AKI Daily Theological Research Note II

ABC Theology: Methodological Definition, God's Proto-Order, and the Boundaries of Theological Inquiry

August 17, 2026

1. A Turning Point in Today's Research

The second half of today's discussion moved from textual calibration of Zhu Xi's li–qi cosmology to the part for which this paper must assume its own original responsibility: What is ABC Theology? We concluded that Zhu Xi, Nāgārjuna, and other traditions may provide important cross-cultural resources, but the paper's theological significance ultimately depends on whether ABC Theology itself has a clear method, clear boundaries, and constructive explanatory power.

2. Definition 1 — ABC Theology

> *ABC Theology (Analytic Biblical Continuation) is a constructive Christian theological method that takes the biblical narrative as its scriptural foundation and draws upon established contemporary scientific knowledge and the enduring conceptual inheritance precipitated in a people's cultural memory, in order to continue analytically lines of inquiry opened by Scripture but not explicitly developed within the biblical narrative.*

established • precipitated • continue analytically

3. Methodological Safeguard

> *ABC continuation is neither additional revelation nor an attempt to complete Scripture; it is constructive theological inquiry undertaken from within questions that Scripture itself has opened.*

Three methodological constraints are therefore central: established, precipitated, and continue analytically. Scientific resources should be established knowledge rather than speculation presented as evidence. Cultural resources should be enduring inheritances precipitated in a people's historical memory rather than arbitrary selections. Theological continuation must remain constructive inquiry rather than a claim of new revelation.

4. The Christian Ontological Axis

The central Christian confession guiding the present ABC proposal is: The Living God Alone Is Antecedent. Antecedence is not reduced to the claim that God exists at an earlier point on an ordinary temporal line. Its primary force is ontological: created reality depends upon God; God does not depend upon created reality. Therefore no Proto-Order may become a second eternal principle alongside God, nor may Order be treated as something above God.

5. Definition 2 — God's Proto-Order

In ABC Theology, God's Proto-Order denotes the antecedent divine order belonging to the living God alone, prior not necessarily in temporal sequence but in ontological relation to the creaturely accessibility of Created-Order. It is neither an independent principle alongside God nor an order imposed upon God from without.

A concise ontological safeguard is: God's Proto-Order is God's; God is not Proto-Order's. ABC therefore does not merely rename Zhu Xi's li as Proto-Order. Zhu Xi's statement, "Before there were heaven and earth, ultimately there was first this li," becomes a genuine point of encounter precisely because ABC instead confesses: The Living God Alone Is Antecedent.

6. Definition 3 — God's Created-Order

God's Created-Order denotes the totality of created reality brought into creaturely accessibility according to the will of the living God. Created reality must not be equated with present human accessibility. What is presently inaccessible to human observation cannot, from that fact alone, be declared nonexistent.

The paper should not treat a multiverse as established contemporary science. If multiverse proposals are mentioned at all, they remain scientific or philosophical possibilities rather than foundations of ABC Theology.

7. The Four Gospels and Trinitarian Theology as a Methodological Precedent

A major development today was the decision not to multiply foundational definitions. Instead, Christian theological history itself may test the legitimacy of ABC's method. The Four Gospels provide narrative and theological witness concerning Jesus of Nazareth. John's Gospel, for example, moves from the Logos, to the Logos' relation to God and divinity, to creation through the Logos, and finally to the Word becoming flesh.

Later Christian theology developed increasingly precise conceptual language—such as ousia, hypostasis, and homoousios—to articulate the relation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Such later terminology did not constitute a "fifth Gospel." Thus the historical development of Trinitarian theology provides a paradigmatic Christian precedent for ABC's central methodological distinction: theological continuation need not mean revelatory supplementation.

This precedent does not prove God's Proto-Order. It supports only the legitimacy, and simultaneously the limits, of constructive conceptual articulation after Scripture.

8. God's Renewal-Order as a Christological Hypothesis

God's Renewal-Order was not promoted today to a new formal definition. Instead, we retained a provisional Christological hypothesis: God's Renewal-Order may be understood in ABC Theology as the eschatological realization, within renewed creaturely accessibility, of the divine purpose grounded antecedently in God's Proto-Order and accomplished through Jesus Christ.

Proto-Order is not identical with Renewal-Order. Any Christian account of renewal must preserve the historical and theological movement of creation, fall, incarnation, cross, resurrection, and new creation. Christ must remain at the center.

9. Isaiah 55:8–9 and the Epistemological Boundary of ABC

Isaiah 55:8–9 reminds ABC Theology that God's thoughts and ways exceed human thoughts and ways. God's Proto-Order therefore cannot be presented as a human reconstruction of the totality of God's thoughts and ways. ABC may inquire faithfully into divine order, but it cannot claim exhaustive comprehension of God.

This yields an ABC inference: God's Reality is not identical with our accessibility to God's Reality. Limited accessibility does not entail limited divine reality. The latter statements are constructive theological inferences, not quotations from Isaiah.

10. Research Discipline: Resonance Is Not Identity

Discussion of I AM, אֶהְיֶה, ἐγώ εἰμι, λόγος, and ברא produced an important methodological discipline. The more strongly a word or conceptual relation resonates with our theological intuition, the more carefully its linguistic, textual, and historical evidence must be examined.

Resonance is an invitation to investigation, not evidence of identity.

Accordingly: lexical identity, intertextual resonance, and theological interpretation must not be collapsed into one another. Exodus 3:14, New Testament ego eimi language, and the Logos of John 1 may participate in profound Christian canonical and Christological interpretation without being treated as lexical equations. Likewise, proposals concerning the semantic range of ברא—such as create, fill, or fatten—must be tested through lexical evidence, biblical usage, immediate context, translation history, and only then theological interpretation.

Resonance → Verification → Interpretation

11. The Core ABC Structure Reached Today

At the end of today's work, no further foundational definitions are required for the present paper. The emerging structure is:

ABC Theology → The Living God Alone Is Antecedent → God's Proto-Order → God's Created-Order → Jesus Christ → Redemption and New Creation → God's Renewal-Order.

This diagram is an ABC constructive theological structure; it is not a systematic diagram supplied directly by Scripture. Maintaining that distinction is itself part of ABC's methodological discipline.

12. Conclusion

Perhaps the most important advance today was not the addition of new material, but the discipline of limitation. ABC Theology need not claim to explain God. It needs to state clearly what it proposes, where

Scripture grounds the inquiry, where contemporary knowledge and cultural memory enter the dialogue, and where constructive theological interpretation begins.

We inquire into God's Proto-Order; we do not claim to comprehend God.

Bold enough to inquire; humble enough to be corrected.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we come before You.

What we know is limited, and what we infer may be mistaken. May the Holy Spirit examine our hearts and everything we have written today. Keep us from treating our own thoughts as Your revelation, and from crossing the boundaries given by Scripture through human wisdom.

If there is truth in ABC Theology that is useful and may help people know You, strengthen it. If there is error, pride, forced association, or misunderstanding that we have not yet perceived, correct us.

When a biblical verse, a Hebrew or Greek word, a scientific discovery, or a cultural idea resonates deeply within us, grant us reverence to verify before interpreting, and never to force Your Word to say what it does not say merely because we desire a conclusion.

May our research not be for establishing our own name, but for faithfully seeking truth, serving others, and bearing witness to our Lord Jesus Christ. Your thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and Your ways higher than our ways.

Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours forever.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Hallelujah! Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Amen and Amen.