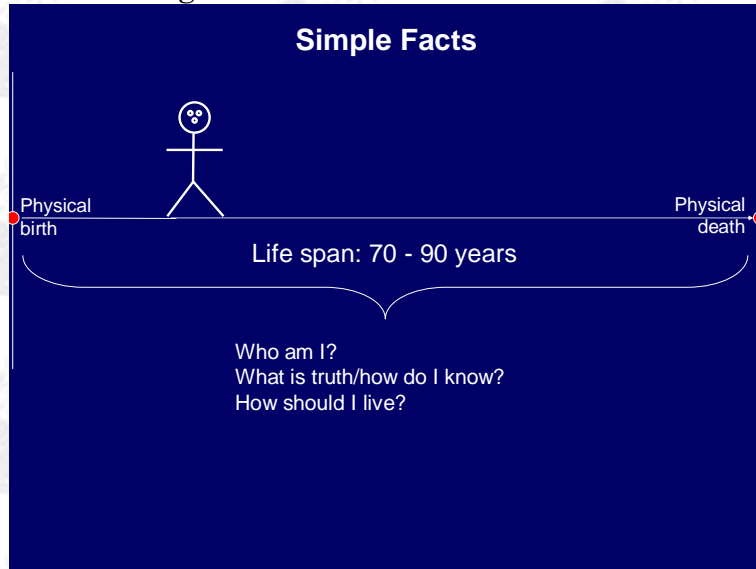


Biblical Framework Part 1

Importance Of Origins

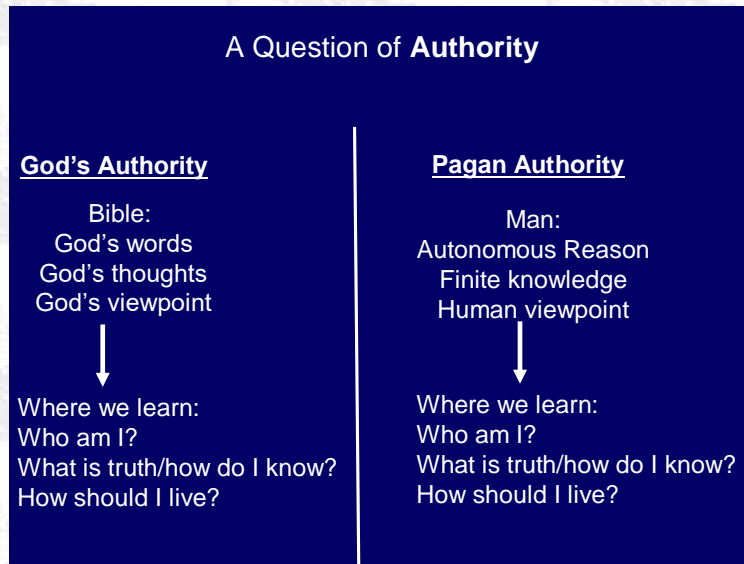
Let's review some of the things we talked about last time we met.



Last time we talked about man and the short life span he has to answer some very serious questions, about who he is, what's he doing here, and where he goes after death. We talked at length about the importance of the Bible in one's life, because, while man walks in this world, we, as believers have been called out to walk by faith and not by sight.

We talked about the challenges of today's living, how there are two (and only two) fundamental views in this world, and they both have to do with the question of **AUTHORITY**.

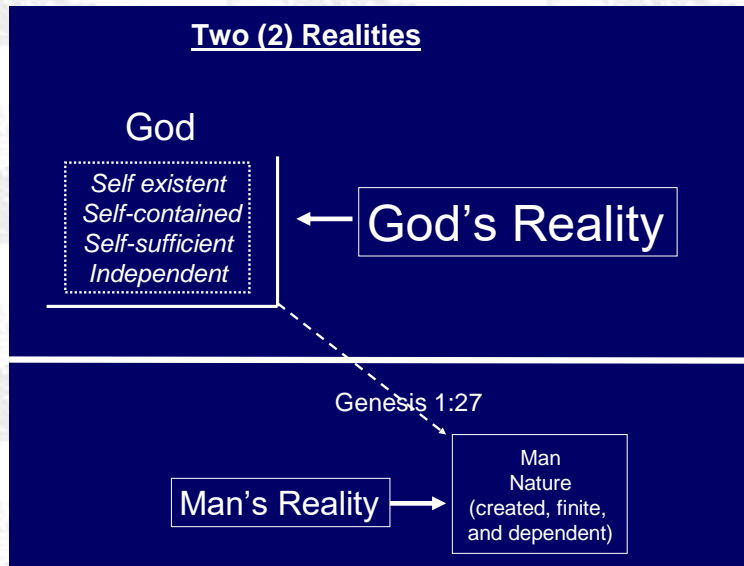
Biblical Framework Part 1



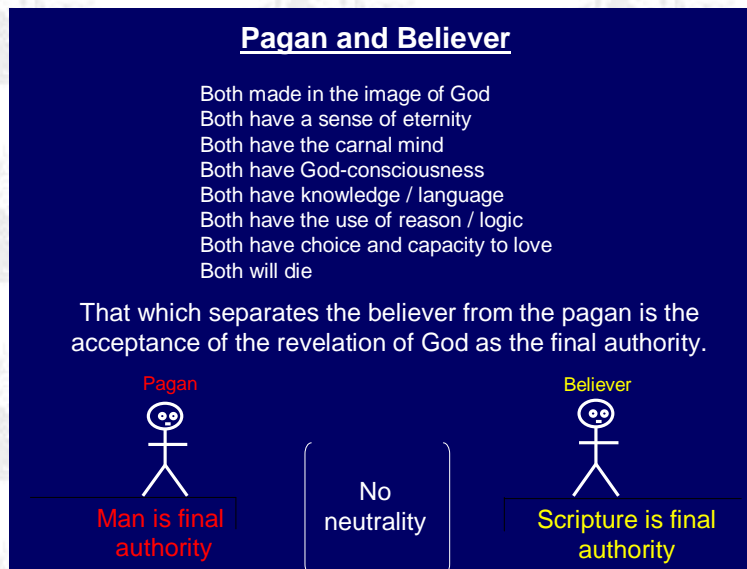
On the one hand, you have everything you've learned from the government sponsored, state supported school system authorities from childhood, as well as what your parent authorities taught you (very likely a mixture of moral, ethical, and law enforcement). This information is what forms your conscience in order to make decisions.

On the other hand, we have the revelation of God given to us to show us the truth of how we got here, why we're in such a mess, how our conscience should be restructured, because of the wonderful salvation He has provided to mend the torn relationship caused by sin, so that we can have a relation through Christ with our Creator once again.

Biblical Framework Part 1



We looked at the concept of the Creator-creature Distinction. We saw that there are two (2) realities – God's reality, and then there is man's reality.



We also saw that, though saved by grace through faith alone in Christ alone, we only differ from the modern pagan mind in the fact that we believe that the Bible (Old Testament and New Testament) is revelation from God to mankind; Inspired, inerrant, infallible, and the final authority.

Biblical Framework Part 1

We looked at how the collective pagan mind (“the world”) pressures us, by humiliation, derision, so that we “conform” to the accepted thoughts of the day.

Modern Compartmentalization	
What science says about itself and how it views “religion”:	
<u>Science</u>	<u>Religion</u>
Fact	Fiction
Real	Unreal
Knowledge	Belief
Brain	Heart
Secular	Sacred
Seen	Unseen
Rational	Irrational
Truth	Fantasy
Practical	Impractical
Evolutionism	Creationism
Public	Private

Science has become a kind of an authoritarian deity that must be given obedience, and so we looked at how Science views Religion – as weak, subjective, non-rational, full of fairy-tales and supposed truths, all non verifiable. Biblical belief is viewed as the realm of the “spiritual”, and “whatever comforts you”. Yet we saw in Romans 1:18-20, we can understand where these accusations are coming from, because these are men who suppress (or bury) the truth in (or by) denial.

So, we know that these men are trying to bury the truth of Scripture by denying the existence of a Creator. And how do we know that? v 19-20 “..because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”

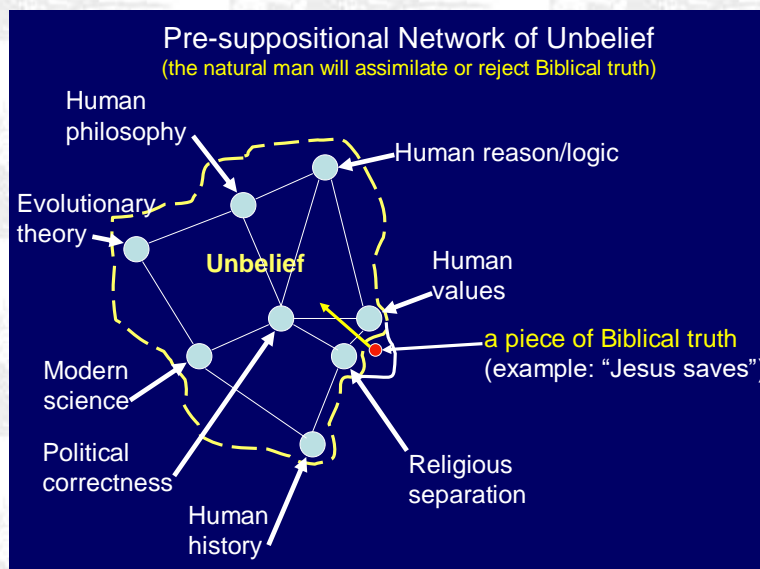
That means that they know that there is a Creator to whom they are responsible, but they would rather deny His existence so that the world can be a safe place in which to sin without responsibility or consequence! But we know that they know we know that they know that there is a Creator.

Biblical Framework Part 1



We looked at the mechanism of compartmentalism, and how that squeezes the time we have for “religious things”, eventually leading us to the point of the “Sunday morning is for God” syndrome.

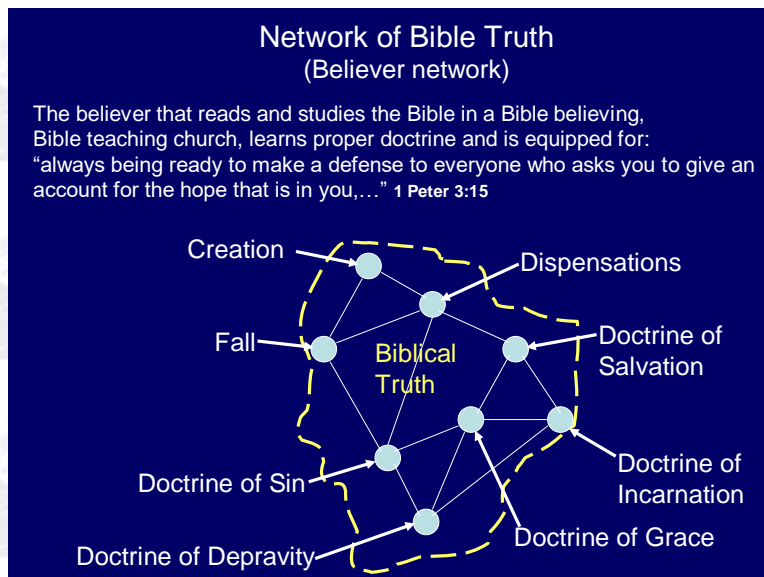
We saw the rise of Liberal Theology and with it the rise of relativity, where truth becomes relative; where “you’re truth is you’re truth” and “my truth is my truth”, and so we lost the Biblical absolutes, and more and more churches drifted away from orthodox Biblical teaching.



Biblical Framework Part 1

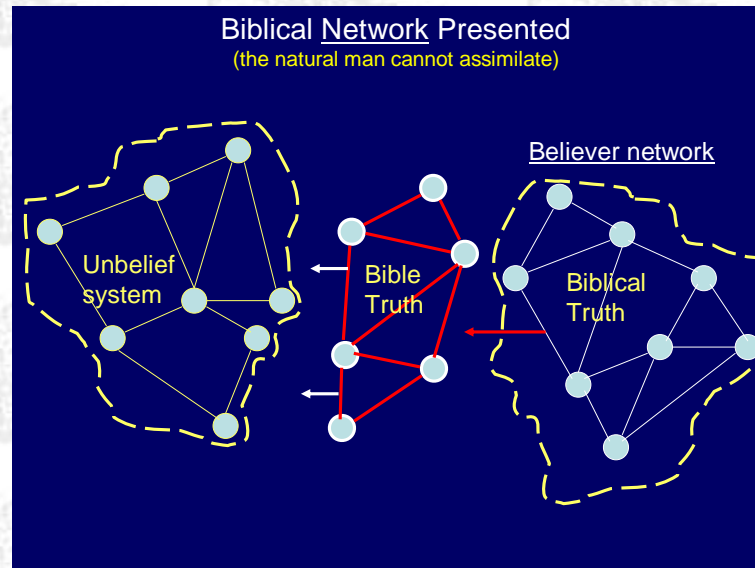
We also looked at the believer's shallow knowledge of the Bible, and how that hinders the defense of the faith that the believer is exhorted to be prepared for in 1 Peter 3:15 "...but sanctify (or set apart) Christ as Lord in your hearts (i.e. your mind), always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;.."

The little Bible knowledge the baby believer offers as an explanation is quickly absorbed, dissolved and dismissed in the modern pagan's mind. The argument that "Jesus saves" isn't going to be enough.



We saw that we needed a framework of related doctrines that would confront the pagan mind so they could not absorb it into their system of thought and reasoning.

Biblical Framework Part 1



Our objective is to reverse the deception that has been perpetrated on mankind, to shock them out of their complacency to the revelation of their Creator.

Remember:

Is the Bible really the Word of God? If it is, then:

Either

you will let the Word of God
interpret the world around you,

or

you will let the world around you
interpret the Word of God.

You will be forced to accept one or the other as truth!

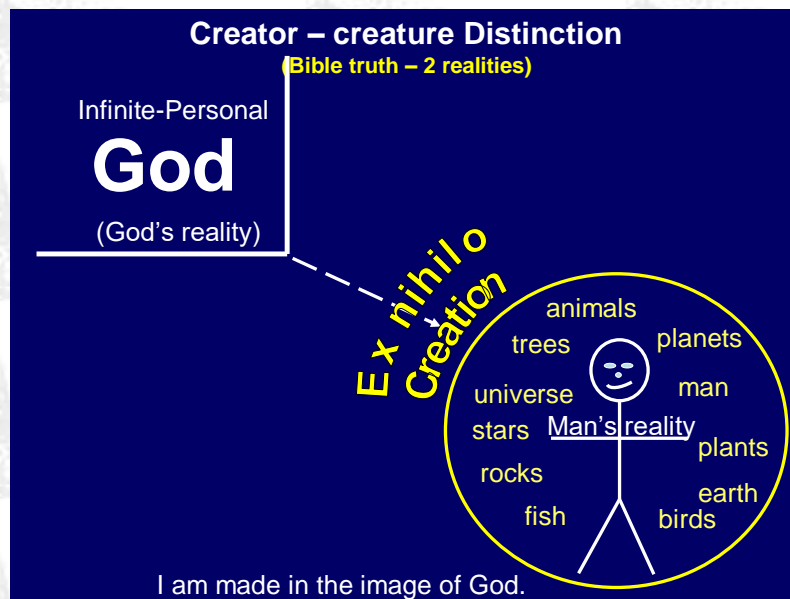
Either you will let the Word of God interpret the world around you, or you're going to let the world around you interpret the Word of God.

Biblical Framework Part 1

So, with that review, let's start our Framework Series study. We begin by looking at:

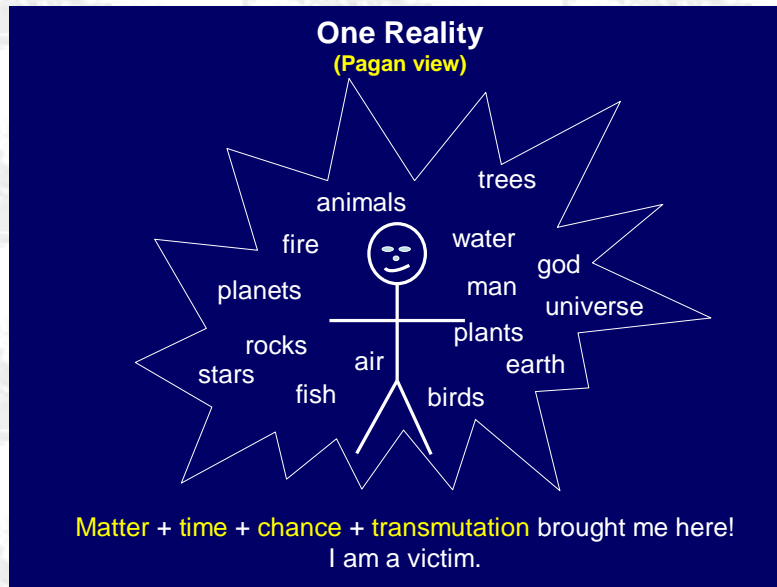
The Importance of Origins

We want to develop the rationale for walking by faith. And as we alluded to in the introduction, we all have the carnal mind (sinful nature) and we have all been influenced by paganism. This is why Paul says in Romans 12:2, "be transformed by the renewing of the mind". If the mind needs renewing then something's wrong with it. What's wrong with our mind is that we've soaked up a pagan framework of thinking and this makes it very difficult to walk by faith.



We need to remind ourselves over and over again that God has His Reality and we have our reality (2 realities).

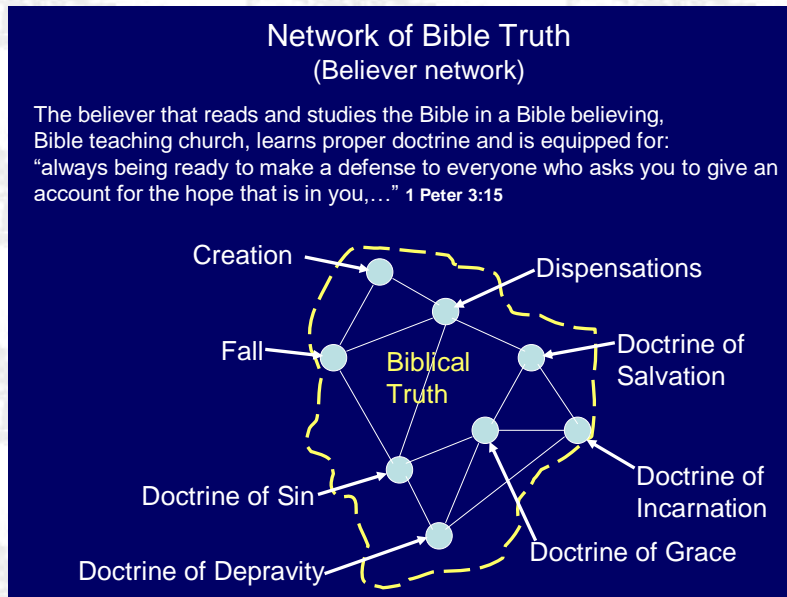
Biblical Framework Part 1



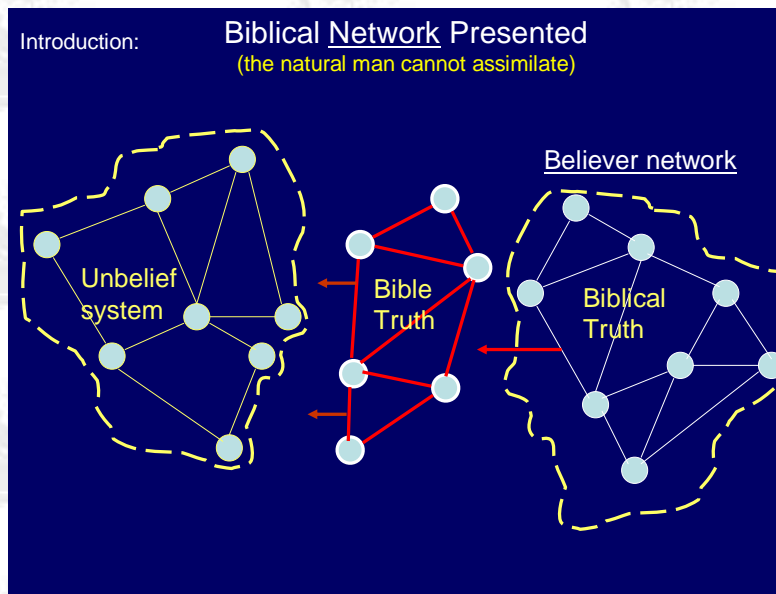
Otherwise, we get pulled into the pagan thinking of one reality – a finite reality without God, subject to man’s reason and whim.

Believers need to be prepared to give a defense in 1 Pet 3:15 “...always *being ready* to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; ...”

Biblical Framework Part 1



How do we prepare a defense for what we believe? We read, study, and learn from the Bible, along with gifted Pastor-teachers, what God has revealed in order to build a “network” of Biblical truths, along with the associated doctrines. This course helps us put it into a “framework” perspective.



Biblical Framework Part 1

Then we will be prepared to give a “network” of Biblical truths that the pagan mind cannot assimilate, thereby disrupting their neatly framed network of “human thinking”, and giving them something of a “God awakening” for them to think about. Remember, they know there is a God!

So instead of one piece of Biblical truth, we flood their minds with a “network” of Biblical truth.

Apologetics: a formal defense or justification.

Apologetics

A working definition.

Apologetics: A formal defense or justification.

apologetics

Noun

1. The branch of theology that is concerned with defending or proving the truth of Christian doctrines.
2. Formal argumentation in defense of something, such as a position or system.

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition copyright ©2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company.

In Acts 17:18-31, we see Paul in the city of Athens. As was his custom for any new city he came to, he went to the local synagogue, and was trying to reason with the Jews there about Jesus and His Resurrection. However, his preaching was overheard by some local Epicurean¹ and

¹ Followers of Epicurus, a Greek philosopher who believed that the world is a random combination of atoms and that pleasure is the highest good (341-270 BC).

Biblical Framework Part 1

Stoic² philosophers and they questioned him about these “strange deities”, and brought him to the Areopagus, to hear more.

Paul realized that because Athens was a polytheistic society, and that these men had taken “Jesus” and “resurrection” as two more gods. So he had to take a framework strategy: he went into an apologetic which aimed directly at the heart of the pagan framework, and so he began his apologetic with the creation event. Why?

The creation event begins to strike at the God-consciousness of the pagan mind and eat away at the pagan framework which endlessly re-interprets and misinterprets pieces of the word of God. All this is a part of an agenda to suppress the truth in unrighteousness. We want to mirror how Paul dealt with this thing because we have got to penetrate and appeal to that God-consciousness that every human being possesses. And, in fact, we’re learning how to address our own hearts, because we too have the same carnal mind.

Presuppositional Apologetics

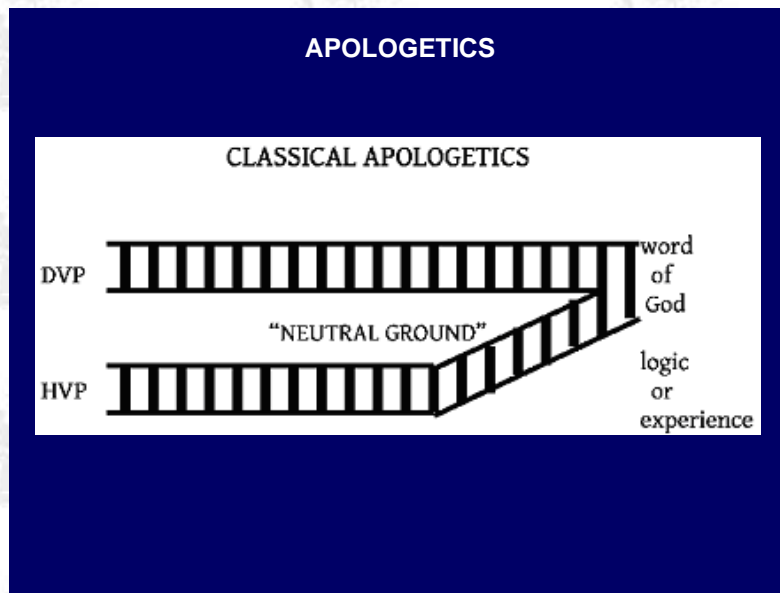
The approach that is taken and is intrinsic to this course, is a method of apologetics called Presuppositional apologetics. Though there are others, we want to concentrate on two methods - Classical apologetics and Presuppositional apologetics. In the early 1900’s the fundamentalist theologians at Princeton lost out to the liberal theologians. These fundamentalists resigned and left Princeton. They had no seminary, they lost libraries and everything. They went to Philadelphia and established Westminster Theological Seminary. Then these scholars took time to reevaluate what went wrong at Princeton. What were the central issues, why had they lost? Several of the men on that faculty came to the conclusion that we Christians were not

² Stoic: A member of an originally Greek school of philosophy, founded by Zeno about 308 B.C., believing that God determined everything for the best and that virtue is sufficient for happiness.

Biblical Framework Part 1

Scriptural enough in the way we were defending the faith. The liberals had argued that there's a genuine area of "neutral" ground between opposing views in which the Christian and the non-Christian could meet and resolve issues.

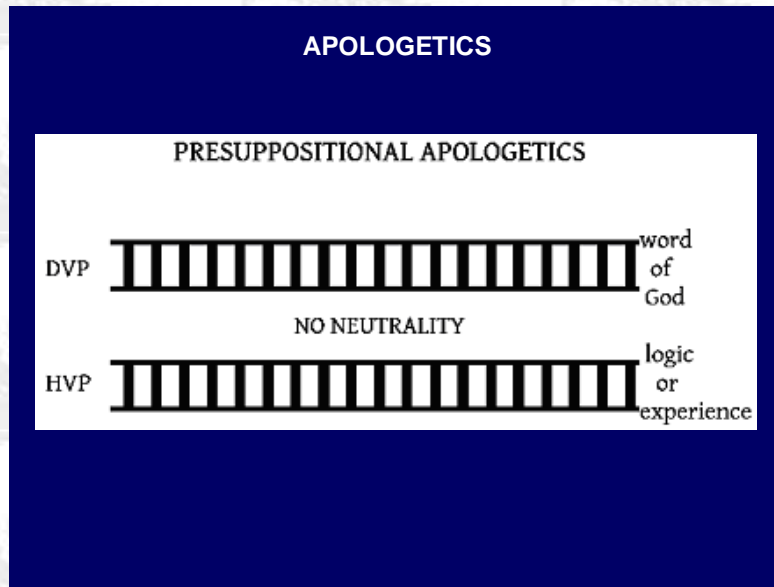
So we have a picture like this:



These scholars were resolved to find a solution that stated their position, one that was correct and defensible. This solution is called Presuppositional apologetics which says if there are two railroad tracks, with the non-Christian going down his railroad track and the Christian on his railroad track, there's no connecting track between the two – which means there is no neutrality!

So here is a picture of this:

Biblical Framework Part 1



Think about this. In order to get a train that is on one track over to the other track, you have to derail the train and move it over car by car. That's a diagram of what repentance is all about. It's a change of mind, a change of thinking, a moving from a worldly-constructed viewpoint to the understanding and acceptance of what God has already done for us as explained in the Word of God – the Bible. There's no smooth connecting track, there's just a sudden catastrophe or abruptness where the train is derailed, then bodily picked up and moved to the other set of rails.

That's presuppositionalism. We have to “dismantle” our human viewpoint (HVP) and “reconstruct” our thinking according to the divine viewpoint (DVP) as God has revealed and defined *reality* in the Bible.

Biblical Framework Part 1

Is the Bible really the Word of God? If it is, then:

Either

**you will let the Word of God
interpret the world around you,**

or

**you will let the world around you
interpret the Word of God.**

You will be forced to accept one or the other as truth!

Another application for this picture might be the one we saw earlier: Either we will let the Word of God interpret the world around us, or we're going to let the world around us interpret the Word of God. There is no middle ground, no blending of Divine Viewpoint and Human Viewpoint.

Origins and the Doctrine of God

The first thing we're going to deal with is the event of creation, the doctrines associated with creation, and the apologetic struggles that we face in Genesis. This event is fundamental because we have to answer the question of: who God is and what God is like.

If we get the wrong answer to these questions we're in deep spiritual trouble, because it will cascade down through all theological areas. So we're going to take some time on "origins" because this is where we learn who God is. We read in Gen 1:1 "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. In the Apostles Creed we say: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." And in the last book of the Bible we read in Rev. 4:11, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." This is at the

Biblical Framework Part 1

end of history, and it's remarkable that this content of the praise of God reverberates with the beginning of history, and that sets God apart. When you talk or hear about the subject of origins you will notice it is a very sensitive subject. The reason people get upset about origins is because you're touching on something that goes to the very root of their being. "Origins" underscores everything. This is a sore point with everyone because everyone is emotionally and deeply committed to a view of origins. That's why it gets everyone agitated. Before we're through with Genesis 3 we're going to have a whole lot of people agitated. We're going to have the biologists agitated, the geologists, astronomers, physicists, and the feminists. The creation narrative literally goes against the grain of every area of pagan thought, and because it does, be warned up front that people will definitely react to it. So, the key in Genesis 1 is that whenever you discuss origins you're really discussing a person's ultimate belief, and that ultimate belief is part and parcel with their view of God. Therefore, show me a person's view of origins and I will show you the person's view of God, they are that closely related.

The Importance of Language

As we continue to look at origins, we want to consider the importance of language for just a bit.

Biblical Framework Part 1

THE IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE

You cannot talk about any subject,
you cannot discuss that subject,
you cannot think about that subject or
you cannot act on the basis of your thoughts about it,

unless you have already established a basic a view of:

1. the universe,
2. view of yourself,
3. view of truth, and
4. view of language.

You cannot talk about any subject, or discuss that subject, talk about it, think about it or act on the basis of your thoughts about it, unless you have already established a basic a view of the universe, a view of yourself, a view of truth, and a view of language. You can't start without presupposing things. This goes for the Christian and the non-Christian. So, we want to explore this issue of language. Think of a little child learning and one of the first things babies learn when they begin to talk, besides all kinds of cute sounds they make, they learn nouns.

As made in the image of God, a child has been preprogrammed for his environment, and he starts to learn nouns, which "classifies" subjects. How does a child learn a noun? Well, he sees something, let's say a dog and he asks "what's that?" and mommy says, and this is interesting, 99/100 mothers, even if they are looking at a Collie, will just say "it's a dog". What has the mother done? She's classified the animal, "it's a dog". The child sees a Terrier and that's a dog too and after a while the child sees another dog, and has never seen this kind before, but guess what he says "Look mommy, a dog". Then he sees a sheep and he says "what's that? That's not a dog." So, he's learned to do something amazing. He's learned the category "dog". You can put another animal

Biblical Framework Part 1

in there, the same size, like a sheep, a badger, and the child is going to, without too much difficulty, learn that there are dogs, and sheep aren't one of them, and cats aren't one of them. They've seen a "category" there.

Dr. Mortimer Adler, who for years was one of the editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, made this statement: "Do you realize that every one of us have performed the greatest intellectual act we will ever perform for the rest of our life by the time we are six years old?" What did he mean? He meant that in some way still unknown a child learns language without having known a previous language.

Preconditions for Knowledge and Meaning

Preconditions For Knowledge And Meaning

The universe must be classifiable

The universe must be stable

Meaning comes from context

The Universe Must Be Classifiable

There is built into all of us a need to classify. We classify again and again; we can't talk without classifying. And that means that the universe around us is classifiable and that is SO IMPORTANT because that it is one of the preconditions for knowledge, that the universe around us is classifiable. Imagine if that were not true. Imagine for example if a little child is sitting here learning and he's just learned

Biblical Framework Part 1

that there is a terrier, a cocker spaniel, a collie, and the cat is not a dog, the sheep is not a dog, he knows what d-o-g means. Then during the night the animals transmute forms. What happens to the learning process? Obviously it stops. If dogs are no longer dogs then you don't have a category dogs and that means you can't have knowledge, you can't even speak unless you can classify, and you can't classify something unless the universe is stable. Language and knowledge presuppose the universe is stable.

The Universe Must Be Stable

How do we connect this with Scripture? It implies that to know anything I have to know that there is stability in the real world outside of me that I can genuinely learn about. Turn to Gen 1:3. For those of you studying English literature please notice that the Bible has a philosophy of language, it does not permit any view of language. The Bible has a very restrictive idea of what language is all about. As God creates the universe He begins to "name". In verse 3 "God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. Verse 4, "God saw that the light was good;" etc., and then in verse 5 is the first naming in history. What was the first thing ever named? Light. Who named it? God did. In other words, the universe from the very start was structured to be describable by language. Verse 8, "And God called the expanse heaven." Verse 10, "And God called the dry land earth." God is "naming". If you were to study this chapter carefully and observe, you would see this is the last thing God names. He names a few things and then, after he's created man what does He say to Adam, Gen. 2:19, notice the assignment He gave man and notice the way He gave man the assignment. "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to see what he [the man] would call them;" so now Adam is doing the naming, and man is now classifying.

Here's the Biblical view of language. First you have God beginning the language. He starts language by beginning to name. Then He comes to

Biblical Framework Part 1

Adam and He says “Adam, this is this and that is that and this is this. Now, the rest is up to you, go on, and finish what I started. I want you to classify things” and by classifying them what was Adam doing? He was learning about God. You learn about a craftsman from the craft the craftsman crafts and we learn about God through His creation, through His word, yes, but also through His creation. So Adam is given an assignment to begin to classify things. Now that’s the lofty view of language in Scripture. Why do we keep going back to language? Because when you are getting into a conflict with a non-Christian, the non-Christian likes to think that he can sit there and use language against you. What have you granted if you let him do that? You’ve granted him authority to use Scripture, which he denies, to support his use of language!

Without Scripture - No Language or Knowledge

We say the Scripture gives a justification for why language works, and if you reject the Scripture you can’t use the Scriptural view of language and that puts the non-Christian in trouble.

We have the preconditions for language and knowledge and the precondition for language and knowledge is stability of categories.

How, in a universe run by chance and natural law do you get stability?

We say the Scripture gives a justification for why language works, and if you reject the Scripture you can’t use the Scriptural view of language and that puts the non-Christian in trouble. We have the preconditions for language and knowledge and the precondition for language and knowledge is stability of categories. How, in a universe run by chance and natural law do you get stability? How do we know the categories

Biblical Framework Part 1

won't change tomorrow? How do we know that tomorrow dogs won't turn into cats? In a universe that has chance in back of everything you can't know that. And if the categories change tomorrow the learning process is over. **Language and knowledge do not exist if the universe is not stable** and we can account for that. How does the non-Christian account for stability of categories? Until he has answered that question he has no right to use the Christian view of language to attack you and your Bible. You have to push him to justify how language can work in a non-Christian universe. Most will avoid the question because they haven't thought that far or if they did they didn't want to go there. You'll hear, "Well, it just works." It's taken for granted. Well, they can avoid the deep questions all they want but that's not an answer and I don't foresee an answer coming. In a non-Christian universe how do you justify your ability to speak and learn anything?

What we said last week from Rom 1:20 was that everyone knows that there is a God, everyone has seen God clearly through what has been made and because of this the non-Christian has no "apologia" (defense) at the final judgment. And what is the significance of this with respect to language? We're saying that every man, woman and child is in contact with God from the very beginning of their existence. And one of the places a person comes into contact with God is every time they speak a word, every time they think, because language presupposes a stable environment.

Meaning Comes From Context

The second thing we want to cover in the section on the importance of origins for meaning is how you learn words after you start to classify them. Suppose you have the word, "dog," we all know that we don't learn that abstractly, that there is a connotation to it, there's some event that triggers the learning process, a dog bit me, a dog licked me, something happened. In other words, you have an experience that begins to shape the meaning of that word, there's a "context" to it.

Biblical Framework Part 1

“Dog” means something in a context. Words have meaning in context. Now, if you use a word and a child comes up and says, “Daddy, what does lizard mean? He’s heard you say the word, so he asks “what does that mean?” You get in a position where you can’t really tell him what it means because he has no experience of it, and so you spend 5-10 minutes in a big discussion about what this word means, and after that he still doesn’t know what it means because he doesn’t have any context, he has no place to put it in his head, there’s no way to organize it. So the second thing that we have to have to make things work in language is context. How do you define a word? You look it up in the dictionary and you find 25 meanings and which one is being used? You have to go back to the context.

Meaning comes from Context

Run:

She has a run in her hose.
I’ll run to the store.
He hit a home run.

Drive:

I’ll drive to the store.
I want to drive the point home.
I want you to drive the nail into that 4”x6”.

Side:

Lay them side-by-side for comparison.
We bought a side beef.
Paint this side of the building.

“Meaning” comes from context. That’s why when we read Scripture we have to be careful to always interpret the meaning of a word in context. But that’s not just true of Scripture, it’s true all over.

So, there are two preconditions for knowledge and meaning and they are stability of categories and context. So, as we’re developing from infancy to adulthood, we’re learning language and we are coming into direct contact with God through His universe.

Biblical Framework Part 1

ETERNITY IN OUR HEARTS (ECCL 3:11)

Now, we want to turn to Ecclesiastes 3. This is a central passage and the reason it's so important is that it was written as part of a literature called wisdom literature in the Bible (*Kethuvim*). Ecclesiastes is a good book to read if you're trying to find meaning and fulfillment in life because Solomon tried everything you can think of, but in the end, came to the conclusion that the world doesn't satisfy, only a relationship with God satisfies.

God Set Eternity in the Heart of Man

ECCL 3:11

"He has made everything appropriate in its time.
He has also set eternity in their heart,

Part of his explanation of this is in Eccl. 3:11 where Solomon presents a puzzle. Note what he says, God "has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart," whose heart? Men's hearts. There is a sense of eternity in every human heart, whether the person is a so-called atheist or a Christian there is a sense of eternity. He made us in His image and a part of that image is a sense of eternity. What this means is God put a drive in our hearts to figure this thing out. Who am I? What is my life all about? Why am I here? What is going on? We have a drive within us to answer these questions because we've got to get meaning in our life. And where do we get meaning? From context. So, we must get back to "origins". This is why we spend

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billions of dollars on space exploration, because people have a sense of eternity in their hearts and they are trying to answer the ultimate question, where did I come from? The answer isn't out there, it's been placed within each one of us. God has set eternity in our hearts, and until we push the context out to eternity we won't be satisfied. No amount of money to fund all our escapades is ever going to satisfy. We must acknowledge God as our Creator, and recognize ourselves as His creatures, as the Bible clearly teaches.

God Set Eternity in the Heart of Man

ECCL 3:11 (con't)

“yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.”

Notice the other side of the mystery in v 11. The first part of the mystery is that God has put eternity in our heart, but then look at why He has done this, “yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.” In other words, starting with your own human reason, logic, and experience you will never get to the bottom of this thing. God is incomprehensible. We can come to know about Him as He has revealed Himself, but that's it. He lies beyond the power of reason to capture. All we know about God is what He chooses to show us. That's why the Bible is so important. And that is why we will never understand the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God and the free will of man!

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So, what God has done is structured the universe to tease us into a relationship with Him. On the one hand He shows us His magnificence, and you can study tremendous things in science and physics, you can study unfathomable things, and we should because God told Adam to go out and name these (Ps 111:2). But a funny thing happens along the way. As we begin to get involved we begin to see these things, and we begin to probe deeper and deeper and deeper, and we finally realize that this goes on endlessly. It's like the human cell. Just over a hundred years ago, the cell was considered a 'black box'. A 'black box' is something that is there, but you don't know what's inside. As we developed tools to look into this box we found out, there's a whole lot going on in there. These cells have power generators called mitochondria, they contain little roads that are built and disassembled to transport things. Then we stop and realize we can never get to the end of this thing. It just keeps going. If I get a new tool I can go further, but what's next?" You can't postpone knowing God. Somewhere along the way we have to come to know God. We have to realize that all this is pointing to Him, and acknowledge a supreme Creator God. What God is saying in verse 11 is, "I have given you people a sense of My presence and My eternity, but I've also structured the universe in such a way that you will never, on your own, understand it unless you come to Me, and then you can only come to Me as I have chosen to reveal Myself." The problem here is that autonomous man does not want to hear that. This is an extremely offensive idea! This is where a modern pagan just flies off the handle—"I will not accept a universe in which I can't dictate the terms of knowing." We'll see why this insidiously creeps into every subject we learn, every part of our education has subtlety inbred into us this pagan idea that we dictate the terms of knowing. We do nothing of the sort. God says, "I dictate the terms of knowing. You are not lords of knowledge, I am the Lord of knowledge and you learn as I show you, period." The idea that there's an authority external to the heart of man is the essence of what we're talking about in the gospel. The essence of sin is that **I** will not accept an authority outside of **ME**. **I**

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want to be the authority. And so, whether it's in math, science, literature, or anything else, we come back to sin.

We want to close by reminding ourselves that there are pre-conditions for knowledge and meaning. They are stability of categories and context. So, when we see Paul giving his apologetics in Acts 14 and Acts 17 and elsewhere why does he go back to creation? Because he's got to get to the point of ultimate presuppositions – what is it that defines your highest belief? Otherwise you're not appealing to their God-consciousness.

One of the tools we can use with unbelievers is to ask how they justify using language? Can they believe that their view of the universe run by “chance and natural law” can provide the preconditions for knowledge and meaning? Certainly not! I can't speak, I can't think, I can't do anything without the universe being structured in a stable way that allows me to think about it, and I've got to learn from context all the way out to eternity to get meaning for my life. Everybody is structured to want that.

Next time, we'll look at what is called “Religious Neutrality”, and we'll also look a comparison of Ancient Pagan Literature versus Biblical literature.