

EAST AFRICA BIBLE COLLEGE

**Theology I:
God and Creation**

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East Africa Bible College

Theology I: God and Creation

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EABC Mission Statement:

To provide Biblical and theological training to equip men and women for the work of Christian ministry.

EABC Vision Statement:

To be a Christ-centered Bible college training men and women to carry the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations of Africa.

EABC Motto:

Training to Reach the Unreached

I. Course Description:

This course will examine in depth the theological issues of Special and General revelation, the Trinity, the nature and person of God the Father, Creation, Anthropology, Angelology, Demonology, and Satan. Each issue will be studied from a Systematic and Biblical perspective using IPHC doctrines as a standard while comparing other streams of theological thought.

II. Course Goals:

- A. To obtain a Biblical and theological understanding of foundational theological issues.
- B. To understand how these theological issues are relevant for our ministry and life today.
- C. To gain the understanding needed to properly teach these issues in the local church/community.

III. Reference Texts:

- A. Tramel, Terry, *The Beauty of the Balance* (Franklin Springs: LifeSprings Resources, 2009).
- B. Oden, Thomas C, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 3: Life in the Spirit* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008).
- C. Williams, J. Rodman, *Renewal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996).
- D. McGee, Gary and Stanley M. Horton, *Systematic Theology* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1998).
- E. Hart, Larry D, *Truth Aflame* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999).
- F. Grider, J. Kenneth, *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1996)
- G. Niehaus, Jeffery J., *Biblical Theology Volume I: The Common Grace Covenants* (Wooster, Ohio: Weaver Books, 2014).
- H. Other books/articles will be used and referred in the notes below and possibly by the instructor.

Revelation

I. Introduction

- A. Before we begin the study of God and His creation, we must first examine our source of information. The question we ask is: Where do we get our information about God?
- B. All of our knowledge about God comes from two sources. These sources are called “revelation.” Revelation is information about God. Revelation is something that is revealed and God has taken the initiative to make himself known to his creation.
- C. God has revealed himself in two ways:
 1. General Revelation
 2. Special Revelation
- D. General Revelation is the first revelation of God to humanity. We will begin with this in our discussion of how we get information about God.

II. General Revelation

- A. Definition:
 1. Wayne House defines General Revelation as, “God’s communication of himself to all persons at all times and in all places. It refers to God’s self-manifestation through nature, history, and the inner being (consciousness) of the human person.”¹
 2. IPHC Theologian Terry Tramel describes General Revelation as “truth that the Lord took the initiative to reveal Himself to His creation” through His creation.²
 3. Another term for General Revelation is “Natural Revelation” since it is information about God revealed through nature or creation.
- B. General Revelation is described in the following passages:
 1. Psalms 19
 2. Romans 1:18-2:15
 3. Acts 15:15-17 and 17:22-31
- C. Paul’s Description of General Revelation in Romans
 1. In Romans 1-2, Paul describes a universal general revelation from God which is information revealed by God about himself through his creation which is available to everyone.
 2. As Paul writes, natural or general revelation is sufficient to testify to humanity of God’s existence and his nature. It is also a testimony to his righteousness requirements (right and wrong). Although General Revelation does not teach right and wrong, it lets us know when our actions are not pleasing to God.

¹ *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine* by Wayne House

² *The Beauty of the Balance* by Terry Tramel

3. Based on this revelation from God, everyone is guilty of sin for we are all aware of our wrongdoing through natural revelation. God's wrath is appropriately waiting for those who reject God's truth since we are without excuse.
4. However, natural or general revelation is not sufficient to bring anyone to salvation. It was not designed to do this. General revelation was given by God to prepare humanity for salvation and the special revelation found in Jesus and the Bible.

D. General Revelation as Seen in all of Scripture

1. Basically, General Revelation is information about God available to all humanity through creation itself (Romans 1:20).
2. All of humanity has access to this type of revelation (Psalms 19:1-2). God intended for his creation to be an ongoing testimony of himself to all mankind.
3. Millard Erickson writes, "God has given us an objective, valid, rational revelation of himself in nature, history, and human personality. Regardless of whether anyone actually observes it, understands it, and believes it."³
4. By observing the world around us, we can know that there is a God and learn some information about that God.
 - i. We know he loves us. His creation is a testimony of his love in general and his love for us in particular.
 - ii. We know he had a standard for right living. Our conscious makes us aware of our bad decisions.
5. Because of General Revelation, humanity knows that there is a God and (to some extent) what God requires in terms of how we ought to live. Nature declares that God is a reality but humanity often suppresses or manipulates this truth. According to Paul, we do this because:
 - i. We are rebellious by nature since the fall of Adam and Eve and live contrary to what our conscious tells us.
 - ii. Human thinking has become corrupt and distorted because of both original sin (from Adam) and person sin (from us).
 - iii. We live in darkness and hide from the light.

E. Sources of General Revelation

1. Nature (Creation)
2. Human History and Experiences
3. Human Morality/Conscious
4. Human Creation of Religions

³ *Christian Theology* by Millard Erickson

F. The Benefits of General Revelation

1. Everyone has access to a testimony about God. Thus, there is a starting point for believers to engage non-believers regarding the things of God and the Gospel.
2. There is ongoing demonstrations of the love and greatness of God.
 - i. Creation is an act of love from God
 - ii. Creation is as demonstration of the greatness of God.
3. Though general revelation serves as a basis for universal condemnation, its primarily given to point us to the Gospel, to prepare us to receive Christ.

G. The Limitations of General Revelation

1. While General Revelation is sufficient for condemnation, it is not sufficient for salvation (John 14:6). We need to know more than the general idea that a God exists in the universe somewhere and somehow.
2. General Revelation declares God's existence and wrath but not God's grace through Jesus Christ.
3. We need a greater revelation to understand how to be saved. That is found in Special Revelation.

III. Special Revelation

A. Definition

1. Millard Erickson writes that Special Revelation is "God's manifestation of Himself to particular persons [and in particular way] at definite times and places, enabling those persons to enter into redemptive relationship with Him."⁴
2. John Jefferson Davis describes Special Revelation as "that knowledge of God and his will which is given to a particular community. The revelation given to Israel and the early church and recorded in the scripture of the Old and New Testament constitutes as the normative deposit of special revelation for evangelical theology."⁵
3. Special Revelation is the revelation that comes from a supernatural source and means. It is not something that humanity can obtain just from observing God's creation alone.

B. The Need for Special Revelation

1. John Higgins explains:
 - i. "Because one cannot arrive at God's plan of redemption by a natural theology, a revealed theology is needed through a special revelation from God. Special revelation complements the self-disclosure of God in nature,

⁴ *Christian Theology* by Millard Erickson

⁵ *Evangelical Ethics* by John Jefferson Davis

⁶ *Systematic Theology*, edited by Stanley M. Horton.

history, and humanity and builds on the foundation of general revelation. But because general revelation cannot bring salvation, the added truth content of special revelation is essential (Romans 10:14-17).”

- ii. “One cannot reflect on the truth revealed in general revelation and develop a theology that enables one to come to a saving knowledge of God. . . In fact, the insufficiency of general revelation to save fallen humanity necessitated a special revelation of Jesus Christ as the Truth who sets people free from the bondage of sin (John 8:36).”

2. We cannot know the person, work, and plan of Jesus simply by looking at the world around us. We need more information, more revelation. That is what special revelation does. It shares and proclaims God’s heart for us and not just his existence.

C. The Nature of Special Revelation

1. It is particular – Special Revelation is a direct message from God that is otherwise unknown or unknowable to humanity. That message is the Gospel as seen in Jesus and the New Testament.
2. It was progressive – Special Revelation was revealed in an ongoing and gradual way over thousands of years from the Garden of Eden until the coming of Jesus. Jesus represents the capstone of Special Revelation and the New Testament marked the completion of holy Scripture. New Scripture is not being written is new theology is not being revealed. However, the Holy Spirit is still at work helping us learn and understand what God has revealed about himself.
3. It is saving – Special Revelation contains the information we need to enter into right relationship with God. It is the knowledge necessary for salvation.
4. It is knowable – Special Revelation is not made known in nature but it is made known in such a way that humanity can comprehend the message when heard.
5. It is personal – Special Revelation is for everyone and has individual implications for all who come to know it. It declares the grace of God for every person.

D. Sources of Special Revelation

1. Jesus

- i. Jesus is our greatest source of special revelation. Jesus is God’s communication of himself to humanity.

In John 1:1, Jesus is called the Word. This identifies Jesus as the greatest Word of and from God.

- a. Hebrews 1:3
- b. Colossians 1:15; 2:9
- c. During the incarnation, Jesus was a direct message from God.

- ii. After the incarnation period, we have the Bible as our source information about God (including many of the words of Jesus).

2. Scripture (the Bible)

- i. The Bible is to be considered the greatest form of Special Revelation available to us today (after the ascension of Jesus). All other revelations about God must be in agreement with the Bible as Scripture is our standard for knowing God and evaluating any information about Him.
- ii. The Old Testament contains the Special Revelation of God's Old Covenant with the people of Israel.
 - a. Adam and Eve enjoyed direct conversation with God as Special Revelation apart from the nature God provided in the creation.
 - b. Special Revelation came to Abraham through personal interaction with God that resulted in the making of a covenant.
 - c. Special Revelation came through Moses in the form of the Law.
 - d. Special Revelation came to Israel through the prophets until the time of Jesus.
- iii. The New Testament contains the Special Revelation of God's New Covenant with all people through Christ Jesus.
 - a. The incarnation of Jesus is the most significant expression of Special Revelation available to humanity. Jesus is the Word of the Father.
 - b. The Apostles were the chief recipients of this Special Revelation through their relationship with Jesus and they later became the chief deliverers of this Special Revelation through their verbal teaching and their writings which are now collected in the New Testament.
 - c. God remains the chief communicator of Special Revelation and the Holy Spirit is seen as the chief teacher of Special Revelation. However, God did call certain humans (the Apostles and their close associates) to help deliver the message through the writing of Scripture. Although the Apostles are gone and the ministry of writing Scripture is finished, the Holy Spirit still helps us understand the information revealed by God in the Bible.
- iv. Any true Christian denomination or group affirms that Scripture is the main form of Special Revelation available to us today. The Bible helps us not only learn about God but evaluate any other information claiming to be about God. Any recent or ancient "revelation" that contradicts the Bible is not from God and should be rejected (Galatians 1:6-9).

- v. Clark Pinnock summarizes, “Christian theology is the articulation of the truth content implicit in divine revelation mediated in Scripture.”⁷

Ultimately, the Bible should form our theological beliefs. We don’t look through the Bible for scriptures to simply support what we have always believed. We allow the text of determine our beliefs.

3. Other Forms of Special Revelation

- i. God still speaks today and people are still hearing from Him. However, any message from God will always affirm and harmonize with Scripture.
- ii. Miracles are forms of Special Revelation
- iii. Divine Speech are forms of Special Revelation
 - a. Prophecies
 - b. Words from God
 - c. Dreams and Visions
- iv. Visible Manifestation
 - a. The Bible describes multiple occasions where God revealed himself in a visible form apart from the Incarnation of Jesus.
 - 1. Genesis 16:7-14
 - 2. Genesis 32
 - b. Although rare, people have testified to these visible manifestations in recent times.

E. Other Scriptures that Address Special Revelation

- 1. 2 Timothy 3:16
- 2. John 1:1-18
- 3. Romans 1:17
- 4. Galatians 1:11-12

⁷ *Biblical Revelation* by Clark Pinnock

The Bible

- I. Why Begin with the Bible?
 - A. As seen above, Scripture is our primary source of information about God today. As Special Revelation, God intends for us to learn about him through the Bible. Pentecostal theologian John Higgins has summarized that “one’s theology must not be built on subjective experience but on the objective Word of God.”
 - B. Therefore, we will use Scripture as our primary teaching foundation. No other information should be given more attention than the Bible. If any information we have about God does not agree with Scripture, that information must not be considered as legitimate.
 - C. Before we open the Bible for teaching, we have to examine the nature of the Bible.
- II. The IPHC Doctrine Concerning the Bible:
 - A. Among the IPHC 14 Articles of faith we find our church doctrine and belief about Scripture in Article 5.
 - B. “We believe in the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, known as the Bible, composed of sixty-six books and divided into two departments, Old and New Testaments. We believe the Bible is the Word of God, the full and complete revelation of the plan and history of redemption.”
 - C. While this statement has always been part of our belief system, it was officially added to our Articles of Faith in 1965.
- III. Understanding this Doctrine:
 - A. What is the Bible?
 1. 66 books divided into two divisions
 - i. The Old Testament (39 books)
 - ii. The New Testament (27 books)
 2. Special Revelation from God
 - B. Verbal and Plenary Inspiration
 1. Inspired
 - i. Means that the Bible has supernatural origins, it was given by God.
 - ii. Even though it was written by humans, those humans wrote under the guidance and leadership (inspiration) of the Holy Spirit, so that God’s Words were communicated through human hands (2 Timothy 3:16).
 2. Plenary
 - i. The word “plenary” means full and complete.
 - ii. Plenary inspiration means that the entire Bible is inspired. The inspiration of God is not only seen in a few places, but in every portion of the Bible.

3. Verbal

- i. Here, verbal refers more to wording than speaking.
- ii. The Holy Spirit guided each writer concerning which words to write.
- iii. The Bible is not just the ideas of man; it's the Word of God. Even the actual words are inspired by God.

C. Word of God

1. As suggested above, the Bible did not originate with man, it is inspired by God. God may have used human hands to write the books and human minds to form the words, God was guiding the hands and influencing the minds of those authors to convey His message.
2. Even though Jesus is called the "Word" in John 1:1, the Bible is also the Word of God since both are special revelation from God.

D. Full and Complete Revelation of the Plan and History of Redemption

1. Revelation (see discussion above)

- i. Knowledge given by God.
- ii. Two types of Revelation: General and Special
 - a. General Revelation – Information about God available to everyone such as nature.
 - b. Special Revelation – Supernatural revelation that comes by special means from God.
- iii. While General Revelation testifies to the world that there is a God, we cannot know the true character and nature of God without Special Revelation. The Bible serves as that special revelation. Because of the Bible we can know about God and even know God personally.

2. Full and Complete

- i. Since the Bible was created through verbal and plenary inspiration, it contains everything God intended for it to have.
- ii. There is not some great unknown that ultimately hinders us from knowing God, everything He intended for us to know and everything we need to know is in the Bible.

3. Plan and History of Redemption

- i. Redemption refers to the salvation of mankind from sin and the reconciliation of mankind with God.
- ii. All humans need redemption.
- iii. The Bible contains God's plan for redemption as far back as Genesis 3:15 and even up to the last chapter in Revelation.

iv. The Bible then shows us redemption history, evidence that God has already set his plan of redemption into motion.

E. Summary: The Bible is a unique book. First, it is a revelation from God to man. We cannot find out what God is like by ourselves. God has shown Himself to us in the sixty-six books of the Bible. In the Bible we see God's picture. We see God at work. We hear God's voice from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation. Secondly, God inspired certain men to write the books of the Bible (Matthew 5:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 2:13). Thus the Bible is a God-inspired book which reveals God to man. In its original form, it is perfected, true and without errors, because God Himself inspired it. Therefore, the Bible has divine authority. We must believe what the Bible says, and obey its teachings.

IV. The Holy Bible

A. Introduction

1. While Article 5 of the IHPC Articles of Faith gives us a great amount of teaching concerning the Bible, there is more information we must discuss to understand the importance, implications, and function of the Bible for Christians today.
2. Obtaining proper understanding of the nature and reliability of the Bible is essential before any other area of Theology can be addressed.

B. Bibliology

1. Bibliology is the study of the Bible.
2. The word "Bible" is derived from the Greek term *biblia* which means book.

V. Origins of the Bible

A. The Bible was written over a period of 1400 to 1800 years by more than 40 different authors.

1. The first books of the Bible to be written were most likely either the Pentateuch or Job.
2. The last book of the Bible to be written was most likely Revelation.
3. The Bible is divided into two sections, the Old and New Testaments.
4. The writings in each Testament are grouped together according to genre (or style of writing). The Bible contains the following genres:
 - i. History
 - ii. Law
 - iii. Poetry
 - iv. Wisdom
 - v. Prophecy
 - vi. Gospels
 - vii. Epistles (Letters)
 - viii. Apocalyptic

- B. The books of the Bible reflect both the Jewish origins of Christianity and the early church age of Christianity.
- C. The word “Testament” in the Bible means covenant or promise.

VI. The Old Testament

- A. Originally written in Hebrew
- B. The books of the Old Testament were written over a long period of time and gradually accepted by the Jewish people as scripture.
- C. The Old Testament as we know it today was finalized and placed together around 250 BC.
- D. Major Themes of the Old Testament:
 1. Creation/Foundations
 2. Covenant Between Humans and God (Common Grace and Old Covenants)
 3. Revelation of God’s Law
 4. Establishment of God’s Chosen People/Nation
 5. Rebellion and Consequences
 6. Promise of the Messiah

VII. New Testament

- A. Originally written in Greek.
- B. The books of the New Testament were written over a period of almost 100 years and gradually accepted by the Church as scripture as the church recognized their special nature.
- C. The New Testament as we know it today was finalized and placed together around 350 – 450 AD.
- D. Major Themes of the New Testament:
 1. Coming of the Messiah
 2. The New Covenant
 3. Rejection and Crucifixion of the Messiah
 4. Salvation by grace through faith
 5. Living in Holiness
 6. The Holy Spirit
 7. Theological explanations
 8. Second Coming/Victory of the Messiah

VIII. Finalization of the “Canon” of Scripture

- A. What is the “Canon”
 1. The English word “canon” is derived from the Greek word *κανων* which means rule, standard, or measure.
 2. The “Canon of Scripture” is the collection of books inspired by the Holy Spirit and accepted as genuine Holy Scripture by the truly Christian church.
- B. Why do we need a Canon of Scripture?

1. The Canon establishes standards of information, teaching, and doctrine (theology).
2. The Canon defends against false teaching and heresy.

C. Old Testament Canon

1. The Old Testament Canon was established before Christianity by Jewish religious leaders.
2. The Protestant Church accepts as Scripture the books canonized by the Jewish religious authorities prior to the intertestamental period.
3. The Catholic Church accepts as Scripture all the books canonized by the Jewish religious authorities including those written during the intertestamental period (the Apocrypha)

D. The New Testament Canon:

1. Many books and letters were written by early Christians but not all were accepted as Scripture.
2. The early church used a set of criteria to decide if a writing should be considered as inspired and genuine Scripture:
 - i. Apostolic Origin- attributed to and/or based upon the preaching/teaching of the first-generation apostles (or their close companions).
 - ii. Universal Acceptance
 - a. Acknowledged by all major Christian communities in the ancient world (by the end of the fourth century)
 - b. The early Church did not decide what the Canon should be but rather recognized the mind of the Christ concerning scripture.
 - iii. Liturgical Use - useful for public reading, preaching/teaching, and worship when the early Christian communities gathered for the services.
 - iv. Consistent Message - containing a theological outlook consistent with other accepted Christian Scripture/writings.

E. The Closed Canon

1. The early church decided that the Canon of Scripture would be closed around 500 AD.
2. This means that no other book or books can be added or taken away from the Bible.

IX. Translation

- A. The first translations of Scripture took place when the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek around 250 BC. This was call the Septuagint.
- B. The next major translation took place when the Church had the Old and New Testaments translated from Greek to Latin around 400 AD. This was called the Vulgate.

C. It was not until the late 1400s and 1500s that the Bible began to be translated into the languages of the people.

X. Publication

A. The Bible as we have it today has been in constant publication for almost 1900 years.

B. In the early days, copies of the Bible were made by scribes handwriting each word onto scrolls or parchment.

C. With the invention of the printing press in the 1400s, the Bible began to be copied and produced in large quantities.

D. Today, the Bible remains the bestselling book worldwide.

XI. Survival

A. Several attempts have been made to limit, destroy, or remove from existence the Bible.

B. The most famous incident was in 300 AD when Roman Emperor Diocletian issued a decree that every piece of Christian literature be destroyed. Only few copies of the Bible remained but God preserved His Word.

C. God's Word has survived thousands of years of attack.

XII. Evidence that the Bible is God's Word

A. The Unity of the Message

1. The message of the Bible is consistent.

2. Even though it was written by over 40 authors within a span of 1500 years, it maintains a consistent message.

B. The Fulfillment of the Prophecies

1. Some prophecies are yet to be fulfilled but for all those that have been, they have been fulfilled according to what the Bible said.

2. No other religious book can claim a record like the Bible for accurate prophecy.

C. The Authority and Power that the Bible Possesses

1. The words of the Bible convict the sinner and bless the saved.

2. It has the answers for the world and the world has recognized it.

D. The Historical Truth of the Bible

1. The historical events described in the Bible are accurate according to other sources such as the writings of Josephus.

2. The Bible is not a book of myths but actual events.

E. The Integrity of the Authors

1. The writers of scripture were people of integrity and there is no reason to doubt their writings as truth.

2. Many were persecuted for their work but continued despite the dangers to do what they knew God wanted them to do.

F. The Making and Survival of the Bible

1. When you see the history of the Bible you must recognize the miracles that had to take place for the Bible to be written and put together and preserved throughout history.

2. God's hand can be seen as taking care of His Word.

XIII. If the Bible is God's Word it must be: (*Since the Bible is the Word of God it is:*)

A. Infallible – without mistake

B. Inerrant – without error

C. Inspired – originated with God

D. Sufficient – contains all we need to know for right relationship with God (salvation, knowing God's will, etc.)

E. Revelation – our supreme source of theology from God himself

F. Authoritative – contains the supreme standard by which all humanity and especially God's people must live

G. Relevant – Applicable to all people, at all times, everywhere

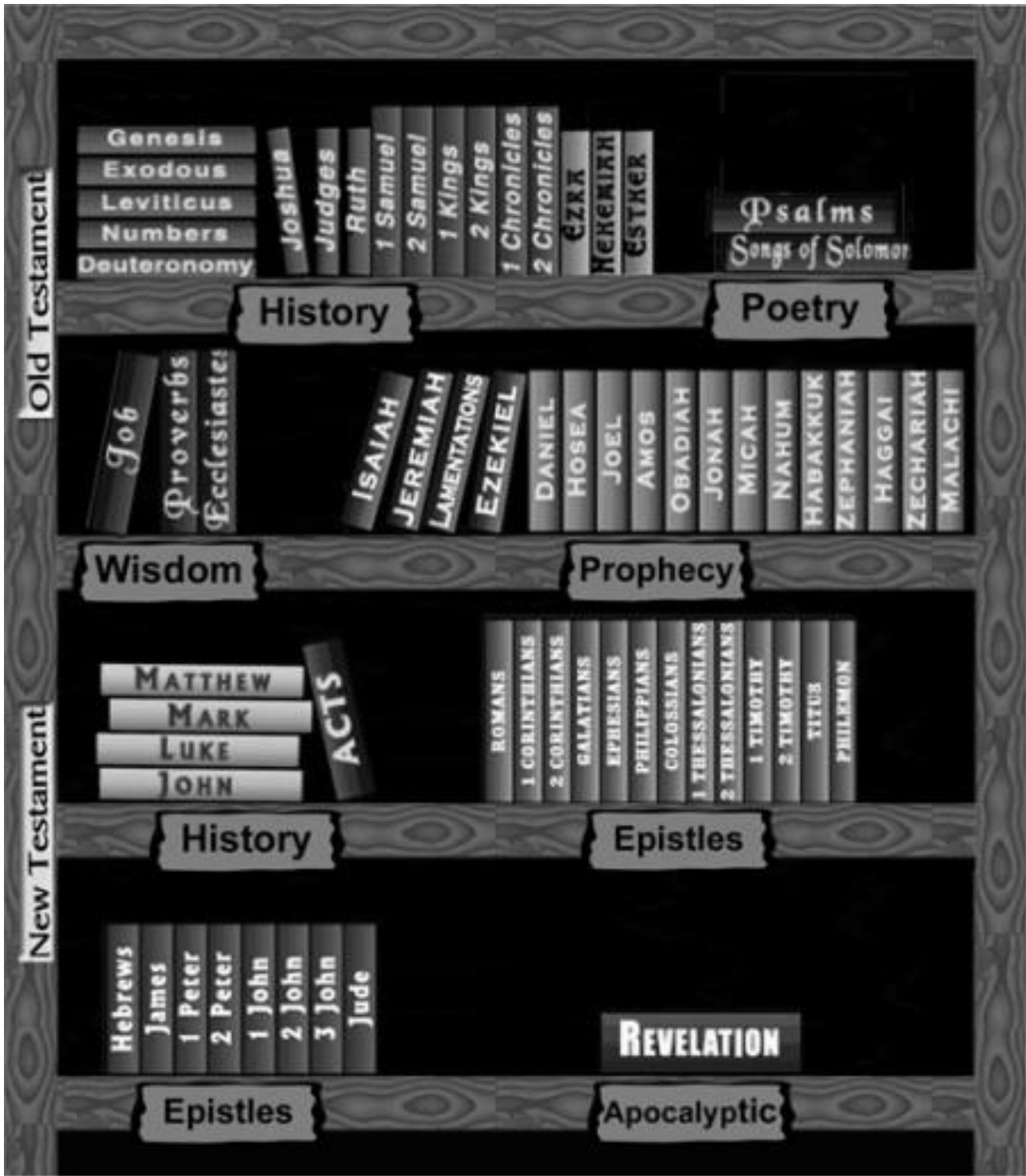
XIV. Scriptures to Consider: 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Jeremiah 31:31; Mark 13:31; Revelation 22:18;

Deuteronomy 12:32; John 7:38; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Peter 1:20; Psalms 119; 11, 16, 105; Isaiah 40:8; John 17:17; Isaiah 55:11.

Dating the Books of the Bible (All Dates are Estimates)

Pentateuch (Gen., Ex., Lev., Num., Deut.)	1400 B.C.
Job	1400 B.C.
Joshua	before 1350 B.C.
Judges and Ruth	before 1050 B.C.
Psalms	before 965 B.C.
Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon	before 926 B.C.
1 and 2 Samuel	before 926 B.C.
1 Kings and 1 Chronicles	before 848 B.C.
Obadiah	848 B.C.
Joel	835 B.C.
Jonah	780 B.C.
Amos	765 B.C.
Hosea	755 B.C.
Isaiah	750 B.C.
Micah	740 B.C.
Jeremiah and Lamentations	640 B.C.
Nahum	630 B.C.
Habakkuk and Zephaniah	625 B.C.
Ezekiel	593 B.C.
2 Kings and 2 Chronicles	539 B.C.
Daniel	before 538 B.C.
Haggai and Zechariah	520 B.C.
Esther	after 476 B.C.
Ezra	458 B.C.
Nehemiah	after 445 B.C.
Malachi	432 B.C.
Galatians	A.D. 49
1 and 2 Thessalonians	A.D. 52
James	A.D. 55
1 Corinthians	A.D. 55
2 Corinthians	A.D. 56
Romans	A.D. 58
Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon	A.D. 61,62 s
Mark	A.D. 62
Matthew	A.D. 63
Luke	A.D. 64
Acts	A.D. 64
Hebrews	A.D. 64
1 Timothy	A.D. 65
1 Peter	A.D. 65
2 Peter	A.D. 66
Titus	A.D. 66
Jude	A.D. 67
2 Timothy	A.D. 67
John	A.D. 85-90
1, 2, 3 John	A.D. 90-95 p=Revelation
90-95	

A.D.



The Nature of Theology

I. What is Theology

- A. In general, theology is the study of God. The word comes from two Greek words:
 1. θεος (theos) – meaning god
 2. λογος (logos) – meaning word
 3. Thus, theology is literally a word about God or the study of God.
- B. Christian Theology is the study of God as seen in the Christian Scriptures (both Old and New Testaments). For us, this is the only way to study the true, living God. Other theologies (such as Islamic Theology) is a distortion of the true God. [note that in some places the Islamic view of God is in harmony with the Christian view of God yet our views of God diverge in several key areas which makes the God presented in the Koran into a distorted view of the actual God of the universe.
- C. Thomas Oden describes Christian Theology as “the worshipping community’s understanding of God, viewed consensually from its earliest beginnings and sources” and “the orderly exposition of Christian teaching.”⁸
- D. J. Rodman Williams writes that Christian Theology “sets forth what the Christian faith teaches, affirms, and hold to be true.”⁹

II. The Bible and Theology

- A. There are two main approaches for studying the Bible for theological formation and reflection:
 1. Systematic Theology – Theology that draws from the entire Bible. As Millard Erickson writes, Systematic Theology “attempts to relate the various individual portions [of the Bible] to one another to coalesce the varied teachings into some type of harmonious or coherent whole.”¹⁰ Systematic theologians examine what the whole Bible says about a particular topic.
 2. Biblical Theology – Theology as seen particularly through one Biblical book, author, or Genre. Biblical theologians examine what one book, writer, or author teach on the various theological topics contained within a particular portion of Scripture.
 3. A third approach is called Historical Theology which examines the views of Theologians in regards to certain topics through various times and eras in Christian History.
- B. While all approaches are helpful, we will usually examine theology systematically.

⁸ Oden, Thomas C., *Systematic Theology Volume 1: The Living God* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 4-5.

⁹ Williams, J. Rodman, *Renewal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 15.

¹⁰ Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 23.

III. The Process of Theology

A. Theology Should be Bible Centered (the Divine aspect)

1. As seen in the previous section, we believe that the Bible is the primary source available to us today for theological study. However, in many places of the Bible, the theological messages and truths are not presented systematically, they must be drawn out of the texts through faithful study and interpretation.
2. As Kenneth Grider observes, “Scripture contains unsystematized revelation of God. Just as people observe nature and build physical and biological sciences from it, so theologians come to the spread-out revelation of God in Scripture, sort through it, order it, systematize it, and often use its raw material to build theological sciences that are useful to the Church in its worship, its faith, its hope, its love, its evangelism.”¹¹

B. Theology is Intellectual (the human aspect)

1. Christian theology requires us to use our own minds and God-given intellect to pursue and achieve theological understanding (see Romans 12:1-2).
2. Christian Theology is not primarily about memorizing doctrines or repeating statements. Rather, as Thomas Oden writes, Christian theologians exercise “fair-minded analysis, critical reasoning, tolerance, and logical coherence, as well as active listening to Scripture and tradition.”¹²
3. In order to balance the divine and the human aspects theological studies, John Wesley developed a helpful illustration known as the “Wesleyan Quadrilateral”

Scripture	Reason
Tradition	Experience

- i. Scripture – Christian Theology is primarily drawn from the Holy Bible.
- ii. Reason – Christian Theology is synthesized through human intellect as the Scripture are faithfully studied and interpreted.
- iii. Tradition – Christian Theology is affirmed and studied through historical orthodoxy.
- iv. Experience – Christian Theology is further affirmed and known through those human experiences which are in harmony with Scripture.

¹¹ Grider, J. Kenneth, *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1994), 100.

¹² Oden, 6.

The Trinity and God the Father

IV. IPHC Belief Concerning God and the Trinity

A. The IPHC Articles of Faith

1. Our doctrine on God and the Trinity is found in Article 1 of our 14 Articles of Faith:
2. “We believe there is but one living and true God everlasting, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in the unity of this Godhead there are three persons of one substance, of eternal being, and equal in holiness, justice, wisdom, power, and dignity; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.”

B. The Apostle’s Creed

1. The IPHC also accepts the Apostle’s Creed as our Creed. This 1500 statement of faith describes in concise form what we and all other true churches believe:
2. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell [that is, the place of the departed righteous]; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic [universal] church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and life everlasting. Amen.

V. Source of Information

- A. The IPHC, as all Christian churches, views the Bible as its primary source of information about God.
- B. We believe that God has chosen the Bible as his primary way of revealing himself to humankind and every other source of information and revelation (experiences, nature, prophecy, etc) is only reliable if it agrees with scripture.

VI. Key Issues within the Article

A. One God

1. Definitions:
 - i. Monotheism – the belief in only one god.
 - ii. Polytheism – the belief in many gods.
 - iii. Atheism – the belief in no god.
2. This IPHC, like all of Christianity, is monotheistic.

- i. We believe there is only one God.
- ii. No other human or spiritual entity can compare to the one God. All exists in submission to God.
- iii. The only God of the universe is the one described in Scripture.

3. Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4 and Mark 12:29

B. Living God

1. God is alive

- i. God is not contained in an idol made of wood, stone, or metal.
- ii. God is not only a philosophy or ideology.
- iii. God is not myth or legend.
- iv. God is a living being but he does not live as we live. As we live, we change. God does not change. He is in a state of perfection. God's unchanging nature is referred to as immutability. See Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalms 18:30; James 1:17.

2. Other Scriptures: 1 Samuel 17:26; Psalms 84:2; Jeremiah 10:10; 2 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Timothy 3:15

C. True God

- 1. God is the ultimate God of the universe. All other gods are false gods.
- 2. Scripture: Jeremiah 10:10; John 17:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 John 5:20

D. Everlasting God

1. God is eternal.

- i. He has no end or no beginning.
- ii. He was never born and cannot die.
- iii. He was, is, and always will be.

2. Scripture: Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13; Deuteronomy 33:27; Jeremiah 10:10; 1 Timothy 1:17; Psalms 90:2

E. God has Infinite Power

1. The Theological term for this is omnipotence.

- i. Omnipotent means "all powerful."
- ii. God is able to do anything He needs to do.

2. No other force in the universe can rival or overcome God.

3. Scripture: Jeremiah 32:27 and Matthew 19:26 and Hebrews 11:3

F. God has Infinite Wisdom

1. The Theological term for this is omniscience.

- i. Omniscient means "all knowing."
- ii. God knows everything that can be known.

2. Nothing is hidden from God.

3. Scripture: Psalms 147:4-5 and Hebrews 4:13 and Luke 8:17

G. God has Infinite Goodness

1. God is Love (1 John 4:8)

- i. God is the creator and give of love.
- ii. God demonstrated His love for us through Jesus.

2. God's goodness is also seen in His holiness and justice.

- i. The giving of God's standards of holiness is a loving act of God.
- ii. God's discipline is an act of love and God's judgment is God's response to a rejection of His love (Romans 1:18-2:9; 2 Corinthians 5:1-6)

H. God is Maker of all things (Genesis 1; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16)

1. Everything exists because of God.

2. Everything exists in submission to God – the maker of something has full rights over that thing.

I. God is Preserver of all things (Nemaha 9:6; Colossians 1:17; Acts 17:28)

1. Everything is sustained by God.

2. God's mercy and grace is demonstrated in his divine preservation.

J. God is Triune

1. Defining Theological Terms

- i. Triune – One divine nature as a unity of three persons.
- ii. Trinity – God as revealed in the unity of three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- iii. Godhead – A title for God when referring to the entire Trinity.

2. Though the word "Trinity" does not appear in the Bible, ultimately our basis for the doctrine of the Trinity is found in the New Testament in the divine self-disclosure of Jesus who is the Son sent by the Father and together they send the Holy Spirit. They are united yet distinct. See Luke 3:21-22; John 10:25-33; and Matthew 28:19.

3. The early church theologian Tertullian rightly observed that the doctrine of the Trinity is divinely revealed, not humanly constructed. Though the early church worked hard to explain the nature of God as seen in Scripture, the Trinity was not a concept they invented. Rather, they discerned by the study of Scripture and the help of the Holy Spirit that God has chosen to reveal this truth about himself in the whole of the Bible.

4. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is our attempt to properly understand God in light of the totality of Scripture. When you examine all that the Bible has to say about God, the concept of the Trinity is the best expression of the whole Biblical record.

5. The Biblical Revelation about God includes:

- i. God is One
 - a) Old Testament: Deuteronomy 6:4; 20:2-3
 - b) New Testament: Mark 12:29; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; James 2:19
- ii. God Exists in Three Distinct Persons
 - a) Old Testament: Genesis 1:1-2, 26
 - b) New Testament: Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19
- iii. J. Rodman Williams, using a statement from John Calvin's *Institutes* summarizes that "As the witness of Scripture increasingly unfolds, it is apparent that God is revealed as existing in three persons – namely, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Calvin speaks of this as 'a more intimate knowledge of his nature' for 'while he proclaims his unity, he distinctly sets it before us as existing in three persons.' The full understanding of God is greatly enriched by understanding his tripersonal reality."¹³
- iv. Kenneth Grider concludes, "Since Scripture clearly teaches that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are all divine, and that there is but one God, it evidently teaches what the Church later put into its [creed]: that God is both one and three."¹⁴

6. Essential Elements of the Doctrine of the Trinity

- i. God is One (unity of the Trinity)
- ii. God Exists in Three Distinct Persons
- iii. Each Person within the Trinity is Deity (God)
- iv. The Trinity is Eternal, not Created
- v. Each member of the Trinity is of the same essence or nature and is not essentially inferior or superior to the others.
- vi. The Trinity is a mystery that we will never be able to fully understand

7. See "Diagram of the Trinity" on page 28.

8. The Unity and Equality of the Trinity

- i. Unity in Substance
 - a) The members of the Trinity are equal in essence or nature – the Trinity is not the mixing together of three essentially different beings or substances.
 - b) They are of the same substance yet distinct.

¹³ *Renewal Theology* by J. Rodman Williams

¹⁴ *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology* by J. Kenneth Grider

- ii. Unity in Eternality
 - a) Each member of the Trinity has existed eternally. Jesus existed before his birth and the Holy Spirit existed before Pentecost.
 - b) The Trinity has always existed in unity and will eternally exist in unity.
- iii. Equal in Holiness
 - a) Each member of the Trinity has the same standards.
 - b) The idea that Jesus is the loving side of God and the God the Father is the wrathful side of God is false. They remain equal in their standard of holiness.
- iv. Equal in Justice
 - a) Just as the members of the Trinity are equal in their standard of holiness, they remain equal in their standard of justice.
 - b) You cannot be condemned by God and forgiven by Jesus. If you are condemned you remain condemned. If you are forgiven you remain forgiven.
- v. Equal in Wisdom
 - a) Each member of the Trinity is all-knowing.
 - b) For a time the incarnate Jesus chose not to use his omniscience but remains omniscient today.
- vi. Equal in Power
 - a) Each member of the Trinity is all-powerful.
 - b) For a time the incarnate Jesus chose not to use his omnipotence but remains omnipotent today.
- vii. Equal in Dignity
 - a) Each member of the Trinity has the same value.
 - b) Though each member performs different functions, one is not less valuable than the other.

9. Members of the Trinity

- i. God, The Father
- ii. God, The Son
- iii. God, The Holy Spirit

VII. Additional Information about God

A. The Attributes of God

1. While our doctrinal statement about God does include some of God's attributes, there are others we should consider
2. God is Omnipresent

- i. God is present everywhere at once.
 - ii. God is not bound to time or space.
 - iii. Jeremiah 23:23; Psalms 139:7-8
 - iv. God is both near and far:
 - a. God is Transcendent
 - 1) Transcendent means far. God is far above and beyond us. He reigns over the entire universe (Isiah 55:9)
 - 2) God is greater than his creation and dwells beyond his creation (in heaven) – see Psalms 33
 - 3) God’s ways are higher than our ways and He deserves our worship.
 - b. God is Immanent
 - 1) Immanence means close or near. God is also near to us and wants to be in relationship with us.
 - 2) God knows us personally (Psalms 33:15; Jeremiah 1:5)
 - 3) God hears our prayers (Psalms 65:2)
3. God is Sovereign
- i. God is the supreme being of the universe.
 - ii. No entity has authority over God but God has all power and authority.
 - iii. God cannot be manipulated, forced, or coerced in any way by anything.
 - iv. Psalms 24:1-2; 29:10; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
4. God is Gracious
- i. God is willing to give any person the undeserved and unmerited favor that brings about salvation if they accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.
 - ii. The grace of God does not diminish God’s justice, righteousness, or holiness. God maintains the standard but gives through the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son.

B. Misunderstanding About the Trinity

1. Modalism

- i. The belief that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are not three individual persons but rather different modes or manifestations of the one and same divine being (God).
- ii. Not an accurate description of the Trinity because all three can be seen working simultaneously (at the same time individually).
- iii. Scripture: Genesis 18 and Matthew 3:16-17

2. Unitarianism

- i. God is one but does not exist in three persons. Jesus and the Holy Spirit are less than God (the Father).
- ii. Not an accurate description of the Trinity because of Biblical statements affirming the unity of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit:
- iii. Scripture: John 10:30 and Matthew 28:19

3. Tritheism

- i. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are three distinct Gods, not one.
- ii. Not an accurate description of the Trinity because the Bible is clear that God is one.
- iii. Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4 and Mark 12:29

4. Oneness

- i. God is one and is to be worshipped only in the form of Jesus Christ.
- ii. Not an accurate description of the Trinity because Jesus himself prays to God the Father and seeks the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- iii. Scripture: Matthew 6:9 and Matthew 4:1

VIII. God the Father

A. The Term God the Father:

1. Although God is not explicitly described as Father until we reach the New Testament, we do see this aspect of God's character in the Old Testament:
 - i. Exodus 32:11
 - ii. Isaiah 63:16
 - iii. Jeremiah 3:19
 - iv. Hosea 11:1
2. Jesus often used the title "Father" to describe God in the New Testament in order to identify their unique relationship. For example, see:
 - i. Matthew 26:39
 - ii. John 3:16
3. However, Jesus also instructed us to call God "our Father" and see Him as our heavenly Father:
 - i. Matthew 6:9 and Luke 11:13
 - ii. Kenneth Grider writes, "God's fatherhood seems to express a special kind of relationship He has with Israel and with redeemed persons in the New Testament."¹⁵

¹⁵ *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology* by J. Kenneth Grider

- iii. As the creator and sustainer of all creation, God is a Father to all. However, not all will experience the fatherhood of God in the same way. Believers know God the Father more intimately. Paul describes how saved people experience a further aspect of God's fatherhood through adoption in Romans 8:9-17. This is a result of the sacrifice of Christ, the only true and natural Son of God.

4. Scripture ascribes to God many other names and titles as well. Each name describes God. See the names of God section below.

B. A Fatherly God

1. It is important to remember that not everyone has a positive example of a father in their life. When we hear that God is a father, we can project the negative qualities of our own father or our concept of fathers onto God. This is not the appropriate way to view God. Rather than applying our own definition of "father" to God, we must view God as the ultimate good father and a supreme example of fatherhood. We allow the Biblical perspective of God and his fatherhood to define Him.

2. The Qualities of Father God

i. God is Creator

- a. God is not the creator of his Son Jesus like human fathers are involved in the creation of their children. In fact, Jesus had no beginning. Like God the Father, God the Son is also an uncreated, eternal being.
- b. However, God is the creator of all life and the creation in which life thrives. Along with the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Father worked to give life to all.

ii. God is Provider

- a. Just as a good father provides for his family to the best of his ability, God the Father has offered abundant provision to his creation.
- b. The two primary ways in which God the Father provides for his creation is by sending us His Son for our eternal redemption and by sending us the Holy Spirit for daily assistance.
- c. God also provides for us in various ways and at various times as seen in Scripture and human history.

iii. God Loves Us

- a. Just as a good father is filled with and motivated by love for his children, God has ultimate and unconditional love for people.

- b. God's love is seen as the primary factor in his interactions with humanity. Even the judgment of God is driven by his love for his people.
- c. Jesus tells a story that demonstrates the fatherly love of God through the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32.

3. God Provides Discipline

- i. In the Old Testament, we see God bringing discipline to Israel. This discipline was not out of hatred but love. God hated their actions but brought discipline to turn them back to God so that they would be saved.
- ii. In the New Testament, God still disciplines his children, see Hebrews 12:4-12.

4. God is our Judge but also Forgives

- i. As a father judges the actions of his children in the natural, so our heavenly father judges us for our sin. Yet he is also willing to forgive. Both elements are critical for God's loving nature.
 - a. Judgement without the opportunity for forgiveness is not love.
 - b. Continual forgiveness with no expectation for judgement is not love.
- ii. Romans 5:-11 shows how God exercise both judgment and forgiveness.

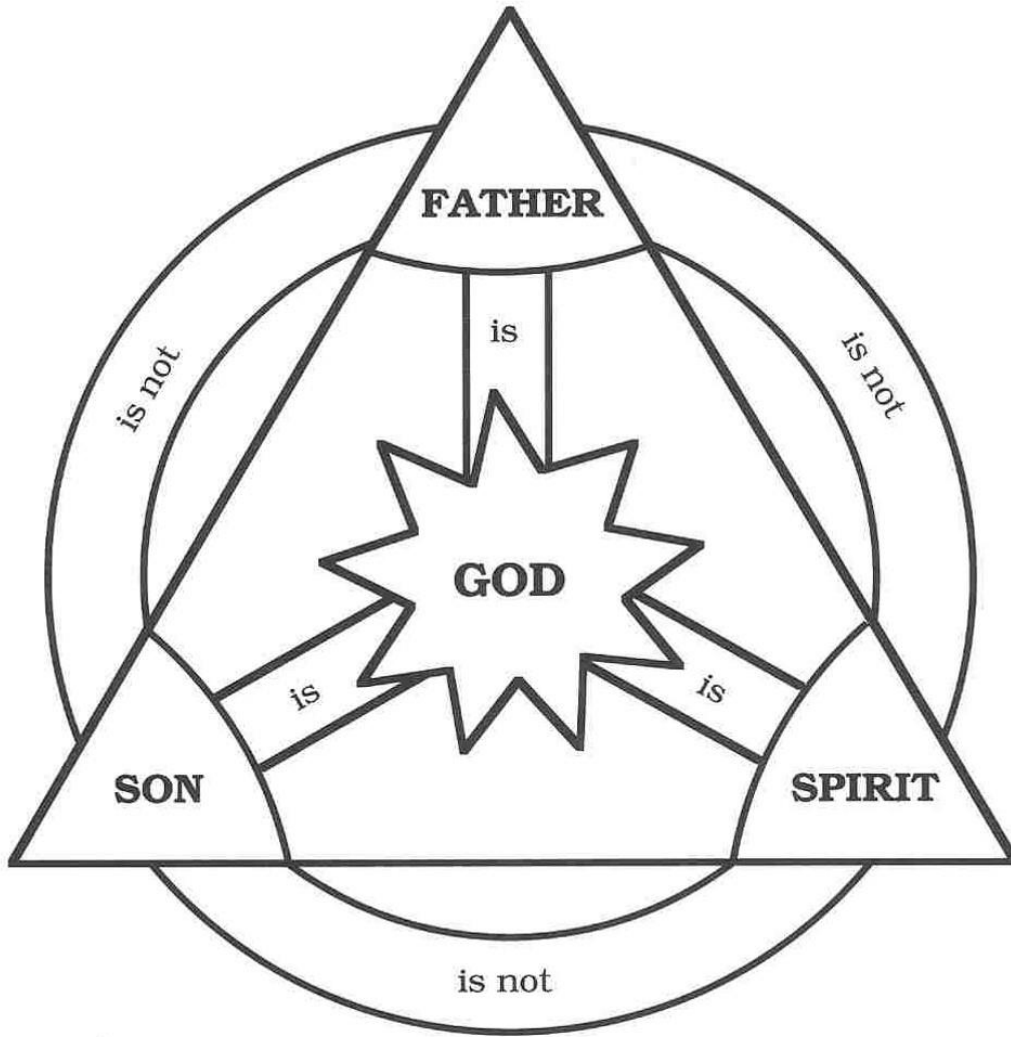
5. Father in Scripture

- i. The usual Greek word for father is πατήρ (patros). This was the formal word for a father and is used often by Jesus or the Gospel writers to refer to God:
 - a. Matthew - 44 times
 - b. Mark – 5 times
 - c. Luke (Gospel only) – 17 times
 - d. John (Gospel only) – 122 times
- ii. However, both Jesus and Paul use Abba, an Aramaic word which was an affectionate term for father. This demonstrates that God the Father is not merely a formal title but should be known through an intimate relationship.
 - a. Mark 14:36
 - b. Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6

6. Summary: God is a Father in three primary ways:

- i. His identity in the Trinity is that of Father with Jesus being the Son.
- ii. He is the Father of all life through his work in creation.
- iii. He becomes Abba Father to all the saved through the adoption that accompanies Salvation.

Diagram of the Trinity



Creation

I. The Created world

- A. God is the Creator of the World and everything that is in it (Genesis 1-2)
- B. God is the Redeemer of the creation, including the material world (Romans 8).
- C. God created the world as an act of love and grace (John 17:24)
- D. The material world exists to glorify God (Psalms 19; Isaiah 55:12; Revelation 5:13).
- E. God still loves all of his creation (Matthew 8:26)
- F. God has authority over all his creation (Matthew 8:26)
- G. Human beings are given God's creation for sustenance and enjoyment. They are also commissioned to take care of God's creation (Genesis 2:15).

II. Anthropology

A. Introduction

- 1. Anthropology is the study of humankind.
- 2. While secular anthropology dismisses the Bible as a viable source of information, Christian anthropology recognizes Genesis 1-2 as the description of the creation of mankind.
- 3. Among all of God's creation, humankind is a special creation having been made in God's image.

B. The Creation of Mankind

- 1. Genesis 1:26-31
- 2. Created by God
 - i. Formed from the dust of the ground.
 - ii. Received the breath of life directly from God breathing into him. (Genesis 2:7).
- 3. Mankind is Created in the Image of God (Imago Dei)
 - i. Being made in God's image is not about forms or appearances. God is not limited or bound to a form resembling human beings. Rather, being made in God's image refers to the nature and function of humanity.
 - ii. First, this means humans are not only material creature but also spiritual beings. Humans have an understanding of the spiritual and a desire to worship and interact with God, the Creator. This makes human beings of greater value than any other part of creation.
 - iii. Second, this also means that humans are representatives of God in creation. Humans are not gods, but God has entrusted humanity with his image to represent God both in testimony and action.
 - a. An image reflects the original.

- b. Humans were given the responsibility to rule over creation from God, the ultimate ruler of all.
 - c. Humans were given the ability and responsibility to produce life from God, the ultimate life giver. We were also given the task of preserving life as caretakers of the garden (God’s creation).
 - d. Our presence on the earth is for God’s glory.
 - e. Jeffrey Niehaus writes, “God made humans in his image and likeness to represent himself both formally and functionally on the earth over which they were to rule.”¹⁶
 - 1) God created the world but assigned humans with the task of caring for his creation.
 - 2) God breathed the first breath of life into humanity but assigned humans with the tasks of creating more life (be fruitful and multiply).
 - 3) God revealed himself to Adam and Eve so that Adam and Eve (humanity) could reveal and represent God to the whole creation.
- iv. Unfortunately, sin marred the image of God in humanity so that we do not properly reflect or serve God as God originally intended. However, New Covenant redemption has renewed the possibility of living as God intended humanity to live. Thus, Christian maturity includes (by necessity) growing more into the image of God and increasingly reflecting God. Persistent resistance to the image of God to which we were created and called to live is sin. When Adam and Eve acted in a way contrary to God’s nature, they lived outside the image of God and broke their covenant with God.
4. Created to be in covenant relationship with God
- i. A covenant is a formal agreement regarding a relationship between two entities.
 - ii. When God created mankind, he made a covenant with man whereby he promised to give and sustain the life of humans. In exchange, humans would serve and worship God on the earth and live according to his standards.

¹⁶ *Biblical Theology Volume 1: The Common Grace Covenants* by Jeffrey J. Niehaus

- iii. God continues to use covenants as the ongoing method of expressing his relationship with his creation.
- iv. God was not obligated to make covenants with humanity but he chose to do so for our benefit. God's covenants with us originated in the heart of God as his exclusive means of engaging with humanity. We were not able to initiate such a covenant but God took the initiative. This is an expression of God's genuine love towards us for God for he could have rightfully engaged with humanity in a number less beneficial ways.

5. Humans are Created with a Free Will - Genesis 2:16-17

- i. We have the power to choose and make decisions.
- ii. We are able to sin.

C. The State of Mankind Before the Fall

1. Free from sin and its corruption

- i. Genesis 2:25
- ii. This allowed for unhindered relationship with God.

2. Free from Death

- i. Genesis 2:25
- ii. 1 Corinthians 15:21
- iii. Genesis 2:9, 17

3. Special Dominion over the Earth

- i. Mankind was given special dominion or authority over the animals as seen in man's power to name the animals (Genesis 2:19).
- ii. Animals did not harm or attack mankind (Genesis 2:19; 3:15)
- iii. Mankind was given special dominion or authority over the land as seen in man's power to live in and from the garden which he worked (Gen. 2:19).
- iv. Also, mankind had the ability to work and not grow tired (Gen. 3:17-19).
- v. Women Had Painless Childbirth (Genesis 3:16)

D. The Fall of Man

1. Genesis 3

2. Factors in Bringing About the Fall

- i. Falling into temptation (from Satan, the enemy of God)
- ii. Disobeying God's Word
- iii. Selfishness
- iv. Discontentment
- v. Self-Exaltation

3. Results of the Fall

- i. Guilt and Shame (Genesis 3:7-10)

- ii. Separation from God (Genesis 3:8)
- iii. Fear (Genesis 3:10)
- iv. Death (Genesis 2:17)
 - a. Immediate Spiritual Death (Ephesians 2:1-3)
 - b. Eventual Physical Death
- v. Punishment
 - a. Women
 - 1) Pain in childbirth
 - 2) Loss of independence
 - b. Men
 - 1) Pain in Work
 - 2) Must Toil for Sustenance
 - c. Universal Consequences
 - 1) The fall and corruption of the whole human race.
 - a) Sin nature (original sin) passed on to all people.
 - b) A desire to sin in all people.
 - 2) The Image of God Marred in Mankind
 - a) We have separation from God and we are aware of that broken relationship.
 - b) We need personal redemption and restoration because of the fall.

E. State of Man After the Fall

1. All the Results of the Fall are Still Felt by Mankind Today – Because of our sin nature (original sin) everyone commits personal sin.
2. Romans 3:23 – For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
3. Live with a Sin Nature – We have an inclination to sin.
4. In Need of Salvation

F. Current Views on the State of Mankind

1. Mankind is not in trouble - mankind is fine the way it is because we cannot improve upon our basic human nature.
2. Mankind is improving - through evolution and education mankind is improving gradually and working out its own problems.
3. Mankind is too ignorant – mankind does not have the knowledge to change or improve its condition
4. Mankind had an attitude problem – mankind can change its condition by changing its attitude. If man has a positive attitude rather than a negative attitude he can improve himself.

5. Biblical View– Mankind is sinful and needs salvation and reconciliation with God.

III. Angelology

A. Angelology is the study of angels. Angels are also part of God's creation.

B. Nature Of Angels

1. Nothing can be known of angels other than that which is revealed in Scriptures. The time of their creation by God is unclear although it is clear they are created agents and not divine beings (Psalms 148:2,5).
2. In the Bible angels are referred to as taking on various forms. Their exact nature is not explained in the Bible; their reality is simply acknowledged.
3. In Scripture their appearance is often invisible. Sometimes that are manlike in appearance (Jud 13:6), often bright and white (Matt 28:3) We have no Biblical evidence they are winged or appear as cherubim and seraphim.
4. They appear as intelligent, personal beings (Rev 22:9) and as holy (Matt 25:31). But they are not omniscient, omnipotent and ever-present.

C. Work of Angels

1. Angels serve as agents and points of contact between God and humanity. They are special holy beings serving God as He seeks to interact with creation (Heb. 1:14).
2. Their activities include praising and glorifying God (Ps 103:20), communicating God's message to man (Acts 8:26), ministering to believers, and executing judgment upon the enemies of God.

D. Classification of Angels

1. Good angels voluntarily choose to serve God and minister to the heirs of salvation.
2. Evil angels who have fallen away from God, under the leadership of Satan.

IV. Demons and Satan

A. Even the demons and Satan are God's creation. Although he has allowed them to work against him, they still exist in submission to God.

B. The Nature of Demons and Satan

1. Demons and Satan are fallen angels (Matthew 12:24; Isaiah 14:12)
2. Demons and Satan are under the authority of God (Luke 8:29).
3. Believers even have authority over demons and Satan (James 4:7; Matthew 10:8).
4. Satan is the chief enemy opposed to the work of God and demons are also at work to oppose God's plan (Matthew 4).
5. Satan and demons are also opposed to the people of God. They work to tempt, persecute, hinder, and disturb God's people.
6. Satan and Demons are destined to condemnation in Hell (Revelation 20:10).

Divine Healing

- V. Introduction
 - A. When we discuss the creation of God, it is important to remember that God is still involved in his creation. One way we see this work is in divine healing.
 - B. In the IPHC, We believe in divine healing as in the Atonement (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; Mark 16:14-18; James 5:14-16; Exodus 25:26).
- VI. What is Divine Healing?
 - A. An act of physical healing achieved through the miraculous intervention of God.
 - B. Even though God uses natural means of medicine and doctors to heal, we consider divine healing to be a type of healing apart from the use of medicine and doctors.
- VII. Divine Healing in Scripture
 - A. God healed through divine means in the Old Testament (Genesis 20:17).
 - B. Jesus was a healer (Matthew 8:13).
 - C. The Disciples prayed for and saw divine healings (Acts 3:1-10).
 - D. Some are given to gift of healing from the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:30).
- VIII. Divine Healing Today
 - A. God does not change. He is still able to heal today.
 - B. Healing can come to something through the prayers and faith. Healing is an act of faith. It is not accomplished by human effort or ability. But God does use the prayers and faith of people to bring about healing (James 5:15).
- IX. “As in the Atonement”
 - A. The possibility and reality of divine healing is provided in the atonement (the sacrificial work of Jesus on the cross) according to Isaiah 53:5.
 - B. This is affirmed in the New Testament by Peter in 1 Peter 2:24.
 - C. Scripture indicated that the shed blood of Jesus is sufficient not only for the cleansing of sin but also for the healing of bodies.
 - D. Because of Jesus, we can be healed.
- X. Are we allowed to use doctors and medicine?
 - A. Scripture encourages us to pray for each other in times of sickness (James 5:14).
 - B. However, we see that God also works through human doctors to bring about healing. Even Paul used the physician Luke for medical care (Colossians 4:14).
 - C. Divine healings are miracles; rare events. Although they can happen we should also look to the provision of God in doctors and medicine. It does not demonstrate a lack of faith to use these things but rather a concern for preserving and caring for the body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

XI. Summaries:

A. From the IHPC Constitution in Kenya:

1. The Bible teaches clearly that God is able and willing to heal bodily disease and sickness (Exodus 15:26; James 5:14-16). Many miracles of healing are recorded in the Old Testament. The ministry of Christ was partly the compassionate healing of men's bodies (Matthew 4:23-25; 14:14, 34-36). He sent out His disciples to heal the sick (Matthew 10:1; Luke 10:1, 9; Mark 16:15-18; Acts 5:12-16). The "gifts of healing" are in the church (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28), and also the ordinance of prayer and anointing of the sick with oil (James 5:14-16).
2. Divine healing for the body is also provided for in the atonement of Christ by His death on the Cross. Salvation is not only for the soul, but also for the body. When Christ comes back again the dead bodies of believers will be resurrected, and the bodies of those believers who are still living will be changed. All the bodies of believers will be glorified (1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Philippians 3:20, 21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Divine healing is a foretaste of the redemption of the body. Through faith we may experience Christ's resurrection power touching and strengthening our bodies. This is part of the full salvation, which Christ purchased for us. We need to understand, however, that the Bible does not condemn the work of doctors and nurses, or healing by natural means. All (medical doctors and registered nurses) who are seeking to heal the sick are doing a good and important work.
3. From the IHPC Constitution in USA: We believe provision was made in the atonement for the healing of our bodies as set forth in the following Scriptures: Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:16, 17; Mark 16:15- 18; James 5:14-16; Exodus 15:26; to which we would also add Romans 8:26-28. And, while we do not condemn the use of medical means in the treatment of physical disease, we do believe in, practice, and commend to our people the laying on of hands by the elders or leaders of the church, the anointing with oil in the name of the Lord, and the offering of prayers for the healing of the sick.