

# Systematic Theology – “Thinking God’s Thoughts After Him”

## Class 2 – Revelation

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### I. Hello...and Catechism Quiz

- How was the reading?
- Questions about writing assignments?

### II. The Difficulty of “Thinking God’s Thoughts After Him”

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. (Isa 55:8)

For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. (1 Cor 2:11)

God must make the first move...like a parent to a baby...

*He reveals himself and his “thoughts” to us in a way we can understand. That is what “revelation” is.*

See this throughout the Bible:

- God to Adam
- God to Abraham
- God to Moses
- Christ to us

### III. General Revelation

Theologians divide God’s revelation in different ways, but one of the most helpful is “*general*” and “*special revelation*.”

**General revelation:** God's revelation to all people through the creation and the conscience. It speaks of him as Creator and invites all people to commune with him.

**Special revelation:** God's direct revelation, especially through the Bible. It speaks of him as Redeemer and invites all people to be saved through faith.

The barrier to understanding: sin.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. (Rom 1:18–21)

For us to fully grasp God's general or special revelation, *we need him to save us*.

#### IV. **General Revelation: The Creation and the Conscience**

The creation as God's painting, God the Master Architect

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. (Ps 19:1)

14 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them (Rom 2:14–15)

## V. Special Revelation

Direct revelation through:

- Direct speech (Gen 2:17)
- Miracles: As in Exodus 3, dreams (Gen 20:3–6; Matt 1:20–21), miracles of Christ (Matt 14:25–27; John 11:4–44; Acts 3:1–10; 6:8; 19:11–12), the “signs and wonders” of God’s people (
- Christ himself – He is “the Word” (John 1:1–3)

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. (Heb 1:1–2)

- But especially his special revelation is captured in the Bible:

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17)

## VI. Attributes of the Bible

A. **Inspiration** (2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 3:7) – It is “breathed out by God”

B. **Authority** – The Bible speaks to us with the very authority of God himself

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, 15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” (1 Pet 1:14-16)

C. **Inerrancy** – It contains no errors

“God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?” (Num 23:19)

**D. Necessity – It is *necessary* for a person to be saved and live a godly life before God.**

Without God's Word, we do not know what we need to know.

**E. Sufficiency – It is enough to have only the Bible.**

Other things are helpful (psychology, philosophy), but it is sufficient to have only the Bible. Remember 2 Tim 3:17: with the Bible we are "equipped for every good work."

**F. Clarity – The Bible is clear enough that we can grasp what is needed to be saved and obey God.**

But not everything is equally clear! That's why Paul told Timothy, "Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything" (2 Tim 2:7).

## **VII. What should we do?**

Given the unique treasure that the Bible is, how should we respond? Read it, love it, delight in it, meditate on it, memorize it, preach it, hear it, listen to it taught, obey it, revere it, believe it. Amen.