

How God Reveals Himself: Getting to Know God

Humans were created to worship, but we tend to worship the wrong things. That's why people have been worshipping false gods since the beginning of time. They know they ought to worship something, so they worship the sun, nature, or even made-up deities. Some people even form their own image of God in their minds, thinking they are worshipping the God of the Bible. However, the god they have created is nothing like the true God. That's called idolatry.

Fortunately, we don't have to just pick and choose what we worship. We don't have to make up our own God, either. God has chosen to reveal Himself to us so that we know exactly Who to worship. He reveals Himself in two ways:

God reveals Himself through natural revelation.

Natural revelation refers to God making Himself known through nature. We read in Psalm 19:1-2, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge." Just by looking at God's creation, people ought to know that there is a Creator. This is why I believe a person cannot really be an atheist. There is no excuse not to believe in God because God has made Himself known to everyone.

For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Romans 1:19-20

This knowledge of God gained from natural revelation is enough to show people that there is a God, but it doesn't tell us much about this God. It is definitely not enough to show us how to have a relationship with God. It doesn't tell us anything about Jesus, either.

That is why God also reveals Himself through special revelation.

Special revelation comes through the Word of God, both the written Word, which is the Bible, and the Word Incarnate, or the Word in the flesh, which is Jesus Christ. Through

the Bible and through Jesus, God has revealed many things about Himself. For example, He shows who He is (the person of God—His nature or character). He also shows what He has done (the works of God). So, as we study Scripture, our goal should be to learn what each passage reveals about who God is or what He has done.

Throughout Scripture, God has shown us His various attributes, or characteristics, those things that make Him God. When we talk about the attributes of God, they are usually divided into two categories: His communicable attributes and His incommunicable attributes.

God's Communicable Attributes

God's communicable attributes are those that He shares with mankind. We are created in God's image, according to Genesis 1:27. I think that part of being made in God's image is that we possess some of the same characteristics that He does. God is holy; we are commanded to be holy. God is loving, just, merciful, patient, good, wise, faithful. Those are all things that we should be as well.

God Incommunicable Attributes

On the other hand, God's incommunicable attributes are those that He alone possesses. Those are the characteristics that make Him unique, that are the result of His deity. He is eternal, infinite, sovereign, self-sufficient, immutable. Even though we often try, we can't and shouldn't be any of those things.

As we study the Bible, we should be able to say with Job...

I have heard of you, but now I see you.

Job 41:2-6

A few things to note about God's attributes:

1. All of God's attributes are equally true of each person of the Trinity. Jesus and the Holy Spirit all possess all of these attributes in equal measure.
2. All of His attributes have always been a part of who God is, and they always will be. Some people claim that the God of the Old Testament is not the same as the God of the New Testament. God may choose to reveal certain aspects of His character more intensely in some situations than others. For instance, in the Old Testament, we see more of God's justice and wrath, where in the New Testament

we see more of His mercy and love. However, God was merciful in the Old Testament and He was just in the New Testament. He didn't change.

3. All of His attributes are connected, intertwined in some way. We can attempt to focus on specific attributes, one at a time, but we can't truly isolate any one of God's characteristics. They will overlap.