

**Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia**

**Bible Study - March 28, 2024**

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**Title: Theology - The Doctrine of God**

**"The Existence of God" - Part II**

**I. Introduction**

A. Welcome once again to another study session as we continue to study who God is, what God has done in the past, and what He is doing today.

B. In our previous session we focused on the existence of God and offered several proofs of God's existence. We shared just how marvelous our God is in His Design of things, and it was stated that "Intelligence is required to create and order this world. Therefore, Design demands a Designer."

C. I would like to share with you some excerpts from the writings of Sir Isaac Newton before we dive into how God Reveals Himself, which will be the focus of this lesson. First, a very brief word about Sir Isaac Newton. His complete biography is much too extensive to present here; therefore, I'll simply list his fields of academic and creative excellence.

**Sir Isaac Newton** was an English mathematician, physicist, astronomer, alchemist, theologian, and author.

D. Consider the insight of Sir Isaac Newton on the existence of God on Universal Design.

"Can it be by accident that all birds, beasts, and men have their right side and left side alike shaped (except in their bowels); and

just two eyes, and no more, on either side [of] the head; and a nose with two holes; and either two forelegs or two wings or two arms on the shoulders, and two legs on the hips, and no more.

Whence arises this uniformity in all their outward shapes but from the counsel and contrivance of an Author? Whence is it that the eyes of all sorts of living creatures are transparent to the very bottom, and the only transparent members in the body, having on the outside a hard transparent skin and within transparent humors, with a crystalline lens in the middle and a pupil before the lens, all of them so finely shaped and fitted for vision that no artist can mend them?

Did blind chance know that there was light and what was its refraction, and fit the eyes of all creatures after the most curious manner to make use of it?

These and such-like considerations always have and even will prevail with mankind to believe that there is a Being who made all things and has all things in his power, and who is therefore to be feared ...."

- Sir Isaac Newton (1642 - 1727), from *Newton's Philosophy of Nature: Selections from His Writings*, H.S. Thayer, ed. (New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1953), 65-66

**//What a Mighty God we Serve!//**

## **II. How God Reveals Himself**

A. Revelation is God's disclosing to man things about Himself that man could not know otherwise. The revelation of God to mankind is divided into two sections: **general revelation** and **special revelation**.

B. General revelation is God's revelation of Himself in creation, through history, and in a man's conscience. Special revelation is God's revelation in His Word and through His Son Jesus Christ.

**Point:** Without revelation we would know nothing about God.

### III. General Revelation

A. **Definition** - God reveals Himself to all mankind through the glories of His creation and His government of the universe.

#### B. How God Makes Himself Known to Us

1. We know Him by two means: First, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most beautiful book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many letters leading us to perceive clearly the invisible qualities of God, namely His eternal power and deity, as the Apostle Paul says in Romans 1:20.

- **Article 2 of the Belgic Confession of Faith (A.D. 1561)**

a. General revelation is **seen in nature** by all men.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." (**Psalm 19:1**)

"We ... preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered [allowed] all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:15-17)

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power, and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." (Romans 1:20)

b. General revelation **sees God as Creator and Governor.**

The theme of the book of Daniel is the rule of God over all. Each of the Babylonian kings came face-to-face with this great thought - "God rules over all." Whether these men accepted God's plan of salvation is unclear, but some at least took the first step by accepting general revelation.

(1) Nebuchadnezzar

"... To the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and sitteth up over it the basest of men." (Dan. 4:17)

"... the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men."  
(Dan. 4:25f)

"and at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation." (Dan. 4:34)

"and he [Nebuchadnezzar] was driven from the sons of men ... till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will."

(Dan. 5:21)

(2) **Belshazzar**

"The God in whose hand thy [Belshazzar's] breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified."

(Daniel speaking to Belshazzar in Dan. 5:23)

"The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men."

(Dan. 4:25)

(3) **Darius**

"I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end." (Dan. 6:26)

- c. General revelation **renders sinful man without excuse.**

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

(Rom. 1:20)

- d. General revelation is **insufficient for saving knowledge**

Although general revelation may lead an individual in the direction of salvation (like the kings of Babylon), it is still not enough to teach an individual the way of salvation.

A good illustration of this truth is the New Testament account of the conversion of Cornelius .

"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, ... A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." (Acts 10:1-2)

\*\* Cornelius was very religious, very moral, but he was unsaved. He had accepted general revelation, but he needed the truth of the gospel presented by God's man.

God appeared to Simon Peter by means of a vision. Peter was instructed to give the gospel to Cornelius. Cornelius could not be saved until he was able to "hear words" from Peter. Yet when he heard the gospel, he immediately accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior.

**Points:**

- 1) Many people are open to the gospel message and are waiting to hear the "Good News" of salvation. Jesus said that the fields are white unto harvest but the laborers are few.
- 2) The Lord seems to have more trouble getting His children to fulfill the Great Commission than He has in opening the hearts of the unsaved.

3) People need to hear the Good News of the Gospel! "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17)

2. The Need for general revelation.

a. It saves the world form chaos and cruelty.

God has provided three channels of general revelation for mankind. They are:

(1) Nature (Psa. 8:3-5; 19:1-6; Acts 14:15-17; Rom. 1:19-25)

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him. (Psa. 8:3-4)

(2) Conscience (Rom. 2:14-15)

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)" (Rom. 2:14-15)

(3) History (Deut. 28; Prov. 14:34)

//Let us read Deut. 28:9-10, 15, and 37 together.)

**Note:** As you read the above passage, the Lord in the passage is speaking specifically to the Hebrew nation, but we can learn so much. Remember what I have taught you over the years concerning the Dispensational aspect of Scripture: "All of the Bible was not written to us - but all of the Bible is for us!"

**Comments:**

- 1) It is through these three channels (i., e., Nature, Conscience, and History) that God gives man some sense of morality. The world system realizes that sin needs to be punished.
- 2) The world system also understands that order is necessary for a nation or society to survive.
- 3) Although morality will not save anyone, it does keep a nation from total chaos. General revelation is helpful, but it is still insufficient for salvation.

b. General revelation **supports** and **illustrates** special revelation (God's Word).

- (1) The glories of God's creation are constant reminders of a Supreme Being. The design of this universe demands that reasoning man recognize a Designer.
- (2) The wonders of the human body cannot be explained apart from God. We would expect that a God that is powerful and wonderful enough to create all things would communicate with His



creation; therefore, **general revelation encourages man to seek special revelation.**

- (3) General revelation and special revelation are like God's two "books," His outdoor book (creation) and His indoor Book (the Bible).
  - (a) His outdoor book can be read by all; if it does not lead people to Him, they are without excuse (Rom. 1:20).
  - (b) Sometimes God's outdoor book leads men to seek after God. God promises to reward the one who diligently seeks Him. (Heb. 11:6)

**Points:**

- 1) God will see to it that true seekers are given the truth revealed in His indoor Book, the Bible.
- 2) If a person is willing to accept the truth of God's outdoor book, God will see to it that the person finds the truth of God's indoor Book, the Bible.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8-9)

#### **IV. Special Revelation**

- A. **Definition** - Special revelation is the act of God whereby He

reveals Himself and His truth to specific people at specific times and places.

B. Although God revealed His special revelation to specific people, the revelation was not for those people alone. God revealed Himself to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses, and yet, what they learned of God has been recorded for all ages.

1. Special revelation **cannot be learned on one's own.**

- (a) The unsaved man cannot appreciate God's revelation as seen in God's Word. He is considered a "natural man" by God.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned [understood]. (1 Cor. 2:14)

- (b) Apart from the Holy Spirit, an individual will never understand the Bible. Therefore, it is useless to argue with someone about Bible doctrine.

- (c) The Christian and the unsaved have no common ground. Not until an unsaved individual accepts Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will they begin to understand God's special revelation.

**Point:** At that moment, the Holy Spirit becomes that individual's Teacher!

2. Special revelation is **accepted by faith**.  
"So then **faith cometh** by hearing, and hearing by **the word of God**." (Rom. 10:17)
  - (a) Although reason can tell a man there must be a God, **faith is required for salvation**.
  
3. Special revelation is **sufficient for salvation**.
  - (a) The Word of God contains the gospel, which is all that is necessary for a person to be saved. The great concern is that so many have not heard the gospel story.

**Comments:**

- 1) Please turn to Acts, Chapter 8, and read Verses 26-39 for a powerful example of the necessity for a person to hear the Gospel in order to be saved. //I will expound on these verses.//
  
  - 2) For those who will be reading these notes and not able to hear my exposition of the passage (i.e., Acts 8:26-39), keep in mind what is stated in the last sentence of items 3. (a) above.  
Afterwards, read Romans 10:13-15.
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I truly pray that this lesson has been a blessing to you. It is now interactive time and I encourage you to notate the page number in the lesson handout, as you record your responses (when applicable). This will also allow others to follow along with you as you respond to a specific question.

As always, all passages have been taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible as you fill in the blank spaces to complete a Bible passage.

1. The revelation of God to mankind is divided into two sections. What are they?

A.

B.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ is God's revelation of Himself in creation, through history, and in a man's \_\_\_\_\_.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ revelation is God's revelation in His \_\_\_\_\_ and through His Son \_\_\_\_\_.

4. "The \_\_\_\_\_ declare the \_\_\_\_\_ of God; and the \_\_\_\_\_ sheweth his \_\_\_\_\_."

[Psalm 19:1]

5. General revelation sees God as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

6. From the lesson handout, the theme of the book of Daniel is what?

Your response:

7. General revelation renders \_\_\_\_\_ without \_\_\_\_\_.

8. "For the \_\_\_\_\_ things of him from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world are \_\_\_\_\_ seen, being \_\_\_\_\_ by the things that are made, even his \_\_\_\_\_ power and Godhead; so that they are \_\_\_\_\_."

[Romans 1:20]

9. Although general revelation may lead an individual in the \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation, it is still not enough to teach an individual the \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation.

10. "So then \_\_\_\_\_ cometh by \_\_\_\_\_, and hearing by the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. [Romans 10:17]

11. God has provided three channels of general revelation; what are they?

A.

B.

C.

12. General revelation and special revelation are like God's two "books."

A. Creation is His \_\_\_\_\_ book.

B. The Bible is His \_\_\_\_\_ book.

13. Special revelation is the act of God whereby He reveals Himself and His truth to \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ times and \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Special revelation can be learned on one's own.
- A. True
- B. False
15. "But the \_\_\_\_\_ man receiveth not the things of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God: for they are \_\_\_\_\_ unto him: neither can he know them, because they are \_\_\_\_\_ discerned."  
[1 Corinthians 2:14]
16. Apart from the Holy Spirit, an individual will never understand the Bible.
- A. True
- B. False

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I pray that you have been encouraged and you will continue to delve deeper into the Word of God. As a servant of the Living Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, it is my joy to share with you from the rich well-spring of the Living Word (the Holy Bible).

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."  
[1 Cor. 4:2]

In The Master's Service,  
Pastor Austin