

APPLYING TRUTH TO LIFE

Grace Gatherings

THEOLOGY NIGHTS | June 7, 2023

GRACE CHURCH
WILLIAMSBURG

From last week ...

Question 3

Here is the issue as it bears on how we speak the truth in love to each other, and to how the Lord Jesus sanctifies us in the truth:

- How do believers today **hear from God** so that they receive guidance, help, direction, wisdom, and confidence in following God through the challenges, sufferings, and temptations of daily trials in a fallen world?
- Does God still use signs, wonders, and miracles to reveal Himself and His will to believers today?
- “Are Christians still receiving, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, direct revelation from God? Can people today -- writing songs or books, preaching or teaching, or making decisions -- legitimately claim that they are under divine inspiration?” (MacArthur)

Question 4

Define **general revelation** and **special revelation** and describe the **nature of their authority** as well as their **relationship to one another**.

Question 4

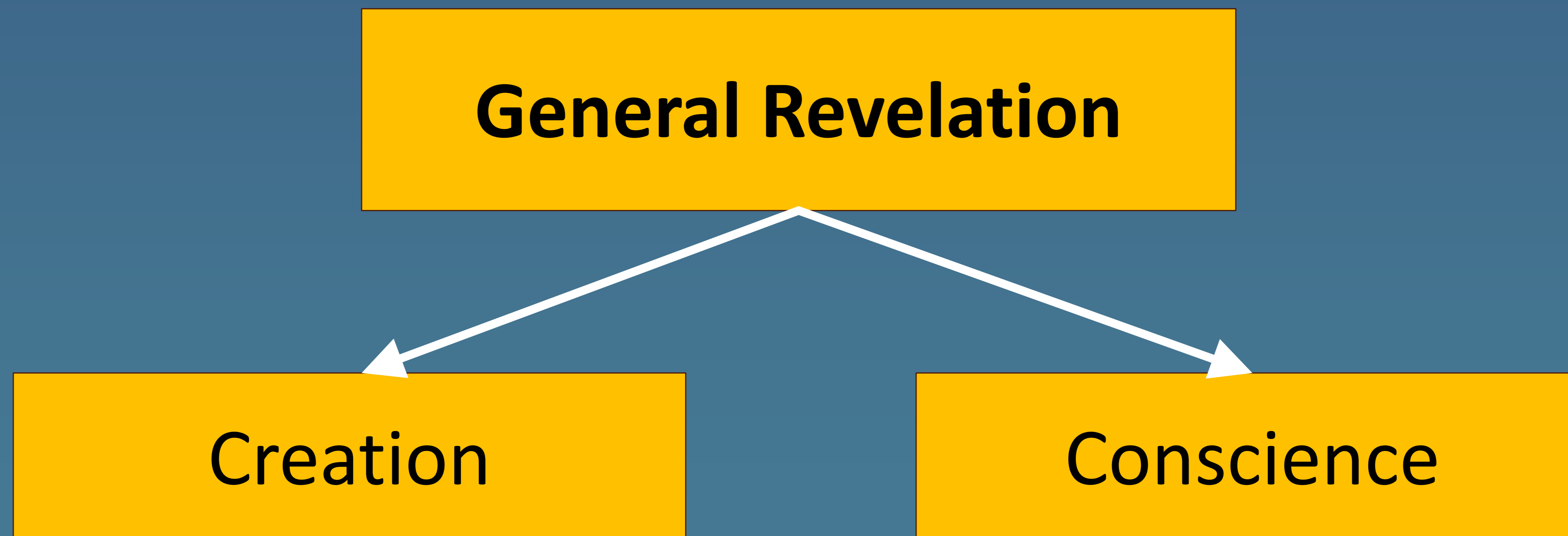
Define **general revelation** and special revelation and describe the nature of their authority as well as their relationship to one another.

- Psalm 19:1
- Acts 14:16-17
- Romans 1:19-21
- Romans 1:32
- Romans 2:14-15

Question 4

Define **general revelation** and special revelation and describe the nature of their authority as well as their relationship to one another.

General revelation is the knowledge of God's existence, character, and moral law that is revealed to all humanity; it's God's "self-disclosure" through creation and one's conscience.



Question 4

Define **general revelation** and special revelation and describe the nature of their authority as well as their relationship to one another.

- “**general**” because it comes to all mankind and through all of the experiences of human life – i.e., not reserved for any one person or group of people
- Also known as **natural revelation**

“General revelation comes through observing nature, through seeing God’s directing influence in history, and through an inner sense of God’s existence and His laws that He has placed inside every person [i.e., conscience].”

(Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 123)

Question 4

Define general revelation and **special revelation** and describe the nature of their authority as well as their relationship to one another.

- The Bible! God's divinely, inspired ("breathed out by God") Word.
- **inspiration**: Greek, *theopneustos* (teh-op'-nyoo-stos)
- 2 Tim. 3:15-17, 1:13; Heb. 1:1-3; Eccl. 12:13; 2 Pet. 1:3

"It [special revelation] is the great wonder of our redemption that God Himself has provided the way of salvation by sending His own Son, who is both God and man, to be our representative and bear the penalty for our sins, thus combining the **justice** and **love** of God in one infinitely wise and amazingly gracious act."

(Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 123)

Question 4

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General Revelation

Let's look at Romans 1 again ...

- God revealed Himself to us (v. 19)
- Invisible attributes (v. 20)
- Personal knowledge (v. 21 – “they knew God”)
- Knowing God includes a moral aspect (vs. 32), which should lead to **honor** and **thanks** (v. 21)

BUT ...

- Suppress the truth (v. 18)
- Exchange the truth for a lie (v. 25)
- Do not see fit to acknowledge God (v. 28)
- Worship idols (v. 23), leading to a full catalog of sins (vv. 24-31)

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Special Revelation

- Authority derives from the author of Scripture – God!
- Because the Bible is inerrant, it is authoritative
- Because the Bible is authoritative, it is binding
- Therefore, it has the authority to place demands on us – to know the Word, believe the Word, and obey the Word.

Question 4

Define general revelation and special revelation and describe the nature of their authority as well as their **relationship to one another**.

- **General revelation** is enough knowledge and information to bring us to the understanding that:
 - God exists
 - He created everything that exists
 - He instilled a standard of right and wrong in everyone's heart (conscience)
 - We stand condemned because we violated that standard
- **However, general revelation is not enough to save us**
- **Special revelation** builds upon general revelation to bring us the knowledge of Jesus Christ
 - Solidifies the official God-breathed standard of right and wrong
 - Confirms our condemnation and leaves us without excuse
 - Shows us the path of salvation, by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ

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Define general revelation and special revelation and describe the nature of their authority as well as their **relationship to one another**.

General Revelation	Special Revelation
Revelation by events (nature, history)	Revelation by word
Given to all mankind	Given to people chosen by God to hear it
Does not present way of salvation	Revelation about salvation

Adapted from John Frame, *Systematic Theology*, p. 689

Question 4

References:

- Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology, An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*
- John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth*
- John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology, An Introduction to Christian Belief*
- Heath Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling*
- Dr. Jeremy Kimble, *Theology I: Natural Revelation (part 1)*. Lecture, Cedarville University
Dr. Jeremy Kimble, *Theology I: Natural Revelation (part 2)*. Lecture, Cedarville University
Dr. Jeremy Kimble, *Theology I: Special Revelation*. Lecture, Cedarville University
<https://www.cedarville.edu/academic-schools-and-departments/biblical-and-theological-studies/bible-minor-project/theology-i>

Next week ...

5. Explain the doctrine of **common grace** as it relates to the limitations of secular psychologists in understanding **true information** about the human condition.

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