

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)

Lesson Plan: Doctrine of Revelation

Learning Goals: Students should be able to articulate why the Bible is trustworthy and the process of God's revelation to humanity.

Question: How do we know God?

Prayer.

Revelation:

Our understanding of scripture must begin with God. We know God because God has taken the initiative to make himself known (to reveal himself to us).

Be careful to distinguish that we are not talking about the book of Revelation (and definitely not "Revelations"), but the process of Revelation.

There are a lot of different sources that try to give us information about God. However, we don't primarily know God through any of these:

- Rational Deduction (we can't think our way to God)
- Tradition (what other people have said about God throughout history)
- Experience (strictly through observation and the senses)
- Culture (what the world says about God)

All of these are important and will help us grow in our understanding of God, but we primarily know God because God has taken the initiative to reveal himself to us.

- The clearest picture we have of this revelation is the person of Jesus Christ
- Jesus is "The Word Made Flesh"
 - *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1; 14 ESV)*
 - *"Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (John 14:9 ESV)*
 - *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. . . . For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." (Colossians 1:15-20 ESV)*

Inspiration:

We know about this revelation of God because the Holy Spirit inspired certain people to write down a record of that revelation (The Bible)

- *Definition of Inspiration:* The supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit on the Scripture writers which rendered their writings an accurate record of the revelation or which resulted in what they wrote actually being the Word of God. Inspiration applies to both the writer and the text. (Millard Erickson)
- We do not add to or take away from the scripture as it is revealed to us
 - take away = we are left with Marcionite heresy (only the NT, throw out the OT) - a Jesus disconnected from history/prophecy
 - add to = we are left with cults such as Mormonism (need the Bible + Book of Mormon, additional revelation)

Understanding:

The Holy Spirit is present as we read scripture to help us understand and apply what we are reading

Jesus taught us about the role of the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John:

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

(John 16:7-15 ESV)

The Holy Spirit will:

- guide us to all truth
- convict us of sin
- point to and glorify Jesus Christ

In understanding the way the Holy Spirit uses scripture in the lives of believers, there two additional terms that are important for us to understand:

- **Inerrancy**: The doctrine that the Bible is truthful in all of its teachings.
- **Infallibility**: The idea that Scripture will not lead us astray in matters of faith and practice. Infallibility asserts what the Bible does whereas inerrancy asserts what the Bible is.

Salvation:

In Hebrew thought, the emphasis was on the function of the scripture in the life of the followers of God. We see a good example of this in 2 Timothy 3:14-17:

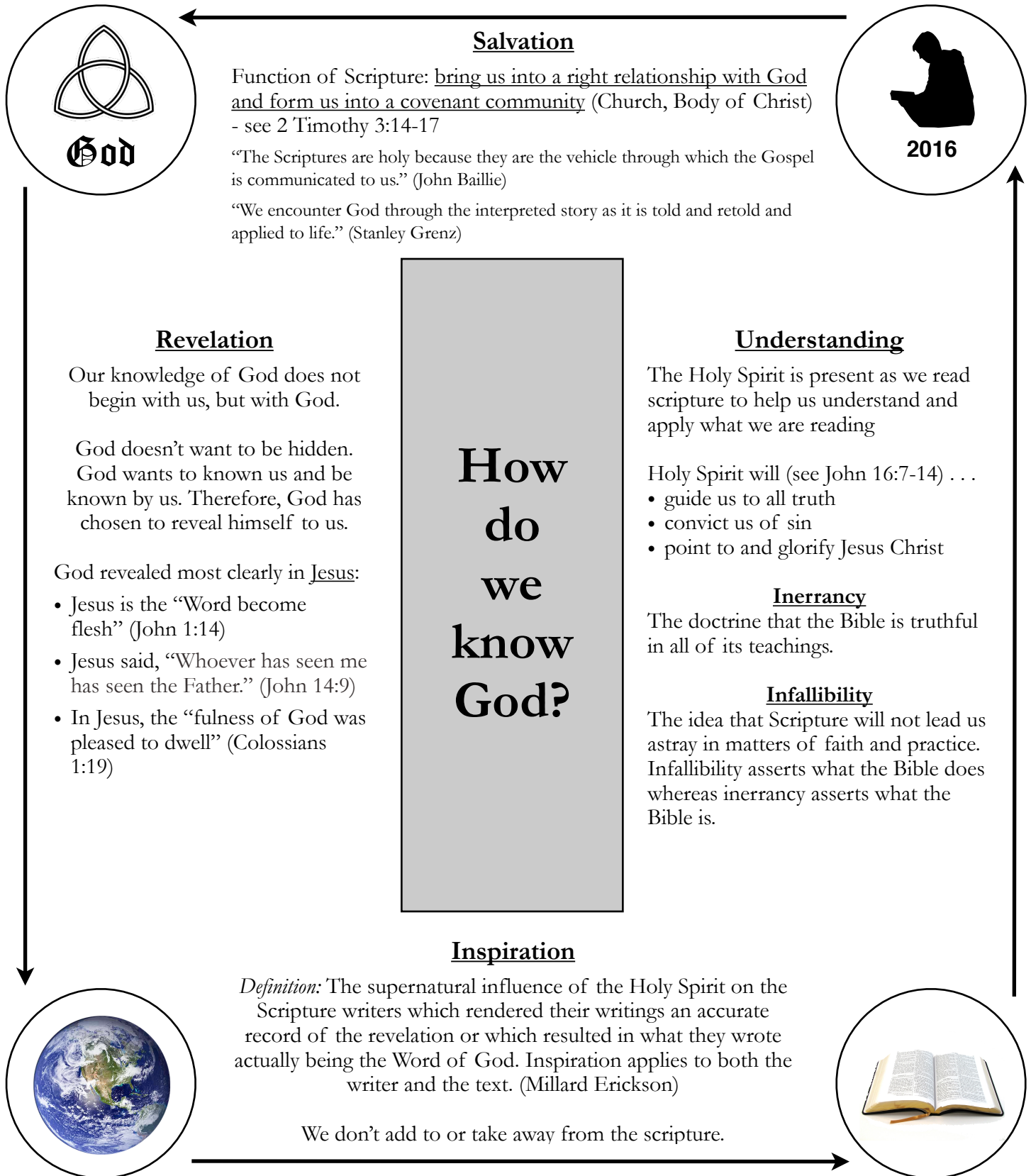
But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:14-17 ESV)

Function of Scripture:

- bring us into a right relationship with God - goal of scripture is to help us understand God and how to relate to God; to understand the Gospel story (that in Jesus God wants to offer us forgiveness and new life); what God commands of us as his creation
- form us into a covenant community (Church, Body of Christ) - scriptures are the normative foundation on which we build our community; this is why we tell (and retell) the story of scripture when we gather in worship - to allow it to shape our community life together (how we relate to one another - love, forgiveness, grace, encouragement, etc.)

"The Scriptures are holy because they are the vehicle through which the Gospel is communicated to us." (John Baillie)

"We encounter God through the interpreted story as it is told and retold and applied to life." (Stanley Grenz)



Lesson Summary /Review:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- revelation

- inspiration

- inerrancy

- infallibility

- salvation

- 3 things the Holy Spirit does to help us understand/apply scripture