

Lesson Five

Review from Previous Lessons: As the 3-D Model of Reality demonstrates, we have been given the ability by God's explanation in Scripture to see the two sides of reality, the seen and the unseen. Today's lesson deals with the way that God has chosen to link, or index, the unseen side to the seen side where we live.

The Problem: Associated with the misconception that there are two realities instead of just one, as the Bible teaches, is another misconception. Many people do not see how the two aspects of reality are connected. They do not realize that it is the proactive, or agential, actions of God that provide a link or index between the seen and the unseen, the visible and the invisible, the eternal and the temporal.

The Underlying Assumptions as Expressed in Everyday Terms:

1. All religions can lead someone to God in some way.
2. All the actions of the Holy Spirit were in the past except that we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit at our conversion (and I'm not quite sure what that means.)
3. Being linked to the unseen realities of God is something mainly for the future when we go to heaven.

Background Reading Before Teaching This Lesson: Study carefully 1 Corinthians 2:6-16. How does this passage demonstrate differentiated representations? What does this passage call undifferentiated representations? Also, be sure that you are comfortable with the concept of non-commutation and indexing and how they can be demonstrated with the 3-D Model.

The Lesson:

- 1) An objection will arise in the mind of many who would ask: "Do not all religions exist to show us how to access the unseen? We have our senses and our brains to assess the seen side of reality." And most religions—even pagan ones—tell us of an unseen side to reality. But the question is: how do we get access to it? We need a link or *index* (in actuality, as Dr. John W. Oller Jr. notes, a "dynamic system of indexing") between the seen and the unseen. There is no inherent link in the human thinking process between the seen and the unseen, the eternal and the temporal.
- 2) Now, Romans 1 teaches us that just looking at creation should give us some hint of what God is like; but later chapters in Romans affirm the truth that just this hint is not enough to save anyone. Paul puts it this way, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom 10:14). Paul continues with the need for a preacher—but even foundational to the act of preaching is the information to be

- preached: and that does not come from the human mind, from the seen side. It must come from the eternal, unseen side.
- 3) Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:16 asks another, related question. "Who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?" The question is rhetorical; for no one knows the mind of God unless God should choose to reveal it. In the vernacular, "you can't get there from here." The invisible has to come to you, you cannot go to it.
 - 4) Thus the indexing or connecting action of the mind of God to ours is an active, kinetic one. But that action is asymmetrical: what our brother and scholar J. Michael Strawn calls "non-commutative." A commuter, we know, is someone or something that travels back and forth between two sites. We say that the indexing action that connects the seen side to the unseen side of reality is *non-commutative*; for it originates not in the seen side with the mind of man, but in the unseen side, with the mind of God; nor does it commute back and forth with us informing God in the way that He informs us. In fact, the movement of power and instruction from the two sides of reality is always non-commutative; and it always originates from the unseen side.
 - 5) Dr. Strawn has developed a physical "model" that has for several years now been very helpful in aiding people to visualize the triadic structure of reality. The model you have, folded in the middle, demonstrates the seen and the unseen sides of reality. Because it is hinged, so to speak, in the middle between the two parts, we speak of that noncommutative movement of power and information as coming from "over the hinge."
 - 6) This model is also quite suitable for demonstrating the role of an index or connecting agent, which laps over each side and links the two. Strawn has isolated for study four elements which actively link the unseen mind of God to the material, seen world in which we live. You can see on your model that those elements begin on the unseen side and come over and link to the seen side; and how each successive layer is built upon the one below it. Let's take a look at the first three of those major linking agents or indices, which we will refer to as "the stacked indices."
 - 7) Consider first the role of the Holy Spirit in linking the unseen world to the seen. With only one notable exception (that of prayer, where He intercedes and takes our requests to God) every time in the Bible we see the Holy Spirit in action, He is bringing something from the unseen side to the seen for our benefit. We see His action very early on in the Bible in the book of Genesis, where in the first chapter He is seen hovering over the face of the waters. This is just a foreshadowing of the kind of work we will see Him doing throughout human history: intimately involved, linking the purposes of God to the material world. There are scores of examples of this kind of active, kinetic, linking index action throughout the Bible, but let us just consider three of the most cogent.
 - 8) The first is in the Incarnation; the manner in which the physical body of Jesus was conceived. The plan or representation in the mind of God for the birth of Jesus was linked to the material world (specifically, to the body of the young virgin Mary) by the indexing action of the Holy Spirit. When the angel Gabriel came to her to tell her that she would bear a holy Son, she asked, "How can this be, since I

- do not know a man?" The angel assured her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you" (Luke 1:34-35). When Joseph wanted to divorce his pregnant bride-to-be, an angel prevented it by assuring him, "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 1:20).
- 9) Near the end of His life, our Savior Jesus talked to His disciples about the way in which the Holy Spirit would continue this linking action of the mind of God to the world: ". . .when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come" (John 16:13).
 - 10) Perhaps the most comprehensive and clear teaching about the role of the Holy Spirit in linking the unseen world to the seen is taught in 1 Corinthians 2:6-16. Read this aloud. It is not possible to read the passage without seeing the truth of the noncommutative movement of revealing from the eternal to the temporal; nor to deny that the role of the Holy Spirit is the active index between the two.

Questions for Discussion with Class:

- 1) Why are indices necessary?
- 2) How do the scriptures we've looked at in today's lesson show the origin, power, and apparency of the actions of the Holy Spirit?
- 3) If the use of a physical object such as the 3-D Model seems new to you, consider its similarity to the way Jesus used parables. How are parables and such a model alike?
- 4) There is at least one limited area in which an index or connecting element originates on earth and links to the unseen. What is it? (How does Philippians 4:6-7 show an indexic response by God?)
- 5) Look at 1 Corinthians 2:6-16. List things in this passage that demonstrate: a) non-commutation b) distinction between the seen and the unseen c) distinction between information and revelation.
- 6) In what area of your daily life this last week would it have been helpful for you to visualize the linking action of the Holy Spirit, connecting the unseen to your material existence? How would your reactions have differed if you had kept this concept uppermost?

"Yeah, but. . ." Is this indexing all just done by God? What is the role of people?

Come back next week for some Scriptural insights.

