

FROM GENERAL REVELATION TO SPECIAL REVELATION

Abbreviations:

general revelation (GR)	physical death (PD)	if . . . then . . . (\supset)
special revelation (SR)	spiritual death (SD)	restrains, recalls from, and removes (RRR)
natural evil (NE)	justice (J)	neglect, avoid, resist and deny reason (<i>NARD</i>)
moral evil (ME)	mercy (M)	less basic/more basic (LB/MB)

1. The NECESSITY for Special Revelation: (see expanded version [here](#))

- i. Natural evil (NE) exists: PD is not natural/original—could/would/must/did argument.
- ii. $NE \supset ME$: NE assumes ME; NE RRR ME; PD calls back from SD.
- iii. If NE and ME exist \supset Justice and Mercy exist. ($NE \cdot ME \supset J \cdot M$)
- iv. $J \cdot M \supset M$ must satisfy J vs. M can set aside J.
- v. If NE is by one representing all, then SR is necessary to show righteousness by one representing all.

2. The CONTENT of SR:

- i. SR must be consistent with clear GR:
 - a) only some (God the creator) is eternal
 - b) original creation is w/o natural evil
 - c) all are affected by one
- ii. SR must show how M satisfies vs. sets aside divine J.

3. The ORIGIN of SR: given by God and only from God

- i. From the nature and existence of ME in man, it cannot be from man (no one seeks and no one understands—*NARD*).
- ii. From the necessity of SR (special revelation as such is from God).
- iii. One's seeking and understanding is by divine grace.

4. The EXISTENCE of SR: Genesis 1-3 is the first, basic unit of biblical revelation.

- i. Only Gen. 1-3 affirms God the creator, man's purpose and destiny and the original goodness of creation.
- ii. Only Gen. 1-3 affirms covenant representation and the fall of man.
- iii. Only Gen. 1-3 affirms man's redemption through curse and promise—M satisfies J through vicarious atonement.
- iv. Therefore, only Gen. 1-3, and what builds on this, is SR.

5. The TRANSMISSION of SR: is SR preserved pure and entire?

$G \supset P$ If SR is given by God (G), then it is preserved by God (P)
G SR is given by God
 $\therefore P$ Therefore, SR is preserved (pure and entire) by God

- i. Since it must be given in light of ME in man, and it is given to restore man from evil, it is therefore preserved from evil (*NARD*).
- ii. vs. Gnostic and neo-Gnostic—neither given nor preserved by God.
- iii. vs. Islam and Mormonism—both claim that SR was given but not preserved in the past, yet given and preserved now.

6. The COMPLETION of SR:

Scripture is redemptive revelation—it is based on promise and fulfillment. The promise is for another to come in the place of Adam to undo what Adam did and to do what Adam failed to do. When the promise is fulfilled, then SR is completed.

$F \supset C$ If the Promise is fulfilled (F), then SR is completed (C)

F _____

$\therefore C$

- i. If Christ has come, then the promise is fulfilled.
- ii. Christ has come if the Spirit has been sent. It is the work of the Messiah (anointed by the Spirit) to send the Spirit after his death and resurrection.
- iii. The Spirit has come if the kingdom of God is expanding to all nations.
- iv. Since the kingdom is expanding into all nations, the promise is fulfilled.

7. The TRANSLATION of SR:

- i. Words express concepts and judgments which are cognitive (true or false).
- ii. Concepts are universal (the same in all); words are conventional (differ from language to language).
- iii. Therefore, translations are possible.
- iv. Since Scripture is meant for all, then translations are necessary and desirable.
- v. Translations as desirable are opposed to the use of original languages only, or to the use of one language only, or to paraphrases in the place of translations.

8. The CLARITY of SR:

If GR is clear by thinking of the less basic in light of the more basic (LB/MB), then SR also is clear by thinking of the LB/MB.

- i. Clarity is opposed to hindering all from searching the Scriptures.
- ii. Clarity is opposed to Gnostic mysteries and to hidden esoteric meanings.
- iii. The meaning of any passage is one, not many; applications may be many.
- iv. Clarity of SR is opposed to contradictions or to apparent contradictions.
- v. Clarity is opposed to resignation to doctrinal divisions in the church.
- vi. Clarity is not opposed to the work of the Holy Spirit leading the church through its pastor/teachers into all truth.

9. The SUFFICIENCY of SR:

- i. *Sola Scriptura* is opposed to all other forms of SR: traditions, opinions of ancient writers, new revelations of the Spirit vs. applications of Scripture.
- ii. *Sola Scriptura* is not opposed to the use of reason or to appeal to clear GR; Scripture assumes both reason and clear GR.
- iii. *Sola Scriptura* requires the use of good and necessary consequences in noting assumptions and implications; it is not only explicit statements.

10. The INTERPRETATION of SR:

- i. Thinking is presuppositional—we must think of the less basic in light of the more basic (LB/MB): meaning/reason, truth/meaning, experience/basic belief, conclusion/premises, finite and temporal/infinite and eternal, SR/GR, Revelation/Genesis.
- ii. Contextualism is opposed to literalism (denial of the presence of interpretation) and allegoricalism (use of foreign or arbitrary assumptions in interpretation).
- iii. Context consists of: a) what is clear from GR; b) the biblical worldview of Genesis 1-3 (creation/fall/redemption); c) historically cumulative insight (the work of the pastor/teachers in church councils summed up in WCF).