

ANTHROPOLOGY AND MISSIONS

Jubilee Memorial Bible College: 2006
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Introduction

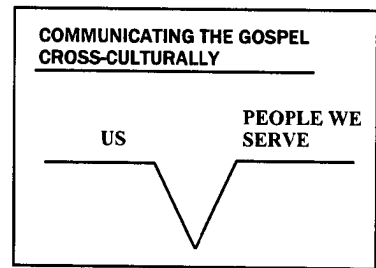
- Missions always raises difficult questions:
 - = to wrestle with these we need to share common commitments:
 - = we are followers of Christ Jesus.
 - = we look to Scriptures as divine revelation.
 - = we need to look seriously at what is going on around the world.

- Peter's encounter with God: (Acts 10:9-33)

Peter: <i>God is a Jewish God</i>	God: <i>God is the God of all people.</i>
Peter: <i>Christianity is the way we do it.</i>	God: <i>Christianity can be done in all cultures.</i>
Peter: <i>We come as outsiders.</i>	God: <i>We must come as insiders.</i>

We need a worldview change when we minister in other cultures.

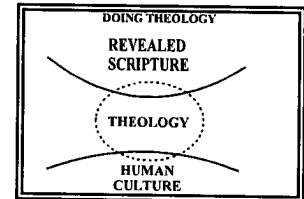
- In missions we need to exegete Scripture and exegete humans and build a bridge between them..



I. BUILDING A THEOLOGICAL BRIDGE BETWEEN BIBLICAL AND HUMAN CONTEXTS

2.1. What is Theology?

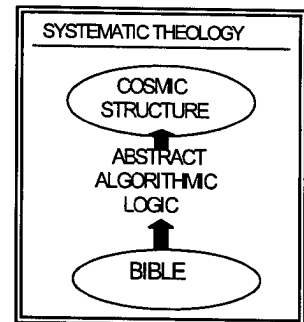
- theology is reflecting on Scripture
- theology is done in human contexts
- theology is a discipline--disciplines are defined by:
 - = the questions they ask
 - = the data they examine
 - = the methods they legitimate



2.2 How do we do theology?

2.21. Systematic Theology:

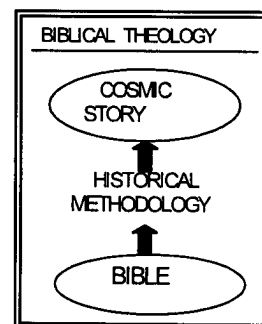
- source: Bible.
- central question: what are the unchanging cosmic realities?
- central method: abstract, analytical logic applied to the text. Well formed sets and algorithmic logic.
- results: an ahistorical, acultural synchronic structural view of reality.



- goal: to see reality as God sees it.
- contribution: helps us develop a biblical worldview.
- limitations:
 - = hard to get from structure to story [diachronic, narrative, changing].
 - = hard to get from universal to particular.
 - = does not allow for mystery, paradox and antinomy.
- = little mission motivation--mission is not its central theme.

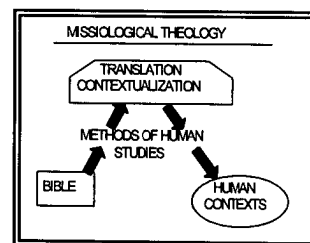
2.22 Biblical Theology:

- source: Bible.
- central question: what is the big story?
- central method: historiography.
- results: an understanding of the cosmic story which gives meaning to the universe and ourselves.
- limitations:
 - = hard to get from past to present.
 - = hard to get from the cosmic to the particular.
 - = little mission motivation--mission is cosmic, but not contemporary and local.



2.23 Missiological Theology:

- source: Bible
- central question: What does Scripture say to humans in this particular setting?
- central method: precedent historical and definitive cases.
- result: a missiological approach to humans.
 - = limitations:
 - = need to link to cosmic universals [Systematic Theology].
 - = need to link to cosmic story [Biblical Theology].
- the three ways of doing theology are complimentary, not competitive.



3. DOING MISSIOLOGICAL THEOLOGY: The process of critical contextualization: When a problem arises:

3.1. Step One: Phenomenology. Study the people's beliefs and practices to understand them. These may not be true and right, but they are what the people come with. The goal is to understand the situation as fully as possible (social, cultural, personal factors etc.)

- avoid judgments at this stage because they are premature, we need to understand before we Judge.
- the people are the experts here, and you are the learner.

3.2 Step Two: Ontology. Study Scripture to see what it says about the issue at hand.
 - the goal is to understand what God says to us in this situation through Scripture
 - you can lead in this because of your training, but it is more important to help them learn to read and interpret Scripture for themselves.

3.3 Step Three: Critical Evaluation. Test the old beliefs and practices in the light of Scripture.
 - help the people come to decisions based on their understanding of Scripture. If you dictate the change, it will not last, and you will become a policeman. If they as a community make the decision, they will enforce it

- much of the old culture you can keep,
- some you must reject. If possible introduce a functional substitute.
- some you can reinterpret, using old forms but giving them new meanings.
- you should introduce new ways to link the believers to the global church [e.g. baptism]
- you can create new ways using local forms and giving them Christian meanings.

- 3.4 Step Four: Missiology. Help the people move from where they are to where they should be through discipling. We cannot expect them to jump from their existing world to the new in a single leap. This is a long process of discipling, teaching, guiding and modeling.
- start with areas in which the people consciously struggle with their faith.
 - suggest other areas that must be addressed.
 - be kind and gentle, not demanding and harsh. Remember, if they change because of your pressures, it will not last. They must be converted internally if the change is to last.
 - remember deep lasting change is often a slow process and takes time, and constant re-commitment to the change.

4. DEVELOPING A META-THEOLOGY: A biblically based way of doing theology.

- 4.1. Based on Scripture as divine revelation.
- 4.2 Recognizing our theologizing is always done in our context, and the Scripture, not our theology, is the final authority. Therefore we do it humbly, seeing to understand Scripture, and recognizing the partial and perspectival nature of our theologies.
- 4.3 Seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We must recognize that God guides his people who seek to understand his Word.
- 4.4 Doing theology in community. Theology belongs to the church as the body of Christ, not to experts. They provide specific understandings, but the church must discern what God is saying to it in this situation.

II. HUMAN CONTEXTS

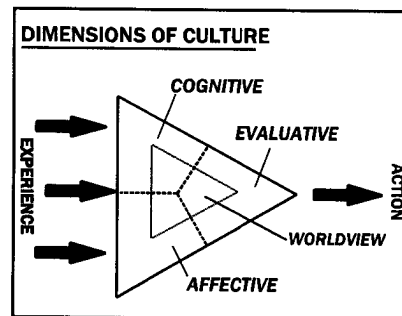
How can people be saved without the Gospel? How can they hear the Gospel without a messenger? Mission is God reaching out to a lost world through his church and his messengers. How can we minister to Others in Other contexts? Each discipline develops key concepts by which it examines its data. Anthropology, the study of humans, draws on two key concepts: culture and society.

1. THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE

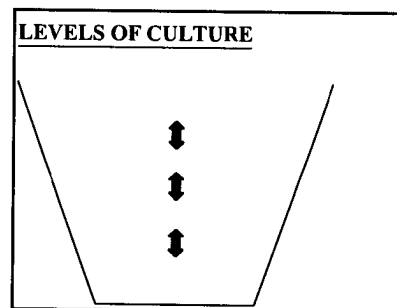
The popular definition is the practices of the elite members of a society. We reject this and define culture in terms of all people.

- 1.1 Popular definition: “culture” is widely seen as the practices of the elite members of a society.
- 1.2 Anthropological definition: *Culture is the 1) more or less integrated systems of 2) learned ideas, feelings and values 3) encoded in patterns of behavior, signs and products 4) created and shared by a community of people.*

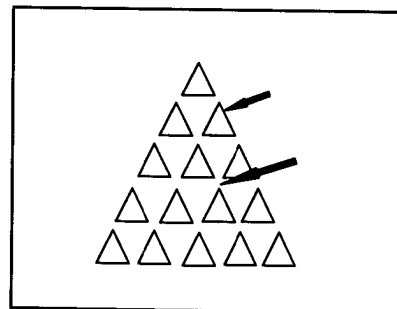
- *ideas, feelings and values*: people think about things, feel about them, and respond to them.
 - **cognitive**: all cultures have systems of knowledge. Cultures are mental maps that provide people with an understanding of the world in which they live, the maps they also use for living in that world.
 - **affective**: Cultures shape the feelings attitudes and sentiments people have about things.
 - **evaluative**: Cultures provide the shared values, morals and allegiances people use to judge their world. more or less integrated systems:.



- *learned behavioral patterns, signs and products*: People's ideas, feelings and values give rise to their patterns of behavior, and the signs and products they create. Not all human behavior and products are part of culture. Only those that are patterned, learned and shared with other members of the community. Culture is learned and is distinguished from biologically instinctive behavior. It is transmitted from one generation to the next, and is cumulative. The patterns of behavior, symbols and products are shaped and shape the world in which people live.



- *more or less integrated systems*: Cultures are not random assortments of unrelated ideas, feelings and values. They are integrated into systems by which people conceptualize and respond to the world around them. For example, they have systems of ideas that deal with health and medicine, acquisition of food, and religion. Ideas, behavior and symbols must be understood in the context of the cultural systems of which they are a part, and these are integrated in varying degrees into a single culture that the people understand, appreciate and value. This integration is rooted in assumptions about the nature of reality, about what is desirable and undesirable, and what is right and wrong. These core assumptions--the worldview--give meaning and credibility to the culture.



Each culture has in it a number of cognitive systems people use to conceptualize and respond to various areas of their lives. Thus they may have systems of ideas about health, economics and religion.

- *created and shared by a community of people*. Culture makes human societies possible.

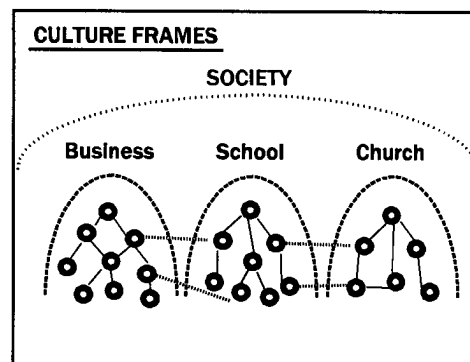
1.3 Levels of culture:

Culture has many levels from surface to deep. Roughly they are:

- patterns of behavior, signs and products
- myths and rituals
- belief systems [including cognitive, affective and evaluative dimensions]
- worldview

1.4 Culture frames:

In complex societies culture is broken down into different 'cultural frames'. For example, a seminary is a cultural frame in which people share a worldview, sets of beliefs and behavioral patterns. Similarly, a grocery store, a business and a government organization are cultural frames.



1.5 Ministering in cultural contexts:

- ▶ we need to present the Gospel in cultural contexts for it to be understood
- ▶ we need to present it in all three dimensions. We need to present it cognitively and affectively so that people respond evaluatively and become followers of Christ. Conversion is people responding to cognitive and affective appeals.
- ▶ so long as we work within our own culture, we are largely unaware of it and how it shapes our thinking and ministry. It is hard to see our culture because it is what we think with, not what we think about.

2. SOCIAL SYSTEM

2.1 Society: the 1) more or less enduring 2) systems of relationships 3) that order people 4) into a community.

2.2 Dimensions of social organization:

- **social**: the definition, allocation and use of relationships
- **economic**: the definition, allocation and use of resources
- **political**: the definition, allocation and use of power
- **legal**: the definition, allocation and use of legitimacy
- **function**: the primary purpose of the human activity being studied

3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Both society and culture must exist for humans to live. Each shapes and is shaped by the other.

- people create cultures in order to exist in societies.
- cultures shape people and societies—giving them maps of how to live together.
- social and cultural systems are recreated every time people transact relationships. This opens the door to changing both as the transactions act outside the normal and acceptable patterns of behavior and belief.
- the Gospel is part of Culture, the Church is part of Society. The church is created by the Gospel, but the Gospel is preserved and spread by the Church. Our task in missions is to plant both the Gospel and the Church in new human contexts.

5. INCARNATIONAL MINISTRIES

How should missionaries relate to other peoples and cultures. The model for us is Christ who became incarnate among humans to save us and bring us the Gospel. He so fully

identified with us in our humanity that most people never recognized that he was God. Yet he remained one hundred percent God, even as he became one hundred percent human. This is our ideal. Clearly we can never become totally one with the people we serve, but the further we go in identifying with them within the limits of our Christian beliefs and consciences, the less distance our national colleagues have to carry the Gospel to their own culture and society.



III. STUDYING HUMAN CONTEXTS

Research is an often neglected but essential dimension of Christian missions. Too often we copy what those around us are doing, or draw on a few anecdotes to make a case for our methods of outreach. We rarely take the time or money to study mission methods carefully. Consequently we are caught up in current missiological fads.

Mission research must be done along with ministry. Too often we think of doing research, and when that is done, doing ministry. We then cut off research too soon, and rarely return to it, or we extend research so long we never get around to ministry. Good research opens many doors for ministry, and ministry raises questions that require further research. The two are parallels, on-going tasks essential to effective outreach.

How can we study human beings? There are many methods. Like tools, we must choose those that are appropriate to the task at hand. Here we can only examine a few methods. Broadly they divide into three broad types: qualitative, grounded theory, and quantitative.

1. Qualitative Methods:

Qualitative methods focus on micro analysis. They are used to construct ethnographies which seek to present rich descriptions of people and their communities from both *emic* and *etic* perspectives. They are based on interacting with human beings.

- **Observation:** This is the first and most fundamental way of gathering data. Too often we look down on it, and try to get on to other methods too quickly.
- **Participant-observation:** Participating in the life of the people, while observing it.
 - **Observer:** - etic analysis, outsider. We remain largely outside the normal life of the people, and does not participate in their life.
 - **Observer as Participant:** - etic analysis, outsider but in dialogue with the people. We participate in the life of the society, but remains an 'outsider'.
 - **Participant as Observer:** - emic analysis, insider/outsider. We see identification with the culture as much as possible, but retain an 'observer' part of us.
 - **Participant:** "Go native". We seek to become totally one with the people. This is impossible, nor, as Christians do we want to do so, for we the Gospel as a transforming power from without.

- Interviews: Talking to people informally and formally to gather data.
- Key informants: Talking to people who have specialized knowledge to gain information.
- Ethnosemantic analysis: Studying words to discover categories, themes and worldviews.
- Myth and ritual analysis: Investigating the nature and meaning of myths and rituals.
- Case studies: Studying cultural events that have a beginning, process and end.

APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF HUMAN SITUATIONS	
<p><i>MICRO ANALYSIS</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - street level view: study “real “people” as persons - micro, qualitative , descriptive - focus on particulars, details thick descriptions - participant-observation, informants interviews, cases - involvement with people - emic or people’s categories - wholistic, many variables <p>USEFUL FOR FIELD MISSIONARIES</p>	<p><i>MACRO ANALYSIS</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - balcony or helicopter view: study people as objects - macro, quantitative, survey - focus on generalizations, comparisons - questionnaires, demographic data - detached observations - etic or scientific categories - reductionist, focus on a few variables <p>USEFUL FOR MISSION EXECUTIVES</p>

2. Grounded Methods:

Grounded theory lies between qualitative and quantitative methods. It studies many cases or instances--enough to give the research an idea of the general categories in the field.

3 Qualitative Methods:

- questionnaires
- demographic surveys

IV. THE MESSENGER AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Cultures are very different from one another. This has significant consequences for missionaries:

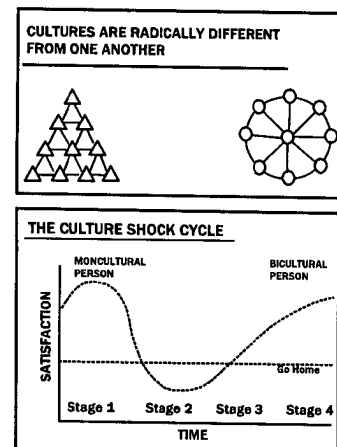
1. Culture Shock:

1.1 **Stages of culture shock:**

- tourist
- disenchantment
- resolution and adjustment

1.2 **Symptoms of culture shock:**

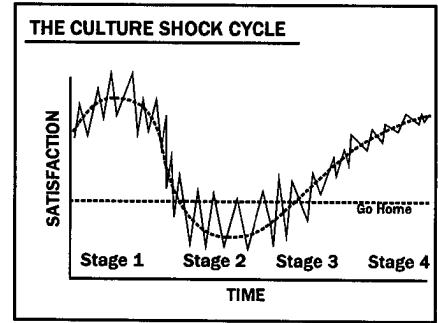
- rising stress
- physical illness
- psychological and spiritual depression



1.4 Dealing with culture shock:

- *recognize our anxieties:*
- *study the new culture*
- *build trust*
- *deal with stress*

1.5 Reverse culture shock:



2. Misunderstandings:

2.1 **Emic view of reality:** the way the people see it.

2.2 **Etic view of reality:** the way we see it..

3. Ethnocentrism:

Ethnocentrism our feelings about “others.”

4. Premature Judgments:

5. Becoming a Bicultural Person:

5.1 **Insiders:**

5.2 **Outsiders:**

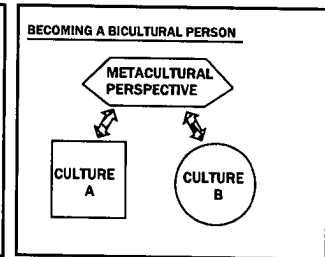
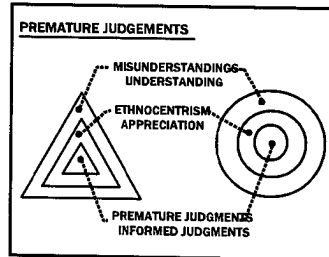
5.3 **Outsider-insiders:**

5.4 **Culture brokers:**

5.5 **Christians as bicultural people:**

5.6 **An incarnational approach:**

HOW DO WE VIEW OTHERS?		
OTHERS		US
MIDDLE AGES:		
• Monsters	vs	Humans
• Infidels, Heretics	vs	Christian
AGE OF EXPLORATION:		
• Pagan, Heathen	vs	Christian
• Slave, Child	vs	Free, Adult
• Savage, Barbarian	vs	Civilized
AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT:		
• Primitive	vs	Civilized
• Aborigine	vs	Modern
AGE OF POST-ENLIGHTENMENT:		
• Native	vs	Native
OUR CHRISTIAN VIEW:		
• There is only US -		
- one in our common humanity		
- one in the body of Christ		

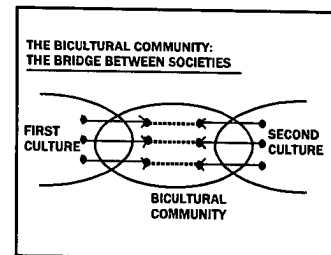


V. THE MESSENGER AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS

1. Defining a New Culture:

1.1 **Lifestyle issues:**

- language
- housing
- food
- clothing
- transportation



1.2 Deep cultural issues:

- belief systems
- feelings
- values
- worldviews

2. Building a New Social Community:

2.1 Building relationships:

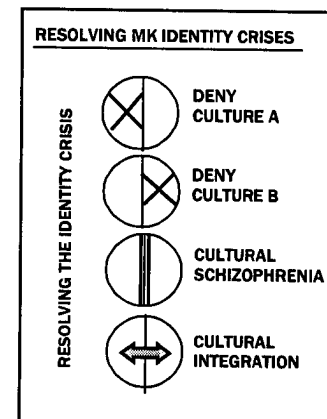
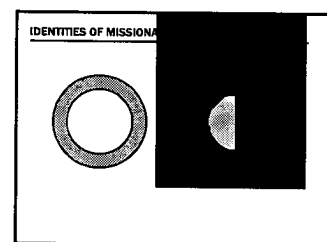
- defining roles and relationships for missionary and national leader
- generationalism

2.2 Becoming a bisocial person:

- historical legacy of the specific bicultural community
- social identification:
 - life style
 - work relationships
 - attitudes to others and otherness
- partnership:
 - contract style
 - familial style
 - patron-client style

2.3 Raising children

- characteristics of M.K.s
 - identity crisis:
 - mature early:
 - detached view of life:
 - adjust to differences rapidly:
 - compensators:
 - "homeless"
- questions in raising M.K.s
 - their cultural identity
 - schooling
 - adjusting to moves
 - spiritual nurture
 - teaching them to work
 - raising special children
 - dating and marriage
 - guardianship
- blessings of being bicultural [few would ever trade the experience]
 - global perspective
 - friends around the world
 - learn from young, vital churches
 - a meaningful ministry



3. National Leaders and the Bicultural Community:

3.1 Stages in relationships to a new church:

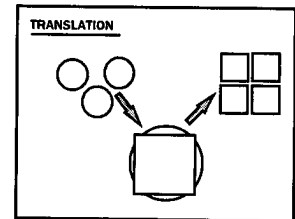
3.2 Problems facing national leaders:

Remember: effective cross-cultural ministry begins not by learning new methods, but by becoming bicultural persons who truly learn to love and identify with their chosen people.

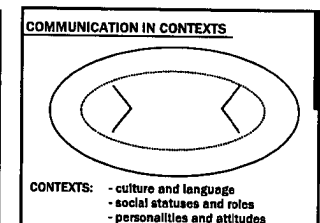
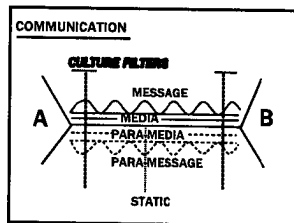
VI. THE MESSAGE IN HUMAN CONTEXTS

1. Contextualizing the Gospel in Cultural Contexts:

1.1 Translating the Bible:

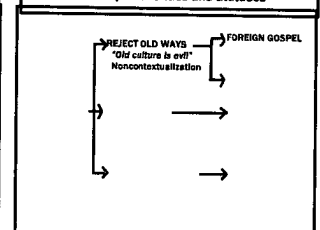
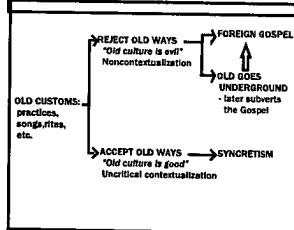


1.2 Communicating the message cross-culturally:

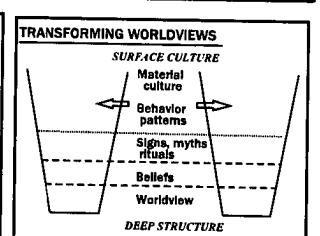
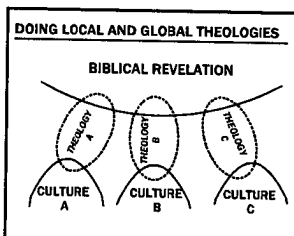


1.3 Contextualizing worship forms:

1.4 Dealing with old customs:



1.5 Doing local and global theologies:



1.6 Transforming worldviews:

1.7 Gospel and culture.

The relationship between Gospel and human cultural contexts can be summarized in three principles:

- we must not equate the Gospel with any culture and cultural forms
- the Gospel must be expressed in culture and cultural forms to be heard
- the Gospel is not information to be believed, but a call to be transformed—individually and corporately.

2. Contextualizing the Church in Social Settings:

2.1 Contextualizing evangelism in sociocultural contexts:

2.2 Contextualizing ecclesiology in sociocultural contexts:

2.3 Contextualizing leadership in sociocultural contexts:

VII. PLANTING CHURCHES

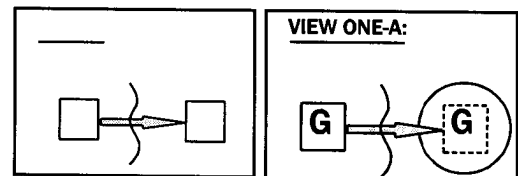
Our goal in missions is to plant clusters of biblically based, contextualized and mission minded churches in areas where there are none.

1. Planting churches in band societies:
2. Planting churches in tribal societies:
3. Planting churches in peasant societies:
4. Planting churches in urban societies.

VII. CHANGING VIEW OF CONTEXTUALIZATION

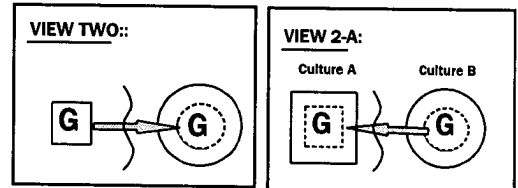
I. VIEW ONE :

- Non-contextualization
- Minimal contextualization



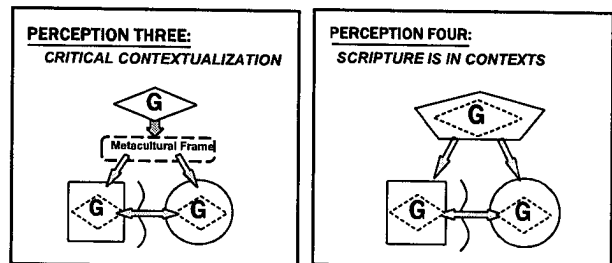
2. VIEW TWO:

- Uncritical contextualization
- “Gospel in Western contexts”



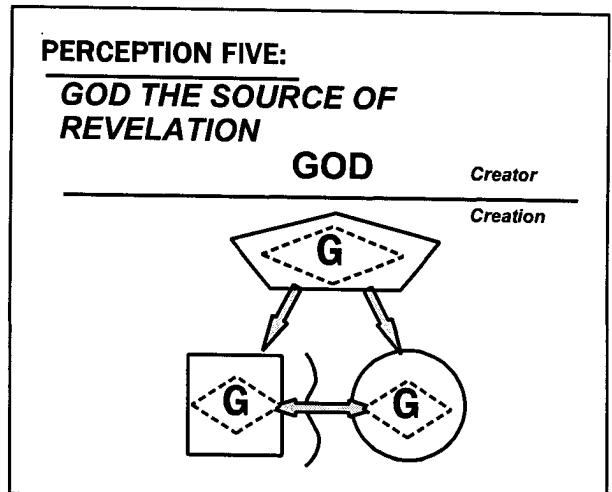
3. VIEW THREE:

- critical contextualization
- ‘doing missional theology’



4. VIEW FOUR:

- scripture is given in human contexts



5. VIEW FIVE:

- Revelation is God communicating and relating to us in our human contexts.