

Night I: September 11, 2009
Hermeneutics and Biblical Interpretation
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Overview of syllabus with/website

I. Divine Revelation Itself. God reveals his goodness and wisdom so that we might come to know the mystery of his will and have access to the Father. Divine sonship and sharers of divine nature is the end goal of all revelation (2 Peter 1:4). Paul contends that our knowledge can rise to knowledge of God's power and divinity by reflecting upon the created world (Rom.1.20...**consider subsequent verses**). In order for us to understand how God reveals himself, we must first consider the manner in which reason serves faith and vice versa.

See *Word of the Week* on **Revelation** and **Wisdom**.

A. Faith and Reason: *"Two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of Truth" (John Paul II)*. Reason must always set itself upon some sort of faith. The rationale of Science (Scientia L.: meaning *"knowledge of order and beauty"*) concludes this in its fiduciary principle—all science is faith-based. What does Science mean by this?

1. Reason (Science) places its trust from a previous experiment that is built upon a previous set of credentials that is built upon a series of journal, etc...faith is necessary if reason (science) is to exist. So why are science and religion opposed? Simply, we have replaced faith with experience and concluded that there is a higher authority in experience as opposed to faith...although, as we have now seen, all science is tied to some aspect of trust.

a. Logic is an instrument of reason. What is logic? As defined by Dr. Hahn in *Reasons to Believe*: *"Logic is simply a reflection of how the mind structures its thought, which is itself a reflection of the structure of reality"* (Hahn, 19). If a person wishes to disprove logic, the individual runs into a wall because they have to do so in a logical manner.

b. Logic allows us to move from the material to immaterial and visible to the invisible...ultimately from faith to reason and reason back to faith. This is characteristically human.

1. Letters represent sounds, which in turn become words representing things all around us. We are mathematicians from adolescence and yet they produce immaterial things. Scientists who want to disprove God use numbers all the time!

2. Proof of the immaterial can lead one to conclude that God is just an "impersonal force". God is more than magnets, engines, and telescopes (these things are a means to an end). God is relationship and we can discern this because we are a reflection and image of him (Gn.1:26)--in relationship with one another.

2. Faith (break open analogously with contemplative gaze against knowledge) and the principle of relationality: born into communion relationship. Living in communion with another demands our attention to conscience (with knowledge—the true meaning of science—the science of morality). For in the breach or awareness humans are aware of some higher demand enjoined upon them for justice and common decency.

a. The moral life is not something added on to real life from the outside. It is life lived by human beings. We live in the gap of the person we are against the person we ought to be. Revelation of truth ought to encourage as oppose to discourage.

B. Economy of Revelation is realized by words and deeds: a marriage made in heaven! The words, for their part, proclaim the works, which ultimately bring to light the mystery they contain (DV, I, 2).

1. Christ is the Word, who proclaims his works and reveals himself who is mystery. He is the sum total of revelation (DV, I, 2).

a. God provides men with constant evidence of himself in created realities. Furthermore, after the fall, God gave man hope, with the promise of salvation

(cf. Gn.3.15); and he has never ceased in taking care of his family. “*God writes the world like men writes stories, to convey truth and love*”--Hahn

2. Consider the covenants made with Abraham, Moses, and David. These covenants are ratified by the one definitive covenant in Christ. These are the essential stages of revelation

a. To understand “*The divine program and economy for the salvation of humanity*” (Irenaeus) it is necessary to note the special characteristics of his covenants with the biblical heroes.

3-fold covenant

Adam-Gen 2.23	Noah-Gen. 9.13	Abraham-Gn. 15	Moses-Ex.20	David-2 Sam.7.10	Christ-Mk
marital	household	tribal Gn. 17	national	kingdom (rules nations)	Universal
Marriage	Rainbow	Circumcision Gn. 22	Passover	Throne	Baptism/Eucharist

C. Man’s response to God. 1. To paraphrase St. Augustine from his rudimentary work on catechesis: “*The Church wants the whole world to hear the summons to salvation, so that through the hearing of Sacred Scripture we might come to believe, through belief we may hope, and through hope we may come to love.*” This is the ultimate progression of the theological virtues realized in light of Sacred Scripture. Moreover, it is the standard for compliance to revelation captured in one simple sentence.

1. By faith, man completely submits his intellect and will. With his whole being, man gives his assent of faith to God. Man’s response to God is good theology: “faith seeking understanding”. So Sacred Scripture calls the human response to God, the author of all revelation, “the obedience of faith” (cf. Rom.1.5; 16.26)...the loved seeking the lover...the child seeking out how he is a reflection of his father’s face!

a. See Word of the Week on **Faith** .

2. To obey in faith is to submit freely to the word of God that has been heard, because God, who is Truth itself, guarantees its truth. Both Abraham and the Blessed Virgin Mary are models of this heroic yes.

a. St. Paul tells us that the obedience of faith brings about a greater holiness. In addition, holiness is the mover and shaker in our contemporary culture.