

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: (ORGANIZED BIBLE KNOWLEDGE)

Part I: Bibliology (Knowledge of the Doctrine of Scripture)

A. Biblical Epistemology (The Study of How We Know God's Truth In The Bible)

I. Introduction

- A. When a believer in Christ speaks with one who thinks one cannot be **sure** the Bible speaks God's truths, or cannot discern for **sure** its truths, the believer's merely quoting verses to him seems to be pointless.
- B. The believer may then wonder how to defend his view that anyone can **know** the Bible's truth for **sure**.
- C. The study of how one knows the Bible's truths, or Biblical Epistemology, answers this need (as follows):

II. Biblical Epistemology (The Study of How We Know God's Truth In The Bible)

- A. First, there is a **helpful** philosophical argument -- a cosmological one -- that the **God** of the **Bible EXISTS** (this argument was developed by Norm Geisler, a Christian Apologist, and is promoted by Ravi Zacharias, Can Man Live Without God?, p. 190-191 (Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1994):
 1. Some things undeniably exist.
 2. My nonexistence is possible.
 3. Whatever has the possibility not to exist is currently caused to exist if it does exist by another.
 4. There cannot be an infinite regress (throw back) of current causes of existence.
 5. Therefore, a first uncaused cause of my current existence exists.
 6. This uncaused cause must be infinite, unchanging, all-powerful, all-knowing and all-perfect.
 7. This infinitely perfect being is appropriately called "God."
 8. Therefore, God exists.
 9. This God who exists is identical to the God described in the Christian Scriptures.
 10. Therefore, the God described in the Bible exists.
- B. Second, there exist evidences that the God of the Bible has **revealed** Himself **through** the **Bible** to **man**.
 1. The Bible's manuscript evidence supporting its **historical validity** **far surpasses** all other ancient writings. It has 24,000 existing manuscript copies of the New Testament alone, and its closest ancient rival is Homer's Illiad with 643 existing manuscript copies, *Ibid.*, McDowell, p. 45.
 2. The Bible is vastly superior in **internal unity** as compared to all other religious works: no other such work was written as was the Bible over 1,500 years (40 generations) by 40 different authors of all walks, backgrounds, geographical and cultural orientations with **complete** theological consistency when their works are understood through normal interpretation, McDowell, A Ready Defense, p. 27f.
 3. The Bible's record of **fulfilled** Old Testament **prophecy** is **towering** evidence for its divine authorship. McDowell details that just one prophecy, that of the destruction of ancient Tyre in Ezekiel 26 which speaks of details about its destruction never to be rebuilt again, and that the odds **against** this prophecy ever coming to pass which are 1 in 75,000,000, were **overcome** and **fulfilled**, *Ibid.*, McDowell, p. 63!
 4. The Bible is superior in **viewpoint** as the only **ancient** religious work to lay claim to a **universal** God of **universal** man (Gen. 1-11). All other works claiming such universalities came long after the Bible.
 5. All other religious messiahs before Jesus claimed to know **of** the Way, the Truth and the Life of God, or claim to embody one or two of these. Jesus **alone** was the **first** to claim to **BE all three**, Jn. 14:6.
- C. Third, there are subjective evidences that man **can discern** the Bible's truths as **God's truths** as well:
 1. There is a clear tendency among secular man to segregate against Christ's gospel in the Bible in favor of any other religion's beliefs! This is due, according to Scripture, to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit and of the power of Christ's Gospel as God's Word itself as noted in Jn. 16:8-11 and Rom. 1:16.
 2. True Christians readily confess Jesus is the Creator God come in the flesh where unbelievers cannot confess this as their belief in fulfillment of 1 John 4:1-4. This indicates the Bible is God's true Word.
 3. Exposure to Scripture produces faith from those who do not resist it, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class or education levels throughout the world. This shows **anyone can understand** the Bible's message by use of normal interpretation, Romans 10:9-10; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

Lesson: Both objective and subjective evidences reveal the God of the Bible exists, that the Bible is His revelation, and that the Bible can be understood by use of normal interpretation. If people do not know its truths when they read it, only sinful blindness can explain why they STAY this way, 1 Cor. 2:14-15.