Foundations of Knowledge
Part 2: Empiricism in Science and Christianity

- Introductory discussion: How is Christian “faith” different than the common usage of “faith”?

- Review: three “levels” of revelation:
  - God’s existence is self-evident from experience (Experiential revelation, week 1)
  - God’s attributes revealed through nature (Natural Revelation, week 2)
  - God’s precise nature and will revealed through his word (Special Revelation, week 3)

- Week 1 take-away: Experience gives enough for us to infer God’s existence.

- "Natural Revelation"
  - God reveals Himself through creation, what He has made. (Ps. 19, Ps. 111)
  - Extrinsic knowledge of God
  - Indirect: nature does not give proposition statements.
  - Empiricism: from "data" to "knowledge"
    - truth gives data
    - data is perceived (sense perception)
    - induction generalizes data into a universal concept
    - universal concept formed as propositional statements (T/F)
    - If concept matches reality = knowledge, belief

Caveat: Cannot deductively prove that empiricism is a valid path from truth to knowledge.

- Science—the intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment. (google)
  - Tenet: empiricism is a valid means of obtaining truth
  - Tenet: cause and effect relationships are absolute
  - Tenet: the existence of immutable, consistent, and discoverable “laws” or natural rules
  - Tenet: inductive reasoning preserves truth
  - Yet, scientists have faith that science does lead to truth. Is this reasonable?

===== got to here =====

- Christian empiricism
  - Does spiritual knowledge require the same foundation of empiricism?
  - Empiricism in scripture: John 20:29-31; Lev. 5:1; Isa. 41:18-20; Matt. 24:32-33; Rom. 1:18-21; 1 Cor. 13:12

- Discussion
  - What are the foundational, required, unprovable, tenets of Christianity?
  - What is the minimum requirement for a human to come to salvific knowledge?
Next week: Rational belief in the propositional truths of scripture (Special Revelation) as the actual word of God.