



Introduction

I. The Nature of Revelation

A. Revelation is a divine activity-

- 1 Timothy 6:15-16: “. . . he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.”
- The Creator-creature distinction displays the necessity of revelation.
- Our knowledge of God is not intrinsic, but originates solely with God as a free act of His sovereign will.
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“. . . no drop will be found of either of wisdom and light, or of righteousness or power or rectitude, or of genuine truth, which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause.”¹

B. God is the object of His revelation.-

- John 1:18: “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.” (Cf. Heb. 1:1-3)
- God displays His perfections in all that He has made.

¹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1.2.1.



- All revelation is an act of grace-

C. The goal of God's revelation is fellowship in terms of God's relation to man-

- John 17:3: "And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."
- This goal is a basic theme that runs throughout salvation-history.

"In its most general idea, revelation is rooted in creation and the relations with His intelligent creatures into which God has brought Himself by giving them being. Its object is to realize the end of man's creation, to be attained only through knowledge of God and perfect and unbroken communion with Him."²

II. Distinctions within Revelation

General Revelation: God's revelation of Himself that comes to all humanity through creation.

Special Revelation: God's revelation of Himself to particular persons at specific times and places, through special means, to enable them to enter a saving relationship with Himself.

A. General Revelation & Its Sources

1. Nature

a. Psalm 19

- Psalm 50:6: "The heavens proclaim his righteousness, for God Himself is judge."

² Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, p. 75.



- Ps. 97:6: “The heavens proclaim His righteousness, and all the peoples see His glory.”

b. Numerous texts speak of the multifaceted ways in which God is revealed, both in creation as well as in providence:

- Job 36, 37; Ps 29; 33:5; 65; 67:7; 107, 145; Isa 59:17-19; Matt 5:45; Rom 1:18, et al³

2. History

a. God's benevolence to mankind (Matt. 5:45; Rom. 2:4)

b. b. God's wrath over sin (Gen. 6:6-9; 11:7-8; Rom. 1:18-32; Gen. 2:17; Ps. 90; Luke 13:2-5; cf. Rev. 16:9)

3. Man (Gen. 1:26-28; Acts 17:22-29; Rom. 2:14-15)-

- Scripture testifies that there is an authentic revelation of God in His creation.
- However, this revelation is insufficient for God's purposes for revelation.

B. The Insufficiency of General Revelation

1. Sin has distorted the witness of creation (Rom. 8:18-25)-

³ Cf. Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 1: Prolegomena*, p. 310.



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2. Sin has blinded the heart of mankind (Romans 1:19-21)- Through general revelation, people know God.
 - a. Because of sin, this knowledge of God is suppressed.-
 - b. People are therefore culpable (accountable) for their sin.

C. Special Revelation & Its Sources

1. Pre-fall Special Revelation
2. Post-fall Special Revelation
 - a. Historical
 - b. Redemptive
 - c. Progressive
 - d. Word-Act
 - e. Christ-Centered



III. Hearing God's Voice

A. "Happy is the man" – Psalm 1

"It is an old saying, and possibly a true one, that every man is seeking after happiness. If it is so, then every man should read this Psalm, for this directs us where happiness is to be found in its highest degree and purest form" **Charles Spurgeon**

"A godly life is lived out of an astonished heart- a heart that is astonished at grace. We go to the Bible to be astonished, to be amazed at God and Christ and the cross and grace and the gospel" **John Piper**

B. Meditation-

C. Memorization

D. Ministering

E. Silence & Solitude

F. Hearers & Doers



G. The X-Factor

“He (Holy Spirit) is a personal force, fully divine and full of mystery- more a person than you or me, and yet no less an indomitable and ultimately irresistible power. He makes the seemingly simple into something supernatural, as reading the Bible takes us beyond the realm of our control. He lingers in silence. He labors mysteriously, outside our control. He imperceptibly shapes us this morning to make us into who we need to be this afternoon, and next week.” David Mathis

IV. God's Word in the Fight for Joy

**The essence of the Christian life is learning to fight for joy in a way that does not replace grace.
John Piper**

A. Our Opposition

- 1. Satan> Gen. 3:1, 1 Peter 5:8**

- 2. Flesh> Romans 8, Eph. 4:20-24**

- 3. World> Romans 12:1-2, 2 Tim. 4:9**

B. Our Weapons

- 1. Sword of the Spirit> Eph. 6:17**

- 2. Food of Faith> Deut. 8:3, Ps. 63:5-6**



3. Incarnate Word> Heb. 1:1-2, John 1:14

According to my judgment the most important point to be attended to is this: above all things see to it that your souls are happy in the Lord. Other things may press upon you, the Lord's work may even have urgent claims upon your attention, but I deliberately repeat, it is of supreme and paramount importance that you should seek above all things to have your souls truly happy in God Himself! **George Mueller**

The question then becomes how do I get my soul happy in God

Dr. Mueller provides an answer for us:

But in what way shall we attain to this settled happiness of soul? How shall we learn to enjoy God? How obtain such an all-sufficient soul-satisfying portion in him as shall *enable us to let go the things of this world* as vain and worthless in comparison? I answer, This happiness is to be obtained through the study of the Holy Scriptures. God has therein revealed Himself unto us in the face of Jesus Christ... And not the simple reading of the word of God, so that it only passes through our minds, just as water runs through a pipe, but considering what we read, pondering over it, and applying it to our hearts.