

*FBC Springfield Growth Institute: The Doctrine of God: Natural Theology*

**Review/Discussion:** How does the doctrine of God impact your life and worship?

**“Natural theology** is the attempt to build a theological structure on the basis of general revelation apart from God’s witness in the Scriptures and in Jesus Christ” (Russell Moore, “Natural Revelation,” in *A Theology for the Church*, page 71, 2007 ed.

General Revelation vs. Special Revelation:

2 Warnings about Natural Theology:

“The light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet they are not sufficient to give the knowledge of God and his will which is necessary unto salvation” (1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith also Philadelphia 1742 and Charleston 1774).

Frame on Natural Theology:

The Limits of Natural Law:

Clues about God from Natural Revelation (primarily from Timothy Keller):

The Originator:

Fine Tuning:

Regularity of nature:

Desires:

Clues from Morality/Conscience:

Aquinas 5 ways:

Motion points to an “unmoved mover”

Existence points to a first cause

Contingency points to a necessary being

Degrees of beauty truth and goodness point to a universal standard of perfection

The design in the natural order points to a designer.

“Thomistic natural theology held that certain truths about God (his existence and attributes) could be known through reason alone, thus building a bridge to the truths about God that could only be known through revealed theology (the gospel of Christ, for instance). All of this was built on a view of epistemology that believed even fallen humanity could still perceive and make use of the evidence for God built in the created order” (Moore, 94).

How did God create the world?

Theistic Evolution:

Young Earth Positions:

Old Earth Positions:

An Argument from Intelligent Design:

Key Texts to Study about Natural Theology

Psalm 19

Psalm 8

Romans 1:18-32

Romans 2:14-15

Acts 14:15-18

Acts 17:22-31

Matthew 6:24-35

Don't we live in a beautiful world?

## Homework:

### **Reflection from this Week:**

Read: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/in-search-of-an-honest-atheist/>

Reflect on: How should natural revelation and natural theology inform our view of the sciences and encourage/discourage people in the pursuit of science? Similarly, what about the arts?

Reflect on: What is the most significant impact to your life of nature testifying about God?

### **Preparation for Next Week:**

[The Reformed Doctrine of Special Revelation: What It Is and What It Isn't \(ligonier.org\)](http://ligonier.org)

Read Psalm 119

### **Resources for Going Further:**

Ham, Ross, Haarma, and Meyer, *Four Views on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*

John Frame, *Nature's Case for God: A Brief Biblical Argument*

Keller, *The Reason for God*, Chapters 8-9 "The Clues of God" and "The Knowledge of God" (Morality arguments).

Aquinas, "5 Ways" in *Summa Theologiae*,

[http://www.faculty.umb.edu/adam\\_beresford/courses/phil\\_100\\_11/reading\\_five\\_way.pdf](http://www.faculty.umb.edu/adam_beresford/courses/phil_100_11/reading_five_way.pdf)