

## Revelation (disclosure, unveiling)

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### God must reveal Himself if humanity is to have a right understanding of God

- Humanity was not created with an innate understanding of God or with the capacity to figure God out. This understanding must be given to humanity by God
  - Matt 11:25-27 → At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."
  - 1 Cor 2:9-11 → However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.
  - Adam in his pre-fallen state had to be told what to do in order to know God's way (Gen 1:28-30; 2:16-18)
- Humanity in its sin is even more crippled in its ability to perceive God and his ways
  - Rom 1:18,21 → The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against the godlessness and wickedness of men *who suppress the truth by their wickedness...for although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.*
  - 2 Cor 4:4 → The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

### God reveals Himself to humanity so that men and women...

- may know the character and purposes of God
  - Character: Exo 34:5-7 → Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. (6) And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, (7) maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation."
  - Power: Ezekiel 28:21-23 → "Son of man, set your face against Sidon; prophesy against her (22) and say: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "I am against you, O Sidon, and I will gain glory within you. They will know that I am the LORD, when I inflict punishment on her and show myself holy within her. (23) I will send a plague upon her and make blood flow in her streets. The slain will fall within her, with the sword against her on every side. Then they will know that I am the LORD."
  - Purposes: Revelation 22:6 → The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place."
- might be drawn into an eternal, loving, and submissive relationship with their Creator
  - Isaiah 45:23 → By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear.
  - John 20:30-31 → Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. (31) But these are written that you

may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

- Revelation 22:17 → The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.
- may know how to live on earth
  - Deuteronomy 6:1-2 → These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, (2) so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.
  - Proverbs 3:1-2 → My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, (2) for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.
  - Ephesians 5:22-33 → Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. (23) For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.
  - Philippians 2:3-5 → Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. (4) Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. (5) Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

#### **God reveals Himself through...**

- creation (Psa 19:1; Rom 1:20)\*
- angels (Dan 10:5-14; Luk 2:8-14; Act 27:23-24)
- His own action in history (Exo 10:1-2; Jos 4:24; 2 Chr 32:20-23; 1 Chr 10:1-11)
- The circumstances in which we live (Acts 17:26-27)\*
- direct verbal communication (Gen 12:1-3; Job 38:1-41:34; Act 9:3-6)
- dreams and visions (Gen 15:12-16; Num 12:5-6; Act 10:9-16)
- the human conscience (Rom 2:14-15, 9:1; Heb 9:14)\*
- Scripture. Scripture is the objective standard by which other forms of revelation are examined (Act 17:11; Gal 1:8, note also the references to Scriptural fulfillment found in the gospels, particularly Matthew's gospel).
- people. It is through people that Scripture came to us (Heb 1:1) and that is most often how we receive the word of God (1 The 2:13; Rom 10:14-15)
- the incarnation
  - Jesus is the perfect revealer of the being of God (Joh 14:10; 17:26; Heb 1:3)
  - Jesus is the perfect human expression of what God desires to communicate to humanity (Joh 1:14, 18; 14:9; Heb 1:1-2)
  - Jesus is the fulfillment of God's revelatory purposes (Mat 5:17; Luk 24:25-27; Joh 5:39)

\*General Revelation – That to which all people are exposed (Acts 14:16-17). Ramifications of general revelation: 1) No one has not seen/heard God. 2) When we speak to those who yet to know Christ, it is not that they have not yet been witnessed to. 3) It is not sufficient enough, if it were God would not have bothered with special revelation.

Special Revelation -- That which is revealed in a particular time and space

What is the difference between general and special revelation? General revelation speaks of the character of God and the needs of fallen man, but does not include a redemptive message. The message of redemption is possible through special revelation.

### **What God has revealed is completely reliable, but God has yet to completely reveal himself to us**

- 1 Cor 13:12 → "... Now I know in part; then I shall know fully..."
- Deut 29:29 → "The secret things belong to the Lord..."
- Mark 13:32 → "No one knows the day or the hour..."
- Rev 10:4 → "...Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down."

### **Revelation involves not only the work of God towards us but the work of God in us**

- It is the Holy Spirit who was sent to live in us who teaches us (John 14:26) and guides us into all truth (John 16:13-15)
- The Holy Spirit must work within us to bring conviction when we are presented with revelation (1 The 1:5)
- We need God to reveal his Word to us (Psa 119:18; Luke 24:44-45, Acts 16:14)
- We need God to understand his mind (1 Cor 2:6-14; Col 1:9-10)
- We need God to reveal himself even in the midst of his special revelation (John 6:44; Matt 11:27; 16:17; Gal 1:15-16; Luke 24:30-31)

### **Revelation can be resisted and if when it is, it may close the door to future revelation**

- Rom 1:21-28 → "what may be known about God is plain to them...for although they knew God, they neither glorified him nor gave thanks to him"
- Mark 4:21-25, pp Luke 8:16-18 → "whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him"
- Eph 4:18 → "They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts."
- Mark 4:9-12 → parables could not be understood by those who rejected Jesus

### **The Bible indicates that there are conditions which put one in a good place to receive revelation**

- Submission
  - Rom 12:1-2 → "Therefore, I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—which is your spiritual worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good pleasing and perfect will."
- Purity (shooting straight with God, not putting on a face)
  - Matt 5:8 → "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

- Fear of the Lord
  - Ps 25:14 → “The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them.”
  - Prov 9:10 “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”
- Thankfulness (Rom 1:21) →
- Seeking for God
  - Deuteronomy 4:29 → “But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul.”
  - Proverbs 8:17 → “I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.”
  - Matthew 7:7-8) → “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and he to him who knows, the door will be opened.”
- Love of Others
  - 1 John 2:11 → “But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him”
- Obedience
  - John 7:17 → “If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.”
  - John 14:21 → “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.”