. Illumination from extra-biblical sources
 - 1. Additional insight from general revelation
 - a. Nature – natural science
 - b. History
 - c. Humanity – behavioral sciences
 - h. Contemporary expression of the doctrine
 - 1. Length – communicate biblical principle from first century to present.
 - 2. Breadth – consider other cultures you are communicating to.
 - 3. Height – what level of education, complexity and sophistication to whom are you communicating.
 - i. Development of central interpretive motif.
 - 1. Luther – salvation by grace
 - 2. Calvin – sovereignty of God
 - 3. Oscar Cullmann –already, but not yet (Kingdom of God)
 - 4. This is a very sophisticated level of doing theology.
 - j. The stratification of topics
 - 1. Are some of the issues you are studying more important than others.
 - 2. This can change with time.
 - k. Theological statements drawn directly from scripture should be accorded the greatest degree of authority.
- E. Contemporizing the Christian message
- 1. Radical example of Rudolf Bultmann seeking to demythologize the New Testament in the 1940-50's.
 - a. The cosmology of the first century world is obsolete. We live in a world of technology and sophistication.
 - b. The following myths must be eliminated or reinterpreted: heaven, hell, angels, demons, God appearing, miracles, and the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. The world has changed. How long can church members tolerate cultural schizophrenia?

2. What must be retained in order to maintain genuine Christianity?
What do you think?
 - a. What is the Gospel?
 - b. What are its critical elements or beliefs?

BEGIN SESSION 3

3. Where is the locus of permanence in Christianity.
 - a. Institutional church – Roman Catholic view
 - b. Acts of God
 1. Exodus
 2. Christ event of New Testament
 - c. Experiences, not doctrine
 1. Death is universal, need to comfort family
 2. Eliminate hell and resurrection of body
 3. Substitute immortality of soul
 - d. Doctrine
 - e. A way of life on earth reflected in concern for justice, social equality and democracy.
4. Two approaches to contemporizing theology
 - a. Transformers
 1. The ancient world has radically changed and the ancient worldview can no longer be tied to Christian beliefs.
 2. Doctrines can change, as truth is relative.
 3. Humanity is best judge of right and wrong.
 4. Revelation from God is not needed for truth.
 5. Relevance is key word, not authoritative.
 6. The program of evil calls into question the existence of God.
 - b. Translators
 1. Believe the transformers have a message, but it is not the Christian faith.
 2. Without a transcendent God and Jesus Christ as Savior, it is not Christian.
 3. The Christian message must challenge the contemporary mind, not simply accommodate it.
 4. Every generation must encounter the eternal truths of Christian faith. Re-dig father's wells.
 - a. Abraham at well of Beersheba.

Genesis 21:31-34

Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because there the two of them took an oath. So they made a covenant at Beersheba; and Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines. Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God. And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days.

b. Isaac at Beersheba. Genesis 26:18-33

Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them the same names which his father had given them. But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of flowing water, the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek, because they contended with him. Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Sitnah. He moved away from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it Rehoboth, for he said, "At last the LORD has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land." Then he went up from there to Beersheba. The LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants, For the sake of My servant Abraham." So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well. Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his adviser Ahuzzath and Phicol the commander of his army. Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?" They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you; so we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, even between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD.'" Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. In the morning they arose early and exchanged oaths; then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace. Now it came about on the same day, that Isaac's servants came in and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water." So he called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

- c. Context may change; content does not.
(Same life-giving water from Everlasting God.)
 - 5. Two-step process
 - a. Determine what was meant in original context.
 - b. Tell what it means today.
- 5. The locus of permanence in the Christian faith is found in God's revelation to mankind. Matthew 16:17-19
 - a. General – nature, history, mankind
 - b. Special – historical events, divine speech, incarnation
 - c. Criteria for permanence in doctrine
 - 1. Constancy across cultures – Romans 3:29
 - 2. Universal setting – baptism – Matthew 28:18-20
 - 3. A recognized permanent factor as a base
 - a. Marriage – God declared it from the beginning
 - b. Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6
 - 4. An indissoluble link with an experience regarded as essential.
 - a. Is our hope of the future dependent upon the resurrection of Christ?
 - b. I Corinthians 15:17

and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

- 5. Position within progressive revelation
 - a. God has worked in a process of accomplishing redemption for humanity revealing Himself and His plan gradually.
 - b. The later the revealing, the more final the form.
- F. Postmodernity and theology
 - 1. The problem
 - a. The modern period has come to an end in terms of the ideas that characterized this time.
 - b. Thomas Oden dates the modern period from 1789 to 1989. The fall of the French Bastille to the fall of the Berlin Wall.
 - c. A new time period, postmodernism, dominates the scene intellectually.
 - 2. Premodernism
 - a. A belief in the rationality of the universe.
 - 1. Dualistic – nature and supernatural
 - 2. Usually religious supernaturalism – God created and

sustains the universe.

- b. The belief that the universe has meaning and purpose. History is orderly.
- c. A belief in the objective existence of the physical world. It existed independent of anyone perceiving it.
- d. A belief in Correspondence Theory of Truth. Truth accurately describes reality.
- e. Language referred to existing realities.

3. Modernism

- a. Retained belief in points c, d, and e.
- b. Changed the dualistic concept of the world from natural – supernatural to natural – natural. In other words, the meaning of cause of the world is now found within the natural world, not above or below it.
- c. Humanism paralleled this shift from God to humanity. The human being, not God, became the center of reality.
- d. The scientific method became the only means of investigating truth.
- e. Nature is considered dynamic, the sole and sufficient cause for all that occurs.

4. Postmodernism

- a. Attempts to find and identify ultimate reality through writing. This is termed deconstructionism. Deconstructionists are literary critics who find reality not in what the author wrote in the context of their own time period, but in what the author wrote viewed through postmodern values and beliefs. Thus, they deconstruct the text. A social construct is formed. The goal is to shift the locus of power and control.
- b. Neopragmatists try to find meaning in life by placing themselves in the context of a community, either real or imagined. The modern definition of narrative, not necessary to be factual. They find truth in what is good or useful to believe; not what is true.
- c. Political correctness reigns. It is a form of coercion. Instead of the free competition for ideas, one position has been arbitrarily imposed.

5. Positive ministry principles for postmodernism.

- a. Truth is not relative but absolute. However, our knowledge of the truth is less than absolute based on our own

limitations.

- b. This suggests a degree of humility for us.
- c. We need to engage those different from us in dialogue and attempt to view reality from their perspective.
- d. I have found this to be personally very stretching, but it has yielded new friendships and a deeper understanding of the Gospel. (Study Circle Groups)

BEGIN SESSION 4

II. God's Revelation

A. Universal or general revelation

- 1. General revelation is defined as God's communication of Himself to all persons at all times in all places.
- 2. Special revelation involves God's communication and manifestation of Himself to particular persons at particular times. The Erickson textbook states these communications and manifestations are now only available by consulting Scripture. I would strongly disagree. The Holy Spirit is still communicating to us.
- 3. God must reveal Himself to us because we are finite and He is infinite, preventing us from knowing Him or having fellowship with Him.
- 4. Modes of General Revelation
 - a. The created physical order – nature
 - 1. Psalm 19:1-4

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun,

2. Romans 1:20

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

b. History

1. Preservation of Jewish people.
2. Revolutionary War
3. U.S. Exceptionalism. It is not that we are exceptional, but God's intervention in our history is exceptional. See Michael Medved's book, "The American Miracle".

4. Acts 17:24-28

The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

c. Humans

1. Mental, moral, and physical qualities
2. Their desire for religion and belief in the existence of a higher reality.

B. General Revelation and Natural Theology

1. Natural Theology is the idea that without prior commitment of faith to the beliefs of Christianity and without relying on any special authority, one is able to come to a genuine knowledge of God on the basis of reason alone.
2. This concept was developed by Thomas Aquinas. It has two major assumptions.
 - a. God has made Himself known in nature and that patterns of meaning are present even if no one perceives them.
 - b. Man's sinfulness and other human limitations do not prevent us from recognizing and interpreting the handiwork of the Creator.
3. Main arguments for Natural Theology
 - a. Cosmological – God is the first cause in the origins of the universe.
 - c. Teleological – order and purpose. Look at a watch. The

universe has order and purpose in its functioning. Therefore, it had an intentional creator.

- c. Both are empirical arguments or sense observations of the universe.
- d. Ontological – the study of existence or being.
- e. All of these arguments have met heavy resistance and criticism.

4. Examination of Scripture

a. Psalm 19:1-4

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun,

b. Romans 1:18-25

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

d. Romans 2:14-16

For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

d. Acts 14:14-17

But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM. In the generations gone by He

permitted all the nations to go their own ways; and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

e. Acts 17:22-31

So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’ Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”

5. What can be said of Natural Theology?

- a. Read pages 34-36. Natural Theology is a subset of General Revelation. The Question is, “Can a person have a relationship with God based solely on what nature, history, and human personality can reveal to them?” Aquinas says, Yes! Calvin and many other theologians say, No! The textbook asserts that Paul claims that humans do not clearly recognize and acknowledge God in General Revelation. They use Paul’s words in Romans 1:18-25 to make this claim. Not true! In fact, Paul states that men inherently knew about God, clearly saw His attributes, understood about God and knew God. The problem is many men ‘suppressed the truth about God, rejected Him, and lied about God.’ Many have but certainly not all. They would exclude men like

Adam, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses who believed God before the Law was given.

- b. Can anyone come to saving faith by Aquinas' definition?
No, not by reason alone.
- c. But these passages declare we can know Him.

Here is how:

1. John 6:44-45

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.

2. John 16:7-13

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

- d. Without the Holy Spirit working with you, you can not come to faith. Neither Erickson or Aquinas discuss this dimension.

6. Implications of General Revelation

- a. All persons have a knowledge of God.
- b. There is a possibility of knowing divine truth outside of special revelation.
- c. God is just in condemning those who have never heard the Gospel in a formal sense.
- e. We will be judged for what we know, not on what we don't know.

Romans 2:14-16

For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of

the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

C. God's Special Revelation

1. Special revelation enables people to enter a redemptive relationship with God.
2. The Hebrew and Greek word for reveal expresses the idea of uncovering what was revealed.
3. Special revelation existed before the Fall. Genesis 1:28, Genesis 2:15-17
4. Special revelation then became remedial when the direct presence of God was lost. Adam and Eve sinning. Man now has a fallen nature.
5. Special revelation is:
 - a. Personal (Exodus 3:14) He tells us His Name
 - b. Makes personal covenants
 1. Noah
 2. Abraham
 - c. Seeking personal encounters.
 1. Paul on road to Damascus
 2. Philippians 3:10
6. God uses anthropic forms to communicate
 - a. Human language
 - b. Human categories of thought
 - c. Common human experience – dreams
 - d. Human life – Incarnation
7. Modes of Special Revelation
 - a. Historical events
 1. Call of Abraham
 2. Exodus
 - b. Divine speech
 1. Audible voice
 2. Silent inward hearing of God's message
 3. Dreams or visions
 4. Conursive – the writing of Scripture as God spoke to their minds. Verbal inspiration.
 5. Frequently the spoken voice of God helped the prophets to interpret human events.

- c. The Incarnation – God does not have human form. Christ’s humanity represents a mediation of divine revelation.
 - 1. John 1:18

No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

- 2. John 14:9
- 8. God’s revelation of Himself is both personal and propositional.
 - a. He reveals Himself in relationship
 - b. He tells us about Himself
- 9. Scripture as revelation
 - a. If God speaking to us, is His revelation, then it can be preserved by writing it down or inscripturating it.
 - b. To the extent that it is an accurate reproduction of the original revelation, it is derived revelation.
 - c. The question of whether the Bible is in this derivative sense revelation is a question of inspiration. Is the Word of God a living text?
 - 1. Hebrews 4:12 – what do you think?
Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

BEGIN SESSION 5

- D. The presentation of Revelation: Inspiration
 - 1. By inspiration of Scripture we mean the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon the Scripture writers which rendered their writings an accurate record of the revelation or which resulted in what they wrote actually being the Word of God.
 - 2. Revelation is the communication of divine truth from God to humankind.
 - 3. Inspiration relates more to the relaying of truth from the first recipients of it to other persons. The writers and what they wrote were inspired.
 - 4. The fact of inspiration
 - a. The testimony of Scripture to its inspiration is not a circular

claim unless it is presented as the only proof. As a historical document, the Bible can make its case. F.F. Bruce, “The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?”

b. Testimony of Scripture

1. II Peter 1:20, 21

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

2. II Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Genesis 2:7 God breathed.

Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

3. Acts 1:16

“Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.

4. Acts 3:18, 21, and 4:25

But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, ‘WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS?’

5. Jeremiah 30:4

Now these are the words which the LORD spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah:

6. John 10:35 – Old Testament

If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken)

7. Matthew 5:18 – Old Testament

For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

5. Theories of Inspiration Pg. 52-53 Erickson

The verbal theory insists that the Holy Spirit's influence extends beyond the direction of thoughts to the selection of words used to convey the message. The work of the Holy Spirit is so intense that each word is the exact word God wants used at that point to express the message. Ordinarily, however, great care is taken to insist that this is not dictation. (Page 53)

6. Extent of Inspiration

a. II Timothy 3:16 – All? God says **all** Scripture.

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

b. II Peter 3:16

For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

c. I John 4:6

We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

d. I Thessalonians 1:5, 2:13

for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

e. The New Testament writers believed they were writing Scripture, the Word of God.

7. Inspiration involved God directing the thoughts of the writer so that they were precisely the thoughts that He wished expressed.
8. The inspiration was verbal, extending to the choice of words. (but not dictation)
9. Inspiration is conceived as applying to the writer and the writing.
10. Because the Bible is inspired, we can be confident of having divine instruction.

E. The dependability of God's Word: Inerrancy

1. Inerrancy is the doctrine that the Bible is fully truthful in all of its teachings.
2. Conceptions of inerrancy Pg. 60-61 Erickson

Full inerrancy also holds that the Bible is completely true. While the Bible does not primarily aim to give scientific and historical data, such scientific and historical assertions as it does make are fully true. There is no essential difference between this position and absolute inerrancy in terms of their view of the religious/theological/spiritual message. The understanding of the scientific and historical references is quite different, however. Full inerrancy regards these references as phenomenal; that is, they are reported the way they appear to the human eye. They are not necessarily exact; rather, they are popular descriptions, often involving general references or approximations. Yet they are correct. What they teach is essentially correct in the way they teach it. (Page 60)

3. Importance of inerrancy
 - a. Theological – if the Bible is not truthful, but contains errors, that negatively reflects on God’s omniscience and on the credibility of divine inspiration.
 - b. Historical – the church has relied on the complete dependability of the Bible for centuries. When segments of the church have abandoned inerrancy, they frequently abandon other doctrines.
 - c. Epistemological – how do we know as Christians? Our basis for knowing and holding to the truth is the Bible.
4. Inerrancy and Scripture
 - a. Our belief in inerrancy is based on the teaching of the Biblical authors on its inspiration, that the Bible is fully truthful.
 - b. Problem texts include contradictions in matters of chronology, numbers, and details.
 - c. Options
 1. Ignore them
 2. Abandon inerrancy
 3. Attempt to harmonize the differences
5. Full definition of inerrancy
 - a. The Bible when correctly interpreted in light of the level to which culture and the means of communication had developed at the time it was written, and in view of the purposes for which it was given, is fully truthful in all that it affirms.
 - b. This applies to the original documents and to the copies that reflect the originals.
 - c. We are speaking of full inerrancy position.
 - d. Read statements on Pg. 63-66 Erickson. Defining inerrancy

1. Inerrancy pertains to what is affirmed or asserted rather than what is merely reported. (Page 63)

2. We must judge the truthfulness of Scripture in terms of its meaning in the cultural setting in which its statements were expressed. (Page 64)

3. The Bible’s assertions are fully true when judged in accordance with the purpose for which they were written. (Page 64)

4. Reports of historical events and scientific matters are in phenomenal rather than technical language. That is, the writer reports how things appear to the eye. (Page 65)

5. Difficulties in explaining the biblical text should not be prejudged as indications of error. It is better to wait for the remainder of the data to come in, with the confidence that if we had all the data, the problems could be resolved. In some cases, the data may never come in.

1. Inerrancy pertains to what is affirmed or asserted rather than what is merely reported.

Acts 7:6

But God spoke to this effect, that his DESCENDANTS WOULD BE ALIENS IN A FOREIGN LAND, AND THAT THEY WOULD BE ENSLAVED AND MISTREATED FOR FOUR HUNDRED YEARS.

2. We must judge the truthfulness of Scripture in terms of its meaning in the cultural setting in which the statement was made. Son – child or descendant
3. The Bible’s assertions are true when judged in accordance with the purpose for which they are written. II Chronicles 4:2 – to duplicate construction or to give you an idea of size of object?

Also he made the cast metal sea, ten cubits from brim to brim, circular in form, and its height was five cubits and its circumference thirty cubits.

4. Reports of historical events and scientific matters are in phenomenal rather than technical language. The writer reports as things appear to the eye. The sun is rising.
5. Difficulties in explaining the Biblical text should not be prejudged as indications of errors. Further data may resolve the problem. New research of the Koine Greek usage of ‘falling headlong’ in Acts 1:18, can also mean “swelling up”, giving consistency of result of death by hanging in Matthew 27:5.

BEGIN SESSION 6

F. The power of God's Word: Authority

1. Authority – the right to command belief or action.
 - a. Many in our society refuse to recognize any final authority. They would rather accept their own judgment as final.
 - b. Post modernism views every opinion is of equal value to any other opinion. To suggest that one is superior to another is viewed as intolerant.
 - c. A supreme being superior to humans and anything else in the created order would have the right to determine what we are to believe and how we should live.
 - d. That supreme being is God and God alone!
 1. Isaiah 40:12-31

*Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand,
And marked off the heavens by the span,
And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure,
And weighed the mountains in a balance
And the hills in a pair of scales?
Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD,
Or as His counselor has informed Him?
With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding?
And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge
And informed Him of the way of understanding?
Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
And are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales;
Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust.*

*Even Lebanon is not enough to burn,
Nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering.
All the nations are as nothing before Him,
They are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless.*

*To whom then will you liken God?
Or what likeness will you compare with Him?
As for the idol, a craftsman casts it,
A goldsmith plates it with gold,
And a silversmith fashions chains of silver.
He who is too impoverished for such an offering*

*Selects a tree that does not rot;
He seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman
To prepare an idol that will not totter.*

*Do you not know? Have you not heard?
Has it not been declared to you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
It is He who sits above the circle of the earth,
And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers,
Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain
And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.*

*He it is who reduces rulers to nothing,
Who makes the judges of the earth meaningless.
Scarcely have they been planted,
Scarcely have they been sown,
Scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth,
But He merely blows on them, and they wither,
And the storm carries them away like stubble.
“To whom then will you liken Me
That I would be his equal?” says the Holy One.
Lift up your eyes on high
And see who has created these stars,
The One who leads forth their host by number,
He calls them all by name;
Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power,
Not one of them is missing.*

*Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel,
“My way is hidden from the LORD,
And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God”?
Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth
Does not become weary or tired.
His understanding is inscrutable.
He gives strength to the weary,
And to him who lacks might He increases power.
Though youths grow weary and tired,
And vigorous young men stumble badly,
Yet those who wait for the LORD*

*Will gain new strength;
They will mount up with wings like eagles,
They will run and not get tired,
They will walk and not become weary.*

2. Revelation 4:1-11

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME." And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

- e. As Creator of all things and as Sovereign Lord over all the heavens and earth, He has the right to establish standards for religious belief and practice.
2. The Bible is God's word to us.
- a. The Bible is special revelation and verbal inspiration.
 - b. Jesus affirmed the revelation of the Scriptures.

1. Matthew 5:17-18 – word is everlasting

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

2. John 10:34-36 – word is inerrant and binding authority.

Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I SAID, YOU ARE GODS’? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?”

c. II Timothy 3:16 – all scripture is God breathed. Inspired and authoritative.

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

d. Hebrews 4:12-13 – the Word of God is:

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

1. Living – it has life (it is God breathed)
2. Active – effective, powerful
3. Sharper – cuts with a single stroke
3. The essential relationship of God’s Word and the Holy Spirit
 - a. John 4:24 – God’s worshippers (those totally committed, prostrate, submitted to God) will worship in Spirit and Truth.

John 4:24

God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

1. Truth – God’s Word
2. Spirit – our spirit and the Holy Spirit

b. John 6:44-45 – God, Holy Spirit draws

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.

1. John 3:3-7 – Born again by the Holy Spirit

Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

2. John 15:26-27 – helper, Spirit of truth will testify of Jesus

"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

3. John 16:7-13 – Holy Spirit will convict of sin and guide to truth

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now."¹³ But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

4. John 14:15-26 – the Holy Spirit lives in believers, guides them, teaches them and helps them love Jesus through obedience to God’s commands.

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?” Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me. “These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

5. I Corinthians 2:6-16 – the Holy Spirit teaches us God’s wisdom, not man’s wisdom.

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; but just as it is written, “THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.” For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of

God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

4. Final thoughts on the authority of God's Word.

- a. II Timothy 2:15 we must diligently study God's Word.
(Understand the meaning of the text.)

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

- b. John 8:31-32 – a disciple must not just know God's Word, he must abide in it, live in it, yield to it, obey it.

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

- c. I Corinthians 2:1-5 – an academic understanding is not sufficient. We need the Holy Spirit to confirm His Word by demonstrations of the Spirit and power.

And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

BEGIN SESSION 7

Theology I - Part II

Song “God and God Alone” by Steve Green

God and God alone created all these things we call our own
From the mighty to the small the Glory in them all is God's and God's alone
God and God alone is fit to take the universe's throne
Let everything that lives reserve it's truest praise for God and God alone
God and God alone reveals the truth of all we call unknown
and the best and worst of man won't change the Master's plan it's God's and God's alone
God and God alone will be the joy of our eternal home
He will be our one desire, Our hearts will never tire of God's and God's alone

III. The Nature of God

A. The Doctrine of God

1. Two views of God
 - a. Malevolent being – God is going to get you.
 - b. God is a grandfather – indulgent, kindly old gentleman
2. Problems in understanding God
 - a. The concept of the Trinity
 - b. God's relationship to the creation
 1. Found within human society and the processes of nature (immanent)
 2. Far away and removed from earth (transcendent)
3. Immanence and transcendence
 - a. Jeremiah 23:23-24

*“Am I a God who is near,” declares the LORD, “And not a God far off?
“Can a man hide himself in hiding places So I do not see him?” declares the LORD. “Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” declares the LORD.*

- b. Acts 17:27-28

that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’

- c. Isaiah 55:8-9

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares 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.

d. Isaiah 6:1-5

In the year of King Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.” And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, “Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

4. Immanence means that God is present and active within His creation, and within the human race, even those members of it that do not believe in Him or obey Him.
5. Transcendence means that God is superior to and independent from anything that He has created. God is not merely a quality of nature or of humanity; He is not simply the highest human being. God is divine.
6. Implications of immanence
 - a. John 16:7-13

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

1. God is relational. The Holy Spirit is with the entire world convicting of sin, righteousness of Christ and eternal judgment.

2. The Holy Spirit will guide us into truth.
- b. Colossians 1:16-22

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—

1. Christ holds all things together. Protein cell called laminin. It is actually in the shape of a cross.
 2. Christ is head of the church.
 3. By His blood He has reconciled us to God and made us holy. Made possible by His incarnation.
 - c. God is active in the world through general revelation. Science, medicine, and mathematics are possible due to an orderly universe.
 - d. We need to have an appreciation and respect for all of creation.
7. Implications of transcendence
- a. There is something higher than human beings. Good, truth, and value are not determined by humans. God gives value to humankind.
 - b. God can never be completely captured in human concepts. He is not limited by our understanding of Him.
 - c. Our salvation is not our achievement. The fact that we know Him is a matter of His self-revelation, not our discovery.
 - d. There will always be a difference between God and human beings. Even when redeemed and glorified we will never be God.
 - e. Reverence is appropriate in our relationship with God. Worship Him. Our prayer is characterized by “Not my will, Yours be done.”

- f. Look for genuinely transcendent moments when God is working.
 - 1. Answers to prayer
 - 2. Miracles

BEGIN SESSION 8

- 8. The nature of God's attributes
 - a. By the attributes of God, it is meant the qualities of God which constitute what He is. They are permanent qualities. They cannot be gained or lost. They are intrinsic.
 - b. Immanence and transcendence are attributes.
 - c. Properties are not attributes. They are the distinct characteristics of the persons of the Trinity.
 - 1. Functions of Godhead
 - 2. Acts of Godhead – creating, guiding
 - d. The incomprehensibility of God does not mean that there is an unknown being behind His attributes. It does mean that we do not know His qualities or nature exhaustively.
- 9. Erikson's classification of God's attributes.
 - a. Natural attributes – God's greatness
 - b. Moral attributes – God's goodness
- 10. Alternate classification
 - a. God is
 - 1. Invisible
 - 2. Personal
 - 3. Living
 - 4. An active spirit
 - b. Metaphysically, God is
 - 1. Self-sufficient
 - 2. Eternal
 - 3. Unchanging
 - c. Intellectually, God is
 - 1. Omniscient
 - 2. Faithful
 - 3. Wise
 - d. Ethically, God is
 - 1. Holy
 - 2. Righteous
 - 3. Loving
 - e. Emotionally, God

- 1. Detests evil
 - 2. Is long suffering
 - 3. Is compassionate
 - f. Existentially, (in His existence) God is
 - 1. Free
 - 2. Authentic
 - 3. Omnipotent
 - g. Relationally, God is
 - 1. Immanent
 - 2. Transcendent
- B. The greatness of God
- 1. Spirituality
 - a. God is spirit. He is not comprised of matter and does not possess a physical nature.

1. John 4:24

God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

2. John 1:18

No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

3. I Timothy 1:17, 6:15-16

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen

- b. God is not limited by a geographical location or a spatial location.
- c. God is not destructible.
- d. God has appeared in physical form.
 - 1. Theophany – temporary manifestation
 - 2. Genesis 18:1

Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day.

- e. God cannot be represented by a physical image.
 - f. Mormonism believes that both the Father and the Son have a physical body.
2. Life
- a. God is alive. Exodus 3:14

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'

- b. Existence is considered a most basic part of His nature.

1. Jeremiah 10:10-11

But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation. Thus you shall say to them, "The gods that did not make the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth and from under the heavens."

2. I Thessalonians 1:9

For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,

- c. God has eternal life.
- 1. John 5:26

For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;

2. Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

- d. God is self-existent.
- 1. Acts 17:25

nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;

2. He does not need anything.
3. He acts out of agape love. (unselfish)
3. Personality
 - a. God is an individual being with self-consciousness, will, capable of feeling, choosing, and having reciprocal relationships.
 - b. God has personality.
 1. He has a name.
 - a. Exodus 3:13-14

Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?"¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

- b. I am who I AM - Yahweh
 2. He is not abstract, but real. Exodus 3:4-6

When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said also, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

3. People call on His name. Genesis 4:26

To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then men began to call upon the name of the LORD.

- c. He knows and communicates with human beings.
 1. Adam and Eve – Genesis 3:8-22
 2. Abraham – Genesis 12:1-3
 3. Moses – Exodus 3:4-22
 4. Ezekiel – Ezekiel 2:1-9
- d. God is an end in Himself and not a means to an end. He is worthy to be loved for who He is and not what He can do for

us.

4. Infinity

a. God is limitless.

b. Space

1. Omnipresence – He is not localized

2. There is no place He cannot be found.

c. Time

1. God was before time began. He was, He is, and will be.

2. Psalm 90:1-2

Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Jude 25

to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:21

to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

3. God created time for mankind. Genesis 1:14-19

Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

4. God is not bound by time, but is aware of the succession of points of time.

5. At any given point within time, He is conscious of the distinction of what is now occurring, what has been, and what will be.

d. Knowledge

1. His understanding is immeasurable. Psalm 147:5

Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.

2. He is omniscient. Matthew 10:29-30

Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

3. God has wisdom. When He acts, He takes all facts and values into consideration. Romans 11:33

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

e. Power

1. God is omnipotent. This means that God is able to do all things which are proper objects of His power.
2. God created the universe. Genesis 1:1-2:1
3. God has power to change a human life and personality. John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Ephesians 4:17-32

So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not

give the devil an opportunity. He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

4. God can only do things that are proper objects of His power.
 - a. He cannot be logically absurd or contradictory.
 - b. He cannot undo the past. He may wipe out its effects or heal its memory.
 - c. He cannot act contrary to His nature.
 - d. He cannot fail to do what He has promised.
5. God is free to exercise His power. He acts according to the “good pleasure of His will.”

5. Constancy

- a. God is immutable or unchanging. He is dependable. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

b. Psalm 102:26-27

*Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed.
“But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end.*

Malachi 3:6

“For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

James 1:17

Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

c. Assumptions

1. God cannot change quantitatively. He cannot increase or decrease. He is perfection.
2. God cannot change qualitatively. God's nature does not undergo modification.

BEGIN SESSION 9

C. The goodness of God

1. Without moral attributes it would be possible for God to exercise this power and knowledge in a capricious or cruel manner. However, God is a good or moral being.
2. Moral purity
 - a. Holiness
 1. God is unique, separate from all of creation.
 2. Exodus 15:11

“Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonder

Isaiah 6:1-4

In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.” And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.

3. Hebrew (qadosh) holy – marked off, withdrawn from common use, to separate.
4. God intends His people to be holy.
5. God is unable to tolerate the presence of evil.

Isaiah 6:5

“Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

Luke 5:8

But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus’ feet, saying, “Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!”

6. Our standard of holiness is not ourselves or others. It is God. Revelation 4:8 – sacred, morally pure, consecrated

And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, “HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.”

7. I believe holiness is God’s baseline attribute. All other attributes flow from holiness.

b. Righteousness

1. Righteousness is God’s holiness applied to His relationships to other beings. God is without sin.
2. God’s written word is a true expression of His nature.

Psalm 19:7-9

The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

3. God’s actions are always in accord with His written word. Genesis 18:25

Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”

4. The standard to which God adheres to is not an external standard, it is His very nature. Special

revelation – written word, Living Word (Christ)

c. Justice

1. Justice is God’s official righteousness, His requirement that other moral agents adhere to His standards.
2. Sin has consequences. Genesis 2:17

but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. We are to treat others fairly and justly.
Amos 5:15, 24

*Hate evil, love good, And establish justice in the gate! Perhaps the LORD God of hosts May be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.
“But let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*

James 2:9

But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

Micah 6:8

*He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?*

3. Integrity

- a. Integrity relates to matters of truth. Integer – one, you are a whole person.
- b. Genuineness – being true.

1. Jeremiah 10:5-10

*“Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, And they cannot speak;
They must be carried, Because they cannot walk! Do not fear them,
For they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good.” There is none like You, O
LORD; You are great, and great is Your name in might. Who would not fear You, O*

*King of the nations? Indeed it is Your due! For among all the wise men of the nations And in all their kingdoms, There is none like You. But they are altogether stupid and foolish In their discipline of delusion—their idol is wood!
Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, And gold from Uphaz,
The work of a craftsman and of the hands of a goldsmith; Violet and purple are their clothing; They are all the work of skilled men. But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation.*

2. John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

3. John 17:3

This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

4. God is not fabricated or an imitation.

c. Veracity – telling the truth.

1. I Samuel 15:29

Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind.”

2. Titus 1:2

in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,

3. Hebrews 6:18 – God cannot lie.

so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

4. God expects us to be truthful at all times. especially in presentation of the Gospel.

II Corinthians 4:2

but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

4. Love

- a. God's love is His eternal giving or sharing of Himself.
I John 4:8, 16

The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

- b. Benevolence – the concern of God for the welfare of those whom He loves.

1. John 3:16, Deuteronomy 7:7-8

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

“The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

2. Matthew 6:26, 28

Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin,

Matthew 6:25, 30-33

“For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will

we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Matthew 5:45

so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

c. Grace – God’s unmerited favor, given on the basis of what they need, not what is deserved.

1. Exodus 34:6

Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;

2. Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

3. Titus 2:11

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men

d. Mercy is God’s tenderhearted, loving compassion for His people.

1. Psalm 103:13

Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.

2. Mark 1:41

Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.”

3. Matthew 14:14

When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.

Mark 6:34

When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things

Matthew 9:35-36

Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd

- e. Persistence – God is long suffering as He withholds judgment and continues to offer salvation and grace over long periods of time.

- 1. II Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

- 2. Romans 2:4

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

- 3. We are instructed to forgive 70 X 7 times.
Matthew 18:21-22

Then Peter came and said to Him, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

- 5. Do God’s attributes compete with each other and cause tension?
 - a. Should love and justice be balanced?
 - b. Do they exist in a dynamic tension?

- c. I do not see them competing or balanced but in dynamic tension.
- d. We want all of God's love and all of God's justice.

BEGIN SESSION 10

D. God's three-in-oneness: The Trinity

1. The doctrine of the trinity claims that God is one and yet there are three persons that comprise the Godhead.
2. Among the religions of the world, Christianity is unique in making this claim.
3. The oneness of God
 - a. The Jewish faith is rigorously monotheistic.
 - b. Exodus 20:2-3

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before Me.

Deuteronomy 6:1-7 (vs. 4 – echad – united, one and only)

"Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it, so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

c. New Testament affirmation. James 2:19

You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder
I Corinthians 8:4, 6

Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one. yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

4. The deity of the three

a. The deity of the Father. I Timothy 2:5-6

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

b. The deity of the Son

c. Philippians 2:5-11. Morphé (Greek) form means the set of characteristics which constitutes what a thing is.

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

d. Hebrews 1:1-10

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did He ever say, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"? And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM." And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE." But of the Son He says, "YOUR THRONE, O

GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. "YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS." And, "YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH, AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;

e. John 18:33-37 Jesus assertion.

Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

f. The deity of the Holy Spirit. Acts 5:3-4

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

John 3:8

The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

I Corinthians 12:4-11

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another

the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

I Corinthians 3:16-17

Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

I Corinthians 6:19-20

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

I Peter 1:2

according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

5. Three in oneness

- a. Historically the church began to think of God as three in one or as triune.
- b. I John 5:6-12 is clear on the Trinity, but has a weak textual basis. (Some parts may not be included in earliest available manuscripts)

This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son. The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son. And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

- c. Genesis record

1. Genesis 1:1 – (Hebrew) Elohim – is always used in plural when referring to Hebrew God.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2. Genesis 1:26-27 – shifting from singular to plural

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

d. Gospel of John record

1. John 1:1-3, 14, 18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

2. John 14:9, 16, 26

Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

3. John 15:26

“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,

4. John 16:13-15

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.

6. Historical constructions

- a. Two most significant constructions referred to a concept known as monarchianism. Monarchianism means sole sovereignty. It stresses the unity of God, but only God is designated in the Godhead.
 1. Dynamic monarchianism – God was a working force upon, in or through the man Jesus, but there was no real presence of God within Him. Jesus was an ordinary man until His baptism.
 2. Modalistic monarchianism. Any separation of the Godhead was thought to be bi-theism. (two gods)
 3. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are terms that do not stand for real distinctions, but are merely names which are appropriate at different times. Father, Son, Holy Spirit are identical and are successive revelations of the same person.
 4. Therefore, one person with three different names, roles, or activities. Current oneness position in United Pentecostal Church.
 5. The simultaneous appearance of all three roles is a major stumbling block. Matthew 3:14-17

But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” But Jesus answering said to him, “Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him. After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”

b. The Orthodox formulation

1. At the Council of Constantinople (38 A.D.) a definitive statement was formulated.
2. This statement was originally made by Athanasius and defined by the Cappadocian theologians Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa.
3. This statement is expressed by the phrase “one ousia (substance) in three hypostases (persons)”
4. The one Godhead exists simultaneously in three modes of being or hypostases. The Godhead exists undivided in divided persons.
5. This statement protects against the problem of modalism, but does it promote tritheism?
6. Can we find a single activity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit which is in no way different in any of the three persons? If so, there is but one substance involved. This activity is found in divine revelation. Revelation originates in the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Spirit.
7. To avoid tritheism, there was an insistence upon the concreteness and indivisibility of the divine substance. This divine substance is the divine spirit. While the three members of the Trinity can be distinguished numerically as persons, they are indistinguishable in their substance.

7. Essential elements of a doctrine of the Trinity

- a. The unity of God. God is one not several.
- b. The deity of each of the three persons. Each is qualitatively the same.
- c. The threeness of God (hypostases) and the oneness of God (ousia) are not in the same respect. A contradiction exists if something is “A” and not “A” at the same time and respect.
- d. The Trinity is eternal. There has always been a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- e. The function of one member of the Trinity may for a time be subordinate to one or both of the other members, but that does not mean He is in any way inferior in essence. This is a temporary role for the purpose of accomplishing a given end. (John 17)

- f. The Trinity is incomprehensible.
- 8. The search for analogies
 - a. Most analogies drawn from the physical world breakdown by tending towards tritheism or modalism.
 - b. Each member of the Godhead is to be worshipped and it is appropriate to direct prayers of thanksgiving and petition to each member of the Trinity.
 - c. Tertullian, a church father in the 2nd century, said that the doctrine of the Trinity must be divinely revealed, not humanly constructed. It is so absurd from a human standpoint that no one would have invented it. We hold it because God has revealed what He is like.

BEGIN SESSION 11

IV. The Work of God

A. God's Plan

1. Is anything causing the pattern of history to develop as it is? Christianity's answer is that God has a plan which includes everything that occurs and that He is now at work carrying out that plan.
2. Key definitions in Erickson
 - a. Predestinate – literally the destiny of someone or something. In God's plan it relates to the eternal condition of moral agents. Their eternal salvation or condemnation.
 - b. Election – within predestination this means God's positive choice of individuals, nations, or groups to eternal life and fellowship with Him.
 - c. Reprobation – within predestination will refer to God's negative choice of some to suffer eternal damnation or lostness.
 - d. Foreordain refers to the decisions of God with respect to any matters within the realm of cosmic history.
3. Key definitions in the Evangelical Dictionary of Theology
 - a. Unconditional predestination
 1. Supralapsarianism – before creation took place God had already determined what the eternal destiny of each person was to be. This view was held by John Calvin and his son-in-law, Theodore Beza.
 2. Sublapsarian unconditional predestination – Adam's

sin was freely chosen, but that after the Fall, the eternal destiny of each person was determined by the absolute sovereign God. Augustine and Martin Luther held this view.

- b. Conditional predestination – the predecision on God’s part is to save the ones who repent and believe. The destiny of individuals is based on God’s foreknowledge of the way in which they will either freely reject Christ or freely accept Him.

4. Biblical teaching

- a. The sovereignty of God in Old Testament

1. Isaiah 37:36

Then the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, all of these were dead.

2. Isaiah 14:24-27

The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, “Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand, to break Assyria in My land, and I will trample him on My mountains. Then his yoke will be removed from them and his burden removed from their shoulder. This is the plan devised against the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out against all the nations. For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?”

- 3. God is supremely powerful, the creator and sustenance of all that is. He is also loving caring, and personal.

4. Proverbs 16:4

The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil.

Isaiah 40:12

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, And marked off the heavens by the span, And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, And weighed the mountains in a balance And the hills in a pair of scales?

Jeremiah 10:12-13

It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom; And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens. When He utters His voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, And He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain, And brings out the wind from His storehouses.

5. It is God's plan that is coming to pass and history is unfolding as prepared in eternity past.
- b. The sovereignty of God in New Testament
 1. Mark 13:7, 10

When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; those things must take place; but that is not yet the end. The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

2. Acts 2:23

this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

3. I Corinthians 12:18

But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

Colossians 1:19

For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

4. Acts 17:26

and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,

Galatians 3:8

The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU."

5. Ephesians 1:11-12

also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

6. Romans 8:28-29

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren

5. The nature of the divine plan

- a. God's plan is from all eternity. Psalm 139:16

*Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written
The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.*

God's eternal plan does not have any chronological sequence within it. There is no temporal sequence to God's willing. It is one coherent simultaneous decision.

- b. The plan of God and the decisions contained therein are free on God's part. No one has advised Him. His decisions are free from external determination and internal compulsion.
- c. In the ultimate sense, the purpose of God's plan is God's glory.
 1. Ephesians 1:5-6

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

2. God has secondary motivations, like salvation for mankind, but they are a means to a greater end, God's own glory.
- d. God's plan is all-inclusive. Ephesians 1:11

also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

- e. God's plan is efficacious. What He has proposed from eternity will surely come to pass.

- f. God's plan relates to His actions rather than His nature.
 - g. The plan of God relates primarily to what God Himself does in terms of creating, preserving, directing, and redeeming. God's plan does not force us to act in particular ways, but renders it certain that we will freely act in those ways.
 - h. While the plan of God relates primarily to what God does, human actions are also included. All human action is foreordained in God's plan.
 - i. The plan of God in terms of its specifics is unchangeable.
6. God's plan or human action, which is first?
- a. Calvinists and Arminians agree that human actions are included in God's plan. They disagree on what is the cause and what is the result.
 - b. Calvinists believe that people do what they do because God has decided that this is exactly how they are going to act.
 - c. Arminians believe that God first foresees what they will do and then on that basis makes His decision as to what is going to happen. No! God has a plan. He gives humans, free moral agents, the opportunity to be part of it. God's plan does not change with our decisions. II Chronicles 16:9

For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars."

7. Additional definitions from Evangelical Dictionary of Theology
- a. Determinism – is the belief that all of man's actions are the result of antecedent factors or causes. (This is ultimate victimhood)
 - b. Naturalistic determinism – man is a cog in the machinery of the universe. All of his actions are determined by antecedent causes like your environment and man's genetic make-up.
 - c. Theistic determinism – all events, including man's behavior are caused or determined by God. If God is in control of all things, then no one could act contrary to His will.
 - 1. Jonathan Edwards – human freedom is not the power to do what one decides, but what one desires. The cause of man's desires is God. Freedom is not uncaused, but caused by God.

2. Response – people do not always do what they desire. No one desires to take the garbage out. Further, people often desire to do what they do not decide to do, i.e. take revenge on others.
 3. Response – free will actions are not uncaused but self-caused. To say that they are self-caused is not to say that they arise out of nothing or exist prior to themselves. Man’s exercise of freedom is self-caused becoming. Persons exist and can freely cause their own actions (not their being).
- d. Self-determination – a person’s action are caused by himself.
1. Man is made in the image of God. No outside forces caused God to create the world. No outside force causes people to choose certain actions. If man is created in God’s image, then he possesses free will. Human actions are caused by human beings. Thomas Aquinas and C.S. Lewis held this view.
 2. God’s commands carry a divine “ought” for man, implying that man can and should respond positively To His commands. Ought has no meaning in determinism.
 3. If man is not truly free and all of his acts are determined by God, then God is directly responsible for evil. This clearly contradicts scripture.
James 1:13-17

Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

8. The question
 - a. God clearly is sovereign and has a plan for the universe.
 - b. The question is how do we participate in His plan?
 1. Do we have real freedom to make choices in our participation?

2. Are decisions really determined for us in advance down to the smallest detail?
- c. Has God really determined the eternal destinies of all mankind before creation? II Timothy 1:15

You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes

II Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

Luke 14:15-24

When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" But He said to him, "A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.' Another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.' Another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.' And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' And the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.'"

- d. Does God desire all men to be saved? Does God invite all men to salvation? Do men freely choose to accept or reject God's invitation? What is your decision?

BEGIN SESSION 12 (Taken from REVISED DOCUMENT)

- B. God's originating work: Creation
 1. Reasons for studying the doctrine of creation

- a. Bible gives creation a prominent role. Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

- b. The doctrine has been a significant part of the church's faith.
See Apostle's Creed in Glossary
- c. Our understanding of creation affects our understanding of other doctrines.
 - 1. Humans were created out of earth; they did not emanate from God.
 - 2. There is no inherent evil in being material rather than spiritual.
 - 3. The universe is God's doing rather than mere chance happening.
 - 4. The doctrine of creation differentiates Christianity from other religions and worldviews.
 - 5. The doctrine of creation is a point of potential dialogue between Christianity and natural science.

2. Elements of Biblical teaching

- a. God created ex nihilo (Latin) or without the use of existing material.
- b. The entirety of reality has come into being with this act.
John 1:3

All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

- c. It was the work of the Triune God.
 - 1. Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

Colossians 1:16-17

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together

2. Creation is from the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Spirit.
- d. Creation brings glory to God. Psalm 19:1

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

3. The theological meaning of creation
 - a. There is no ultimate reality other than God. There is no room for dualism which would call for two realities God and nature. God did not create with anything already in existence.
 - b. The original act of divine creation is unique. God did not create with any external material to Himself.
 - c. Nothing made in creation is inherently evil. Matter or nature is not evil.
Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31

and God saw that it was good.

- d. The human race must take responsibility for sin. Sin is an exercise of human freedom or free will. Cannot blame material world.
 - e. Creation also guards against delegitimizing the incarnation. If the human body is inherently evil, it would be hard to justify Christ taking on human flesh.
 - f. In creation process a part of God did not emanate out from Him to make “nature” divine. This is the basis of pantheism. God created from nothing to form the universe and all that exists.
4. Creation doctrine and relations to science
 - a. Can be found on Pg. 139-141
 - b. Use of the word “day” in Genesis 1:5, is used throughout the Pentateuch as a solar day or 24 hour period.

God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

- c. In regard to the earth’s age and development, I do not think the point of origin for sin has been taken into consideration.

1. Genesis 2:25
2. Genesis 3:6-7
3. Genesis 3:17-19
4. Romans 5:12-14
5. Romans 8:18-22

Genesis 2:25

And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Genesis 3:6-7

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

Genesis 3:17-19

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."

Romans 5:12-14

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

Romans 8:18-22

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the

creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

6. This excludes an old earth and the billions of years needed for evolution, if death begins with sin.
- d. I am not aware of new specie discoveries.
- e. We know many scientific facts about our earth. I do not believe that we yet know what they fully mean.
- f. I believe Intelligent Design is much more in line with the Genesis creation account. It also offers expert scientific evidence that creation occurred through an intelligent designer. Please read “God Is Not Dead” by Anthony Flew. He was the leading atheist/apologetist for evolution in the world for the 20th Century. Intelligent Design theory changed many of his views.

BEGIN SESSION 13

C. God’s continuing work: Providence

1. Pronoia (Greek) is used for only human foresight.
2. Providere (Latin) literally means to foresee. The word also carries the connotation of acting prudently or making preparation for the future.
3. Three aspects of providence
 - a. Creation is the stage on which are enacted God’s dealings with mankind. Providence is God’s gracious outworking of His purpose in Christ which issues in His dealings with man. From the Biblical point of view world history and personal life stories possess significance only in the light of the incarnation.
 - b. God’s providence also serves the purpose of bearing witness to God among mankind. Romans 1:18-23

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been

made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools,²³ and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

- c. The God who gives man life also preserves him while he is on earth. Matthew 6:25-34

“For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

D. Evil and God’s world: A Special Problem

1. David Hume put it succinctly when he wrote of God: Is He willing to prevent evil, but is not able? Then He is impotent. Is He able, but not willing? Then He is malevolent. Is He both able and willing: whence then is evil?
2. The problem of evil then is one of internal consistency in Christianity with three concepts; God’s power, God’s goodness, and the presence of evil in the world.
3. Two general types of evil
 - a. Natural evil – hurricanes, earthquakes, disease
 - b. Moral evil – actions which can be traced to the choices of free moral agents
4. Two forms of the problem of evil

- a. Religious form – someone is personally experiencing evil and calls into question God’s attributes
 - b. Theological form – evil in general, how can it exist?
5. Types of solutions
- a. Abandon the idea of God’s omnipotence.
 - b. Modify the idea of God’s goodness and modify what is evil.
 - c. Reject the reality of evil
6. Possible solution to question of evil in world
- a. Is there a key reason why an all powerful, good God cannot remove evil from the world?
 - b. Genesis 2:25-3:7

And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

1. God declared creation good at finish and man was without sin. (Genesis 2:25)
2. Good meant that man was created with free will reflecting the image of God.
3. Man was given dominion over the earth and had regular fellowship with God.
4. Adam and Eve were God conscious, not self-conscious. (Genesis 2:25)
5. Man was given a simple set of rules to obey. It is plausible that in their fellowship time with God, He was instructing them about moral evil (disobedience to Him), but never wanted them to experience evil.
6. Man sinned by disobedience to God. Man immediately became self-conscious. (Genesis 3:7)

7. Sin, death and evil are in the world.
8. Evil was always a possibility if man has a genuine free will.
9. Man possessing a free will was the only way for God and man to have authentic, loving fellowship together. Man has to have the ability to choose between himself and God.
10. God did not create evil. Evil went from a possibility to a reality when Adam and Eve sinned. Man introduced evil into the world with the help of the devil. However, man made the choice for mankind, not the devil.
11. On Christ's return and the establishment of the Kingdom of God, all men will be held accountable for their evil deeds. Hebrews 9:27-28

And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Revelation 20:11-15

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

E. God's special agents: Angels

1. Angels are spiritual beings that God created higher than mankind, some of whom have remained obedient to God, and carry out His will, and others of whom disobeyed, lost their holy condition and now oppose and hinder God's work.
2. Good angels – angelos (Greek) – means messenger
3. Evil angels – Satan and demons

4. Christ is superior to all angels. Romans 8:37-39

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

5. Angels function as:

a. Ministering spirits to humans. Hebrews 1:14

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

b. God's messengers to mankind. Luke 1:26-28

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

c. Worshippers before the throne of God. Revelation 5:11

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands

d. Execute judgment on enemies of God. Revelation 8:6-9:21

And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed. The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter. The fourth angel sounded,

and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!" Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them. The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle. They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon. The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things. Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind. The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm. The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor

walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

e. Will be involved in Christ's second coming. Matthew 24:31

And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

f. God's warriors in accomplishing His plans for nations.
Daniel 10:10-21

Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future." When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, "O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me." Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me. He said, "O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!" Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, "May my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." Then he said, "Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince.

6. Questions on evil angels or demons.

- a. When did Satan and angels rebel against God? Sometime between the end of creation and the Fall.

1. Ezekiel 28:11-19

Again the word of the LORD came to me saying, "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. "You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared. "You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. "You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created Until unrighteousness was found in you. "By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you. "By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade You profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you ;It has consumed you, And I have turned you to ashes on the earth In the eyes of all who see you. "All who know you among the peoples Are appalled at you; You have become terrified And you will cease to be forever. "'''

2. Revelation 12:3-4, 7-12

Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who

deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying,

“Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.”

b. How did angels become demonic spirits?

1. II Peter 2:4

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;

2. Jude 6

And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,

3. Luke 11:24-26

When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.”

4. Fallen angels have had their ‘body’ placed in eternal judgment. Their spirit is roaming looking for another body to inhabit.

c. Ultimate fate of Satan and demonic spirits

1. Luke 8:31

They were imploring Him not to command them to go away into the abyss.

2. Revelation 11:7

When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them.

3. Isaiah 24:1-23

Behold, the LORD lays the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface and scatters its inhabitants. And the people will be like the priest, the servant like his master, the maid like her mistress, the buyer like the seller, the lender like the borrower, the creditor like the debtor. The earth will be completely laid waste and completely despoiled, for the LORD has spoken this word. The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left. The new wine mourns, The vine decays, All the merry-hearted sigh. The gaiety of tambourines ceases, The noise of revelers stops, The gaiety of the harp ceases. They do not drink wine with song; Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it. The city of chaos is broken down; Every house is shut up so that none may enter. There is an outcry in the streets concerning the wine; All joy turns to gloom. The gaiety of the earth is banished. Desolation is left in the city And the gate is battered to ruins. For thus it will be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, As the shaking of an olive tree, As the gleanings when the grape harvest is over. They raise their voices, they shout for joy; They cry out from the west concerning the majesty of the LORD. Therefore glorify the LORD in the east, The name of the LORD, the God of Israel, In the coastlands of the sea. From the ends of the earth we hear songs, "Glory to the Righteous One," But I say, "Woe to me! Woe to me! Alas for me! The treacherous deal treacherously, And the treacherous deal very treacherously." Terror and pit and snare Confront you, O inhabitant of the earth. Then it will be that he who flees the report of disaster will fall into the pit, And he who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the snare; For the windows above are opened, and the foundations of the earth shake. The earth is broken asunder, The earth is split through, The earth is shaken violently. The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard And it totters like a shack, For its transgression is heavy upon it, And it will fall, never to rise again. So it will happen in that day, That the LORD will punish the host of heaven on high, And the kings of the earth on earth. They will be gathered together Like prisoners in the dungeon, And will be confined in prison; And after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be abashed and the

sun ashamed, For the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, And His glory will be before His elders.

4. Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

AIM Institute
Theology I
Glossary of Terms (in order of use in the notes)

Metaphysics – that which is beyond physics, the study of the ultimate nature of reality

Ontology – the science of being. What is real and what is appearance?
Is there reality beyond the senses? Is the mind real? Is there a God?

Ontological argument – concerning the existence of God. First advanced by Anselm of Canterbury in 1109A.D. God is said to be a being such that a greater being cannot be thought of. Anyone having such an idea of God and accepting what it means cannot deny that God truly and necessarily exists.

Cosmology – The study of the universe.

Cosmological argument – an argument for the existence of God based on the observation that since every known thing in the universe has a cause, the universe itself must have a cause, which can only be God.

Teleology – the study of the end or final purpose of the universe. The view that there is design and purpose in the world and that they are directed to a final goal.

Teleological argument – an argument for the existence of God which reasons that, since the universe exhibits evidence of order and design, there must be an intelligent and purposeful God who created it to function in this way.

Arminianism – a theological tradition that seeks to preserve the free choices of human beings and denies God’s providential control over the details of all events.

Calvinism – a theological tradition that emphasizes the sovereignty of God in all things, man’s inability to do spiritual good before God, and the glory of God as the highest end of all that occurs.

T – total depravity of man

U – unconditional divine election

L – limitation of the atonement to the elect

I – irresistibility of divine grace

P – perseverance in grace to the end

Worldview – one’s personal view of the world and how one interprets it; the totality of one’s belief about reality, a general philosophy of life.

Biblical worldview – a means of experiencing interpreting, and responding to reality in light of Biblical perspective.

Epistemology – the study of, or inquiry about, human knowledge. This involves questions concerning how the mind acquires and uses knowledge as well as what is truth and certainty.

Correspondence Theory of Truth – propositions (statements) are true if they correctly describe the realities they purport to describe and false if they do not.

Dualism – that there are two basic, fundamental realities in the world that are opposed to each other and that cannot be reconciled. (i.e. a power of good and a power of evil) Christianity rejects this teaching. God as creator is the only source of everything, and at the end of the age all

powers now contrary to His will are to be defeated.

Existentialism – man's struggle to find meaning and truth in his existence.

How does one live an authentic life?

From John Lennon's album *Imagine*

Imagine

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us, only sky
Imagine all the people
Livin' for today
Ah
Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion, too
Imagine all the people
Livin' life in peace
You
You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one
Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world
You
You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will live as one

From John Lennon's album *Imagine*

Crippled Inside

You can shine your shoes and wear a suit
You can comb your hair and look quite cute
You can hide your face behind a smile
One thing you can't hide
Is when you're crippled inside
You can wear a mask and paint your face
You can call yourself the human race
You can wear a collar and a tie
One thing you can't hide
Is when you're crippled inside
Well now, you know
That your cat has nine lives, babe
Nine lives to itself
You only got one
And a dog's life ain't fun
Momma, take a look outside
You can go to church and sing a hymn
You can judge me by the color of my skin
You can live a lie until you die
One thing you can't hide
Is when you're crippled inside
Take it, brother
Well now, you know
That your cat has nine lives, babe
Nine lives to itself
But you only got one
And a dog's life ain't fun
Momma, take a look outside
You can go to church and sing a hymn
Judge me by the color of my skin
You can live a lie until you die
One thing you can't hide
Is when you're crippled inside
One thing you can't hide
Is when you're crippled inside
One thing you can't hide
Is when you're crippled inside

From John Lennon's album *Imagine*

Gimme Some Truth

I'm sick and tired of hearin' things
From uptight, short-sighted, narrow-minded, hypocritics
All I want is the truth
Just gimme some truth
I've had enough of readin' things
By neurotic, psychotic, pig-headed politicians
All I want is the truth
Just gimme some truth
No short-haired, yellow-bellied, son of Tricky Dicky
Is gonna mother hubbard soft soap me
With just a pocketful of hope
Money for dope
Money for rope
Woo-oo-hoo
No short-haired, yellow-bellied, son of Tricky Dicky
Is gonna mother hubbard soft soap me
With just a pocketful of soap
Money for dope
Money for rope
I'm sick to death of seein' things
From tight-lipped, condescendin', mama's little chauvinists
All I want is the truth
Just gimme some truth now
I've had enough of watchin' scenes
Of schizophrenic, egocentric, paranoiac prima donnas
All I want is the truth now, now
Just gimme some truth
No short-haired, yellow-bellied, son of Tricky Dicky
Is gonna mother hubbard soft soap me
With just a pocketful of soap
It's money for dope
Money for rope
Ah, I'm sick to death of hearin' things
From uptight, short-sighted, narrow-minded, hypocrites
All I want is the truth now
Just gimme some truth now
I've had enough of readin' things
By neurotic, psychotic, pig-headed politicians
All I want is the truth now
Just gimme some truth now
All I want is the truth now
Just gimme some truth now 5X

From John Lennon's album *Imagine*

How?

How can I go forward when I don't know which way I'm facing?
How can I go forward when I don't know which way to turn?
How can I go forward into something I'm not sure of?
Oh no, oh no

How can I have feeling when I don't know if it's a feeling?
How can I feel something if I just don't know how to feel?
How can I have feelings when my feelings have always been denied?
Oh no, oh no

You know life can be long
And you got to be so strong
And the world is so tough
Sometimes I feel I've had enough

How can I give love when I don't know what it is I'm giving?
How can I give love when I just don't know how to give?
How can I give love when love is something I ain't never had?
Oh no, oh no

You know life can be long
You've got to be so strong
And the world she is tough
Sometimes I feel I've had enough

How can we go forward when we don't know which way we're facing?
How can we go forward when we don't know which way to turn?
How can we go forward into something we're not sure of?
Oh no, oh no

Lyrics *God and God Alone* by Steve Green

God and God alone
Created all these things
We call our own
From the mighty to the small
The glory in them all
Is God's and God's alone

God and God alone
Reveals the truth
Of all we call unknown
And all the best and worst of man
Won't change the master's plan
It's God's and God's alone

God and God alone
Is fit to take
The universe's throne
Let everything that lives
Reserve its truest praise
For God and God alone

God and God alone
Will be the joy
Of our eternal home
He will be our one desire
Our hearts will never tire
Of God and God alone

God and God alone
Is fit to take
The universe's throne
Let everything that lives
Reserve its truest praise
For God and God alone

God and God alone
Is fit to take
The universe's throne
Let everything that lives
Reserve its truest praise

**THE APOSTLES' CREED,
TRADITIONAL VERSION**

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;**

**And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and
the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Genuine Fellowship Ways to Serve One Another

John 13:34-35 - Love one another
Romans 12:5 - Members of one another
Romans 12:10 - Devoted to one another
Romans 12:10 - Outdo one another in showing honor
Romans 12:15 - Rejoice with one another
Romans 12:15 - Weep with one another
Romans 12:16 - Same mind with one another
Romans 14:13 - Not judge one another
Romans 15:7 - Accept one another
Romans 15:14 - Counsel one another
Romans 16:16 - Greet one another
I Corinthians 11:33 - Wait for one another
I Corinthians 12:25 - Care for one another
Galatians 5:13 - Serve one another
Galatians 6:2 - Bear one another's burdens
Ephesians 4:32 - Be kind to one another
Ephesians 4:32 - Forgive one another
Ephesians 5:21 - Submit to one another
Colossians 3:13 - Bearing with one another
I Thessalonians 5:11 - Encourage one another
I Thessalonians 5:11 - Build up one another
Hebrews 10:24 - Stir up one another
James 4:11 - Not speak evil against one another
James 5:9 - Not grumble against one another
James 5:16 - Confess faults to one another
James 5:16 - Pray for one another
I Peter 4:9 - Be hospitable to one another
I Peter 4:10 - Minister gifts to one another
I Peter 5:5 - Clothed with humility to one another
I John 1:7 - Fellowship with one another

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