





Christian Education

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Foreword

Foundations for Living is a ten-unit elective for high school students, providing the biblical basis and historical development of the Christian worldview. Fundamental truths and principles from the Bible are used to apply the Christian worldview to a range of contemporary issues from family life to art, music, and politics.

Gathering all of a student's education into a unified whole, this course assists contemporary teenagers in recognizing the value of Christian truth. As teenagers discern the differences between Christian and non-Christian worldviews, they will be better equipped for their new adventures in life beyond high school.

Foundations for Living contains the following units. The specific unit you will be studying next is highlighted below.

Unit 1 – What Is a Biblical Worldview?

Unit 2 – Presuppositions

Unit 3 – The Doctrines of the Bible

Unit 4 – God's Creation

Unit 5 – The Family

Unit 6 – The Bible and Marriage

Unit 7 – Dating to Matrimony

Unit 8 – Christian Education

Unit 9 – Art, Music, and Politics

Unit 10 – Putting It All Together

NOTE: All vocabulary words appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used in the text. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given in the Glossary.

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Christian Education

Our purpose in *Foundations for Living* is to teach students that there is a significant difference between the worldview of non-Christians and the worldview of Christians. This difference can be stated most simply by saying that Christians have a biblical worldview while non-Christians do not. This means that we consider Scripture to be our guide or standard for every aspect of life. Thus far we have discovered that Scripture teaches us about God's creation, ownership, and sovereignty of the world. We then learned about the special place man has in God's creation and the sanctity of human life. Units 5, 6, and 7 taught us much concerning what God's Word says about relationships between Christian men and women, as well as marriage and the family. Thus, a Christian worldview has a profound effect on both our thinking and our actions.

In this unit we will learn about another subject, one in which you are presently involved and in which many students will be involved beyond high school. Unit 8 addresses the subject of education. Though the word "education" encompasses nearly everything we experience (we are constantly learning), this unit will deal specifically with formal education. By **formal education** we mean a planned and detailed course of study with a specific goal in mind. Such education takes place in a structured setting, either at home or in a conventional classroom. Included in the goals of a formal education is a working knowledge of academic subjects including, but not limited to, courses such as language arts, mathematics, history and geography, and science. Additional courses may include foreign languages, Bible and theology, music and art, or physical education.

The goals of such an education may vary from student to student and from family to family. Typically in our culture, a minimal goal would include the completion of high school. Additional goals might include a college degree or completion of trade or vocational school. The term "formal education" is not limited to these; however, what we have mentioned is very typical of formal education in our culture. Your present studies in this course, as well as others you are taking, are part of your overall formal education.

Since education is something nearly everyone is involved in at some time during his or her life, it will greatly benefit us to discover what God's Word says about it. Why are you learning? What do you need to learn? In what sort of environment should you be learning? Who is responsible for teaching? Questions such as these will be addressed in this unit.

The Worldviews Presented in this Unit



Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you should be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAAC®.

When you complete this LIFEPAAC, you should be able to:

- Discover that man was created by God with the special ability to learn.
- Realize that God and His Word provide the foundation for all education.
- Learn to use Scripture as a "filter" for all the information we receive.
- Understand that our primary purpose for learning God's Word is to put it into action.

The Worldview Tree

Before you read your first section, we would like to introduce you to the “Worldview Tree,” a recurring visual metaphor that will unify and explain the entire curriculum. It teaches that our actions do not occur randomly; rather, they are the natural results of our beliefs and presuppositions. Therefore, what we believe and think truly does make a difference! This is how it works (see the opposite page for the chart).

The Worldview Tree illustrates how a **culture** develops within a particular **civilization**. This process begins in the soil with **presuppositions**, which move up a root system into the trunk of the tree. Once above ground, the **worldview** affects one’s perspectives on life and directs one’s choices. These choices manifest themselves in a variety of activities, which are repeated over time as an ongoing **heritage**, passed from one generation to the next.

There are four successive steps that lead to a developed culture. The first step is **believing**, followed by **thinking** (or, in the case of Postmodernism, **feeling**). The process moves to **seeing**, and this leads through choices to **doing**. These steps of human progress illustrate how internal ideas lead to external actions.

Each time a Worldview Tree is displayed, its structure remains essentially the same, while its content follows the information in each unit and is represented by the **roots** (boxes in the lower portion of the ground) and the **fruit** (which are located on or near the tree). This content demonstrates how a variety of topics all follow a similar path of development from foundational beliefs (roots) to behavior (fruit).

There are two basic worldviews, God’s and Man’s. **God’s Worldview** is depicted with bright green leaves and healthy red fruit. **Man’s Worldview** is depicted with dull brown leaves and decaying purple fruit. Within **Man’s Worldview**, there are two variations: a single tree represents a single worldview and multiple trees represent a plurality of sub-worldviews (as with Postmodernism, which will begin in Unit 4). Each Worldview Tree asks a thought-provoking question and provides space for your answer.

Historically, these two worldviews (God’s and Man’s) developed over four periods of time as depicted in the pullout chart and provide a picture of the ongoing differences between the Christian and non-Christian perspectives on the origin, history and destiny of humanity.

WORLDVIEW TREE LOCATIONS

Contemporary Christianity	30
Postmodernism	31

Believing



THINKING
OR
FEELING

Civilization: Locations that display worldviews

Fruit: Resulting behavior



Culture: Activities that express a worldview

Roots: Foundational beliefs

Worldview: A comprehensive view of life

Presuppositions: Beliefs that develop a worldview

▶ **Seeing = Doing**

I. CREATED TO LEARN



In Unit 4 you learned about the special place humans hold in God's creation. You learned that man, created in the image and likeness of God, was immediately given responsibilities. In the first two chapters of Genesis, we read that man was told to tend the Garden of Eden, and he was to take dominion over the earth and all its creatures. God immediately began to teach Adam. He told Adam what was fit to eat and what he was not to eat. Included in God's teaching were consequences. He told Adam that if he ate of the "forbidden fruit" he would surely die. This is the first evidence demonstrating yet another way that man is different from the rest of God's creation—man is teachable.

To **learn** means to acquire knowledge or skills by observation, study, or instruction; to receive or fix in the mind. It may be argued that man is not the only creature that can be taught, since many animals can also learn. This is true in a certain respect; however, animals do not learn for the same reasons. Animals do not have the same learning skills as man. They do not learn with any sense of morality, and they do not learn in a progressive manner with an ultimate goal in mind. Man has been given reasoning abilities.

Reason, as a noun, is that which is thought or alleged as the basis or ground for any opinion, determination, or action. It includes proof, argument, motive, and principle. As a verb, to reason means to examine by means of reason; to use reasoning or to prove by reasoning; to be able to take or give account according to reason. Animals do not have reasoning abilities; they do not make intellectual decisions considering all the impli-

cations and/or examining the evidence to determine the truth of a matter. Neither are animals created with the ability to participate in formal education, as defined in our introduction.

Why were humans the only ones created in this fashion? Because God gave them tasks which were given to no other creatures. We have summarily stated man's task as being the steward of God's creation. A steward is much like a manager. Humans were created to **manage** the earth and all that is in it. To manage is to direct the affairs of; carry on business; render supervision; to carry out.

Management may also include the training and supervision of others. Consider the responsibilities of a manager of a large department store. One who is hired to manage a large department store is responsible for its proper operation. The owner of the store determines such operation. The owner hires those who will manage the store in a manner that he determines. Such store managers have many responsibilities and must be aware of all aspects of the store. They must know about the finances, the merchandise, the employees, the inventory, and numerous other matters. One is not employed as a manager unless he/she is well trained in these areas. In order to manage, a manager must first learn.

The management of a department store includes many responsibilities and requires an excellent education in that field. When we consider the size of some of the department stores in our culture, we can only imagine what one must learn in order to be a good manager. However, the largest department store is tiny compared

to our entire planet. If we expect a department store manager to have a good education, how much more should we, who have been called to manage God's creation, be educated?

Whatever animals may learn, it is solely for their survival or instant gratification. Such an education is minimal and far inferior from the kind of education man should acquire and is able to acquire. For everything

God wants us to do, we may ask "how?" That is certainly a legitimate question. In comparison to any management position in the world, the management of God's creation is awesome. We have been given no easy task! However, God is a gracious God; whatever He calls us to, He also equips us to accomplish. He wants us to ask "how," and He has created us in an exceptional way so that we can learn the answer to that question.

The Scriptural Basis



Godly education is a lifelong process

The very fact that God chose to reveal Himself in Scripture demonstrates that humans were created to teach and to learn. Throughout the Bible, we see that

God teaches people and that people teach one another. We are given the responsibility and the ability to learn and to teach others what we have learned. By assuming that responsibility and taking advantage of our abilities, we are better equipped to complete those responsibilities for which we were created.

Following are just a few of the many Old and New Testament examples which prove that Scripture assumes that we are able to learn and to teach. In these references, note that we learn from God and from one another.

Exodus 18:20: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

Deuteronomy 4:5: Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

2 Chronicles 30:22: And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

Judges 13:8: Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

2 Kings 17:27: Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let them teach them the manner of the God of the land.

Psalm 25:4: *Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.*

Proverbs 4:11: *I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.*

Proverbs 22:6: *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

Isaiah 2:3: *And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

Micah 4:2: *And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

Matthew 5:2: *And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying ...*

Mark 4:2: *And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine ...*

Luke 19:47: *And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him ...*

John 6:45: *It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

1 Timothy 3:2: *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach ...*

Titus 1:9: *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*



Answer true or false for the following statements.

- 1.1 _____ Formal education involves a planned and detailed course of study with a specific goal in mind.
- 1.2 _____ God immediately began to teach Adam.
- 1.3 _____ God did not include consequences in His teaching.
- 1.4 _____ Animals learn for the same reason as man.
- 1.5 _____ Both humans and animals have reasoning abilities.
- 1.6 _____ Humans were created to manage the earth.
- 1.7 _____ Man learns only for the purposes of survival and instant gratification.
- 1.8 _____ God teaches people, and people teach one another.
- 1.9 _____ Both the Old and New Testaments assume that humans are able to learn and to teach.
- 1.10 _____ According to 1 Timothy 3:2, a bishop must be able to teach.



Learning and growing assist us in reaching life's goals

A television advertisement promoting education used the statement, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." Certainly wastefulness of anything is terrible, but especially the waste of a mind. Other creatures have a **brain**, the enlarged portion of the central nervous system contained within the skull; but only human beings have been created with a mind.

"Mind" is the term used for our conscious intelligence. It includes our intellect, our consciousness, our contemplation, our considerations, thoughts, opinions, and conclusions. To say that we have a mind is to recognize that we have the unique ability, not only to learn, but to be conscious of what we have learned. We think about what we have learned and we draw conclusions. We make conscious decisions based on the conclusions we have drawn from what we have learned. To suffer an injury to our brain would certainly be a tragedy. However, it is also a great tragedy to have a mind and not develop and use it. Indeed, a mind is a terrible thing to waste!

There is no indication that someone with a Christian worldview produced the above-mentioned advertisement. Even non-Christians recognize that not using one's mind is lamentable. Non-Christians recognize this because they understand that in order to advance in society, to prosper, and to provide for oneself and fam-

ily, a mind must be taught. Certainly this is true; yet it is not the entire truth, it is only one portion.

Christians also have the responsibility to learn and take care of themselves. However, Christians are aware that their responsibility is not only to themselves but to the world around them. We recognize the great calling that God has placed upon us. We have been mandated to be stewards of the earth. Such stewardship includes all aspects of management. When God said, "*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth,*" He made it clear that we have a responsibility to Him and to the world around us.

In order to fulfill such a responsibility, we must be educated in all aspects of God's creation. Consider just a few of the academic subjects that would be included in preparing to fulfill this mandate. To replenish and subdue the earth, we must be educated in physical science, mathematics, languages, economics, politics, and religion. When we consider dominion over the fish of the sea and the fowl of the air we think of subjects such as biology, oceanography, and ornithology. Also, in order to fulfill God's mandate, we should learn about ecology, anthropology, and sociology. These are but a few of the sciences, arts, and skills that must be

learned in order to properly fulfill the Cultural Mandate stated in Genesis 1:28.

Although one may learn much about each of these disciplines, the Cultural Mandate cannot be correctly fulfilled without active and ongoing evangelism. Genesis 1:28 tells us why man was placed on this earth. We have already discussed that man had much to learn in order to fulfill this mandate. One of the things he had to learn was that the mandate could not be fulfilled without man's obedience to God.

In Genesis 3, we read that man sinned. Man committed that one act that God told him not to commit:

he ate of the forbidden fruit. This act became known as the "fall of man" and resulted in man being unable to fulfill the Cultural Mandate.

However, Jesus Christ came to redeem man to his former state. After three years of active ministry on earth, Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and three days later rose from the dead. He soon ascended back into heaven, but He first presented His disciples with what is known as the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20). In the chart below, you will read the words of both the Cultural Mandate and the Great Commission. The parallels between these two passages were briefly covered in Unit 4. **Note them again:**

Genesis 1:26-28 The Cultural Mandate	Matthew 28:18-20 The Great Commission
GOD SAID..	JESUS SAID..
"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and every living thing that moveth upon the earth."	"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Because of the sacrifice of Christ, man was once again in a position to properly extend his dominion over the world. However, this time a greater method was to be used. This time man was to include evangelism of all the nations. Notice that evangelism included sharing the gospel of Christ's redemption, but it was not limited to that. Jesus said that we are to teach all things He had commanded. Whether we are referring to the Cultural Mandate of Genesis 1 or the Great Commission of Matthew 28, one thing is certain: teaching and learning are necessary ingredients for their fulfillment. Man learns from God, he uses what he has learned, and he passes God's teachings on to others: "...teaching

them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

There are several important facts we have learned in this section:

1. From the very beginning, God taught man. Man was created to learn, specifically from God.
2. Man learns from God both directly and indirectly. God spoke directly to Adam; however, Adam also learned from his environment, God's creation. Adam saw the difference between the Garden and the rest of the earth. He learned from his environment what was good and right (what needed to be kept and tended), and what

the area outside the Garden was like (what he needed to subdue and exercise dominion over).

3. Man not only learns from God and uses what he learns, he also passes his knowledge on to others. In the Cultural Mandate, Adam was to take dominion of and subdue the earth, using what God had taught him. In the Great Commission, Jesus' disciples were to evangelize the world by "teaching them to observe all things" that Jesus had commanded them.

The fact that man was made to learn does not imply that all men necessarily have the gift of teaching. Scripture makes it clear that certain people have a special gift (a calling) to be teachers by profession. Notice the following verses:

Romans 12:4–8: *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Ephesians 4:7–13: *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*

There are those who have the special gift of teaching. However, all of us are to teach others what God has taught us, though not necessarily in a formal setting. We teach our family members what we have learned from God; we teach unbelievers what we have learned; we pass on to future generations what we have learned from God. We also teach by both word and example. As God teaches us, we change. We tell others about these changes, and we also demonstrate these changes by our actions. Both dominion and evangelism are brought about by what God teaches us and by what we teach others.



Answer the following questions.

- 1.11 In your own words, explain the difference between a brain and a mind. _____

- 1.12 Upon what do we base our decisions? _____

- 1.13 Why do even non-Christians consider an unused mind lamentable? _____

- 1.14 To whom do Christians have a responsibility? _____

- I.15 What are some of the academic subjects we should study in order to properly fulfill our mandate? _____

- I.16 In which chapter of the Bible do we find the account of the fall of man? _____
- I.17 In which chapter of the Bible do we find the Great Commission? _____
- I.18 According to the Great Commission, what are we to teach all nations? _____

- I.19 Who originally taught man? _____
- I.20 What are the two ways man is taught? (Be specific.) _____

- I.21 What was man to learn from the model of the Garden of Eden? _____

- I.22 What are two New Testament passages which mention the “gift of teaching”? _____

- I.23 Whom do we teach, even if we are not specifically called to be teachers? _____

The Foundation of All Education

To begin this section, we will once again refer to the fact that God created all things. We will also refer again to God’s attributes, especially His omniscience. We will do this briefly, simply as a reminder so that you will be able to understand the foundation of all education. By “foundation” we mean the basis of all education; that upon which all education is founded.

As you know, God created all things. We emphasize the word “all,” lest anyone should mistakenly assume that there are some things that God did not create. As we consider the topic of education, it is important that we at all times maintain an awareness of God’s creation. This is crucial because in its most basic form, education is that process by which we learn why things exist, what things mean, and how things work. One reason we learn about things is so that we can answer questions about them. One of the first questions a child asks is “why?”



Curiosity inspires us to learn

A father tells his child something and the child asks “why?” To respond with a simple statement like, “just because,” or “because I said so” does not satisfy the child’s curiosity and will probably provoke the child to once again ask “why?” To repeatedly ask that question is normal for a child and is a trait the child received from God Himself. God wants us to ask why, and He wants to answer that question. Intellectual curiosity is an attribute with which only man was created.

When asking “why,” whom should we ask? Certainly children should ask their parents and students should ask their teachers; but whom do parents and teachers ask? Since education has to do with information about the world around us, it is logical that the best source for correct answers is God. As we mentioned in a previous unit, the one who created something knows the most about it. God created the world; therefore, He knows most about His creation. God knows how it came into existence, how long it has existed, and how it works. He knows what has happened in and around the world, and He knows what will happen to the world in the future. And to the joy of even the most inquisitive child, God knows *why*!

Consider the major courses of any high school—science, mathematics, history and geography (social studies), and language arts. God addresses all of these, beginning in the book of Genesis and continuing throughout the rest of the Bible.

In Genesis, we read of the creation of the universe, of the sun, moon, and stars, of man, animals, plants, fish, birds, water, sky, and so forth (science). We read of the use of numbers—the days of creation, the ages of people, the number of people on the earth, the length of times, the distance between two points (mathematics). We read of the beginning of mankind—when he was created, in what activities he was involved, where and how he lived, his battles, his lineage (history and geography). We also read of the beginnings and development of languages (language arts). Certainly other things may be written about any of these topics, but none of these can be properly understood without knowledge of what God’s Word says about them.

We have also learned about God’s omniscience—the “all-knowingness” of God. There is nothing God does not know correctly and in its entirety. He possesses all knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. A good education is a proper knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of the subjects studied. Therefore, in order to receive a good education, it must ultimately be

derived from God. To study something apart from what God has revealed about it is to learn it partially and/or incorrectly. To study sources which deny the existence of God or the fact that He is active in His creation is to study lies.

One may argue that there are many who know a lot about a variety of subjects, yet do not believe in God or His Word. One may have a Ph.D. in a particular subject, yet be an atheist. While this certainly is true, the possession of a degree does not ensure that the truth has been learned. Degrees are earned by those who have learned the information taught by those awarding the degree, whether such information is true or not. Sadly, many today are under the assumption that one who has studied much knows the truth. In reality, one who has studied much simply knows much about what he has studied, whether truth or otherwise.

Education should have two goals: to teach and to teach what is true. To learn the existence of something is only one part of the educational process. To learn *why* it exists answers the question even the youngest child asks.

In a recent American History textbook used by some public schools, we read of the first Thanksgiving. The textbook clearly teaches that Thanksgiving is a holiday that exists in the United States. It also correctly informs the students that this holiday began shortly after the Pilgrims settled this continent. However, in an attempt to answer *why* Thanksgiving exists, the textbook states that this holiday began with the Pilgrims inviting the Indians to dinner in order to thank them for their help. Students who are required to take a test on this portion of their American History course must demonstrate that they have learned that Thanksgiving began when the Pilgrims thanked the Indians. If this is what they indicate on their test, they will receive a good grade. They have earned the grade, but they have learned a lie.

We know that the Pilgrims invited the Indians to the first Thanksgiving dinner, but we also know that the thanks was given to God. Yet, if we were in that particular class, we would be penalized for giving that answer on a test. That is not what was taught, but to pass a test we must demonstrate that we have learned what is taught—whether it is the truth or a lie. This is a simple illustration of how degrees can be earned without ever learning the truth. The goals of education have not been achieved. Students have learned, but they have not learned the truth.

This does not imply that no facts have been learned. People who do not believe in the Bible can learn much. However, no matter how many facts they learn, they will never derive the whole truth. Eventually, in order to fill in the missing facts, they will theorize the things they have not been able to prove. Regretfully, many of these theories are then presented as truths.

A case in point is the theory of evolution. Although this is called a theory, it is presented in textbooks, as well as many classrooms, as the truth. Lest we think that this is done mistakenly, we must refer to Romans

1:18–20, which clearly tells us that such people are without excuse:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.



Answer true or false for the following statements.

- 1.24 _____ One of the first questions a child asks is “why?”
- 1.25 _____ Intellectual curiosity is an attribute possessed by all of God’s creatures.
- 1.26 _____ Parents and teachers know most about creation.
- 1.27 _____ The major courses in high school involve things addressed in the book of Genesis.
- 1.28 _____ No subjects can be properly understood without consideration of what God’s Word says about them.
- 1.29 _____ To study something apart from what God has revealed about it, is to learn it partially and/or incorrectly.
- 1.30 _____ Anyone who has earned a Ph.D. has learned the truth about a particular subject.
- 1.31 _____ Some students have learned much, without having learned the truth.
- 1.32 _____ Those who have not learned the truths of the Bible theorize the things that they have not been able to prove.

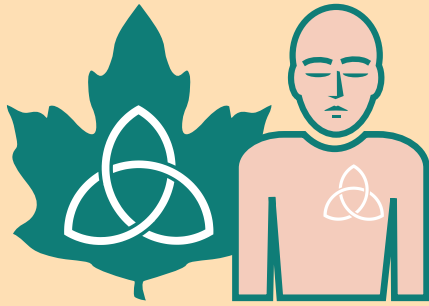
One of the problems in the educational process is that we have forgotten the purpose of education. Before you read on, consider why you are receiving an education. Why do you believe it is good to get an education? One of the common answers to this question is related to the ability to get a good job. We say that an education is valuable so that when we graduate we will be able to get a better job—better than if we were not to graduate. After graduation from high school, we may go on to college to get yet a better job. Though it is true that the more education we receive, the better employment we may find, is this our primary reason for learning? Should not our primary reason be to learn the truth? Being thus equipped with the truth, we will be able to fulfill our calling. If a quest for the truth is our goal, we will never be satisfied unless we inquire about the source of all truth—God.

Since all wisdom, knowledge, and truth derives from God, we must learn from what God has revealed. Imagine a mountain spring producing cool, clear water. The only place to get the water in its purest form is directly from the mouth of the spring. One may get water downstream, but the further away from the spring itself, the more polluted the water. One may have gallons and gallons of water, but unless it is from the mouth of the spring, the water is never truly pure. This illustrates our point concerning education. One may have a storehouse of knowledge, but unless the knowledge is from God, it is polluted. In order to get a pure education, one which includes not only information, but truth, we must get it from the source.

God’s revelation of Himself and all else comes to man in two primary ways, by **general revelation** and by **special revelation**.

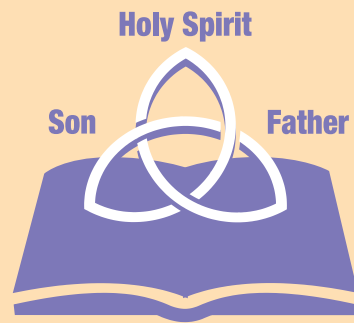
GOD'S REVELATION

General



**GOD'S WORK & GOD'S LAW WRITTEN
IN CREATION & ON MAN'S HEART**

Special



**SCRIPTURE ILLUMINATED
BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

General revelation is the act of God revealing Himself in ways that everyone can see. The predominant means by which general revelation is imparted is through nature. We have already referred to Romans 1:18–20. We will look at this passage again, with verses 21–25 added:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to

uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

What is addressed here is general revelation. Look closely at what is presented in verse 20. We read here that God's attributes are clearly seen (they have been revealed) in His creation. In other words, when we look at nature, we can see the attributes of God—those attributes which would otherwise not be seen ("invisible"). What does that mean? It means that by looking at God's creation, we can learn about God. What sort of things can we learn about God simply by considering nature?

First, just the fact that created things exist tells us that someone greater than us must have created them. Consider the magnitude of God's creation. Could any human have created it? The answer is obviously "no." The sky and the stars, the mountains and valleys, the oceans and deserts, living creatures—all of these could not exist were it not for the creative power of God. In nature we also realize the order and

wisdom of the Creator. The position of the planets as they rotate around the sun, the fact that days and nights come and go, the fact that seasons change, birds migrate, babies are born, trees produce fruit—all these reveal the wisdom and order of God. Countless examples could be given that show how nature tells of God's attributes. When we look at nature, we must admit there is a God and that He is wonderful. As he writes his letter to the church in Rome, Paul is amazed that anyone would deny the existence of God, when nature itself presents such obvious evidence. He says that with such revelation, people who deny God are "without excuse" (v. 20).

Now notice what the apostle Paul says in verses 21–24. Paul tells his readers that those who deny God "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator." In verse 22, he says that they professed to be wise, but became fools. This is a good description of one who studies natural things yet never acknowledges that God is his or her creator. Such a person considers himself wise but in reality is a fool.

In verse 23, we read that such people change "the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." This is reminiscent of the ancient Greek philosophers you learned about in your first unit. They also considered nature a force in and of itself. Rather than recognizing God, who is incorruptible, they considered the corruptible things God created as the origin of everything—as if nature creates itself and maintains itself. Over two thousand years later, we find many in our own culture who are just as foolish. Many have learned much about natural things, yet refuse to recognize God as the creator of all they have studied.

General revelation comes to man in the facts, forces, and laws of nature. Such revelation is received in the composition and operation of the human mind and in what is learned by experience and through history. Other than our passage from Romans 1, the Bible refers to general revelation in the following passages:

Psalm 19:1–2: The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

Romans 2:14: For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.

Those who are not Christians consider general revelation adequate for all our needs, but we recognize that it is insufficient. General revelation became clouded by man's sin. Although God's revelation in nature was not totally erased, it became hazy and indistinct. General revelation points man toward an awareness of the existence of God and some of His attributes, but it does not furnish us with a foundation upon which we can build our faith and hopes. It also does not direct us in the way we should live.

General revelation does not cause humans to recognize their sins, nor does it present us with the understanding of redemption. While it communicates some knowledge of the goodness, the wisdom, and the power of God, it does not reveal Christ as the only way of salvation.

This does not mean that general revelation has no value at all. It is, after all, revelation. General revelation causes some people to seek after God (Acts 17:27) and to see God's everlasting power and divinity (Romans 1:19–20). The general revelation of God also forms the background for His special revelation. One cannot fully understand special revelation without the background of general revelation.

Science, history and geography, mathematics, and language arts help to illuminate the words written in Scripture. We understand more of Scripture because of our mastery of natural things, and we understand more of natural things because of our study of Scripture.



Underline the correct word or phrase in the following statements.

- 1.33 One of the problems in the educational process is that we have forgotten the (**age, grade, purpose**) of education.
- 1.34 A quest for (**the truth, a diploma, good grades**) is our primary goal in education.
- 1.35 In order to get a pure education, we must get it from the (**source, books, teacher**).
- 1.36 God's revelation of Himself, and all else, comes to man in (**four, three, two**) primary ways.
- 1.37 God's revelation in nature is called (**special, general, obscure**) revelation.
- 1.38 (**Romans, John, Hebrews**) 1:18-25 tells about God's revelation in nature.
- 1.39 The apostle Paul said that people who deny God are without (**reason, education, excuse**).
- 1.40 (**General, Divine, Special**) revelation comes to man in the facts, forces, and laws of nature.
- 1.41 General revelation became clouded because of man's (**glory, creation, sin**).
- 1.42 We understand more of Scripture because of our mastery of (**past, natural, original**) things.

Special Revelation

In addition to the revelation of God in nature, we have His special revelation. This is the revelation of God in Scripture. As you learned in Unit 3, the Bible is God's primary means of revelation. It is a revelation in which teaching and truth are inseparably presented. Such special revelation is necessary because of the entrance of sin into the world. God's revelation in nature was blurred and corrupted, and man was afflicted with a spiritual blindness. Since the sin of Adam, humans have been subject to error and non-belief, and have not been able to correctly read and understand God's revelation in nature. Therefore, it became necessary for God to interpret the truths found in nature, provide a revelation which included redemption, and illuminate man's mind so that he could be redeemed from his errors.

God has used several means in giving His special revelation. The following are several examples with scriptural references:

1. **Theophanies/Christophanies** – These are visible manifestations of God, indications of His presence, or revelations of His glory.
 - Exodus 3:2; 33:9; Psalm 78:14; 99:7 – in fire and clouds of smoke

- Job 38:1; Psalm 18:10–16 – in stormy winds
- 1 Kings 19:12 – in a still, small voice

At times God revealed Himself in the form of Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity. In such cases, the manifestation is referred to as a **Christophany**.

- Genesis 16:13; 31:11; Exodus 23:20-23; Malachi 3:1 – as the angel of God, the second person of the Trinity (Christophany)
- John 1:14; Hebrews 1:1,2 – The highest point of the personal appearance of God among men was reached in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. In Christ, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

2. **Direct Communications** – These are revelations of God, directly to men, by way of an audible voice; the internal operation of the Holy Spirit; dreams and visions.
 - Deuteronomy 5:4 – by an audible voice
 - 1 Peter 1:11 – by the internal operation of the Holy Spirit

- Numbers 12:6; Isaiah 6 – by dreams and visions
 - John 14:26; I Corinthians 2:12 – through the Holy Spirit
3. **Miracles** – The miracles of the Bible should never be considered simply as phenomena to amaze men, but as essential means of God’s special revelation. These are found throughout the Old and New Testaments, are evidence of His special presence, and were often used to symbolize spiritual truths. God’s miracles are signs of His coming Kingdom and of His redemptive power.

- I Timothy 3:16; Revelation 21:5 – The greatest miracle of all is the coming of the Son of God in the flesh. In Him all of God’s creation is being restored and brought back to its original beauty.

Scripture tells us of all these means God has used to reveal Himself and His truths to us. Scripture is therefore our greatest source of God’s revelation. Though we learn much by studying nature and all the subjects relating to God’s creation, our studies are incomplete without the revelation of God.



For each of the following scriptural references, indicate whether it tells of a *theophany*, *Christophany*, *direct communication*, or *miracle*.

- 1.43 Job 38:1 _____
- 1.44 I Timothy 3:16 _____
- 1.45 I Peter 1:11 _____
- 1.46 Genesis 16:13 _____
- 1.47 Psalm 78:14 _____
- 1.48 I Kings 19:12 _____
- 1.49 John 1:14 _____
- 1.50 Numbers 12:6 _____
- 1.51 Psalm 18:10–16 _____
- 1.52 Revelation 21:5 _____



Review the material in this section to prepare for the Self Test. The Self Test will check your understanding of this section. Any items you miss on this test will show you what areas you need to restudy.

SELF TEST 1

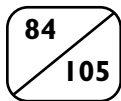
Underline the correct word or phrase in each of the following sentences (each answer, 3 points).

- I.01 **(Further, Self, Formal)** education is a planned and detailed course of study with a specific goal in mind.
- I.02 To **(learn, read, meditate)** means to acquire knowledge or skills by observation, study, or instruction.
- I.03 That which is thought or alleged to be the basis or ground for any opinion, determination, or action is called **(education, reason, teaching)**.
- I.04 Animals do not have **(reasoning, learning, instinctive)** abilities.
- I.05 One who **(owns, digresses, manages)**, directs the affairs and carries on business.
- I.06 The **(brain, soul, mind)** is our conscious intelligence.
- I.07 The Cultural Mandate is very similar to **(the plan of salvation, predestination, the Great Commission)**.
- I.08 Genesis 3 tells of **(Cain killing Abel, the fall of man, the birth of Seth)**.
- I.09 Romans 1:18-20 tells us that God is revealed in **(nature, law, the gospel)**.
- I.010 God's revelation comes to us in **(two, three, four)** primary ways.
- I.011 **(Special, General, Extraordinary)** revelation comes to man in the facts, forces, and laws of nature.
- I.012 **(Special, General, Extraordinary)** revelation does not furnish us with a foundation upon which we can build our faith and hope.
- I.013 **(Nature, The Bible, Science)** is God's primary means of revelation.
- I.014 God revealing Himself in the Old Testament as the second person of the Trinity is called a **(metaphor, parable, Christophany)**.
- I.015 **(Prophets, Miracles, Dreams)** are evidences of God's special presence and were often used to symbolize spiritual truths.

Answer true or false for the following statements (each answer, 3 points).

- I.016 _____ Animals and people learn for the same reasons.
- I.017 _____ Animals have been given reasoning abilities.
- I.018 _____ Whatever God calls us to do, He also equips us to accomplish.
- I.019 _____ Scripture assumes that we are able to learn and to teach.
- I.020 _____ Our mind is the enlarged portion of the central nervous system contained within the skull.
- I.021 _____ We make conscious decisions based on the conclusions we have drawn from what we have learned.
- I.022 _____ The Great Commission is found in Genesis 1:28.

- I.023 _____ In the Great Commission, Jesus tells His disciples that they are to teach all nations “to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”
- I.024 _____ Adam learned directly from God as well as from his environment.
- I.025 _____ Each course in a major high school curriculum is addressed in the book of Genesis.
- I.026 _____ All wisdom, knowledge, and truth derives from God.
- I.027 _____ The apostle Paul said that people who deny God are “without excuse.”
- I.028 _____ Special revelation comes to man in the facts, forces, and laws of nature.
- I.029 _____ Through general revelation, we recognize our sins and are presented with the knowledge of redemption.
- I.030 _____ Special revelation is the revelation of God in Scripture.
- I.031 _____ In special revelation, teaching and truth are inseparably presented.
- I.032 _____ God has used several means in giving His special revelation.
- I.033 _____ God’s greatest miracle was the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai.
- I.034 _____ The audible voice of God is an example of direct communication.
- I.035 _____ Prayer is our greatest source of God’s revelation.



Adult Check

_____ **Score**

_____ **Initial**

_____ **Date**