

The two books, coined by the theologians

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God's objective for self-revelation is that mankind comes to know Him better. From the beginning of creation, God's plan " was to create a people among whom he could dwell and with whom he could be in relationship" (Hill & Walton, 2009, p. 23). Mankind has no excuse for not knowing God and establishing a relationship with Him because " everyone naturally has a general idea that there is a God" (McGrath, 2011, p. 5), based upon His eternal power and divine nature. His glory is declared in the heavens, the work of His hands is proclaimed in the skies, (Psalm 19; Romans 1: 20) and " the order, intricacy, and wonder of creation speak to the existence of a powerful and glorious Creator" (Got Questions, 2013). Moreover, " people everywhere possess general knowledge of the existence of God as the Creator of heaven and earth, and they understand His righteousness, and that He administers punishment to the wicked, etc.

However, " people do not have a clue of God's plans concerning mankind, the benefits of His blessings, our deliverances from sin and death, and the plan of salvation—which denotes true knowledge of God (McGrath, 2011). The Two Books that God reveals Himself to humanity include, " General Revelation and Special Revelation. " General revelation refers to the general truths that can be known about God through nature. Special revelation refers to the more specific truths that can be known about God through the supernatural" (Got Questions, 2013). General Revelation was not the catalyst that was designed to teach us our obligation towards God and our proper relationship to him as our creator. It was not designed to guide us in morality even if the fall of man had not occurred in the Garden of Eden" (Preacherwin's, 2008). It is through General Revelation that God's revelation

of Himself as God, and the righteous judge is seen. Also, through General Revelation man is seen as a sinner standing under The Two Books – Page 2 God's divine judgment.

The clear message of general revelation and what is derived from it--natural theology (e. g. , Romans 1 and 2), encounters the problem of fallen man perverting its clear message. Nature, human history, and human nature (internally—via conscience) denote the three primary categories of general revelation (Apologetics, 2013). “ God manifested or revealed Himself through Special Revelation in three major categories that include: miraculous events, divine speech, and visible manifestations. Special Revelation is redemptive or salvific in nature and is communicated in both words (e. . , Scripture) and acts or actions. It must be revealed/initiated by God alone. Christ and the Scriptures respectively are the supreme examples of Special Revelation” (Apologetics, 2013). Having said this, The Two Books, coined by the Theologians, present an intertwining role of Special Revelation (Scripture) and General Revelation in the theological task of discovering God. As we explore General Revelation in the area of Science and the Bible, we must note that there is some information that General Revelation tell us and does not tell us.

According to VandenBerg, (2010), there are two beliefs among the Christian community concerning scientific knowledge and the Bible. For example, “ there are Christians who reject the knowledge in the areas of evolution, cosmology, and insist that the biblical accounts of creation and cosmology must be read in a woodenly literal fashion. They assert that it is not

necessary to harmonize the Bible and science because, for the most part, the scientific academy is wrong.

Furthermore, some Christians insist that what the Bible says about the origins of the universe does not, in fact, cannot, contradict what science has discovered. Contrasting those in the first group, those in this group tend to affirm the discoveries of science while seeking to harmonize them in some way with the biblical text. The Reformed tradition, tends to fall into line with the The Two Books – Page 3 latter group” (p. 16). However, “ Because God is the author of both books—the physical world and the Bible—so the argument goes, there can be no disagreement between them.

The basic premise for science and the Bible is that God has provided two sources of knowledge for human persons: nature and the Bible (VandenBerg, 2010). Scientists contend that the problem with General Revelation is not that data is interpreted incorrectly with regard to any particular scientific subject that is being studied, but the problem is that the author of the data is distorted (VandenBerg, 2010). A critical analysis of General Revelation calls into question what is being revealed.

At first glance, “ there is common understanding of what God is revealing about himself. However, the theological jury is still out deliberating a revelatory verdict” (Howard, D. , 2010). One point is agreed upon concerning General Revelation by those who embrace this Doctrine of Revelation is that knowledge about God is revealed concerning His existence and character (Howard, D. , 2010). “ Agreement also exists that the knowledge revealed consists of particular attributes of God or a “ broad outline of what He is like. The attributes of God that are considered to be revealed are those described

in passages such as Psalm 19: 1-6, Romans 1: 18-32, and Acts 14: 17. Psalm 19: 1-8, according to Demarest, indicates that God “ as Elohim—the eternal, omnipotent, wise, and good Creator and Sustainer of all that is—revealed via general revelation” (Howard, D. 2010). “ Knowledge obtained from general revelation is not considered salvific in nature, because it lacks salvation knowledge. Knowledge disclosed in general is only about God as The Two Books.

Creator and other “ general” divine attributes, not God as Redeemer and other salvific knowledge. There is no knowledge of redemption or the Redeemer given in general knowledge, because the precise purpose of general revelation is to declare “ the glory of the Creator and give general guidance to the creature,” not to reveal Jesus Christ. Furthermore, humans do not obtain salvific knowledge from general revelation, they have true and accurate knowledge of God’s existence, his attributes, and moral law (Howard, D. , 2010). The task of discovering God is incomplete without Special Revelation (Scripture).

The intertwining role of Special Revelation (Scripture) and General Revelation reveal “ two different media that in different ways point to the same messenger—the divine Creator and Revealer. To the degree that the content of the message is the same—“ God’s invisible qualities his eternal power and divine nature” (Romans 1: 20)—the truth that both books speak the same language and point to the same God must be stressed. At the same time, the truth that natural theology has no saving capacity, that to know our sin and salvation we need the additional special revelation given in Scripture, must never be overlooked.

The two Books are not in the first place about the Bible and science but about God and his relation to us as Creator and Redeemer in Jesus Christ” (Bolt, J. , 2011). Special Revelation can be categorized in the following way. “ Theophany (God makes Himself known to the prophet while the prophet is awake and aware of such taking place; Visions (God makes Himself known (not physically) to the prophet who is awake and aware of what is taking place; Dreams(God makes Himself known to a prophet who is asleep); In His Son—Jesus Christ (Jesus is the ultimate manifestation of God given not just to the prophets, but The Two Books - Page 5 o all people. Jesus is also the perfect image of the invisible God and the object of all Special Revelation. All of Scripture, not just the Gospels, points to Jesus)” (Preacherwin, 2008). Without the Two Books, (General Revelation and Special Revelation), mankind would be deprived of the “ intimate manifestation of God’s special Revelation to his people, revealing Christ and uniting in Christ all of these separate forms of Special Revelation. Scripture reveals Christ in his fullness for God’s people and thus, the completed canon of Scripture is given to us as the capstone upon which our faith is held together” (Preacherwin, 2008).

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