

Theology Proper

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- I. How has God revealed Himself? Part 1: General Revelation
 - a. Two Types of Revelations: General and Special.
 - a. General Revelation
 - i. Parameters: General Revelation usually refers to non-propositional disclosure of God.
 - ii. Nature
 1. It reveals God
 - a. See Psalms 19:1-6 and Romans 1:18-20
 2. What nature tells us about God:
 - a. God exists (Romans 1:21)
 - b. God's eternal power (Romans 1:20)
 - c. God's divine nature (Romans 1:20)
 - d. God's glory
 - i. *"The heavens declare the glory of God"* (Psalm 19:1a)
 - e. Nature as God's creation
 - i. *"...the skies proclaim the works of his hands."* (Psalm 19:1b)
 3. The unavoidable revelation in Nature
 - a. This revelation is clear
 - i. *"Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them."* (Romans 1:19)
 - ii. *"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen..."* (Romans 1:20a)
 1. Notice that this took place from the time of Creation onwards.
 - b. This revelation is understood
 - i. *"...being understood from what has been made"* (Romans 1:20b)
 - c. This revelation is continuous
 - i. *"Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge."* (Psalm 19:2)
 - d. This revelation is all over
 - i. See Psalm 19:3-6
 - e. This revelation gives one no excuse
 - i. *"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what have been made, so that men are without excuse."* (Romans 1:20)
 - ii. *"God says that you live, as it were, on His estate. And His estate has large ownership signs placed everywhere, so that he who goes by even at seventy miles an hour cannot but read them. Every fact in*

this world, the God of the Bible claims, has His stamp indelibly engraved upon it. How then could you be neutral with respect to such a God? ”¹

iii. History

1. God operates in the course of human affairs temporally and this also reveals God
2. History reveals God²
 - a. *“In the past, he let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your heart with joy.”* (Acts 14:16-7)
 - i. See also Matthew 5:45
 - b. *“O Sovereign LORD, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do?”* (Deuteronomy 3:24)
 - c. Referring to Israel’s history: *“Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.”* (1Corinthians 10:6)
3. What History tells us about God
 - a. God’s testimony of Himself (Acts 14:16)
 - b. God’s kindness towards Gentiles (Acts 14:17)
 - c. God’s Common Love (Matthew 5:45)
 - d. God’s mighty deeds (Deut. 3:24)
 - e. God’s warning for our hearts not to be set on evil (1Corinthians 10:6)

iv. Conscience

1. *“(Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirement of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.)”* (Romans 2:14-5)
2. What our conscience tells us about God: The requirement of the Law of God (Romans 2:14)

v. Man’s inner constitution

1. *“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”* (Psalm 139:14)
 - a. Notice here that the Psalmist knows full well he is wonderfully made

¹ Cornelius Van Til, *Why I Believe in God* (Philadelphia, The Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church).

² For an interesting summary of the argument that history requires the Triune God and the Christian worldview to be intelligible and meaningful, consult the following work: Cornelius Van Til, *Common Grace* (Philadelphia, The Presbyterian And Reformed Publishing Company), 1-13.

2. *“Ears that hear and eyes that see—the LORD has made them both.”* (Proverbs 20:10)
 - a. Only the presupposition of the Christian God can account for empirical knowledge.³
- vi. Limitation of General Revelation
 1. It does not tell us the gospel
 2. It was never meant to be interpreted by itself: There is a need for Special Revelation to complement it.

³ See my Apologetics lecture that deals with the Precondition for Empiricism for the presentation of the argument.