

Class 3, "Truth and Revelation"

Worldviews and Truth: All worldviews insist that there is truth to know and that people can know it. The way people engage and come to know truth in worldview thinking is called EPISTEMOLOGY. Therefore, in worldviews, one is taught what there is to know and one may know what there is to know. Further, each worldview seeks to make known that truth which can be known; worldviews claim to guide people to know the truth that can be known. This is the nature of worldview thinking as it pertains to truth.

Worldviews and Revelation: Similarly, worldviews claim that the truth that can be known is known to certain people in certain ways. This means that truth is knowable through revelation, or some type of revealed mechanism by which truth can be known. Worldview thinking describes the way that truth is knowable and the way in which truth is known. This implies the following:

1. Truth is knowable
2. Humans are knowing beings
3. There are epistemological contexts and limitations pertaining to knowing truth
4. There is significance to knowing

Christianity and Truth

1. Christianity and the reality of truth
 - 1) Truth is absolute and eternal
 - 2) Truth is good and loving
2. Christianity and truth's relationship to God as Ultimate Reality

Christianity and Revelation of Truth

1. Christianity and the knowable nature of eternal truth
 - 1) Christianity states that truth is knowable by its nature
 - 2) Christianity states that truth must be known by humans, a necessity to know
 - 3) Christianity states that God is known through truth, a means of knowing God
 - 4) Christianity states that known truth in human mind and experience forms an essential aspect of actualized humanity.
2. God is the source of truth
 - 1) God is truth
 - 2) God gives truth to know through revelation
 - 3) There is no truth but truth in God
 - 4) To know God is to know truth
3. God reveals Himself in truth
 - 1) God reveals His goodness and morality in truth
 - 2) God reveals His justice and righteousness in truth
 - 3) God reveals Himself in truth.
4. God brings people to know Him through truth
 - 1) Truth is a means by which sinners truly come to know about God

- 2) True knowledge of the true God is essential to live a true human life
 - 3) Truth becomes the lens through which redemption is experienced through faith in Christ.
5. The coherence (logic and integration) of truth
- 1) Truth is segmented into different categories
 - 2) Segmented truth is compatible and consistent with all segments of truth
 - 3) All truth together links in the center of truth found in God Himself
6. General revelation
- 1) General revelation is found in two components in Creation:
 - (1) Created order and beauty
 - (2) Human conscience
 - 2) General revelation is for all humanity to see
 - 3) General revelation is the first voice of truth all humanity experiences
 - 4) General revelation about God demonstrates His greatness and exaltation (see Rom. 1)
 - 5) Sin causes all sinners to reject the message of Creation and Conscience as a rejection of God.
 - 6) General revelation is not enough to be saved.
7. Special revelation as the Bible
- 1) Special revelation (in addition to general revelation) is revelation of the Scripture
 - 2) In Scripture God reveals the precise and specific nature of theological thought needed
 - 3) In Scripture God reveals truth about Himself.
 - 4) In Scripture God reveals truth about humanity
 - 5) In Scripture God reveals the truth about sin
 - 6) In Scripture God reveals the truth about morality and redemption in Christ
8. The Bible as revelation in human language (see next section below)
- 1) Special revelation (the Bible) is given in human language
 - 2) Human language is designed for conveyance of idea and thought, including eternal ideas
 - 3) Visualization and image are not specific enough for special revelation
 - 4) Only language can be a vehicle for ideas for the mind and soul
 - (1) Language bears the weightiness of concepts/ideas
 - (2) Language includes objectivity and related meaning of concepts
 - (3) Language is pliable to bring understanding of concepts to the human mind
 - (4) Contrasting written language with spoken language:
 - a. Written language is superior in terms of conveying logical meaning for study
 - b. Spoken language may be superior to engaging heart affections
 - 5) God speaks His truth into existence in Scripture, by which humans engage through enlightenment (enlightenment = Spiritual awakening for understanding by the Holy Spirit)
9. Progressive revelation and Redemptive revelation
- 1) General revelation precedes special revelation
 - 2) Special revelation is progressive in redemptive history
 - (1) God chose a man – Abraham
 - (2) God chose a family/tribe/nation – Israel
 - (3) God establishes covenant of redemption in Messianic context
 - (4) God establishes morality and divine holiness in law
 - (5) God gives progressive prophecy concerning the Messiah and the Kingdom

10. Divine revelation and the incarnation

- 1) The Incarnation of Jesus is the pinnacle and fulfillment of Messianic prophecy
- 2) Jesus is the Messiah, salvation is found in Him, and He is the King of the kingdom.
- 3) Redemption is fulfilled in salvation of sinners, forming the kingdom with believers.
- 4) The salvation of individuals and the collective salvation of the world are found in the saving work of Christ on the cross, His resurrection and exaltation, and His second coming.

Christianity and Human Epistemology

1. Creation, the image of God, and human epistemology
 - 1) Pre-fallen humanity and epistemology – relationship with God by Adam
 - 2) Loving God as knowing God – to know God is to love Him, and to love Him is to know Him
 - 3) Serving God as knowing God – to seek His honor and glory
2. Sin's impact on human epistemology (limitations and inabilities)
 - 1) Sin's impact on human desire to know the truth (Loss of desire)
 - 2) Sin's impact on human idolatry, denying God's authority (Rebellion against God)
 - 3) Sin's impact on human mental capacity to understand truth (Loss of mental ability)
3. Redemptive regeneration's impact on human epistemology (salvation impacts the mind and soul)
 - 1) Restored love and desire for truth of God
 - 2) Desire to know, in order to obey God
 - 3) Desire to grow in knowledge of truth
 - 4) Truth as integrated in human experience in redemption:
 - (1) Prayer
 - (2) Ethics
 - (3) Worship
 - (4) Establishment of kingdom morality
 - (5) Growth in humanity and maturation (human actualization and fulfillment)
 - (6) Relationship with other people
 - (7) Love for God and enjoyment of God
 - (8) Spiritual enlightenment of mind and soul with respect to truth
 - (9) Gives the mind a protective grid to perceive lies and falsehood

Christianity and the Significance of Knowing Truth

1. The interrelatedness between knowing the truth of God and knowing God
2. The interrelatedness between knowing God's truth and enjoying God
3. The interrelatedness between knowing God's truth and living for God

Satanic Hindrances to the Truth of God's Revelation

1. Hindered exposure to God's truth in the Bible
 - 1) Hindered distribution of God's truth in the Bible
 - 2) Hindered ability to read
 - 3) Hindered by a failure to preach and teach
2. Hindrance by disinterest

3. Hindrance by false belief, preaching, teaching, and misinterpretation
4. Hindrance by attack on biblical truth and persecution of Christians
5. Why does Satan attack God's Word, the Bible?
 - 1) Attacking God's Word attacks God Himself
 - (1) God's integrity
 - (2) God's authority
 - (3) God's honor and glory
 - 2) Attacking God's Word attacks the gospel
 - (1) Saving faith begins by a right knowledge of the gospel
 - (2) Saving faith based on a true knowledge of the gospel brings personal trust in Christ
 - 3) Attacking God's Word attacks the kingdom of Christ
 - (1) Kingdom truth
 - (2) Kingdom morality
 - (3) Kingdom authority of God's sovereignty
 - 4) Attacking God's Word attacks people
 - (1) Prevents them from coming to know God
 - (2) Hinders their development
 - (3) Prohibits their salvation

Christian Defense and Maintenance of Revealed Biblical Truth

1. Bring the Bible to people
2. Teach the Bible to people
3. Interpret the Bible for people
4. Train the people to interpret the Bible
5. Present Christ and the gospel for spiritual regeneration, renewal, and growth

Modern Challenges to the Bible as God's Truth

1. Attack on absolute truth
 - 1) Assertion of non-transcendence
 - 2) Imposition of post-modernism
2. Attack on biblical truth through casting doubt on the integrity and sufficiency of the Word of God
3. Neglect of the Bible in churches, preaching, teaching, and ministry

Summary and Closing: Throughout the Scripture, from Creation to 2 Timothy 3:16-17, the Bible presents God's Word as intimately associated with God Himself and His honor and power. This is why Satan attacks God's Word, and this is why Christians should have a correct understanding of the role God's Word, the Bible, plays in the Christian worldview.