

Christian Ambassador Training

How We Know God I - Revelation

^{ESV} **Psalm 19:1** The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

^{ESV} **2 Timothy 3:16-17** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

^{ESV} **Hebrews 1:1-2** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Review/Preview

Knowledge – An Ambassador needs to know **his Sovereign**, his **Sovereign’s message**, and the **subjects to whom he’s called to represent the Sovereign** (their nature, culture, and language) so that he can communicate the Sovereign’s message to the people faithfully.

Know God (your Sovereign, the King that you represent)

- We need to know our Sovereign’s nature, character, attributes & message!
- How do we acquire such knowledge?

The Doctrine of Revelation

definition--

^{ESV} **Isaiah 59:2** but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

"Hidden" means beyond human ability or rational deduction. Thus all human ability is excluded. God is the *initiator*; man is the *receiver*.

God must _____ Himself to us.

I. General Revelation

A. Creation

Psalm 19:1-4

Romans 1:19-20

B. **Providence** (protective care)

Acts 14:14-18

Acts 17:26-29

C. **Moral Conscience** (God's moral law, written on our hearts)

Romans 1:29b-32

Romans 2:12-16

- We have the requirements of the law written on our hearts
- We often do, by nature, what is written in the law (we don't kill, steal, lie, etc.) and are offended when others don't.
- We have a sense of right and wrong, which reflects God's moral norm
- All people have this revelation of divine law
- We have broken it, suppressed it, and perverted it by trying to hold others to it, but excusing ourselves from it.

Discussion 1 -- General Revelation (ref. Rom 1:18-20)

- If what Paul says here is true, would you characterize the unbeliever's problem as *ignorance*?

- If not ignorance, what is the real issue?

- When we talk about "Law" and "Gospel"
 - Is the *Law* sufficiently revealed by general revelation?

 - Is the *Gospel* sufficiently revealed by general revelation?

- Then what is the purpose of the Law? (Gal 3:24; Rom 3:19-20; Rom 7:7)

God's law acts as a schoolmaster to bring us to Jesus Christ that we might be justified through faith in His blood. The law doesn't help us; it just leaves us helpless. It doesn't justify us; it just leaves us guilty before the judgment bar of a holy God.¹

--Ray Comfort, "Hell's Best Kept Secret"

II. Special Revelation

A. Historical

- **Hebrews 1:1** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

B. In Christ: The Word (essence, attributes, divine self expression) of God in bodily form.

- **Hebrews 1:2** - but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
- **John 1:1-5** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- **John 1:14-18** 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

C. Scripture: The Word (essence, attributes, divine self expression) of God in Written form

- **1 Tim 3:16** - 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God be competent, equipped for every good work.

¹ Ray Comfort's *Hell's Best Kept Secret* sermon audio, video and manuscript are available here: (<http://www.livingwaters.com/learn/hellsbestkeptsecret.htm>). God used these messages powerfully and formatively in my life and I'm forever grateful to God and His servant Ray for this message.

Discussion 2 -- General & Special Revelation

- Returning to “Law” and “Gospel”
 - What is the purpose of the Law (again)?
 - Ought we to be proclaiming the Law? If so, to what end?
 - What’s the difference between this and legalism?

- Is the *Gospel* sufficiently revealed by *special* revelation?

Application Questions

- How ought this to affect our message as ambassadors? (ref. 2 Cor 4:2)

- Who is the Law (bad news) designed for? (ref. 1 Tim 1:9)

- Who is the Gospel (good news) designed for? (ref. Luke 4:16-21)

“Law to the _____ -- Grace to the _____”

Wrap Up

- Summarize the implications:
 - *sinners have the knowledge of God, we’re called to preach to the conscience*
 - *God’s Law was given for the purpose of revealing sin and leading us to a knowledge of our need for a Savior (leaves us guilty and helpless!)*
 - *The Law revealed in general and special revelation is not the Gospel. It is the bad news that makes the Gospel (good news) make sense.*
 - *Start recognizing how consistently this is the Biblical model. Bringing a knowledge of sin (through appeal to God’s Law explicitly or implicitly) and calling to repent and believe the Gospel.*