

A Visible Revelation

A message from our Lord!

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by

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Here we are in the middle of a new week. I confess to you that when we entered this COVID-19 pandemic two weeks ago, I had no idea that we would be taking a month and a half or more, to sit around at home and twiddle our thumbs. Of course, not everyone is doing so – some are still working – especially those who have been deemed “necessary.”

At first, I tried writing some devotional thoughts to you, which I hoped addressed the angst that can be so prevalent in a time of national emergency. And I have done so. We’ve talked about having “*Faith over Fear*,” about being “*Encouraged to Courage*,” about “*Godliness with Contentment*,” and other such titles which I was hoping would help us to settle down and to take stock of what we have in common: the love and peace of our awesome God, the fellowship of the brethren, our ministry of encouragement one to another, and as always, the ministry of reconciliation Christ Jesus left us to.

But I never saw this dragging on so long. We took steps to begin livestreaming – missing two Sunday’s together before actually getting technically savvy enough to pull it off. But I confess – I don’t know quite where to go from here.

Certainly, we still need to be an encouragement, one to another, as this pandemic stretches out into unknown periods of time. But what should I

do about our daily devotions that we started two weeks ago – first with simple written studies, and now these live-streamed Facebook sessions?

We have all been lifting one another in prayer – and that is good. I know you have been praying for Judy and I – and that is greatly appreciated. But I covet your prayers in another area, now. What should these daily devotions look like over the course of AT LEAST the next month? That is what I need prayer for – direction.

For today, I am going to return to Chris Tiegreen's “*Salt & Light*” devotional. He titled today's devotion,

“A Visible Revelation.”

Romans 1:18-20

¹⁸The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

Charles Darwin was caught between two competing beliefs: (1) that nature seems randomly filled with cruelty and pain and (2) that the brute forces of nature alone could not account for the intricacies of its design. He fluctuated between these two beliefs – randomness versus design – for much of his career, claiming at most points to be agnostic about

them. Even in light of his theories, he had trouble conceiving of such order coming out of pure chance.

We are told that the world is in a fallen condition, a distorted picture of what it once was. Science cannot explore such theological claims, nor can it marvel over the artistry of the Creator, but it can make observations about the order and complexities of life. These are still an unsolvable mystery to all but those with eyes of faith. They defy the natural processes we observe today. They point to an intelligence from outside the natural world.

Paul did not write about nature as poetically as the psalmists did, but he did point clearly to the purpose of God embedded in this world. However much God's creativity is displayed for our admiration, it is given for another reason too: **to reveal who he is**. He wants us to get a glimpse of his personality. For the same reason we were created in his image, we are given eyes to see his handiwork. He wants to be known.

Paul argues that the rebellious human race has glimpsed the glory of God and has been casual about it. What should have sent us in search of the Creator – the beauty and design of nature, the stunning miracle of a newborn, the joy of simple pleasures – became instead, an idol or even just a happy accident. We have to learn to see the world in a new way. More than that, we have to help others see it too. Yes, it is a fallen world, full of imperfections, but it's also a shadow of things to come. Most people don't want to leave the Creator's beauty behind. Remind them they don't have to.

(Lord, the beauty of this age pales in comparison to what you have in store for those who love you. May I live with that anticipation always, and may it provoke the imagination of those around me and point them to you. Amen.)¹

1. “*Salt & Light.*” Chris Tiegreen, 2019. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Pg. 91. “*A Visible Revelation.*”

Are you controlling the situation, or is the situation controlling you?

Care, in the midst of crisis.