

lation and the inspired written record of such in Scripture.

c. The Effect of Sin Upon Special Revelation

The sinful acts of humans have not kept the Scriptures from reaching us in excellent form, due to God's special providence in preserving them to us (see R. J. Dunzweiler, "Are the Bibles in Our Possession Inspired?" IBRI Research Report 5 [1981]).

However, sinners regularly distort the meaning of Scripture (2 Pet 3:15-16), twisting it to their own destruction.

d. The Relevance of Special Revelation for Point of Contact

The experience of conversion through the reading of Scripture is rather common in the history of the church. Conversions like Paul's are much less common, but do not appear to have been limited to the apostolic age. Some, like Balaam, appear to have had direct special revelation, yet died unsaved. Many have misused Scripture to bring disaster upon themselves. Christians can seek to help unsaved people avoid these problems by working through Scripture with them in Bible studies, etc.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMON GROUND

1. Meaning of the Term "Common Ground"

The question here is this, "Are there any areas of meaning shared by both believer and unbeliever which can be used as a starting point in the task of Xn apologetics?"

2. Levels of Common Ground

Edward J. Carnell holds that there are three levels of meaning: (1) the personal level, (2) the scientific level, and (3) the metaphysical level.

Carnell thinks there may be common ground between believer and unbeliever on the personal and scientific levels, but not on the metaphysical level, not even in metaphysical dimensions of personal or scientific facts.

Gordon H. Clark thinks there may be common ground on the level of persons.