Knowing God Paper

Assignment 2-2 for ST5534 Systematic Theology 1

Jarret Hutchison

Dear Friend,

I hear that you are questioning whether the Bible is truly necessary for people to know God. The Bible itself as you know does say that we can know God from general revelation or in other words through nature, history and humans themselves. The Bible is the Word of God though and holds things in it that we cannot afford to miss. I hope that you can bear with me as I try to explain my side of why the Bible is a necessity.

God shows himself to us in all sorts of ways everyday, as you have stated previously to me about general revelation. Within my studies I have found many useful resources on the importance of scripture and one such resource is Wayne Grudem’s Systematic Theology book where he speaks on this specific issue. Wayne Grudem in his book states “the necessity of scripture means that the Bible is necessary for knowing the gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for knowing God’s will, but is not necessary for knowing that God exists or for knowing something about God’s character.”[[1]](#footnote-1) The first thing that Grudem speaks on for the importance of the Bible is so we can know the gospel, which is so important as Romans 1:16 says “it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”[[2]](#footnote-2) If it were not for the Bible we would have no way of knowing what Jesus had done for us on the cross and the significance of it.

The Bible has so much impact on the way we live and it is just like Grudem says in his second point that it is crucial for maintaining spiritual life. Jesus says in Matthew 4:4 “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."[[3]](#footnote-3) As we both know in 2 Timothy 3:16 the Bible states that all scripture is God breathed and as Jesus states man needs to live by every word that comes from the mouth of God. The third point Grudem brings up is we need the Bible for certain knowledge of God’s will. I know that to this point you will want to bring up the fact that we can know certain things of God through conscience but in a sinful world a lot of our perceptions can be distorted and we need the Bible to help us stay true. Grudem is just one of many theologians that have good writings on this subject and I would love to sit down with sometime to chat in person on this topic. Millard Erickson is another theologian that states “God does not merely demonstrate through his actions what he is like; he also speaks, telling us about himself, his plans, his will.”[[4]](#footnote-4) As Erickson says God is telling us His plan and He does so through scripture all we have to do is pay attention.

I hope that everything I am saying is making sense and that you know it is coming from brotherly love in Christ. I was concerned when I first heard you talking about wanting to only rely on general revelation, which is the main reason for all of this. I really do appreciate your friendship and I hope that we can continue to discuss this at a later time.

In Christ,

Jarret Hutchison

1. Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The MacArthur Study Bible, English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The MacArthur Study Bible, English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Christian Theology 3rd Edition, Millard J. Erickson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)